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Cramer, Christopher. *Violence in Developing Countries: War, Memory, and Progress.*

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dependent variable of interest, interstate conflict, is constructed by using global events data (gleaned from major newspaper sources) from 1966-92 categorized as either low-level conflict, such as sanctions or reduction in aid, or high-level conflict, such as military threats or attack. His statistical analysis produces — among other results — two new and more detailed findings than previously observed: that first, as a target state's exit costs increase so does the likelihood of *low-level conflict* but that second, as these target state's exit costs continue to increase the likelihood of *high-level conflict decreases*. The intuition here is compelling: a target state being threatened by its trading partner (the challenger state) will be willing to engage in low-levels of conflict so long as the target state's exit costs do not pass a certain threshold — this threshold being a function of the market structure and asset specificity discussed earlier. As the target's exit costs continue to increase, it becomes more and more crucial for the target state to maintain the economic partnership and thus high-level conflict becomes much less likely.

This book offers an accurate and concise summary of the trade and conflict literature in international relations and then updates this tradition by providing compelling and influential empirical evidence of its own. The author successfully produces simple and readable mathematical models outlining what conditions of interdependence interstate conflict (either low- or high-level) is likely to occur. Beyond an impressive scholarly contribution, this book succeeds in its potential ability to educate a wide audience ranging from interested casual readers to professional students and scholars alike.

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Cramer, Christopher. *Violence in Developing Countries: War, Memory, and Progress*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007.

Christopher Cramer's *Violence in Developing Countries* attempts to answer one of the central questions of peace and conflict studies: is it possible to make sense of war? The book aims to prove that it is indeed possible and to decide how making sense of war can help us to mitigate its affects. On this count the book is based on a rather straightforward reformulation of theories of conflict resolution and transformation in the tradition of Johan Galtung and Louis Kriesberg, and does not innovate much in terms of its understanding of the nature of violent conflict.[1] Where it does diverge creatively, however, is in its critique of development as a technique of peacebuilding. Whilst the mainstream literature on peace and conflict studies tends to affirm development — in particular eco-

nomic growth — as a tool for transforming violent conflict and eliminating the 'structural violence' that prompts it[2], Cramer greets this approach with refreshing skepticism. He takes as his central foil the claim that war is "development in reverse" (p. 9) — and therefore, that to develop a society is to reverse the effects of war. Cramer strives to demystify the lure of development through a series of historical examples that illustrate the centrality of violent conflict to the development of the industrialized liberal democracies (pp. 43, 179-81, and 183-87). In so doing, he explodes several myths surrounding violence in developing countries, such as the idea that poverty (p. 126), relative inequality (p. 108), ethnic factors (p. 107), or indeed modern notions such as globalization have given rise to new kinds of warfare, which are often seen as 'congenital disorders' and blemishes upon the liberal visage. (p. 94)

From the converse perspective, Cramer develops an argument that war is not, in fact, development in reverse but rather a necessary stimulant of development. One of his most interesting arguments here is that the normative value or moral purposes of war are not diminished in the modern day (p. 171); rather, as a result of modern liberalism, the material values and moral significance of daily life over which many modern conflicts seem to arise are moral priorities and are deeply embedded within our political institutions. Of particular value here are his examples of war finance as a key plank in the development of state structures (pp. 189-91) and his discussion of the arms trade in developing countries, such as Angola, with reference to this process (chapter one). However, although Cramer argues in a convincing, nuanced, and comprehensive way that liberal economic development can cause war, he does not sufficiently demonstrate that it *necessarily* leads to violence. This leaves his thesis vulnerable to the argument that most socio-economic or socio-political processes, including liberal ones, can support either violence or peace, depending on their context and the nature in which they unfold.[3]

The concluding sections of the book do pose a second substantive question of great importance: if development can be viewed as a good in itself, is it worth the violence that it possibly engenders? The greatest disappointment of the book, in fact, is Cramer's failure to address this question directly. Rather than articulating his invective against liberal development theories explicitly, Cramer appears to assume that his reader agrees with his stance and interprets the nature and structure of the work as subversive in itself, which robs the argument of much of its power. It is perhaps unfair to criticize an author for what he *did not* write, but given the careful and potent arguments made in this book, the reader cannot be blamed for expecting more in the way of prescription.

Cramer makes a convincing argument against the form of development that he perceives to create violence but fails to provide a constructive alternative. For example, what kind of development, if not the liberal-capitalist variety, could avoid the trap of escalating violence? Or, alternatively, if violence is necessary to

progress (p. 47), how exactly can (and should) policymakers "twist the dynamics of accumulation to more constructive ends"? What, specifically, would he propose to replace the "post-conflict makeover fantasy" (p. 261) that inheres within most liberal approaches to peace-building? Cramer's rather unoriginal suggestions of regulating violence by means of the United Nations and altering economic policies leave much to be desired, and the author's discomfort in making concrete suggestions in the area of policy-making, despite the fact that he hinges the solution of the problem upon this. Indeed it is more a confirmation of a book's value than of its shortcomings to suggest that more could have been done with the material at hand, which is certainly the case here. Perhaps the book's greatest strength is that it can provide a number of theoretical springboards for those who are interested in formulating new approaches to this persistent challenge.

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Endnotes

1. Johan Galtung, *Peace By Peaceful Means* (London: Sage, 1996); and Louis Kriesberg, *Constructive Conflicts* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998).

2. Galtung, *Peace*, p. 2.

3. Hugh Miall, *Emergent Conflict and Peaceful Change* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2007), p. 3; John Paul Lederach, *Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Peace-Building* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 68-70; Elise Boulding, *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), pp. 2-3.

Manafy, A. *The Kurdish Political Struggles in Iran, Iraq and Turkey: A Critical Analysis*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007.

A. Manafy's book offers an analysis of twentieth-century Kurdish political struggles in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey. Very well versed in the historical details and complexities of the Kurdish issue in these states, Manafy includes in his book many interesting anecdotes from his personal experiences in the Azeri and Kurdish provinces of Iran over the years. His theoretical approach to the issue comes from Dependency theory, World Systems theory, and similar modes of production, and class-based analytical traditions. He refers to the arguments of Samir Amin, Immanuel Wallerstein, Rosa Luxemburg, Noam Chomsky, Jurgen Habermas, and Antonio Gramsci often and applies them to the Kurdish case. Manafy also brings in important observations from noted scholars of the Kurdish issue, especially Malcolm McDowall (*A Modern History of the Kurds,* 1997) and Martin Van Bruinessen (*Agha, Shaikh and State,* 1992).