

which is legal in India, whereas selection on the basis of sex is forbidden, as discussed in chapter five. Here, the dilemma between feminists' claim to a woman's right to abortion and the right to life of the disabled child is discussed as well as the danger that new technologies of (selective) reproduction can become instruments for eugenics.

In chapter six the medical and social model of disability, the social construction of disability and the framing of disability as aesthetics and resistance are presented and criticised as the prevailing theoretical conceptualisations on disability. Ghai calls for theorising disability as a "critical modality" that challenges the myth of perfection by providing "possibilities for emancipation of those who are 'disabled' by society's view of them, but also those who are unwittingly trapped in their 'normality'" (p. 222).

In chapter seven the issues of identity are addressed as related to disability and in chapter eight Ghai introduces the need for a paradigm shift in both the practical and theoretical engagement with disability in India by emphasizing the importance of advancing disability studies to challenge misinterpretations of disability.

Ghai's book gives an extensive, detailed and complex overview of disability in India. It is the author's position at the interface between a research scholar on disability, a disability rights activist and a disabled person that makes her book so interesting and demonstrative. As do her remarkable expressions of hope and strength as illustrated by her comment, "Polio was a gift – an opportunity from which to learn, experience, understand, and then move on" (p. 15).

Anna-Lena Wolf

GARY JONATHAN BASS, *The Blood Telegram. Nixon, Kissinger and a Forgotten Genocide*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013. XXIV, 499 pages, \$30.00. ISBN 978-0-307-70020-9

NAMRATA GOSWAMI, *Just War Theory and India's Intervention in East Pakistan, 1971*. (PSP Monograph 1). New Delhi: Academy of International Studies / Jamia Millia Islamia, 2014. 90 pages, Rs250.00. ISBN 978-93-83649-18-1

SRINATH RAGHAVAN, *1971. A Global History of the Creation of Bangladesh*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2013. 358 pages, \$29.96. ISBN 978-0-674-72864-6

The war of 1971 that led to the creation of Bangladesh is subject of three new publications by Gary J. Bass, Namrata Goswami and Srinath Raghavan. The first author is professor of international politics at Princeton University, the second research fellow at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses in New

Delhi and the third senior fellow at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, and at King's College, London. Their concerns are why the USA did not interfere (Bass), whether India's intervention was justified (Goswami) and the geopolitical constellations that determined the most important actors in their actions and non-actions (Raghavan).

The books by Bass and Raghavan were reviewed and praised right after their release; the booklet by Goswami – a product of her PhD thesis on just war theory and humanitarian intervention – came out more recently. None of the authors is old enough to have followed events in the media in 1971. At times especially Raghavan and to some extent Goswami refer to contemporary affairs. Bass restricts himself discussing his main source, the telegraphic messages of Archer Blood, the US Consul General in Dhaka, to the State Department, hence the title of the book.

The authors follow different approaches: Bass chose a chronological order, starting with the cyclone of 1970 that interrupted the elections. The military government's failure to respond to the worst natural disaster of the century led to the overwhelming victory of the Awami League (160 out of 162 seats in East Pakistan and a total of 300 seats in the National Assembly, respectively). His grim tale of events ends with the unconditional surrender of Pakistani troops in East Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country by the end of 1971. Goswami starts with just war theory, before turning to the "Crisis in East Pakistan and India's Humanitarian Intervention" and discussing the "Indian Intervention in East Pakistan" as a case for just war. Raghavan starts with the history and emergence of the East Pakistan crisis and then discusses the interests and policies of the main foreign actors, the "Neighbour" India, the "Grand Strategists" in the USA, i.e. President Nixon and his National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, the "Reluctant Russians", the "Poster Child and Pariah", i.e. the international civil society, the European countries (under the caption "Power and Principle"), and China ("The Chinese Puzzle"). Henry Kissinger's verdict "I consider this our Rhineland" is the title of the chapter on the geopolitical dimension of the conflict, seen in the context of the Kashmir dispute and the Vietnam war, with Kissinger even more hawkish than Nixon, both seriously discussing risking a nuclear war.

The late 1960s were the height of the Cold War. Pakistan was part of the western defence system, created to contain "the red flood". India tried a policy on non-alignment and its own brand of socialism. The Third World was just emerging, many states having been released into independence by their colonial powers only a few years earlier. The USA and the USSR tried to rope in the new states. In Vietnam a proxy war raged for a decade and became increasingly unpopular in the USA. To end the war in Vietnam an understanding with China, the emerging other socialist superpower, was needed. There were secessionist movements of various intensities almost everywhere. The worst was in Nigeria, where the province of Biafra tried to break free. Looking back it seems that one

of the unwritten laws at the time was the sanctity of borders. The superpowers stuck to their allies in the Third World, whatever their domestic policies were.

As a result of a decades-long struggle for statehood (or “states”, as demanded in the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League in 1940), India at its independence was divided into two dominions, i.e. Pakistan and India. Simultaneously, India’s two major provinces, Bengal and Punjab, also were divided. This partition was marked by murder and expulsion on a vast scale, resulting in Pakistan as a new country with two “wings”, separated by 1,600 km of Indian territory. The majority of the population lived in the newly created province of East Bengal, later East Pakistan, where people soon felt neglected and deprived on both cultural and economic grounds. As the colonial power had preferred the “martial races” of the Northwest (Punjabis and Pakhtuns), Bengalis were poorly represented in the army, an important factor once Pakistan came under the rule of the military. With its long, winding border with India and a lack of military installations, East Pakistan was regarded as indefensible; the defence of the country focused on the west. Increasing tensions persuaded the new military leadership to hold Pakistan’s first democratic elections in 1970, 23 years after independence. The Awami League of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the dominant party in East Pakistan, won. The army, adopting the same line as Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party and winner of the elections in West Pakistan, refused to let the new Assembly meet and elect an East Pakistani as prime minister. Fearing a popular uprising, they declared martial law and started “Operation Searchlight”, an attempt to systematically annihilate the East Pakistani intelligentsia and leadership. As civil war spread, millions of people, especially Hindus, fled to neighbouring India, as the international community slowly became aware of the war.

The US General Consul in Dhaka, Blood, tried to alert his government with a string of telegrams, urging it to intervene. Bass quotes Blood’s telegram of March 28, 1971: “For three days we had been flooding Islamabad and Washington with graphic reports of a vicious military action, only to be answered by a deafening silence. [...] I was suddenly tired of shouting into the dark and decided to ratchet the intensity of our reporting up a notch.’ [... Blood] sent a furious cable with a jolting subject line: ‘Selective Genocide’” (Bass, p. 58). The White House, however, had other priorities. President Nixon was looking to the elections of 1972, which he wanted to win with a promise of ending the Vietnam War. For this he needed the support of Vietnam’s major ally, China. As the USA never had recognized the Communist government, there were no direct diplomatic contacts and the White House had to be very careful that the shift in policy did not become known too early. Pakistan had been one of the first countries, and the first Muslim one, to recognize the new government in China and had cordial relations with China, despite the fact that they were allied to the USA as CENTO and SEATO partners. There was also a direct air link between Pakistan and China, so that Henry Kissinger, Nixon’s

National Security Advisor, could go to Pakistan for negotiations, pretend to be sick, fly to Beijing and negotiate Nixon's visit to China in the election year. Thus, the Vietnam War could be ended, while the bipolar world became tri-polar. Such a grand design left little room for sympathy with East Pakistan.

While the USA, China and the Islamic states sided with the military government in Pakistan, civil society, especially in the West, supported the movement for Bangladesh, i.e. the land of the Bengalis and Bengali-speakers. It became part of the anti-establishment movement, especially in the USA, where recruits were conscripted to fight in a faraway land. The other fear was that the proxy wars in Asia and Africa might escalate into an all-out nuclear war. There was little sympathy and understanding for the USA's support for Pakistan, limited as it was. Especially Bass demonstrates that for Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger the war in East Pakistan was of little importance: they needed the good services of Yahya Khan, Pakistan's chief martial law administrator, in establishing contacts with the Chinese government. "With that, Yhaya's special usefulness to the United States and China expired. There were now easier ways to talk to the Chinese" (Bass, p. 173).

Consul General Blood was not informed of the intentions and strategy of his government and sent telegram after telegram to Washington, giving a minute account of the ghastly developments. He might have had the support of the State Department, but not of the White House. After widening the circle of recipients of his alarming reports, he was finally removed from his post and left Dhaka on 5 June 1971 (Bass, p. 344). He resigned from the foreign service. In his review of the international constellation, Raghavan confirms the story. What is striking is how a single dictator could have been the only reliable and trustworthy intermediary for the world's most powerful government to establish contact with the Chinese leadership, while other channels were soon abandoned (Raghavan, pp. 173–74). To put this in context: it was the time of Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik, when all kinds of backdoor channels existed between East and West.

Providing its good services to the USA did not improve relations between that country and Pakistan. On the contrary, as in the 1965 war, Pakistan felt forsaken, if not betrayed, when they received virtually no military support in their war with India. Diplomatic relations soured further in the 1970s and reached a low point in 1979, when Pakistan's next military government did nothing to prevent a mob of students from torching the American Embassy in Islamabad. Ironically, they became best allies again a few weeks later, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan.

In 1971, within days of the start of "Operation Searchlight", the stream of refugees seeking protection in India became a flood, reaching ten million within months. The East Pakistan tragedy became a humanitarian crisis of epic proportions. After the *Sunday Times* printed Anthony Mascarenha's account "Genocide", the mass killings became world news. The question was, however,

whether that justified intervention on humanitarian grounds. Looking desperately for international support, Indira Gandhi finally entered a twenty-year agreement with the Soviet Union. As Goswami outlines, the UN Charter would not have allowed India to intervene in East Pakistan on humanitarian grounds and try to end the mass killings (Goswami, pp. 46–50).

So the question was whether Pakistan's de facto mass expulsion of millions of its citizens to the neighbouring country could be seen as an act of aggression, which gave India the right to act in self-defence and force Pakistan to take back its people. Once hostilities broke out between India and Pakistan, India feared it would be forced to agree to a ceasefire that would leave it with millions of refugees to be accommodated in the northeastern states, which already had delicate minority problems. Accordingly, victory had to come quickly. In the end it came quicker than anyone dreamt.

Was India's intervention justified? Goswami thinks: yes, as it "was a strong case of humanitarian intervention. [...] The failure of the Security Council to stop the violence in Pakistan gave India a moral right to act unilaterally" (Goswami, pp. 66–67).

Looking back, Raghavan in his "Epilogue" discusses the chances of Pakistan's survival: "Had Bhutto joined forces with Mujib, as several contemporaries expected, the breakdown could have been averted" (Raghavan, p. 266). He also saw opportunities to avert the unconditional surrender of the Pakistani forces in East Pakistan: Poland had tabled a resolution that "had the potential to deprive India of a clear victory" (Raghavan, p. 259). "If Bhutto had not consigned the Polish resolution to the dustbin, it would almost certainly have passed, and Indian forces would have had to stop short of Dhaka" (Raghavan, p. 267).

Raghavan raises another point that was played down then and is often overlooked. Besides the small intellectual and political leadership, it was the Hindu minority that was systematically targeted by the Pakistan army and their helpers. Their share among the refugees certainly was larger than in the East Pakistan population before the war. Raghavan does not give any figures. Because India wanted all refugees to return, it was important not to emphasize the number of Hindu refugees. As a matter of fact, the process of Hindus leaving East Bengal/Pakistan and later Bangladesh has never stopped: the proportion of Hindus in the area has fallen from more than a quarter before the partition of India to less than a tenth now. Hence the talk of 20 to 30 million "Bangladeshi" in western India. Not only are the numbers inflated, but not all the migrants from eastern India come from Bangladesh, nor are they all Muslims.

All three volumes are extensively referenced. Bass provides a bibliography and Goswami President Yahya Khan's statement at the General Assembly on 1 March 1971, his radio broadcast on 26 March 1971, the UN General Assembly Resolution 2793 of 7 December 1971 and the text of the resolution moved by the Prime Minister of India in Parliament on 31 March 1971.

We should expect more insights as material becomes available. Bass and Raghavan rely on primary sources as far as they are accessible, which means in particular sources in the USA and India. “Archives in Pakistan remain firmly shut [...] and there are no official archives relating to 1971 remaining in Bangladesh, as most of the documents were destroyed by the Pakistanis” (Raghavan, p. 11).

In cases where authors venture away from the core stories, readers might want to verify details. Statistical figures always have to be read more as an indication of magnitudes, but in Pakistan it is not true that “fifty-five million people spoke the official language – Urdu” (Goswami, p. 32): Bangla was not simply the language with the largest number of speakers, Urdu was mother tongue only of the refugees from West and Central India, seven per cent of West Pakistan’s population; the rest spoke local languages, possibly with some understanding of Urdu. Furthermore, there were not “more Muslims in India after Independence than in Pakistan” (Goswami, p. 58). This was only the case after Bangladesh’s independence, if at all: the figures for the last Pakistan population census are provisional and questionable.

Bass’s work in particular has already become a standard source for the events in East Pakistan, like Siddiq Salik’s *Witness to Surrender*. Raghavan also explores the motives of US policy and those of India. Goswami brings out the limitations of humanitarianism in international politics. All three books invite readers to draw parallels to present conflicts.

Wolfgang-Peter Zingel

MIRJAM WEIBERG-SALZMANN, *Die Dekonstruktion der Demokratie durch die Kultur. Der Bürgerkrieg auf Sri Lanka*. (Studien der Hessischen Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung 10). Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2011. 474 Seiten, € 69,00. ISBN 978-3-8329-5862-6

EVA GERHARZ, *The Politics of Reconstruction and Development in Sri Lanka. Transnational Commitments to Social Change*. Routledge: London / New York, 2014. 188 Seiten, £ 90,00. ISBN 978-0-415-58229-2

Das wissenschaftliche Interesse an Sri Lanka hat bedauerlicherweise nach dem Ende des Bürgerkrieges 2009 erheblich nachgelassen. Umso erfreulicher ist es, dass in den letzten Jahren zwei Arbeiten erschienen sind, die sich nicht nur umfassend mit dem Bürgerkrieg selbst, sondern zumindest überblicksartig auch mit der Zeit danach beschäftigen. Beide Untersuchungen gehen von unterschiedlichen Ansätzen aus, thematisieren aber dasselbe Problem: den Einfluss der Kultur auf politische und ökonomische Strukturen. Während Mirjam Weiberg-Salzmann schon im Titel eine gewisse Unvereinbarkeit von Demokratie und Kultur in Sri Lanka postuliert, ist Eva Gerharz vorsichtiger in ihrer Diskussion