nuance to this broader argument, suggesting that informal organizations fill voids "sometimes constructively and other times destructively" (p. 275). Indeed, the case studies illustrate empirically that informal organizations are no panacea.

Going beyond the intended scope of this ethnographically grounded book, the reader naturally wonders under which conditions informal organizations ultimately become constructive or destructive—and whether there are lessons to be learned about the conditions that need to apply to achieve the former. The book suggests that "disruption to informal organization… creates instability" (p. 263), thereby raising the intriguing question whether undisrupted informal organizations usually develop as constructive.

Ultimately, *Bridging State and Civil Society* is essential reading for those interested in the dynamics in the Tajik-Afghan borderlands. Crucially, it is also an important resource for those grappling with questions relating to informal organization and those trying to gain an understanding of what shapes the relationship between civil society and the state.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Bleeding Wound: The Soviet War in Afghanistan and the Collapse of the Soviet System. By Yaacov Ro'i. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2022. 424p. $75.00 cloth.
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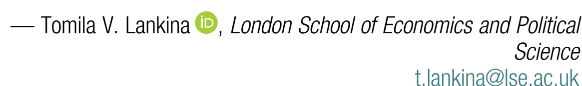
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Ro'i's *Bleeding Wound* is a meticulous study of the political, social, and economic consequences of the Soviet war in Afghanistan. Ro'i extends the earlier analyses by Mark Galeotti and Rodric Braithwaite—who have also written book-length accounts of the war, published, respectively, in 1995 and 2011—by contributing to the "polyphony" of views and perspectives and drawing on more recent sources that have become available since the publication of those earlier books.

Ro'i draws on a dazzling array of new sources to argue that the Soviet invasion had lasting repercussions for the political stability of the Soviet regime and its legitimacy, leading to growing socioeconomic and nationalist discontent, and contributing to the demise of the Soviet Union. Ro'i's sources include archival papers, memoirs, interviews, and popular culture, including film, songs, and oral history. Unusually for a work by a historian, the empirical backbone of the analysis consists of author-conducted surveys. The author and his assistants conducted the surveys in 1992 and 1993 in Israel and in 11 of the formerly Soviet countries. They cover over two hundred veterans who fought in the war, and 229 civilians who did not fight but lived through the years coinciding with the war. Another survey based on a "convenience sample" was conducted with 266 immigrants in Israel. The surveys allow the author to gauge veterans' opinions about the war, their role in it, and their place in Soviet society after they came back from Afghanistan; citizens' awareness of the war from the beginning through to the later phases and withdrawal; misconceptions about what the Soviets were up to in Afghanistan; and public attitudes toward the veterans.

The book consists of 10 chapters. The chapters are arranged thematically, and chronologically span a period of more than a decade, beginning with the decision to launch a military intervention in December 1979 to prop up the Marxist regime that was proving to be deeply unpopular with the Afghan population, and proceeding to examine the progression of the war and auxiliary operations all the way to the withdrawal of the last soldier in February 1989.

The book must have gone into print just before or around the time of Russia's so-called "special operation" against Ukraine, launched in February 2022. But the analysis is astonishingly prescient. In fact, for pretty much every aspect of the coverage of the war, one could substitute the word Afghanistan for Ukraine, and the insights would stand. Ro'i gives us a minute account of the experiences of soldiers and their families during their military service in Afghanistan and after they returned home. This sociological angle in my view is the biggest strength of the book. Conscripts did not know where they were going or why. And parents often found out that their sons had fought in Afghanistan only after they received their remains in a zinc box. The military aspects of planning and supplies were a shambles. Citizens were fed a steady diet of misinformation: the invasion force was vaguely referred to as a "limited contingent" that was performing an "international duty" of logistical support to the Afghan army rather than serving as fighters; the Afghan people welcomed Soviet soldiers with flowers and showered them with affection and gratitude.

The consequences of the lies and planning failures for the soldiers and families affected were tragic. Because officially they were not fighting in this "unacknowledged" war, the captured did not get POW status; and the vets struggled to get official recognition for their suffering and material support when they got back to the USSR. They were not heroes because the Soviet Union was not fighting a war.

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Some of the most revealing aspects of the analysis pertain to interethnic relations within the battalions and in the Soviet Union more broadly. Early on, the contingents were heavily drawn from Central Asian republics. Conscripts barely out of school were subjected to hazing, and minorities suffered from prejudice. And the Balts, Ukrainians, and citizens in the Caucasus were at the forefront of antiwar protest and dissent, not least because of their own experiences of fighting Russia's colonial policies.

The book places the war within the broader context of Soviet socioeconomic inequalities. Conscripts were drawn from some of the poorest communities. Over time, as citizens became aware of the war, people learned to evade the draft through bribery, forged medical exemptions, and the like, but again, it was only the best-connected and most affluent citizens who could afford to do so.

Ro'i is careful to identify the methodological issues inherent in reliance on a small sample of survey respondents and is transparent about the issues of representativeness. For instance, many surveyed citizens were based in Israel in the 1990s, and Ro'i acknowledges that Jews mostly resided in the USSR's urban areas, and hence were less likely to be drafted to fight. If I were to offer one slight criticism of the survey data, it would be concerning presentation. The tables with survey results do not give information on sample size or other information about the survey itself; this information is buried in the text but should have been presented for each table.

Though Ro'i does not anchor his analysis in political science theorizing, the findings have strong theoretical relevance. Autocracies can be successful at manipulating public opinion. Over time it becomes increasingly hard to keep tabs on information. In tight-knit communities, a funeral becomes an event in which the entire village grieves. Gossip, rumors, and hearsay become mixed up with facts. And soldiers write letters to families back home and often write truthfully. The war served to amplify extant grievances. Whatever their ethnicity or social background, soldiers came home traumatized, and often maimed and in poor health, wondering what their mission had been.

The book is thought provoking for students of international relations who want to understand Russian and Soviet foreign policy. One rationale for invading Afghanistan was the imperative to protect domestic borders—border regions included the Central Asian republics, territories that Tzarist Russia colonized to extract resources and protect its expanding frontiers. Brezhnev not only feared "losing Afghanistan," but he and his entourage also agonized over US influence in Central Asia. Soviet leaders feared that the US could place surveillance technology along the USSR's southern borders. Iran had just deposed the shah and established an Islamic regime, and concerns emerged that the Soviets would have a "Muslim problem" on their borders.

The question is: where does one stop? If Russia had—hypothetically—kept control over Afghanistan, there would arise the imperative to fear any threats from within the new outer perimeter of the empire. Again, Russia's war against Ukraine comes to mind, and the staunch support for Ukraine that countries like Poland have shown throughout Russia's invasion, for they had for centuries been vulnerable to the unstoppable march of Russia's expansionist ambitions. Ro'i's masterful analysis of the war in Afghanistan demonstrates the catastrophic consequences of the logic of imperial expansion. Ro'i cites one Russian antiwar commentator who ascribes the invasion to "[the] imperial damn-foolishness of the septuagenarian leaders with their outdated mentality stemming only from the lessons drawn from World War Two and in the Cold War environment" (p. 178). Over forty years after the invasion of Afghanistan, the material in the book remains prescient. This book should be on the shelves of every scholar seeking to understand the effect of violence on social cohesion, and on the durability of autocracies fighting wars.

Frenemies: When Ideological Enemies Ally. By Mark L. Haas. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022. 306p. $47.95 cloth.
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There is arguably no stronger vindication of realist thinking in international politics than when two states that are bitter ideological adversaries join forces to counter a third state that threatens both. Such alliances of convenience have ranked among the most consequential geopolitical events of the last century, memorialized by the now (in) famous photographs of Franklin Roosevelt (and Winston Churchill) sitting alongside Joseph Stalin at Yalta during the closing months of World War II and of Donald Rumsfeld enthusiastically shaking hands with Saddam Hussein at the height of the Iran-Iraq War. The springboard for Mark Haas's excellent book *Frenemies* is that realist theories are glaringly incapable of explaining the several less memorable, but no less consequential, instances in which states failed to create such frenemy alliances, which he defines as "security cooperation between ideological enemies when those rivals confront a common and pressing security threat" (p. 13). Haas valuably identifies the ideological factors that facilitate or inhibit the formation of these alliances, enabling policy makers to better ascertain their prospects in future geopolitical confrontations.

Haas argues that two variables determine whether a frenemy alliance will emerge among endangered states. The first is *regime vulnerability*: whether an endangered state's regime (or its dominant ideology) is vulnerable to

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