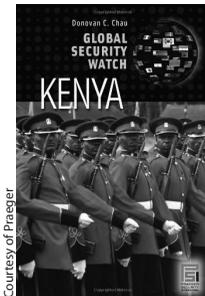


These same leaders, however, are the very people who ultimately decide where, when, for what purpose, and toward what end the United States next employs the military instrument. Clearly, a bounty of lessons on how to posture for and conduct extended SO and COIN emerged from Iraq and Afghanistan. That does not mean that those lessons are automatically universal, durable, or indelible. Faced with a crippled domestic economy in the twilight of two expensive COIN operations, the United States might well choose to address similar future threats in a less costly manner. This may result in the pursuit of more limited strategic objectives and, thus, a less expansive US investment.

Ucko is clearly correct. The next US war is far likelier to look like Baghdad circa 2006 than Kuwait City circa 1991. What remains in doubt is whether or not a US president—well aware of the enormous absolute costs of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan—will be circumspect in the objectives pursued, by implication limiting the US effort in time, human capital, and material resources. Or, if faced again with righting a failed regional power, he or she chooses maximum stabilization, nation-building, and COIN. Prediction at this point is impossible; however, there are good indications the former is preferred.



Santa Barbara, CA:
Praeger, 2010

194 pages

\$49.95

Global Security Watch: Kenya

by Donovan C. Chau

Reviewed by Dr. Dan Henk, Director, Air Force Culture and Language Center, Air University

This work is a recent addition to the Praeger *Global Security Watch* series—publications that assess the “strategic dimensions” of individual countries. The publisher makes bold claims, calling the book “an expert analysis . . . first to examine the strategic dimensions of Kenya and the political and military circumstances that shaped the country.” The author more modestly claims that he seeks to “inform the general public, students, scholars

and policy makers in the United States.” The publication may not fully live up to the advertiser’s hype but does achieve the author’s intent.

The author organized his text in a straightforward if somewhat mechanical manner—an initial chapter provides the geographic and political background to the country followed by a chapter examining the recent history of the Kenyan Armed Forces. Chau then takes three chapters to analyze Kenya’s security relationships with its neighbors (Tanzania, Uganda, and Somalia) and relations with the United States. Subthemes in these latter chapters include Kenya’s connections to various other states and institutional actors, among them the United Kingdom, People’s Republic of China, Ethiopia, and the larger East African and Horn of Africa communities. A final chapter concludes with policy recommendations for Kenya and the United States.

No publication can be all things to all people, and reviewers are vulnerable to an arrogance that insists a work should reflect the reviewer’s (rather than

the author's) vision. So it is appropriate at the outset to note that this book is a commendable addition to the existing literature, providing a useful summary of Kenya's contemporary external relations. The author is a seasoned analyst who draws valuable insight from his professional experience and from extensive interviewing in support of his study. Of particular value is Chau's analysis of Kenya's historically fraught relations both with neighboring Somalia and the Somali societies of the Horn (among which are the ethnic Somalis who happen to be Kenyan citizens). The chapter outlining US-Kenya relations since the 1970s also is worthy of note—filling a somewhat overlooked niche in the literature. These strengths make the book a useful addition to the library of an Africanist scholar and of value to policy makers concerned with security dynamics in East Africa and the Horn. The book may be most useful as an introduction for readers with a limited background in East African studies.

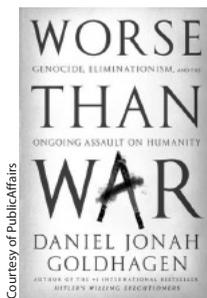
The work does have some limitations. The most significant, at least to this reviewer, is a deficiency within the literary genre itself—the tendency to reification. Nation-states are abstractions that cannot think, decide, or act. While it is conventional and convenient to attribute such capabilities to them, that practice obscures the fact that policy decisions are made by sentient beings, in many cases by a few individuals or by small decisionmaking elites—often not very representative of society at large. To really understand the foreign policy inclinations of a state, there is really no substitute for an analysis of the factors that influence the individuals in the decisionmaking elite—their shared cultural perceptions and values, individual personalities, and life experiences. Related to this broader issue is the importance of examining the actual processes of foreign policy decisionmaking, including a detailed look at how the relevant actors relate to each other (based, for example, on ties of kinship, patron-client relations, formative cohorts or shared ideology). The real questions here are: who is obliged to whom and for what, and are these kinds of relationships enduring in Kenyan political culture or are they undergoing significant change? In-depth analysis of such issues, drawing from other traditions of scholarship, would have significantly strengthened this work.

A second limitation is an apparent reluctance to assess Kenya's future. Whatever roles Kenya may currently play in global and regional affairs, its future depends on the coherence of its internal political institutions—on the persistence of the weak ties that bind government and civil society. Given these often fragile connections in African countries, it is dangerous to assume that the present is a good indication of what is to come. (For a chillingly illustrative example, one need only compare the relatively prosperous and stable Zimbabwe of 1995 to the basket case of 2011.) Other than allusions to ethnic competition, the author does not really help the reader understand the centrifugal and centripetal forces in Kenyan society, nor does he map the most likely alternative futures for the country over the next decade. If the work is to be really useful to policy makers, it requires a greater focus on the future—to balance the coverage of past and present.

The author treads rather lightly both on the capabilities of the Kenyan security establishment and on emerging African security architecture. The reader is informed that the combat record of the Kenyan Armed Forces (KAF) is limited to the nation's struggle against the "shiftas"—bandits (or dissidents) in the north. However, Kenya has participated in peace support operations around the world, has engaged in numerous multilateral military exercises, maintains a very sophisticated professional military education system, and sends its officers and other ranks in relatively large numbers to military education courses abroad—so it should not be too difficult to get a sense of the professionalism and capabilities of the KAF. Likewise, Kenya is a key actor in a new African security architecture sponsored by the Africa Union. If that structure coalesces as envisioned, it will play an important role in Kenya's strategic future—a theme that begs for additional attention.

As a final comment, the publisher shortchanged its editing role in this work. A thorough peer review process would have helped capture some of the missing detail noted above. The author himself is generally articulate, but the text, while certainly readable, is sprinkled with typographical errors and occasionally awkward syntax.

Despite its limitations, the book contains much useful information and very good insight. It seems oriented primarily toward an American audience that starts with a limited background in African studies. It emphasizes breadth of coverage rather than depth. With those characteristics in view, it is nonetheless a valuable addition to the literature.



New York:
PublicAffairs, 2009

672 pages

\$29.95

Worse Than War: Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity

by Daniel Jonah Goldhagen

Reviewed by Michael H. Hoffman, Assistant Professor,
US Army Command and General Staff College

This book examines a stark challenge, one that's been the focal point for the murder of millions but has escaped systematic study by those responsible for its prevention. Daniel Goldhagen offers his paradigm for genocide and its mechanisms in *Worse Than War*. This combative, clearly written, sometimes repetitive book offers an interdisciplinary perspective on genocide, incorporating more elements than readers have likely encountered or considered elsewhere.

The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide aims to prevent and punish "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group . . ." This framework does not fully capture the universe of mass crimes that military and interagency planners will likely consider genocide. Goldhagen argues that the acts he identifies as eliminationism provide the most useful frame of reference.