

David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saideman. *NATO in Afghanistan: Fighting Together, Fighting Alone*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014, 280 pp., \$24.50 / £17.47.

Scott Nicholas Romaniuk
University of Trento

David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saideman are no strangers to matters of national security, intra-state conflict, foreign policy, civil-military relations, or conflict and state building. Their previous work, which engages with intra-alliance debates during military interventions not to mention deterrence and terrorism, provides a searing background for a succinct book that is both theoretically conversant and empirically deep. Despite the claim that warfare in the contemporary period is almost always a multilateral affair, successful interaction between actors involved in a coalition or alliance during wartime is not always an efficacious matter. The war in Afghanistan was a complex undertaking that revealed many dismal and dreary sides of multilateral initiatives of this nature. Agreement across the board was not always present, efforts to defeat the Taliban, as a common enemy, were not always so collective, and willingness to assume the responsibilities and burdens of modern warfare were anything but consistent, or even predictable. Auerswald and Saideman examine the nitty-gritty of the war in Afghanistan showing that the events and outcomes of the war were not only decided on the battlefields, but were also products of government structures and party politics within the NATO alliance and member-state politics.

This book is divided into nine chapters. The first part offers a theoretical basis for the subsequent empirical examinations. It problematizes the very practice of warfare, particularly when it is fought by coalitions. Yet, an interesting and overlooked aspect of coalitions or alliances like NATO, are the issues that initially bring nations together in a collective security organization; those issues, however, do not necessarily bring and keep them together when an organization or alliance goes to war. "The Americans and Italians," write Auerswald and Saideman, "disagreed over how to proceed in Somalia in 1993, and the French seemed to confound the Americans in Bosnia in 1998" (p. 2). Afghanistan offers no exception to the risks of policy formation and implementation disagreement, even in light of conspicuously imbalanced pecuniary contributions to, in this case, NATO. Budgetary dimensions speak directly to the authors' views of the roots of resentment within coalitions. In this vein, they discuss the problem of "[s]ome countries [...] withholding their full effort" (p. 3). Given the historical background provided in this book and its deep examination of NATO in Afghanistan, it presents readers with multiple case studies but also discusses "the broader dynamics involved whenever countries seek to cooperate in combat" (p. 3).

Numerous angles from which to view the role of countries in NATO and their relationship with one another during the war in Afghanistan are on offer within this book. For example, each NATO member (as well as non-members like Australia and New Zealand) made different financial, material, and human contributions to the war effort. This data is situated clear from imbalance and underscores the challenges (even recurring problems) “inherent in multilateral warfare” (p. 5). Some countries, as discussed, are just not able to contribute to the same degree as others. Thus, we observe *unwillingness* within and amongst the willing in both ad hoc coalitions and institutionalized alliances. A very interesting caveat (many are discussed) is the terrorism threat within countries that form part of an alliance. NATO members each faced different terrorist threat levels that acted as restraints, compelling countries to hold back on troop commitments, and yet it was actual terrorist attacks that shaped and formed the role and limits of NATO country forces on the ground. Looking at domestic imperatives, the authors move beyond the analytical borders established by realists in International Relations (IR) theory. Domestic politics and public pressure at home are critical to seeing how the war in Afghanistan was fueled from afar.

Breaking the black box of states, Auerswald and Saideman analyze presidents in charge of different countries. In chapter 4, the authors look at politicians leading the United States, France, and Poland with the aim of identifying behavioral impacts on military agents deployed. Political actors are not just examined on their own. Auerswald and Saideman attempt to exhibit specific patterns of behavior by comparing and contrasting key players within administrations: “Rumsfeld versus Gates” during the years of the Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld administration, “Chirac versus Sarkozy,” two key figures in French politics that presented France with two very distinct administrations during the war in Afghanistan, and the “Kwasniewski versus Kaczynski” presidencies from 1995 until 2010. The findings are convincing that the current and decision-making that goes on in domestic politics heavily impacts individual decision-makers outside of the country and particularly within context of multilateral missions. Single-party parliamentary governments take readers beyond the initial empirical chapter of this book in order to show how the political orientations of governments influence agent selection and behavior.

This book delivers a very robust overview and indeed deep analysis of different governments that comprised (at different points during the war in Afghanistan) NATO over approximately a 10-year period. In the latter chapters, Auerswald and Saideman look beyond membership to two countries that played significant roles in the war. Whereas in the previous chapters the authors investigated NATO members and governments developing different models of “principle-agent (PA) relations to depict possible configurations of states during multilateral interventions” (p. 177), the chapter on Australia and New Zealand focuses on “contingent delegation, patterns of oversight, and patterns of promotion” (p. 179) and their effect on

commanders operating on the ground. It is difficult to summarize the complexity of this single chapter, but in essence, responsibility shares a mysterious relationship with historical character of a nation and its people, where size might be expected to matter does not at all, and troop restrictions could hardly be seen as restrictive, especially when comparing Australia and New Zealand's troop performs with that of other NATO countries.

The risks involved for countries, their soldiers, their publics, and their politics are central components of this book. The core of politics at home and their impacts on warfighting in distance places and in the context of multilateralism is the essence of this intensively researched and brilliantly articulated study. One should not see this as a military examination, or a history of a military campaign. In fact, one cannot escape the interdisciplinary character of a study that attempts to touch on so many different aspects of a war that affects, in turn, so many different levels of societies. This is perhaps one of the most admirable traits of this book. Its intricate empirical side matches its theoretical dimension. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods of research, there is a very noticeable eclecticism through the chapters. The book, through its investigation of the NATO alliance and its members and non-member partners, pays further attention to the dynamism of a politico-military organization that has repeatedly been said to have outlived its usefulness and becomes disconnected in terms of its original conception, with the evolving nature of geopolitics in contemporary times. There is no clear indication of bias in any of the chapters nor have the authors fallen short of providing equitable focus to the many countries involved in the Afghanistan war. Auerswald and Saideman's book has established a useful vantage point for further studies of the two-way effects of the war and its participants on several analytical levels, and is an important resource for members of military institutions in addition to scholars, and people in politics.

Hloušek, Vít (ed.) *Presidents above parties? Presidents in Central and Eastern Europe, Their Formal Competencies and Informal Power* (Brno: Muni Press, 2013).

Philipp Köker
University College London

The presidencies of Central and Eastern Europe and their incumbents have attracted the attention of a number of political scientists since the region's transition to democracy over twenty years ago. Although over time Prime Ministers and their governments have established themselves as the dominant executive actors, presidents still play an important role in the functioning of these political systems and possess the power to exert significant influence over political decision-making. The volume *Presidents above parties? Presidents in Central and Eastern Europe, Their Formal Competencies and Informal Power* takes the recent change of the