


concepts, detailed political science research on violence in the former Yugoslavia is rare, and the interviews are often powerful. The book deserves a wide audience among scholars of political violence, mass atrocities, social identity, and Eastern Europe.

In Their Own Words: Understanding Lashkar-e Tayyaba.

By C. Christine Fair. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

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Often overshadowed in Western media by al-Qaida and the Islamic State, Pakistan's Lashkar-e Tayyaba (LeT; "Army of the Pure") is one of the world's most potent and resilient militant Islamist groups. Yet, relative to its size and significance, it has long been one of the least understood. At least, that was until this terrific book by C. Christine Fair, professor of political science at Georgetown University. The fruit of decades of scholarship, *In Their Own Words* is not only the definitive work on LeT thus far but is also a major contribution to the study of South Asian politics and militant Islamism more broadly.

The title is slightly deceptive, because it suggests that the book is a commented reader of LeT texts in translation, in the genre of Gilles Kepel and coauthors' *Al-Qaida in Their Own Words* (2005) or Haroro Ingram and others' recent *The Isis Reader* (2020). This book is not that; it is an analytical work in Fair's own voice that seeks to understand the nature of Lashkar-e Tayyaba and its role in Pakistani society. The six-chapter volume deals in turn with the India–Pakistan relationship, Pakistan's history of proxy warfare, LeT's organization and ideology, its personnel recruitment, its domestic political role, and the question of how the international community should handle the group in the future.

The analysis is deeply anchored in primary sources, however. The author draws on hundreds of books and pamphlets, as well as nearly a thousand martyrdom biographies from LeT magazines—some of which were collected online, some in the field, and some through US-based libraries. Her years of fieldwork in Pakistan and strong command of Urdu and other local languages allow her to interpret and contextualize these sources with the sensitivity of the finest area specialist. The book contains lengthy citations from primary sources and interviews, so if you come to this book for the flavor and texture of LeT's ideology, you will not be disappointed.

You should stay, however, for the social science. Fair, who is one of the leading political scientists studying the contemporary Muslim world, applies a range of methods to drill into questions of general interest to scholars of contentious

politics. She retraces the history of the group—from its roots in the 1980s Afghan jihad; through its subsequent guerilla activities in Kashmir, India, and Afghanistan; to its recent entry into Pakistani politics—debunking a number of long-held misconceptions along the way. She parses the complex and shifting organizational structure of the group, showing that the LeT cannot be understood on its own, but only as part of a large conglomerate with countrywide activities in a range of domains, from education and charity via military operations to electoral politics.

Particularly intriguing is the chapter on recruitment, which leverages a new biographical dataset of nearly a thousand fallen LeT fighters. We learn that LeT "martyrs" are better educated than their peers and that almost none of them are from Kashmir, the region for whose liberation they are fighting. Personal letters and wills reveal that mothers play a crucial role in the recruitment process by prodding and guilt-tripping their sons into volunteering for jihad. The mothers appear to do this partly for social status in their community and partly for the afterlife rewards they believe are conferred on the entire family of a martyr. Family peer pressure has been observed in many Islamist groups, but it has not been examined in as much fascinating detail as Fair offers here.

The book's biggest contribution is its elucidation of the relationship between LeT and the Pakistani state. That the group enjoys close ties with the military establishment is well known, but Fair takes the analysis deeper and farther than previous works and shows that the two are even more deeply intertwined than previously recognized. As such, *In Their Own Words* is not just a book about an Islamist paramilitary group but also—and perhaps primarily—a book about Pakistani politics.

It makes two major contributions. The first is to explain *why* Pakistan has used LeT as a tool for proxy warfare. Fair rightly devotes one-third of the book to the geopolitical and ideological dynamics underpinning this strategy—notably the conflict with India, the opportunities offered by the nuclear umbrella, and the rise of revolutionary and sectarian jihadi groups inside Pakistan. She shows that the LeT has filled an evolving set of functions for the Pakistani state: from the early 1990s as a weapon in Kashmir, post-9/11 as an instrument in the Afghan theater, from the late 2000s as an ideological counterweight to the more radical Islamist forces, and more recently as a vector of influence in electoral politics. These insights make the analysis of LeT deeply contextualized, a quality often lacking in the literature on jihadi groups.

The second contribution is to specify the nature and mechanics of the relationship between LeT and the state. The book fleshes out in great and damning detail the various ways in which LeT has enjoyed state support, from direct transfers of funds and weaponry via military mentoring and operational supervision to the selective provision of operating space in various civilian sectors. This is a difficult exercise, because the topic is highly contentious and the

existing literature rife with rumors and misinformation, but Fair's account is credible precisely because she stays close to LeT's own documentation. Her overall verdict of the Pakistani state behavior in this domain is harsh but persuasive. The analysis would have been even more compelling with a sharper definition of the "deep state." Fair uses this concept throughout the book to refer to the forces in the state apparatus that are doing the manipulation of the LeT, but without providing a detailed description of it.

The book contributes to several literatures and deserves a wide readership. Scholars of militant Islamism will find it particularly thought provoking, because LeT is a rare case of a state-supported violent Sunni Islamist group. Historically, the ideological objective of strict religious legislation has tended to put such groups on a collision course with their rulers. Some groups, such as Hamas and the Taliban, have taken *external* state support, but LeT may be the only such group that has agreed to operate under a less Islamist government in its own country. Fair's new book helps explain why: the Pakistani state has made unusually large concessions to the LeT conglomerate. The question is how sustainable this is. Pakistani leaders seem to be betting that LeT will never turn against the state, but that is a wager few historians of Islamism would be willing to make.

State-Sponsored Activism: Bureaucrats and Social Movements in Democratic Brazil. By Jessica Rich. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 252p. \$105.00 cloth. doi:10.1017/S1537592720003916

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Unusually for a social policy adopted by a developing country, Brazil's AIDS program has drawn considerable scholarly attention. The country achieved great success by boldly deviating from conventional wisdom and supplying antiretroviral drugs to patients; in so doing, Brazil also defied the US and multinational pharmaceutical companies to make its novel approach fiscally feasible.

Although numerous scholars have already examined Brazil's AIDS policies, Jessica Rich manages to develop an interesting, novel argument in this fairly crowded field. Whereas extant studies highlight the bottom-up pressures of patients and activists in the initiation of the AIDS program, Rich stresses the crucial role of state–society cooperation for guaranteeing the AIDS program's continuation and lasting success.

Rich agrees with the prevailing view that demand-making by infected people and their supporters was crucial for launching Brazil's AIDS program (pp. 55–85). State officials initially pursued different priorities, working to extend health care to the large numbers of poor people in this highly unequal country. Providing comparatively expensive medicines to a small group diverged from these

plans. Therefore, social movement pressures were decisive for advancing the interests and needs of AIDS patients: they induced state officials to embrace this goal and promoted the recruitment of AIDS activists into the public administration.

Yet as Rich emphasizes, this was only the beginning of a long struggle. What has undergirded Brazil's sustained effort to combat AIDS is the intricate collaboration and interpenetration of state officials and societal activists that emerged during the 1990s. The new crop of public bureaucrats helped maintain social movement pressure and actively promoted the formation and demand-making of numerous new associations, which then backed governmental policy initiatives and program implementation.

Such "state-sponsored activism" was decisive for guaranteeing the reliable implementation of innovative AIDS policies in this far-flung country and for extending the struggle to related issues. For instance, popular mobilization stimulated from above allowed Health Minister José Serra (1998–2002) to win concessions from the powerful pharmaceutical industry, which made the AIDS program financially sustainable.

Developing countries are littered with innovative, promising programs that start with great fanfare, yet soon wither away as newly incoming governments seek to claim credit, start their own high-profile initiatives, and neglect or butcher their predecessors' pet projects. As Rich emphasizes, Brazil's AIDS program is remarkable for maintaining its functioning, performance, and accomplishments for decades, across several changes in government and partisan control (pp. 12, 95). Her argument about state officials building, assisting, and guiding their own activist support base in society is decisive for explaining this interesting puzzle.

Scholars privilege the analysis of change, such as the creation of new policy programs. Investigating such temporal variation is comparatively straightforward: Who or what made the difference? It is more difficult to notice unexpected continuities and to account for them; the counterfactual is less obvious, and it is harder to uncover the crucial forces guaranteeing persistence.

Jessica Rich's book makes a valuable contribution by taking on this important task and carefully tracing the complex mechanisms through which state officials have fostered and cooperated with social movements to produce unexpected, lasting success (pp. 40–52, 111–86). The book is impressive in its comprehensive development and thorough documentation of significant, albeit not earth-shattering, insights. The grounding in the relevant literature, especially the ample writings on state–society relations, is masterful.

The social movements literature likes to highlight participatory energies and bottom-up pressures emanating from society. Rich is to be commended for demonstrating the important role of state officials in strengthening and