Political Theory


Why do some atrocities become part of a group’s ‘psychocultural narrative’, a story through which communal identity is constructed, while others fall out of collective memory, to require resuscitation by historians long afterwards? What mechanisms underlie this process of selective preservation and discarding? These are the questions Jeffrey C. Alexander sets out to answer in his sublimely engaging Trauma: A Social Theory. He begins by first de-naturalising trauma, observing that ‘Events are not inherently traumatic. Trauma is a socially mediated attribution’ (p. 13). To rise to the level of trauma, social crises must become cultural crises in which group pain is represented as a fundamental threat to collective identity. In response, claims are made, carrier groups with both ideal and material interests engage in public ‘meaning making’, the traumatic claim is broadened through social performance at a variety of levels and, eventually, enough people are persuaded that they have become traumatised for a new master narrative to take shape.

To demonstrate this process with historical examples, Alexander explicates collective reaction to the Holocaust, the Rape of Nanjing and the Partition of India. With regard to the Holocaust, what began in the West as a progressive narrative in which the forces of democracy defeated the forces of evil (with genocide being simply part of a broader threat to the world) evolved into a view of the Holocaust as ‘not an event in history, but an archetype, an event out of time’, and possessing universal significance and applicability (p. 60). In Israel, by contrast, the Holocaust reinforced long-established particularism, interpreted not universally but as yet another manifestation of European anti-Semitism. In wartime China, neither the Kuomintang nor the communist forces were eager to consecrate the Nanjing massacre lest it provide a sense of unity beyond the ideological divide both were then exploiting – despite the horror of the event, no claims were made, and no social performances were enacted. The Indian and Pakistani leaders, intellectuals and the masses all ‘framed their collective identities inside the narrative of progress’ so as to redeem the trauma of the Partition by the emergence of their respective new states (p. 142).

Alexander does exemplary work in illustrating the processes that underlie trauma narrative creation. Beyond that, by tracking how narratives evolve and how particularism can indeed give way to universalism, his work inspires hope for a truly cosmopolitan world in which people identify with others across group boundary lines.

Guy Lancaster
(Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture)


This work presents a scholarly, yet personal endeavour to understand the relevance of Confucianism in modern political life. Evolving from Stephen Angle’s earlier scholarship on Confucian ethics, this monograph attempts to reconcile that system of moral development with a meaningful lens through which Confucians might engage in present-day political issues. The work draws quite heavily on the neo-Confucianism of Mou Zongsan (1909–95) and particularly his interpretation of ‘self-restriction’. This book will be best received by those with some background in Confucianism and/or comparative political philosophy.

Recognising the difficulty that Confucianism has endured throughout its history, and especially over the last century, Angle identifies several key ideas that can be harmonised to cultivate ‘Progressive Confucianism’ as a guide for promoting ritually influenced virtue
politics. This reappraisal honours the traditional Confucian tenets, but also offers a means to alleviate contemporary social justice concerns. The author charts the interesting history of Confucianism and reveals that despite a rather broad and lively tradition, much of the existing scholarship maintains a somewhat awkward grasp of its utility beyond a basis for ethical considerations. In this text, Angle attempts to identify the core elements of the Confucian tradition which can be universally applied so as to revitalise the tradition in order to manage modern social problems. In rescuing Confucianism from its perceived conservatism, Angle outlines a ‘Progressive Confucianism’ that calls upon ethical reflection as a key to re-evaluating institutions and their efficacy in promoting the actualisation of human virtues. This perspective relies on Confucian principles, but is ultimately progressive in its socio-economic and political criticism and vision.

Angle’s treatise rests upon the relationship between ethics and politics derived from the neo-Confucianism of Mou Zongsan and his notion of ‘self-restriction’: the indirect link between the ethical and the political offers guidance to the individual for subjective moral action, but only within the limitations of a given objective political structure. In order to promote a broader system of public virtue, the individual must restrict substituting their personal aspirations of virtue for public ones. The overall aim of Progressive Confucianism is to illuminate the recognition of the interdependence of ethics, politics and rituals that form the intersubjective webs of meaning within a given society as well as providing the context for the advancement of human virtue. Ultimately, it is through self-reflection and self-restriction that a more solid foundation for establishing social justice can be developed.

Christopher M. Brown
(Arcadia University, Pennsylvania)


In the introduction to this work Geoff Boucher makes clear that his concern is with the intellectual tradition of Marxism, rather than the history of communist movements inspired by Marxist thought. He stresses, furthermore, that this is largely a book on Western Marxism. This is indeed the case in the six chapters that follow the first two, which are on Marx and classical Marxism. The book thus has an interesting structure, illustrating the development of ideas in the Marxist tradition. After the introduction, the first main chapter deals with the Hegelian roots of Marx’s work. The study then turns to Marx’s later work and the similarities and differences between this and the Hegel-inspired early work. The second chapter, on classical Marxism, is very wide-ranging, focusing on Engels and Lenin, G. A. Cohen’s revival of classical Marxism in the 1970s, the Trotsky/Stalin conflict over the application of Marxism, and Mao’s development and application of Marxism to largely peasant-populated societies.

The early chapters provide a good basis for consideration in the remaining chapters of Western Marxist developments upon the original and early themes and ideas. These chapters are on Hegelian Marxism (Lukács and Gramsci), the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse), structural Marxism (Althusser, Poulantzas, etc.), analytical Marxism (Elster, Cohen, Roemer, etc.), critical theory (Habermas, etc.) and post-Marxism (Laclau, Mouffe, Butler, etc.).The latter chapter also summarises Žižek’s recent critique of post-Marxism and his call for a Marxist revival.

The author’s scholarship and the quality of the analysis make this a very informative book. As a detailed survey of Marxist political philosophy it will be useful to postgraduates and second- or third-year undergraduates who have read a little about Marx and Marxism and/or already taken a History of Political Thought introductory module or something similar. It may, however, be very challenging for readers who have not studied Marxism or political philosophy before. Newcomers to Marxism who see the title Understanding Marxism may expect to find an easy book to read. They may feel reassured that this is the case if they turn to the preliminary page which introduces the series to which the book belongs, where they will find a statement that ‘the books in the series are written for undergraduates meeting the subject for the first time’. Some of these readers may be a little disappointed. The summaries at the end of each chapter will, nevertheless, be clear and useful to such readers.

Peter Lamb
(University of Staffordshire)
Cognitive Capitalism by Yann Moulier Boutang.

Yann Boutang’s Cognitive Capitalism is the most systematic and comprehensive account of the economic position developed by the autonomist school of thought. The economic thrust of autonomism developed as a result of the relocation of the Italian autonomista in the 1980s and 1990s to Paris. This formulation was largely conducted through the journal Multitudes.

While highly impressive contributions have been provided by Antonio Negri, Paolo Virno, Christian Marazzi and Andrea Fumagalli, these have been fragmentary ones. It is to Boutang’s great credit that he formulates an autonomist economic position from within the key conceptual framework of economic theory, most prominently labour and property. More importantly, he indicates the manner in which these concepts have been – and will continue to be – transformed as the emerging paradigm which he terms cognitive capitalism continues to develop, superseding that of industrial capitalism.

The whole account is grounded through the metaphor (which also replicates recent biological developments) of the pollen society. Classical political economy was informed by Bernard Mandeville’s Fable of the Bees, and Boutang has revived an economic interest in this insect. He carves a clear distinction between the activity of bees (pollination) and the outcome or output of that activity (honey). Classical political economy has been exclusively concerned with the latter, and has not only ignored the crucial role of pollen, but also developed policies – such as patents, intellectual property rights, the consumerisation and commercialisation of higher education and so on – which hinder the development of this activity. Within the emergent paradigm of cognitive capitalism, pollination becomes pivotal to the construction of value. Theories of classical political economy and their instantiation through neoliberalism, as a consequence, serve as a brake on the production of value.

Given this stress on the circulation of flows, it is surprising that Boutang (along with many other autonomist theorists) has chosen to provide a singular focus on cognition. Negri’s social philosophy has served as a founding basis of autonomist economic theory. This has been most famously formulated in the account of immaterial labour developed by Hardt and Negri, which focuses on not only cognitive labour but also affective labour. Boutang’s exclusive emphasis on the cognitive ignores the expanding role of affective labour, and its constitutive role in enabling and enhancing circulation. Any incorporation of affective labour points to the ascendancy of communicative – rather than merely cognitive – forms of capitalism. Nonetheless this account is so systematic that it should be essential reading for the economics community, and will appeal throughout the wider social sciences and humanities.

Andy Knott
(University of Brighton)

Under Weber’s Shadow: Modernity, Subjectivity and Politics in Habermas, Arendt and MacIntyre by Keith Breen. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012. 253pp., £60.00, ISBN 978 0 7546 7908 0

This book critically examines the social and political thought of Jürgen Habermas, Hannah Arendt and Alasdair MacIntyre. While their work may be analysed from various angles, Keith Breen discusses them as offering differing responses to Max Weber’s diagnosis of modernity: the view that the prospect of the individual living a free and meaningful life is crucially threatened by rationalisation and disenchantment accompanying the process of modernisation. The result is a fruitful one. Breen forcefully demonstrates that the three thinkers, despite their limited interest in each other’s work, share the fundamental concerns with modernity, (inter)subjectivity and the normative ground of politics; and that these themes may be richly illuminated through a Weberian lens.

The book begins with a brief summary of Weber’s key ideas, followed by three parts devoted to Habermas, Arendt and MacIntyre. Breen analyses how each thinker provides an important but ultimately unsatisfactory correction to Weber’s excessive subjectivism in ethics and extreme realism in politics. Along the way, Breen makes numerous interpretive points and critical observations, sometimes by grouping multiple thinkers together to highlight shared problems, and sometimes by isolating one theorist to underline the merit or demerit unique to his or her work. The concluding chapter suggests several ideas to advance a more adequate rejoinder to Weber’s pessimistic vision.
Although Breen’s argument here is provisional, he assembles key insights from both Weber and his three critics to indicate an overall direction in which to find a solution.

Breen’s discussion is not without flaws. He could have reduced the use of jargon, paid more attention to the internal tension within each theorist’s work and drawn a clearer line between what the four thinkers actually said to each other and what they might have said. One could also wish that Breen had discussed his constructive proposals in a little more detail. For example, while he takes pains to emphasise that the weak perfectionism he endorses is in principle compatible with diversity or the ‘fact of pluralism’, he avoids the hard question of what limit is due to diversity if his perfectionist ideals are to materialise. Yet Under Weber’s Shadow offers a concise and thought-provoking discussion of the four prolific thinkers’ writings. Moreover, it is greater than the sum of its parts: it shows how, despite the important work by Habermas, Arendt and MacIntyre, Weber’s insights remain profoundly relevant to the theory and practice of contemporary politics.


The essays collected in this book set out from the assumption that both justice and legitimacy are central concerns to any contemporary liberal polity riddled with ethical diversity, but call into question the often encountered trend within contemporary political theory to ground political authority on an either/or basis. They map out contemporary political theory as divided between approaches that seek to provide normative grounding to political authority either on the basis of the priority of justice or the priority of legitimacy and aim to disentangle any simple approach that conceptualises either justice or legitimacy as derivative of the other. The recent debate on moralism and realism in political theory is taken as the current instance exemplifying the divide between justice-driven and legitimacy-driven theories, which, for that matter, is considered to prove the relevance and importance of a focus on the relationship between justice and legitimacy, the focal point of the book.

The individual chapters give readers different answers on how to conceive the relationship between justice and legitimacy and attempt to show that the normative standing of political authority is, in part, related to how one conceives the relationship between the two. Perhaps more importantly, they demonstrate the way(s) in which the normative standing of political theory itself is predicated on a particular understanding of the relationship between those two pillars of ethically diverse liberal polity. In this manner, they seem to suggest that the normative standing of political authority is derivative of the normative standing of political theory.

The obsession with normativity, I suggest, is the major weakness of this book. Most of the essays credulously assume that political theory should be normative and go so far as to claim that one of the major challenges faced by realists today is to provide a normative notion of authority that avoids moralism. It is not at all clear why this should be so, if one takes into account that one of the major aims of realist theorists is to call into question the very issue of normativity itself. To suggest that a realist political theory should provide a normative grounding to political authority is, in fact, to give the recent resurgence of realism a Kantian/Rawlsian turn, the very target against which it has been formulated in the first place.

Gulsen Seven
(Bilkent University, Istanbul)


Finding Oneself in the Other provides an insightful glimpse into Jerry Cohen’s experiences and reflections on diverse subjects, including spirituality in the absence of God, the moral substance of critical utterances like *tu quoque* and (perhaps most suggestive of Cohen’s tendency to subversive waggery of the intellectual sort) the philosophical weight of the term *bullshit*.

Cohen’s ingenuity, drollness and versatility underscore many of the more explicitly philosophical chapters. His adapted ‘Jesus views’ in ‘Ways of Silencing Critics’ is a good example of this; in no small feat,
Cohen renders the subject of linguistic morality accessible through a refreshing admixture of humour and diligent explication.

In still other chapters – especially ‘Casting the First Stone’ and ‘A Black and White Issue’ – Cohen demonstrates a sober moral conviction and willingness to engage with serious political issues. His impugning of the words of Israeli Ambassador Zvi Shtauber has a special significance when one considers that Cohen’s son, Gideon, had himself been the victim of a Palestinian terrorist attack in Israel (p. 115).

Perhaps the most unique aspects of the volume, however, are Cohen’s first-hand, narrative accounts written over the last 25 years. The description of his relationship with Isaiah Berlin, his recounting of his experiences in India and the valedictory lecture he gave in 2008 endow him with a certain amiable familiarity. The impression gives you a sense even of finding yourself in Cohen.

Indeed, the theme of dispelling ‘otherness’ quietly unites the volume. One of its most poignant manifestations is Cohen’s encounter with mendicants in Bombay: ‘The moving thing is that our eyes meet with a certain mutual understanding and with unexaggerated gratitude from them. You can open to each other. You can open to a poor man lying on the pavement with stumps where his feet should be ... And you can cry inside yourself at your very core when he or she smiles at you in a way that cannot be fake. You both understand, and you share your understanding’ (p. 29).

This moment – and so many others throughout Finding Oneself – is at once edifying and sincere. The final chapter, which features Cohen’s all-too-brief take on spirituality and the sensation of beatitude, concludes with a consummation of the volume’s eponymous theme. ‘True religion’, Cohen suggests, ‘celebrates life’ and ‘can find its completion only in relation to the world and to other human beings’ (pp. 206–7).

Ross Mattiga  
(University of Virginia)


‘Horror is not reducible to the central theme of biopolitical analyses, that of the need to take command of life in order to preserve it from situations that might weaken it to the point of death’ (p. 19), write Debrix and Barder in Beyond Biopolitics, a book which explores the limits of the biopolitical frame in understanding acts of extreme violence in the contemporary world. Going beyond the forms of political sovereignty explored by the likes of Schmitt and Foucault, the authors here theorise the emergence of what they call ‘agonal sovereignty’, which does not seek to regulate humanity or individual human subjects but rather ‘strives to dismantle the human condition and the logic of the ontos by irrespectively annihilating the physical, psychical, moral, and mental attributes of human life’ (p. 22). For agonal sovereignty, the preservation of the political compact no longer determines the character of warfare, for humanity itself ‘is often reconfigured as what precisely stands in the way of war efforts and agonal violence’ (p. 43), a fact illustrated by the senseless detention of acknowledged innocents at Guantánamo, as well as the infamous Mexican narco killings. The authors devote special analysis to the so-called ‘global war on terror’ as one in which traditional and biopolitical discourses of alterity have broken down, so that the only enemy that remains is humanity, given that humanity contains the potential for inhumanity.

While Debrix and Barder provide a useful survey of prominent thinking on the subject of violence and terror in world politics, they unfortunately indulge frequently in a style somewhat reminiscent of schoolyard gossip (‘Billy said that Susie said that John ...’), with all too many sentences beginning along the lines of: ‘In a recent but too brief account of how Agamben actually tries to borrow a few insights from Schmitt’s The Nomos of the Earth, Dean argues that Agamben hopes ...’ (p. 80). This betrays a kind of authorial impatience, a desire to skim quickly through the background material in order to get to the present argument, and skilled readers, even those very familiar with the literature of biopolitics, can easily get lost in such chains of citation within citation. That said, the authors do make an excellent case for tackling modern horrors beyond the biopolitical frame as well as coping with horrors outside traditional narrative frameworks that seek closure. Beyond Biopolitics constitutes a truly serious attempt to think about the unthinkable.

Guy Lancaster  
(Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture)
Toleration Re-examined by Derek Edyvane and Matt Matravers (eds). Abingdon: Routledge, 2012. 152pp., £85.00, ISBN 978 0 415 53135 1

This stimulating collection of essays is the most recent instalment from the ‘Morrell Studies in Tolerance Programme’, based at the University of York. Although the various essays are not unified around a common theme, a frequent point of departure is the question of whether toleration should be considered virtuous. This comes out most clearly in the four philosophical contributions, by John Horton, Glen Newey, David Owen and Derek Edyvane.

Both Horton and Newey focus on toleration as a political virtue. Horton defends toleration – understood in its traditional negative terms – as an indispensable feature of a divided and imperfect world. In doing so, he extends the theory of modus vivendi that he has developed in other recent essays. While Newey also endorses the traditional negative conception of toleration, he focuses on its uneasy relationship with public reason and liberal neutrality. Against those political theorists who make toleration central to their theories of liberal democratic politics, Newey sketches a more Hobbesian vision, in which the only proper objects of political toleration are the seditious.

Owen and Edyvane address toleration as a personal virtue, and each adopts a sympathetic but critical view of the traditional conception of toleration. In an innovative and wide-ranging essay, Owen strikingly claims that possession of an appropriately formed sense of humour can help its holder to identify the limits of toleration. Meanwhile, Edyvane argues that toleration might be a less difficult and less unstable virtue than it is often thought to be, because inner conflict and ambivalence are ordinary and often admirable features of human psychology.

The remaining essays adopt a more historical orientation. John Christian Laursen locates a number of ‘blind spots’ afflicting some of the canonical advocates of toleration, such as Milton, Spinoza, Veiras, Locke and Bayle. He then raises the suggestion that contemporary liberals might be guilty of analogous omissions. Cary Nederman also connects toleration’s complex and contested history to contemporary political concerns, and unsettles the purported connections between liberalism and toleration by stressing the rich diversity of forms that toleration has taken historically. Finally, Timothy Stanton’s interpretive essay aims to clarify the place of toleration within Locke’s philosophical project, and argues against the view – defended elsewhere by Jeremy Waldron – that Locke’s political thought has Christian foundations.

The absence of a common theme or approach is perhaps a drawback. For instance, while Newey and Stanton focus narrowly on quite specialised topics, Nederman, Laursen and Horton cast a much broader net. However, the breadth of the collection succeeds in conveying the rich array of philosophical and political problems to which toleration continues to give rise.

Andrew Shorten
(University of Limerick)


As many contributors to this volume admit, Kant is not usually included in the canon of the most important political thinkers. However, recent decades have seen increasing interest in his ideas on politics, leading to Kant being portrayed as the philosopher of freedom. In the context of an expanding body of scholarship during recent years, Kant’s Political Theory: Interpretations and Applications should be seen as a contribution to summing up the advances of the ongoing intellectual debate rather than a ground-breaking analysis. It addresses, either directly or indirectly, the core concerns of modern Kantian political thought: transnational organisations, the democratic peace hypothesis, human rights, the ‘deeply Kantian deliberative democracy theory’ (p. 1) and several less often discussed issues, such as Kant’s views on education and book piracy.

The main thread connecting the otherwise disparate and sometimes conflicting contributions is Kant’s theorising of politics as intended for ‘unsociable yet interacting rational beings’ (p. 39). The authors mostly deal with Kant’s take on justice, social contract, the state and its authority. Not only is important contextualisation of his political thought provided, as is the case with Hunter’s attempt to read Kant against the Prussian Enlightenment tradition, but also critical interventions to the modern readings of Kant are made. Concurrently, the contributions display the multiple ways of reading Kant, often defying commonplace interpretations. Of
these efforts, Ferguson’s critique of the modern appropriation and adaptation of Kant’s ideas, first of all by Rawls and Habermas, is notable. However, as with, for example, Ripstein’s effort to derive a right to oppose certain regimes or Hodgson’s attempt to construct an argument for a world federation, it is more an attempt to add credibility to an author’s own agenda than a genuine striving to decipher Kant’s message. This is always a danger of any reading ‘between the lines’, and sometimes the contributors seem to have overstepped the limits of ‘Kant’s political theory’ proper.

Kant’s obscurity as a political theorist lies, as Elisabeth Ellis rightly argues in the introduction, in the fact that his political thought has to be read while constantly keeping his three critiques in mind, and even his more explicitly political writings are fully accessible only in the light of the critical project. Therefore, this volume is useful as an attempt to unpack some of the ideas that otherwise might be inaccessible for those interested in neo-Kantianism, but uninitiated to Kant’s work in general.

Ignas Kalpokas
(University of Nottingham)


In recent years, publishers have clearly decided that there is money to be made in producing authoritative surveys of different patches of the scholarly universe. Companions, handbooks, histories and encyclopedias have proliferated, seemingly without end. (I am complicit in this phenomenon, having contributed to both an Oxford Handbook and a Cambridge History). While many of these volumes are redundant, simply replicating what is already in print, the books under review here are valuable examples of the genre. Both are skilfully edited, contain numerous excellent chapters and deserve a wide readership.

The Oxford Handbook of the History of Political Philosophy edited by George Klosko is a compendious survey of two and a half thousand years of (largely Western) political thinking. The 50 chapters are divided into four sections of varying size. Part I, ‘Approaches’, consists of five chapters. Three interrogate different methodological orientations: contextualism (Mark Bevir), Straussianism (Catherine Zuckert) and postmodernism (Joshua Dienstag). The remaining two address the development of the history of political thought as an academic subfield (John Gunnell) and the value of studying history (Terence Ball). Although brief, the chapters are all useful. But the absences are significant too: important approaches that are ignored include Marxism, postcolonialism and (the new kid on the block) global intellectual history/comparative political thought.

Part II consists of 23 chapters on diverse ‘Chronological Periods’ of Western history, ranging from ‘The Origins of Political Philosophy’ (Danielle Allen) to ‘Political Philosophy in a Globalizing World’ (Terry Nardin). The chapters are thematic, rather than focused on individual thinkers, and although they are too short to probe deeply, the section provides a valuable conspectus of arguments and traditions over a huge time span. Part III comprises nineteen chapters on ‘Themes’, including most of the traditional concerns of political theory (sovereignty, rights, freedom, equality, citizenship, democracy, etc.). Again, the overall standard of the chapters is high and they can serve as handy overviews for advanced students and non-specialists.

The final section, ‘Non-Western Perspectives’, warrants just three chapters, covering Confucian, Muslim and Hindu political thought. This section appears tokenistic: it would be better to dedicate a separate volume to the rich variety of non-Western political thinking, allowing it to be explored in the same amount of depth as the Western tradition. While the authors make a valiant effort to discuss complex traditions in a few thousand words, there is a mismatch between the detail that they can include and that of the other chapters in the volume. Moreover, huge swathes of the world are left uncovered – what of African or Latin American political thought, for example? Despite this shortcoming, the Oxford Handbook of the History of Political Philosophy is a useful reference work.

The Oxford Handbook of Political Philosophy, by contrast, is a shorter, tighter volume. Its coherence comes at a cost – it is less a survey of contemporary political philosophy than of a particular (albeit very prominent) mode of it, namely Anglo-American normative philosophy. To give a sense of its scope, none of the
following merits entries in the index: Adorno, Agamben, Arendt, Badiou, Bourdieu, Butler, Deleuze, Derrida, Foucault, Gadamer, Laclau, Mouffe, Oakeshott, Rancière, Rorty, Schmitt, Shklar, Spivak, Virilo, Wolin or Žižek. Habermas is the lone critical theorist considered worthy of mention. With the exception of a chapter on Marxism, the work falls squarely within the horizon of recent Anglo-American liberalism. The editor, David Estlund, justifies the limited scope by distinguishing between ‘political philosophy’ and ‘political theory’, the former practised largely in philosophy departments and the latter in political science departments. While there is something to this sociological observation, it hardly exhausts the issue (after all, several of his own contributors are based in politics departments, while many of the above list of absentees were or are card-carrying philosophers), and is ultimately arbitrary. Despite its admirable quality, the volume does not come close to offering a survey or a ‘snapshot’ (in Estlund’s words) of contemporary political philosophy. It would perhaps be more accurately named ‘The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Anglophone Liberal Philosophy’.

Within its own terms, though, this is an excellent book. Estlund has assembled a stellar group of theorists, many of them leaders in the sub-field (including A. John Simmons, Philip Pettit, Gerald Gaus, Elizabeth Anderson, Samuel Freeman, Jeremy Waldron, Allen Buchanan and Jeff McMahan). The volume is divided into six sections and 22 chapters. Part I, ‘Classic Questions’, encompasses five chapters on equality, authority, freedom, justice and property. Part II dedicates just four chapters to ‘Approaches’, three of which are explicitly liberal: classical liberalism, the social contract, left-libertarianism and (as a single chapter) socialism and Marxism. Part III spans variations on the theme of democracy (four chapters), while Part IV consists of three chapters – on war, human rights and global justice – addressed to ‘The Globe’. Part V covers various kinds of (in)justice – historical, racial and gendered – and the lively ideal/non-ideal theory debate. The final section, ‘In Retrospect’, illustrates the scope of the volume by devoting two chapters to the writings of John Rawls and Robert Nozick, the figures whose intellectual legacies tower over, and help shape the parameters of, contemporary liberal political philosophy.

To get a sense of conflicting views of the subject, it is instructive to read Estlund’s volume alongside the much more pluralistic Oxford Handbook of Political Theory (edited by John Dryzek, Bonnie Honig and Anne Phillips). In doing so, we can see the internal conflicts between different approaches to the nature and scope of political thought manifested within the same Oxford University Press format.

Duncan Bell
(University of Cambridge)


Cécile Fabre here steers moral cosmopolitanism into relatively unfamiliar waters, applying its tenets to the field of just war theorising. After clarifying the cosmopolitan moral perspective and setting out a familiar case for sufficientist principles of global distributive justice, Fabre proceeds to subject a range of different war scenarios – one per chapter – to analysis, bearing in mind these commitments. In doing so, she arrives at a number of conclusions that diverge from orthodox just war theory. These include the moral impermissibility of killing some combatants and the permissibility of killing some non-combatants (ch. 2, ch. 7); the right for sub-state groups and indeed even individuals to wage war (ch. 4); and the qualified moral duty (not merely permission) to wage humanitarian war (ch. 5). Fabre’s arguments are meticulously constructed, and she adds colour by making reference to real-life historical examples, offsetting her frequent use of the ‘If A does X to V’ form of illustration.

Fabre’s most striking claim – that impoverished states (or individuals) could be justified in launching ‘subsistence wars’, killing others (even including, for example, employees of the World Bank) where the latter renege on their positive and/or negative cosmopolitan duties to the former (p. 124) – is tempered substantially, as she recognises, by the condition that any just war must have reasonable prospects of success. Other claims Fabre makes are admitted to have no practical import (p. 197). The book as a whole is framed as an investigation into the ‘deep morality’ of war, and not as an ethical handbook for military strategists.

While the book expressly claims as its target audience both cosmopolitan theorists and proponents of orthodox just war theory (who may not themselves be cosmopolitans), the latter will likely find her arguments...
easier to ignore than the former. Despite the fact that the chapter devoted to setting out a theory of cosmopolitan justice is some 50 pages long, it contains little that the informed reader will not have encountered – and taken a position on – already. Thus if one does not accept cosmopolitan principles prior to picking up the book, much of it will have little bite. On the other hand, cosmopolitans should welcome Fabre’s work in moving moral cosmopolitanism beyond its familiar preoccupations, and will find her conclusions much harder to reject. Indeed, given the challenging nature of those conclusions, the book functions as a barometer by which self-proclaimed cosmopolitans can measure the strength of their convictions.

Luke Ulaş  
(London School of Economics and Political Science)

The Political Philosophy of Alexander Hamilton  

This volume is one of a series on the ‘political philosophy’ of the ‘American Founders’, and as such imputes a ‘philosophy’ to each subject in the series, including Washington and Franklin. The author defends this claim implicitly by saying that the aim of political philosophy and theory is ‘to convey the truth of reality’ (p. 5), and that Hamilton’s focused and engaged intellect qualifies him for the philosophic level of discourse, especially with regard to human nature and its implications for political life.

Michael Federici makes a credible case for Hamilton as a ‘moral realist’ appreciative of the good and bad in all human beings, who factored this understanding into his constitutional and policy views, and into his general conception of politics as the art of the possible rather than a tool in the millennialist project for the progressive elimination of evil on earth. The author sees Hamilton as a defender of republican government for the United States, whose overriding aim was to make the system viable for as long as possible through policies of economic and military strength and unity. Important influences on Hamilton’s general views are attributed to Cicero, Plutarch, Augustine, Hume and Burke.

Federici quarrels with several well-known general interpretations of Hamilton’s project. Against Gerald Stourzh, he emphasises the Christian element in Hamilton’s general outlook; against Tom Pangle’s view of Hamilton as part of the modern liberal project, he notes the influence of Ciceronian thought, emphasising the compatibility of private property and civic virtue; and against J. G. A. Pocock, he tries to qualify the attribution of ‘Machiavellian’ to Hamilton’s outlook. On this last point, Federici is certainly correct to resist the epithet ‘amoralism’ in Hamilton’s case, but he misses a major sense in which Hamilton was ‘Machiavellian’ – the pursuit of constitutional longevity through expansive economic and military power, which was Machiavelli’s justification for recommending the Roman republic over the Spartan and Venetian. One might also have hoped for a more detailed account of Hamilton’s Walpolean monetary system (perhaps by building on the work of Forrest McDonald) as a major component of his vision for the United States.

This well-written book evinces a nuanced and complex grasp of the theory/practice relationship in its complex subject, and provides a welcome corrective to ideological interpretations of Hamilton’s views and policies. It will be useful to senior undergraduates, graduate students and professional researchers.

Wendell John Coats Jr  
(Connecticut College)

A Companion to Michael Oakeshott  

The publication of this Companion by Penn State Press is proof of the increasing recognition of Oakeshott’s philosophical work in recent years. The fact that another such product has been issued simultaneously by Cambridge University Press underscores this British thinker’s importance to the intellectual world. Yet were these two products to be taken as mere rivals, rather than complementary pieces of scholarship, Paul Franco and Leslie Marsh’s volume need not fear the comparison.

In their volume, Franco and Marsh assemble fifteen articles by leading experts in the field to cast a kaleidoscopic view on the ‘life and letters’ of Michael Oakeshott. Perhaps one should more precisely say that the Companion wishes to inform readers about Oakeshott’s multifarious philosophical achievements as...
well as his eccentric (and much less meritorious) love life, or so the focus of the unlikely biographical note at the beginning of the book (by Robert Grant) suggests. The articles that follow the introduction by the editors and the biographical note are organised in two parts. The first part deals with Oakeshott’s reflections on the practice of philosophy, morality and historical knowledge, as well as religious and aesthetic kinds of experience. The second part discusses his work on political philosophy and the history of political thought. Thus, the wide range of Oakeshott’s oeuvre is covered and, what is more, the quality of contributions is generally high.

Inevitably, not all interests can be wholly accommodated when assembling a collection on a prolific philosopher. For instance, readers will not find a succinct conspectus of Oakeshott’s political philosophy and the limits of his ideas, or its reception in the academic world. Also Oakeshott’s stance on economic policy is not addressed in great depth. (Leslie Marsh’s outstanding article on Oakeshott and F. A. Hayek primarily inquires into issues of cognitive science and the philosophy of mind.) Finally, though this is probably a virtue rather than a vice, the editors refrain from attempting to reconcile the partly diverging interpretations of the individual authors (p. 12). However, there is no doubt that the articles manage to acquaint the reader with Oakeshott’s philosophical achievements without being uncritical, and take the existing literature in several respects one step further. A Companion to Michael Oakeshott can therefore legitimately claim to serve as an authoritative guide to Oakeshott’s thought. It will be of great value to advanced scholars as well as students unfamiliar with his ideas.

Note

1 The Cambridge Companion to Oakeshott, ed. Efraim Podoksik.

Martin Beckstein
(University of Zurich)


This book offers a sophisticated and challenging argument for global egalitarianism, according to which we have a duty to eradicate not only absolute poverty but also relative disadvantage. As such it contributes to the growing literature in normative political philosophy on the question of global justice, and by convincingly defending heavily contested positions on several issues it makes not only an interesting contribution, but also a valuable one.

Pablo Gilabert pursues this argument in two stages. In the first part of the book, he defends the position that there exist duties of justice to eradicate global poverty. While this is not an uncommon position in the literature, the argument is distinctive in two ways. First, Gilabert bases his argument on a form of Scanlonian contractualism, requiring principles of justice to have ‘cosmopolitan justifiability’ (p. 10), and maintains that this requirement arises from the humanity of others, and not from any associative relation we might share with them. Second, he argues against the libertarian critiques of global justice (as well as certain advocates, e.g. Thomas Pogge) that duties of justice can be non-derivatively positive, requiring action and not only the avoidance of harm or rectification of past harm. In the second part of the book, Gilabert goes further to defend an argument for global egalitarianism on humanist premises. He thus challenges two prominent positions in the global justice literature: associativist accounts of justice, which limit the scope of justice to bounds of cultural, institutional or economic interaction; and relational accounts of equality, which demand only the absence of extreme inequality.

Perhaps the most innovative contribution of this book is its discussion of the place of feasibility in normative theory in general, and in the global justice debate in particular. Gilabert offers an enlightening conceptual map of feasibility concerns, which he considers essential to non-ideal theory. Here he provides nuanced discussions on the distinction between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ constraints of feasibility, the relevance of questions of stability and accessibility, and the idea of dynamic duties to expand the feasible set of political action. As the question of feasibility is often absent in contemporary normative philosophy, this is a helpful discussion which will hopefully serve as a basis for further research. Gilabert’s book is therefore a welcome contribution, which at the very least provides a well-argued challenge to the main positions in the literature.

Lior Erez
(University College London)

This work addresses the ‘modern impasse’ created by a culture of individualism and a multitude of institutional scandals in American life and politics: the ‘fundamental distrust of institutions’ (p. 11). Having set out the problem, Hugh Heclo argues that the view of institutions primarily as ‘barriers and weights that impede our personal journeys toward meaning’ (p. 35) is not only misplaced but dangerous. He argues that institutions are valuable, representing ‘inheritances of valued purpose with attendant rules and moral obligations ... [a] socially ordered grounding for human life’ (p. 38). Rejecting the general culture of anti-institutional absolute freedom, he argues that such a position in fact leaves us ‘perplexed, burdened, and looking for some fixed points of reference’ (p. 39). Although institutions can be enchanting, they also serve to enable. It is in this context that Heclo argues for ‘institutional thinking’.

The term institutional thinking constitutes a ‘respect in depth’ for institutions (p. 89). It is cast as a middle ground between ‘thinking in organizational or bureaucratic terms’ (p. 90) and utopianism, or revolutionary zeal. A ‘person thinking institutionally has entered into a pre-existing normative field’ (p. 98), ‘thoughtfully taking delivery of and using what has been handed down to you’ (p. 98). Second, tasks are ‘infus[ed] with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand’ (p. 101). Third, institutional thinking involves expanding one’s time horizons, with individuals ‘living an implicated life, always both inheriting and bequeathing’ (p. 109).

Heclo draws on a variety of current and historical examples to make his case, also utilising recurring sporting analogies. These methods make a book intended for a general and student readership relatively accessible, while the detail of the argument will be of interest to those heavily involved in the study or practice of politics. The work is very US-centric, and it is a shame that more connections were not made with developments in the rest of the world – though the book equally constitutes an excellent primer for the outsider on aspects of American political history.

A nagging doubt for this reader concerns the apparently inherently conservative nature of ‘thinking institutionally’. However, Heclo convincingly addresses many potential dangers of, and challenges to, his position (ch. 5), recognising that ‘to live in a world of nothing but institutional thinking would be a monstrosity’ (p. 183). Ultimately, Heclo’s argument for the ‘countercultural act’ (p. 181) of institutional thinking is in turn interesting, challenging and invigorating.

Harry Annison
(University of Oxford)


Bernard Williams notoriously remarked that, in their professional capacities, philosophers are not like scientists. Whereas scientists can always contribute useful data, philosophers risk simply getting in the way: blocking progress by generating noise and misunderstanding. Accordingly, only those who are very good at philosophy should bother doing it; only they will make worthwhile contributions.

How might Williams have received this collection? It is difficult to say. On the one hand these essays are of extremely high quality, and there can be no doubting the philosophical prowess of the (sometimes highly prestigious) contributors. On the other, the collection is organised specifically around ‘themes’: on individual issues and ideas found in Williams’ work but explored separately by each author. And there tensions arise. With the exception of Gerald Lang’s discussion of ‘speciesism’, these essays all centre on what might be called Williams’ middle period: his writings from the late 1970s and 1980s, principally Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy and the papers collected in Moral Luck. Contributors generally focus on specific passages or papers from Williams, before developing their own preferred position. This sometimes leads to striking lacunae. Brad Hooker and Philip Pettit, for example, seek to defend consequentialist ethical theory from Williams’ criticisms, yet do not address his most forceful claim: that because ethical theory cannot understand the interplay of theory and practice, it is doomed to incoherence. More generally, the emphasis on individual themes generates little sense of Williams’ overarching ambitions. With the important exception of Susan Wolf’s considerations on having ‘one thought too many’, Williams’ understanding of the ‘morality system’ receives

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little attention, despite being a central concern connecting his ideas on reasons, moral luck, moral knowledge and ethical theory – the principal themes around which this collection is organised.

Furthermore, the overall tendency of this collection is orthogonal to Williams’ urging in his later work: that philosophy be practised as a ‘humanistic discipline’ concerned with the breadth of human knowledge and experience, rather than prioritising refined technical analysis in a scientistic mode. That claim, of course, is itself highly controversial. Those who disagree with Williams’ vision of what philosophy should be like will most likely receive these essays doubly well: as high-quality analyses of specific topics, originally raised by Williams but appropriately singled out for detailed examination. Those who hope for a more humanistic discipline, however, may feel that something important is missing.

Paul Sagar
(University of Cambridge)


Jamie Terence Kelly argues in this work that ‘just as in economics and law, normative democratic theory must begin to pay attention to the picture of human choice described by empirical psychology’ (p. 1). Specifically, the text focuses on judgement-based theories in which citizens are understood to be seeking the common good. Kelly is anxious to point out, however, that the ‘behavioural approach’ referred to in this book is not that usually associated with Skinner et al. and ‘behaviouralism’. Rather, Kelly takes for granted humans’ ‘internal mental states’ – as do many psychologists, economists and other social scientists – and focuses unreflectively on their implications for democracy.

Thus this brief book describes a ‘behavioral approach to normative democratic theory’ (p. 1). Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the role of ‘framing effects’ and their largely negative role in democratic decision making. Chapter 2 organises extant theories of democracy according to the author’s judgement taxonomy. Chapter 3 – the core of the book – makes a case for the key advantage of the behavioural approach to democratic theory, namely as ‘a way to reconcile normative claims about democracy with troubling empirical evidence regarding the epistemic abilities of citizens’ (p. 4). In chapter 4 the theory is applied to minimalist and maximal theories of democracy, and finally chapter 5 considers the institutional implications of the behavioural approach to democratic theory on media, constitutional review and public education.

Political scientists who are sympathetic to empirical approaches to democracy may find Kelly’s ‘behavioural approach’ theoretically promising. However, those familiar with the criticisms of social science by thinkers including Peter Winch will inevitably question the practical value (and even the possibility) of a behavioural theory of democracy for improving democratic practice in specific cultural contexts – let alone generally. And affecting democratic practice is ultimately what Kelly seeks to accomplish. But despite the author’s attempt to ‘lessen the gap that currently exists between philosophical theories of democracy and practical problems regarding the design of institutions in democratic societies’ (p. 124), the larger issues of democracy as a human practice and its practical relation – if any – to political theory and meta-theory are problematically absent from Kelly’s otherwise recommendable book.

Overall, Framing Democracy is well written and logically organised. Scholars and graduate students interested in the literature of democratic theory will find much to debate in this thoughtful monograph.

Jeffrey D. Hilmer
(Independent Scholar)


Freedom after the Critique of Foundations is a rigorous work of political theory with due diligence paid to theoretical consistency and ontological clarity. Alexandros Kioupkiolis sets out a philosophical and political perspective as profound as it is intricate. To achieve its aim, the book’s argument is split into three parts, each of which identifies and appraises one of three paradigms of freedom: essentialist, liberal and agonist.

In the first and second parts, through insightful discussions of figures such as Marx, Kant and J. S. Mill,
Kioupkiolis demonstrates how both essentialist and liberal strands of thought have at their heart a determinism, related to conceptions of the subject, which fixes and contracts the space for freedom. Set against this, in the third section Kioupkiolis dismisses objective ontological foundations and draws upon the work of Cornelius Castoriadis to argue for a conception of freedom as agonistic self-creation – whereby ‘freedom bursts beyond the limits of essential closure and negative liberty’ (p. 7) – concluding with a brief overview of ‘contemporary experiments [such as those which flowed from the Argentine riots in December 2001 and the Greek riots in December 2008] which offer collective embodiments of this understanding of freedom’ (p. 227).

In arguing that Castoriadis’ work provides an important source for contemporary radical emancipatory politics, Kioupkiolis achieves his aim. The only query I would raise is his failure to address the critique notably made by Yannis Stavrakakis in The Lacanian Left: Psychoanalysis, Theory, Politics, which is cited herein, that there is a contradiction at the heart of Castoriadis’ theory of subjectivity due to his notion of a monadic radical imagination which contains a continuing ‘first matrix of [pre-social] meaning’, post-socialisation. With the monadic psyche at the heart of Castoriadis’ autonomous subject – and thus Kioupkiolis’ own theory also – it would have been helpful to hear the latter’s response to this apparent flaw, beyond noting that Castoriadis’ theory of subjectivity ‘features highly contentious elements, such as the notion of a primordial self-enclosed monad but that this is critically valuable for the cause of freedom’ (p. 113).

This book belongs to a growing engagement with Castoriadis, and is an excellent work in its own right which will hopefully find the readership it deserves. The agonistic perspective that Kioupkiolis proposes involves, along the way, his critical engagement with the arguments of other contemporary thinkers such as Laclau, Marchart and Žižek, and therefore represents vital and essential reading for all those interested in agonist politics and the question of freedom.

Note

David S. Moon
(University of Bath)


‘Debt creation’, Maurizio Lazzarato argues – ‘the creation and development of the power relation between debtors and creditors’ – constitutes ‘the strategic heart of neoliberal politics’ (p. 25). And it is from within the debt economy that a new subjective figure has emerged: homo debitor, or ‘indebted man’.

For Lazzarato, the debtor–creditor relationship now encompasses and cuts across all others. Workers, the unemployed, consumers and citizens have all become debtors. It is a particularly insidious power relation: exercised ‘neither through repression nor ... ideology’, but rather along the lines of ‘Foucault’s last definition of power’ where ‘an action is carried out on another action, an action that keeps the person over which power is exercised “free”’ (p. 31). This freedom, though, is limited to choices as to how one works or consumes ‘compatible with reimbursement’ (p. 31).

Providing a genealogy of indebted man, Lazzarato draws on three primary resources. The first is Nietzsche’s ‘Second Essay’ in The Genealogy of Morals on the inscription of a particular morality in subjects – through the debtor–creditor relation – making them ‘capable of promising, someone able to stand guarantor for himself’ (p. 40). Its function is to neutralise the risk inherent in time: enabling (economic) ‘confidence’ in the future and ‘reducing the uncertainty of the behavior of the governed’ (p. 46). The second resource is Marx’s own (Nietzschean) ‘Comments on James Mill’, which argues that the alienation of commodity fetishism – where relations among people become those among things – is not undone by credit’s supposed reinstating of human relations based on ‘trust’. Rather, it completes alienation ‘since it is the ethical work constitutive of the self and the community that is exploited’ (p. 57). Third, Deleuze and Guattari’s appropriation from both Marx and Nietzsche in Anti-Oedipus is invoked and extended to develop a ‘non-economic reading of the economy’, stressing the imbalance of power in exchange relations ‘inherent’ in ‘the economy of debt’ (pp. 72–3).

The book’s main apparent shortcoming is perhaps unsurprising: its difficulty in invoking ‘forms of struggle ... as effective at bringing things to a halt’ in the debt
Certainly, as Lazzarato argues, this would not only mean organising defaults, but combating the ‘debt morality’ that ‘holds us hostage’ (p. 164). It is likely, however, to be precisely the forms of subjection and subjugation of indebted man – and woman – so vividly described that present the greatest obstacles to anyone’s so doing.

Ben Trott
(Duke University)


Brian Leiter’s work asks whether there is any reason to tolerate religion, and answers in the negative. The answer to such a general question depends significantly on how religion is defined, and the book’s critical response rests on Leiter’s tepid understanding of religion.

The author’s definition of toleration is familiar: toleration is ‘putting up’ with a view or conduct by Y that X disapproves of, while X has the ability to influence or change such conduct or belief. Leiter distinguishes between principled toleration and the practice of toleration that can be supported by pragmatic considerations. He is interested in the former.

The specific question that interests him is whether there can be a reason to tolerate religion. This question assumes that religion can be distinguished from secular beliefs and conduct. This may not be simple, as the definition of religion that Leiter offers is any belief system that is insulated from evidence, issues categorical commands and provides existential consolation (p. 53). He does not see any reason to tolerate any view or conduct that is grounded in these tendencies. Translated into practical considerations (ch. 5), this view means that, in cases where rules of general applicability clash with the religious practices of at least some citizens, no exemptions should be given. This is a familiar view, dating back to Locke’s Letters on Toleration and, more recently, advanced in Brian Barry’s Culture and Equality.

Leiter’s conclusion is not only grounded in considerations of equality or impartiality, but in his questionable assumptions about religion. In this regard, there is some novelty in his book (especially the fifth chapter which introduces various interesting distinctions in the oft-debated issue of religious exemptions from generally applicable laws). However, his definition of religion is oddly incomplete and stilted. For one, the description – that religions issue categorical commands – is incomplete at best. In Judaism, for example, the entire oral tradition demonstrates continual interpretation and reinterpretation, revealing the autonomy of religious persons which sits uncomfortably with categorical commands. Christianity and Islam doubtless have similar phenomena. Furthermore, Leiter’s definition does not include God. But this would puzzle many members of monotheistic religions, and weaken the definition in losing what many members of such religions would recognise as their religion. As the argument of the book rests, to a significant degree, on the unattractive nature of the phenomenon defined by Leiter as religion, the problems of this definition bear important consequences for the argument as a whole.

Nahshon Perez
(Bar Ilan University, Israel)


Democracy is considered to be the most legitimate form of governance as it provides people with the freedom to choose their representatives and decide the way in which they would like to be ruled. With the ‘Third Wave’ of global democratisation, many of the previously authoritarian and communist states were forced by civil society to make transitions to democratic forms of governance. The Third Wave of democratisation was essentially concerned with the ‘procedural’ forms of democracy and was primarily a result of political process and choices of a variety of civil society actors which played important roles in dismantling the bureaucratic authoritarian structures and establishing political democracy. Civil society thus came to be considered as an important agent of democratisation. Following this, scholars like Ernest Gellner declared: ‘no civil society no democracy’. 
However, some scholars have criticized the Third Wave of democratisation for its role in spreading capitalism and neo-liberal markets. Other scholars have rejected the Third Wave theorists’ claim of civil society as a democratic force. Several studies have recently shown that civil society may not always contribute positively towards democracy promotion. It is in this context that C. B. Macpherson’s *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy* and Kathleen Blee’s *Democracy in the Making* provide significant insights into the relationships between liberal democracy, the market and civil society.

The central questions in Macpherson’s book are: what is liberal democracy and what are its limits and prospects? What kind of relationship does liberal democracy share with individualism, capitalism and market freedom? Following a historical analysis of the life and times of liberal democracy from ancient times until today, Macpherson discovered that the liberal position has very often been associated with capitalist principles. However, he argues that ‘the fact that liberal values grew up in capitalist market societies is not in itself a reason why the central ethical principle of liberalism ... need always be confined to such societies’ (p. 2). For him, the ethical principle of liberal democracy ‘has out-grown its capitalist envelope and can now live as well or better without it’ (p. 2). For a proper continuance of liberal democracy, argues Macpherson, it is important to downgrade the market assumptions and upgrade the equal right to self-development. In exploring the limits and possibilities of liberal democracy in recent times, Macpherson discusses three existing models: (1) protective democracy – which protects people from ‘rapacious’ government; (2) development democracy – the means of individual self-development; and (3) equilibrium democracy – which regulates competition for power among elites. In addition, he proposes a fourth model to make democracy participatory by creating widespread opportunity for citizen participation other than through political parties (p. 114).

Macpherson’s participatory democracy model goes beyond the arena of elections, political parties and voting and advocates the equal right to self-development in the arena of civil society. It is in this context that Blee’s *Democracy in the Making* investigates the relationship between civil society activism and democracy. Based on an intensive study of more than 60 emerging grassroots activist groups in Pittsburgh in the US between 2003 and 2007, Blee explores how grassroots activism shapes democracy ‘beneath and beyond the state’ (p. 4). The central question that she asks is about ‘how emerging activist groups work and what prevents them from working better’ (p. 9). Addressing this, Blee emphasises the processual nature of activism (instead of institutional or structural) and argues that although ‘grassroots groups are an important source for democratic renewal’ (p. 138), ‘not all grassroots civic activism is democratizing’ (p. 4). Grassroots activism can move decidedly towards undemocratic goals, such as efforts to restrict the political rights of immigrants or prisoners (p. 4). Despite this, Blee is hopeful. For her, the paths of action and interpretation in activist groups, even those that steer in non-democratic directions, are created by members. They are not inevitable outcomes of structural conditions. Hence, they are neither automatic nor unchangeable (p. 138). Considering this, Blee concludes that it is not just creating activist groups and getting people to participate that will strengthen democracy; what is more important is that activists also need to take steps to ensure that their groups fulfil their democratic potential. Grassroots activism can only strengthen democracy when it nurtures a broad sense of possibility (p. 140).

Macpherson’s book provides an excellent historical and philosophical account of the various models of liberal democracy, whereas Blee’s book, supported by numerous empirical examples, discusses how the life of liberal democracy is transformed by civil society activism. Both these books are well argued and make significant contributions to the literature on democracy and civil society. They are a delight to read and should be recommended to students of political science and historical, comparative sociology.

Sarbeswar Sahoo
(Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, India and Max-Weber-Kolleg, Erfurt, Germany)


*Living Together as Equals* does not focus on the rights and entitlements of citizens but, as its subtitle indicates,
on their duties and responsibilities. The reason for doing so is that comparatively little attention has been paid to the precise content and basis of the demands of citizenship. The result is a sparkling book in which theory and practice are proficiently intertwined by adopting an approach that takes into account the merits of both ideal and non-ideal theory. The book consists of two parts. In the first (theoretical) part Andrew Mason explores three conceptions of justice (all as a moral ideal), that is, the justice account, the common good account and the equal membership account. Besides giving a thorough discussion of each of them, he argues that: (1) the common good account is a less developed version of the equal membership account; and (2) the justice and equal membership accounts complement each other rather than being in competition with each other.

Whereas the equal membership account could be regarded as redundant, Mason clearly shows that it is of primary value when at first sight there does not seem to have been any form of injustice although there is unmistakably a failure to treat others as equals (as in the case when someone prefers not to sit next to someone from a minority). The other way around, the justice account might be more comprehensive in cases where the equal membership account focuses too exclusively on citizens and loses sight of resident aliens. How both accounts relate exactly to each other depends on the perspective one takes, which also means that they can come into conflict with each other.

In the second part of the book Mason illustrates and concretises this by means of six different questions: is there a duty (1) to avoid state dependency; (2) to share domestic burdens; (3) not to seek or gain unfair advantages; (4) to offer only public reasons; (5) to integrate; and (6) to act as a global or ecological citizen? The subtle, lucid and fine discussions of each of these instances in light of the previous, theoretical meditations on the demands of citizenship unmistakably constitute the strength of this study. The more theoretical and more practice-oriented parts are not separate entities, but clearly complement each other. Mason’s book is a fine example of high-quality political theory which bridges the gap between theory and practice and between ideal and non-ideal theory.

Erik De Bom
(University of Leuven and Erasmus University of Rotterdam)


Given his prodigious output over more than 50 years, and the tremendous appeal of his collaborative project with Michael Hardt, it comes as a surprise that it took until 2012 for the first monograph analysis of the philosopher and political activist, Antonio Negri, to appear in English.

That wait has been worthwhile. The bar has been set very high for any future considerations of this innovative and compelling theorist. Timothy Murphy is ideally placed to produce a detailed and authoritative account of Negri, having edited a two-volume commentary on his work, introduced and translated a number of books, and collated and edited selections of Negri’s writings.

Negri’s prolificacy is readily apparent from his publication of over 60 books, and Murphy displays an intricate knowledge of these, drawing on many yet to be translated into English. Most notable here are Negri’s early works on the philosophy of law in Kant and Hegel half a century ago, alongside his consideration of the early nineteenth-century poet, Giacomo Leopardi.

Beyond such erudition, the outstanding feature of this monograph is Murphy’s portrayal of Negri as a Renaissance humanist, a portrayal that serves to orient the entire account. Murphy views Negri as continuing this project of invention, construction, accumulation and freedom which was initially instigated some seven centuries previously. Murphy writes: ‘Thus the unfulfilled promise of Renaissance humanism, an alternate or counter-modernity, is what draws together Negri’s diverse philosophical monographs, his organisational writings and his militancy into a coherent project of revolutionary transformation’ (p. 14).

This portrayal rests on presenting Renaissance humanism as complex and multifaceted, and aligning Negri with Giovanni Pico della Mirandola’s account that questioned the more widespread essentialism associated with the Renaissance, instead considering human subjectivity as replete with the potential of construction and reconstruction. It is this open process of subjectivation that is key to many of Negri’s notable conceptual innovations, such as constituent power and the multitude.
Murphy’s orienting depiction of Negri as a Renaissance humanist is a timely intervention into current debates regarding political subjects after ‘the death of the subject’ announced by post-structuralism and anti-humanism, which have subsequently provoked the return of the subject, via post-humanism.

While Murphy does provide critical comments, this is a sympathetic account that is careful to elucidate Negri’s complex philosophical manoeuvres in as simple a manner as possible. As such, this book will be warmly received throughout the various levels of academia in the humanities.

Andy Knott
(University of Brighton)


Saul Newman has assembled a unique and valuable collection of essays on the political thinker Max Stirner. More akin to a collection of snapshots than a portrait, the contributors to this volume reveal Stirner to be a complicated and original political thinker. This is contrary to the oft-cited caricature of Stirner as the obsessive advocate of radical ‘egoism’.

Newman’s introduction primes the reader for an encounter with Stirner that successfully illuminates the under-appreciated influence he exerts upon the history of Western political thought. Furthermore, Newman maintains that the essays in the volume reveal Stirner’s contemporary relevance; specifically that his political thinking ‘makes possible a radical rethinking of key political categories – the subject, agency, sovereignty, universalism, freedom and ethics – thus opening the way for alternative forms of political action’ (p. 10).

The book engages Stirner thematically: historical context, key works, themes and debates and contemporary relevance. David Leopold presents a concise overview of Stirner’s ‘solitary’ life, while Ruth Kinna’s contribution shows how Stirner’s ideas have been used and abused by critics of anarchism. Riccardo Baldissone’s insightful, if dense, essay details the ways in which Stirner’s texts have been deployed by other thinkers and, moreover, how Stirner also used texts for his own ends. Stirner himself makes an appearance in chapter 4, via a heretofore unpublished essay, in which he evaluates the reception of his The Ego and Its Own. Paul Thomas’ lucid chapter highlights the significant role Stirner’s ideas play in Marx’s attack on anarchism. Widukind de Ridder utilises Stirner to prompt a rethinking of the concepts of power, essentialism and subjectivity. Kathy Ferguson’s essay ‘plunders’ Stirner for ideas useful in ‘radical critique’ (p. 167), while the final chapter – Newman again – emphasises the utility of Stirner’s thinking for furthering contemporary debate regarding ‘voluntary servitude’.

Max Stirner is not, however, the ideal starting place for the Stirner curious – most chapters are aimed at a very specific political theory-oriented audience; several chapters are quite thick with theory vocabulary. And the rather bold claim that Stirner will prompt ‘new forms of political action’ (p. 10) is, perhaps, overly optimistic. Nevertheless, this volume succeeds in demonstrating that Stirner’s political thought is richer than is generally assumed and clearly of relevance to contemporary political theory. Scholars and students unfamiliar and familiar with Stirner’s political thought are encouraged to (re)consider Stirner by way of this exceptional collection.

Jeffrey D. Hilmer
(Linfield College, Oregon)


In her clearly written and thoroughly argued book, Cara Nine engages with a question that has only recently received significant attention from political theorists and philosophers: how should we best conceptualise territorial rights? Embedded in this question are issues regarding the who (what agent is the proper bearer of territorial rights?), what (what set of claims are included in territorial rights?) and why (the normative justification for territorial rights).

The first half of the book details Nine’s concept of and justification for territorial rights, both generally and in particular instances. Utilising a natural law theory approach supplemented by capabilities theory, Nine argues that territorial rights are a cluster of rights held by a collective in order to satisfy the basic needs of the collective within a geographical region. To account for particular claims of territorial rights, Nine employs Lockean values of desert, efficiency and autonomy.
The second half of the book deals with possible concerns one might have with territorial rights. Chapter 5 argues against the objection that national borders are morally arbitrary, and thus unjustified. Chapter 6 deals with the question of jurisdiction and ownership over resource rights within a territory. Chapter 7 relates territorial rights to broader debates in global justice. Chapter 8 investigates how the Lockean proviso can ground a territorial claim made by ecological refugee states.

Nine makes a number of intriguing and well-articulated points. Of particular note is her emphasis on jurisdictional authority as the primary (and necessary) incident of territorial rights, rather than ownership rights. This distinction gives her leverage against cosmopolitan criticisms of territorial rights claims, as she convincingly argues that there is a special relationship arising from the value of self-determination between a people and their territory.

While the book touches on most of the key questions, I wish the author had spoken more on the interaction between territorial rights and how utilising them affects foreigners. This lacuna is generated by Nine’s focus on the function of territorial rights as the satisfaction of the basic needs of a collective. However, she notes that included in the moral imperative of territorial rights is a minimum standard of justice which is not only domestically oriented, but also internationally oriented, including ‘standards of good conduct in the international sphere’ (p. 49). A more in-depth exploration of this issue may turn out to be a way in which cosmopolitanism creeps back into the picture.

Harrison P. Frye
(University of Virginia)


The authors of this book present a conception which according to them renders the essence of the current state of politics. The argument underpinning these reflections is a belief that political leaders play a crucial role in modern representative democracies. This is due to the fact that bonds between voters and political parties have diminished, mass media coverage of politics is more concerned with leaders than ideas, executive power is being wielded by narrow groups of policy makers and, last but not least, political leaders have been carrying increasing clout in the international arena. The authors shrewdly observe that approaching the issue from the angle of leader-centric trends is not a novel one. They rightly indicate the ideas of Max Weber and Joseph Schumpeter as the forerunners of such an approach.

The eponymous statement is presented in the framework of the theory of democracy. The theoretical model of leader democracy is featured while determining the characteristics of the described tendency. The authors refer to other existing theories as well as attempting to extrapolate and consider the alternative future of democracy viewed from the perspective of conclusions drawn. Hence, the contents of the book are attractive to those who are interested in the discourse on modern democracy and the transformations that it undergoes.

Jan Pakulski and András Körösenyi determine and present convincingly the premises substantiating their thesis. Their book is of considerable value owing to clear development, their ability to formulate synthetic statements and especially to their conclusions of merit. The book appears to be a well thought out argument in the debate on the current state and future of democracy. One has, however, to note that reading it requires a degree of proficiency in the issues described. The conclusions drawn refer to a broad context which presupposes a certain level of learning in the reader. Given the fact that the language and reasoning are quite sophisticated the book is aimed at an experienced scholar rather than a reader commencing his or her study of democracy. The drawback of the book seems to be a lack of reference to the theory of political leadership mentioned in the title of the book. Summing up, it could be claimed that the arguments are plausible. The book is clearly written and well structured and the conclusions are noteworthy. Consequently, it is a highly valuable book which deserves to be recommended.

Maciej Hartlński
(University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland)


A scholar can hardly be better employed than in destroying fashionable opinions. In his ground-breaking
and ambitious book, Nahshon Perez provides a compelling case against intergenerational redress. Weaving a strong argumentation with straightforward clarity and attentiveness to opposing positions, Perez argues that individuals (born after a past wrong has ended and all direct wrongdoers and victims have passed away) should not be expected to bear material costs related to past wrongs. Not only because, aside from very few exceptions, arguments in favour of intergenerational redress are unconvincing, but also because individuals born after a wrong has ended have a right to a clean slate.

Freedom from Past Injustices opposes a majority of published works on the topic and is, to the best of my knowledge, the only full academic book to advance a case against intergenerational redress at length. The book contains five chapters. The first chapter provides the groundwork and basic definitions of central concepts such as past wrongs, compensation and restitution. Chapter 2 examines Parfit’s non-identity problem (if one’s existence is causally connected to a past wrong, one cannot claim to be harmed by it, therefore nullifying any claim for reparations). Chapter 3 analyses the difference between compensation and restitution. Chapter 4 examines various notions of collective responsibility. Finally, chapter 5 deals with forward-looking considerations for reparations (usually seeking the improvement in relations between communities or nation states), and examines the famous Maria Altmann art restitution case as an example of a justified restitution claim.

One especially insightful argument is the author’s distinction between compensation – returning a victim to a situation he or she would have enjoyed had the wrong never occurred – and restitution – nullifying unjust enrichment – a distinction that proves crucial for claims for intergenerational reparations for past wrongs. In such cases, the identity of those unjustly enriched is known, yet that of those who should bear the cost of compensation is not; for in past wrongs all the wrongdoers have died.

Well aware of Jasper’s famous idea of metaphysical guilt, Perez neatly avoids the simplistic arguments linking metaphysical and moral guilt. Instead, he suggests, metaphysical guilt is better left for the privacy of one’s soul since its judgement is for God alone. Nevertheless, the diversity of objections to intergenerational redress developed in his book echo the biblical rejection of lumping together wrongdoers with non-wrongdoers: ‘In those days, they shall no longer say, “Parents have eaten sour grapes and children’s teeth are blunted” ’ (Jeremiah 31: 29).

Yuval Jobani
(Tel Aviv University)


The overall aim of this book is to show the contribution of institutional theory in the study of urban governance. The author contends that urban politics matters because it is at this level that most of the decisions affecting our daily lives are made, and he sets out a range of potential functions for local authorities – efficient delivery of services, inclusion of stakeholders, economic growth, wealth redistribution – and assesses the extent to which a particular function is reflected in approaches to governance: to what extent does the institutional framework of local government reflect these functions and goals?

To explore this, Jon Pierre identifies four models of urban governance: the Managerial City, Corporatist Governance, Pro-growth Governance and Welfare Governance. These different institutional frameworks shape and constrain local political actors in their objectives and behaviours. As the author asserts, ‘The institutionalization of political priorities becomes a self-reinforcing process; institutions put in place to pursue a particular objective will create and reproduce that objective as a political and social norm, which becomes exceedingly difficult to challenge in political debate’ (p. 142). Furthermore, two general themes are discussed within these four institutional possibilities: the effects of globalisation on the objectives of the cities and the extent to which democracy is or can be influenced by the institutional framework of urban governance.

Pierre acknowledges that this analysis of urban governance is mainly theoretical. The empirical base of the research is limited beyond brief reference to some case studies and there is little discussion of how the governance models identified could be used to assess governance approaches in policy practice. The author acknowledges that some cities may have diverging objectives that cut across the four models. However, he does not explore in depth the scope for interaction.
between models, as city functions evolve over time, or potential tensions within models result from competing objectives. Nevertheless, the models provide an interesting framework for analysing urban politics and explaining ‘governability gaps’ (p. 153). Overall, the book offers a thoughtful analysis of four different models of urban governance, drawing on the main theories and up-to-date developments in the field. As such, it provides a good introduction for students of urban governance while setting out models that could be used as a framework for future empirical study.

Dorine Boumans (University of Strathclyde)


This book does two things: it discusses and critically reflects upon the theoretical developments in the field of utopian studies over the past 30 years, and it uses this enriched theoretical vocabulary to explore the utopian dimensions of a range of contemporary social and political phenomena.

The first chapter skilfully guides us through the conceptual proliferation that has occurred as theorists have sought to deepen and broaden the concept of utopia – the coining of the concepts of the dystopian, the critical utopian, the anti-utopian, the anti-anti-utopian, the critical dystopian and so forth – which has enabled a much finer-grained analysis to be developed. Armed with this upgraded conceptual apparatus, Lucy Sargisson proceeds to provide fascinating utopian analyses of religious fundamentalism, feminism and gender, sexuality, climate change, attitudes to nature, intentional communities, architecture, computer gaming and cloning, cyborgs and robots. A huge array of texts, artefacts, institutions and practices are interrogated to reveal the nature of their utopian or dystopian dimensions, ranging from the fantastic buildings of contemporary Dubai to the Second Life computer game, and from post-apocalypse fiction to New Zealand green communities.

Throughout the study there is both classification and judgement; the form, function and content of these utopian phenomena is delineated, but Sargisson is at pains to make normative assessments, as in her critique of the ‘hierarchical utopianism’ of Dubai (p. 160), and of the perfectionist utopianism to be found in some religious currents. This dislike of what Sargisson sees as the authoritarianism and closure of perfectionist utopias is a long-standing feature of her work (though one not shared by all theorists of the utopian). Sargisson’s normative analysis of utopian tendencies in the modern world brings to mind the methodological intent of Ernst Bloch’s search for ‘concrete utopias’ in the society of his time, the seams of utopian gold in the everyday and the extraordinary.

Inevitably, some readers will not be entirely happy about the specific areas covered, and those omitted, and Sargisson herself notes the absence of coverage on democracy and the economy. Her choice of topics grows out of her previous scholarly work, and her sense of what are genuinely pressing issues; Bloch took three large volumes in The Principle of Hope to be more encyclopedic, and still penned a highly personal and idiosyncratic work. In short, this is a valuable contribution to the literature of utopian studies, written with great clarity, and with a strong authorial voice that is genuinely engaging.

Vincent Geoghegan (Queen’s University Belfast)


Foucault and the Politics of Hearing is concerned with challenging the view that, for Michel Foucault, sound, voice and auditory perception (what Lauri Siisiäinen refers to as the ‘auditory-sonorous’) was an insignificant issue, particularly in comparison to sight, in the operation of power. This being the case, the fundamental argument this book propounds is that Foucault had an interest in the auditory-sonorous throughout his intellectual career, and that the value that he gave it in terms of utilisation for power was not negligible. The book also focuses on establishing further potential for understanding sound through a Foucauldian lens; that is to say, beyond Foucault’s own thought explicitly.

Siisiäinen analyses Foucault’s work chronologically, this chronology being split into three parts. The first part concerns Foucault’s thinking in the 1960s, and likewise the second and third parts concern his thought in the 1970s and 1980s. Demonstrated by a reading of
various works by Foucault at each juncture, the prevalence of sound in Foucault’s historical analyses is established.

As a commentary and augmentation of Foucault’s thought, it is an advanced text which relies upon prior knowledge of Foucault’s work. This book would thus be of use to those wishing to augment or further their understanding of Foucault.

Largely, the author accomplishes his goals. Clear accounts are given of points where Foucault discusses sound in terms of its use in the operation of power, thus refuting the notion that sound for Foucault was insignificant. Moreover, the author can be praised for analysing lesser-known works by Foucault: first, in the name of good scholarship, but more importantly in this case to establish further that sound for Foucault is not neglected. The final chapter can be commended in particular for adding to the literature surrounding parhesis, of which currently there is not a great deal.

Siisiäinen can, however, be criticised for overemphasising the importance of sound in Foucault’s work. Foucault did not focus on sound in his analysis of the panopticon, for instance – arguably Foucault thus thought that sight was of far greater importance than sound in the exercise of disciplinary power. However, the general point of argument is strong and indeed plausible: that readings of Foucault have often omitted sound in favour of sight, whereas Foucault himself did not totally omit the former. Thus, for anybody with an already established understanding of Foucault, this well-written and well-researched text should be an interesting read.

Ed Wright
(University of Nottingham)


This book offers a systematic and methodical introduction to the concept of global governance. Timothy Sinclair’s aim is to discuss the meaning and importance of the concept. In the first chapter, he presents a brief history of global governance as being one of continuity. It emerged at the end of the Cold War as a pragmatic idea focused on outcomes in opposition to the prevailing idea of institutional processes as the organising principle of international relations. In the following chapters, Sinclair develops six approaches to global governance (institutionalism, transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, hegemonism, feminism and rejectionism), extrapolating their implications, evaluating their strengths and weaknesses and outlining the future development of the concept.

Even if arguing for incremental changes, the first three approaches are traditional supporters of the process of globalisation. Institutionalism focuses on international organisations and their potential to manage the problems raised by globalisation. Transnationalism adds to the levels of analysis of institutionalism, acknowledging the concerns and interests of global civil society as inputs to more legitimate policy choices; while cosmopolitans intend to change the mechanisms to deal with problems derived from globalisation by emphasising democratic procedures.

The last three approaches are much more critical of the globalisation process, paving the way for radical changes or simply denying the process. Inspired by Marxism, hegemonists suggest that global governance reflects socio-economic structures of exploitation and inequality that dominate the world. Focusing on the gender divide, feminists criticise global governance from the ground level of exploitative social relations. Finally, rejectionists simply reject the secular and capitalist world order upon which the very concept of global governance is dependent.

The originality of the book lies in Sinclair’s engaging interpretation of the six approaches. He formulates simple and yet critical questions to be asked when grasping the main premises of these approaches. Moreover, he presents hypothetical vignettes involving two families (the American Mason family and the Indian Patel family) to illustrate the differences in views and the concrete implications of these differences. Conditioned by their particular circumstances, they will react in different ways to current issues as varied as the global financial crisis that started in 2007, climate change, development, security and gender relations. Undergraduate students looking for a well-structured and appealing introduction to globalisation and its literature should find the book rewarding. Faculty members in search of stimulating ways of teaching the subject should share the same opinion.

Alessandra Sarquis
(University of Paris IV)

Neo-liberal policies have been subject to criticism, not least in the course of the recent economic crisis. But how could these ideas enter mainstream politics in the first place? This question is the backdrop of Stedman Jones’ treatise on neo-liberalism, a ‘free market ideology based on individual liberty and limited government that connected human freedom to the actions of the rational, self-interested actor in the competitive marketplace’ (p. 2).

Stedman Jones identifies three phases of neo-liberalism, namely its budding phase from the 1920s to 1950, a second one from 1950 until the Thatcher and Reagan era in the 1980s, and a third beginning after the 1980s. Although he focuses on the second phase, we learn much about neo-liberalism’s roots, as chapter 1 describes the post-war economic conditions that inspired the writings of the Austrian School of economics. Chapter 2 introduces Popper, Mises and Hayek, whose theoretical contributions proved just as important as the creation of the Mont Pelerin Society. In chapter 3, the focus shifts across the Atlantic with the establishment of Chicago School economics and public choice theory, with a brief excursion to Germany’s ordo-liberalism. Chapter 4 turns to those who became the ‘indefatigable foot soldiers in Friedman and Hayek’s ideological war’ (p. 157): think tanks on both sides of the Atlantic served as a ‘conduit through which neoliberalism flowed into conservative and eventually mainstream politics’ (p. 133). From this point on, the story of neo-liberalism indeed resembles ‘a rugby match’: ‘The think-tanks pass to the journalists who pass to the politicians, who with aid from the think-tanks run with it and score’.1 Thanks to the rise of Friedman’s monetarism and the ineffectiveness of Keynesian policies (ch. 5), British and American governments turned to neo-liberal solutions in the 1970s. Concentrating on economic strategy (ch. 6) and urban policy (ch. 7), Stedman Jones shows how the triumph of neo-liberalism was due less to particular heads of state and more to circumstances. He closes with a reflection on neo-liberalism’s legacy and those who misunderstand its central tenets.

A review in the Wall Street Journal Online criticised Stedman Jones’ ‘more adjectival attitudinizing than a chronicler of history should allow himself’,2 a verdict applicable to the concluding chapter. The book as a whole, however, offers a balanced, well-structured and highly readable account of neo-liberalism’s history which will serve both students and scholars as an introduction to this controversial line of economic thought.

Notes

Claudia Franziska Brühwiler (University of St Gallen, Switzerland)


The first translated book of Bernard Stiegler’s three-volume work, Disbelief and Discredit, studies the cultural impasses of Western society. Following the ideas developed in his monumental Technics and Time, Stiegler focuses on the particular relationship individuals form with their technological environment in contemporary capitalist society. For the French philosopher, technics is at the heart of human individuation. In other words, our species becomes human by virtue of exteriorising our psychic capacities such as memory and through the use of tools such as writing. These tools, in turn, affect the ways in which humans function in the world. Stiegler perceives a fatal flaw in the way that individuation occurs under the current conditions of the capitalist epoch: the process of individuation is halted by the destructive mechanism of consumerism that employs current technologies. He illustrates this problem precisely by the state of leisure (or lack thereof) in capitalist society, where it has become synonymous with consumption.

Like many before him, Stiegler also pinpoints what he observes as the contradiction in capitalism through this lengthy analysis of the effects of the culture industry on the human psyche. In Stiegler’s account, Western societies are facing a critical challenge which revolves around the difficulty of maintaining the life-affirming, individual desire despite the existence of a homogenising, self-effacing consumerist culture. New media technologies reduce libidinal energy into calculable and regulated units and hence hinder the articulation of...
desire. In other words, capitalism digs its own grave by expunging individual desire which is its effective driving force.

The question of whether this is a significant intervention in the long history of the culture industry debates remains to be seen. The alienating effects of culture within capitalism have always been a central discussion in Marxism, and it is likely that this study will lead to further comparisons of Stiegler’s thought with those of contemporary Marxists. Certain concepts (grammatisation, mnemo-technics, protention, etc.) might seem convoluted for readers unacquainted with Stiegler’s thought. However, the study of actual transformations taking place in society through these concepts could also facilitate an engagement with his philosophy. Stiegler’s counsel with regard to the cultural policies of the European Union, which is undergoing a turbulent existential crisis, endows the present study with practical and timely value. It is a moral responsibility for the intellectual to transform lofty ideas into tools that could overcome misery. As such, it is enthralling to see one of the most innovative of contemporary philosophers discussing earthly matters.

Irmak Ertuna-Howison
(Beykent University, Istanbul)


Carl Schmitt maintained a life-long interest in Thomas Hobbes. In his most famous work, Schmitt focused attention on Hobbes’ central concern, his protection-obedience formula. In Leviathan, Hobbes set out his doctrine which laid the foundation of the national state, arguing on behalf of a strong central authority to avoid the evil of religious discord and civil war. Similarly, Schmitt argued that the European national state model ensured peace and stability while the twin threats of communism and liberalism would produce either the total state or a weak polity unable to make the most pressing decisions. George Schwab’s interpretation of Schmitt’s Hobbesian studies between 1936 and 1944 seeks to demonstrate that Schmitt’s ideas were closer to conservative authoritarianism than totalitarianism. Schwab’s interpretation is among the main topics of debate in this collection of important new essays.

Most chapters are of excellent quality. In the introduction Johan Tralau argues that after the Second World War the primary concern of political conflict has centred on the redistribution of resources. Hobbes and Schmitt, by contrast, focus on problems of order and political stability and unencumbered sovereignty. Second, both Hobbes and Schmitt maintained that myths, shared ideas and cultural mores enable state and nation building by promoting order and social cohesion. Gabriella Slomp’s chapter on Schmitt’s interpretation of Hobbes’ state theory shows how the latter’s theory cannot be reduced to mere authoritarianism. In contrast, Schmitt argues that Hobbes’ individualism (i.e., the individual’s right to self-preservation during the time of war) undermines the notion of the absolute state. Jan-Werner Müller compares the work of Michael Oakeshott and Schmitt. His argument states that both were preoccupied with how the era of mass politics and liberalism had undermined the sovereign national state.

Other chapters are a little weaker. For instance, Stephen Holmes, in a highly critical essay on Schmitt, notes that Schmitt’s interest in Hobbes was opportunistic and was basically used to hide his views during the Nazi regime. This is essentially the same argument that Holmes makes in prior work, which is less convincing than Schwab’s earlier interpretation of Schmitt’s work on Hobbes and the sovereign state. All in all, this book is a worthwhile contribution toward the understanding of two ‘giants’ of political theory and constitutional law.

Notes

1 The Concept of the Political, 1996, p. 52.

Paolo Morisi
(Independent Scholar)
**International Relations**


The axis of discussion in the present book is the challenges of the United States’ foreign policy in the Greater Middle East during the Presidency of Barack Obama. Greater Middle East refers to the region that has geopolitical and strategic importance from different directions for the United States and other countries. The central argument of this book is that the Greater Middle East is still considered as a serious challenge for America’s foreign policy in the period of Obama. In this regard, the book’s authors believe that Obama cannot overcome the vast and complex problems in this region, contrary to his claims during the election campaign in America. To explore this idea, the contributors discuss more or less all of America’s foreign policy challenges in the Greater Middle East in different chapters, namely: Iran’s nuclear programme, problems existing in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Arab–Israeli peace issue, the problems existing in North Africa and also concerns about Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

According to these issues, it can be said that this book is quite useful and beneficial mainly for experts in the realm of the Middle East and America’s foreign policy. In terms of content and structure, the book is written in a form that will absolutely convince the reader that the problems and concerns of America in the Middle East have still continued in the period of Obama. As an example, not much progress has yet been observed in the area of the Iranian nuclear programme (at the time of the book’s writing) and the Middle East peace talks. Topics and chapters have been selected in a form that enables the reader to gain a complete understanding of America’s problems in the Greater Middle East and America’s foreign policy towards those problems. It can therefore be said that the book is well written and the contents are quite understandable and acceptable for the reader.

Ghasem Torabi
(Islamic Azad University, Hamedan Branch, Iran)

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This book is intended as an introductory text for students in international relations (IR). It is very informative and well structured, undoubtedly filling a gap. The major theories in IR start from the existence of interests or objectives of the state, but how are they defined or established? Foreign policy analysis (FPA) complements IR by offering a number of insights into how the ends and means in the conduct of foreign policies are forthcoming through the interplay of domestic and foreign factors.

The authors present a clear overview of the findings from many country studies concerning how the ends and means of foreign policy emerge, involving different actors and complex interactions. In well-ordered societies, the pluralist hypothesis appears most plausible, as the set of stakeholders comprises not only the chief executive offices but also representative assembly and civil society.

The authors argue convincingly that the process of globalisation has changed the conduct of foreign policy. Interestingly, they suggest a threefold classification of states in order to theorise the impact of globalisation: institutional, cluster and quasi-states. The first type is the classical Weberian state with its focus upon sovereignty, the second type is the EU framework for shared sovereignty – multi-level governance – and finally the third type is the country in anarchy.

What results from these efforts is a picture of foreign policy that is broader and more nuanced than the heralded FPA in classical realism, focusing upon rationality. The authors draw upon both historical sociology and constructivism, but they still maintain that the concept of the state is central to this broader picture of FPA.

Jan-Erik Lane
(Independent Scholar)

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As a process, conflict transformation is generally described as being complex, multilayered and structurally
non-linear. Normatively, it has been analysed through a lens that focuses mainly on measuring conflict variation by quantifying change, and that neglects the impact change has on future developments and prospects. However, Advancing Conflict Transformation: The Berghof Handbook II, under the clever editorship of Beatrix Austin, Martina Fischer and Hans J. Giessmann, breaks this slow rhythm of research and advances a novel and systematic approach in the study of conflict transformation by addressing a ‘two-fold task: to take stock of what we have learnt to date through research and practice, and to explore different experiences and new challenges for the road ahead’ (p. 10).

Defining conflict transformation as a ‘process of changing the relationships, attitudes, interest, discourses and underlying structures that encourage and condition violent political conflict’ (pp. 9–10), the book offers a clear perspective on the role of interdependence in understanding contemporary conflict. Dynamic in its interdisciplinary character, Advancing Conflict Transformation integrates a variety of theories and methods in a complex design that successfully meets its purposes. Highly attentive to the particularities of the twenty-first century conflict pattern, the authors of the book inquisitively question the origin, nature, development and future of conflict transformation. From this point of view, what is particularly interesting is the interplay of intellectual traditions and their impact on the transition from the different sections of the book, and an example would be the clear link between the section on third party intervention and that on spaces of transformation. Despite the large number of contributors, the book is structured and it does not overlap, remaining consistent and reader focused throughout.

The use of multiple case studies proves the explanatory power of the volume and further enhances its capacity for advancing ground-breaking theories on issues such as third party interventions, the role of different actors in the transformation process, as well as transitions from war to peace. Advancing Conflict Transformation therefore complements the existing literature on conflict transformation and adds to the scholarly debate a skilfully crafted perspective that establishes common ground with both academics and practitioners.

Vladimir Rauta
(University of Nottingham)


As a thought-provoking collection of fourteen chapters, Children without a State: A Global Human Rights Challenge focuses on the dynamics and effects of statelessness on children, and challenges the dominant conclusion of ‘the invisibility thesis as an explanation for children’s statelessness and their resulting lack of access to rights’ (p. 21).

This collection is divided into three parts. In the introduction, on the basis of the critique, Jacqueline Bhabha formulates the three themes of the whole collection: ‘legal (de jure) statelessness’ children (absence of any nationality), ‘de facto statelessness’ children (absence of legal migration status despite legal nationality) and ‘effectively stateless’ children (absence of birth registration).

In Part I, ‘Legal Statelessness’, the chapters by Brad K. Blitz and Christina O. Alfirev analyse the stateless children in many countries, including Kashmiris in the United Kingdom, Banyamulenge in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rohingya in Myanmar and Bangladesh, and Palestinian citizenship of children in Israel. In chapter 4, Bela Hovy reviews the availability of statistical information, and highlights that ‘the absence of a dedicated statistical unit has a pervasive effect on data collection’ (p. 104).

The first four chapters in Part II, ‘De Facto Statelessness’, explain the impacts of ‘de facto statelessness’ on the undocumented children in the European Union, and advance a set of recommendations to improve the current situation of undocumented children. The last three chapters in Part II argue that immigrant children have been marginalised by post-secondary education, immigration law and constitutional principle in the United States.

In Part III, ‘Effective Statelessness’, the chapters by Kirsten Di Martino and Caroline Vandenabeele examine the challenges facing migrant children without birth certificates in China, Nepal and Bangladesh, and describe the obstacles to obtaining birth registration. Moreover, in chapter 14, Simon Szreter reviews the history of English early social security and identity registration, and concludes that a society should ‘commit legally to an agreed set of practical and deliverable arrangements that provide the necessary social and economic supports’ to the stateless children (pp. 332–3).
This collection will not only make valuable contributions to the policy making that improves the straitened environment of stateless children, but will also be of great interest to policy makers, human rights advocates and scholars of human rights and international relations.

Kai Chen
(College of Public Administration, Zhejiang University, China)


This book analyses trade negotiations featuring absolute asymmetries in bargaining power, where ‘not only [is] the threat of discontinuation ... disproportionate but ... such discontinuation can cut lifelines’ (p.2). The authors of this edited volume argue that uneven distributions of ‘bargaining power’ between negotiating parties have allowed more powerful countries to pursue interests at the bilateral level which eluded them at the multilateral level. Weaker countries are thus less able to defend their interests at this level owing to the large discrepancies of power at play and lack of recourse for strategies to offset this imbalance. The international political economy framework employed in this book is paired with a trade policy practitioner’s level of detailed knowledge of the world trading regime, making for a book that is theoretically interesting and empirically satisfying.

Chapter 1 establishes the theoretical framework of the analysis. Chapter 2 examines the scope for asymmetrical treatment in the GATT/WTO legal disciplines and broadly reviews how the United States and the EU, as the most powerful trading states in the world trading system, have tightened the scope of various articles congruent with their own interests and incongruent with others. The following chapters present studies of these topics: the EU–ACP negotiations; comparison of the FTAA and the EU–MERCOSUR negotiations; Venezuela trade strategy in the FTAA and the CAN–EU negotiations; the Colombia–US FTA; the aborted Thailand–US FTA; and a postscript on the implications of the financial crisis for asymmetrical trade negotiations. The first six chapters mentioned above are excellently detailed with rich historical narratives and economic analyses, and convinced this reviewer of the book’s central premise. The Thailand–US chapter is very brief and does not contribute much to the book. One surmises that it was included to broaden the book’s geographical scope to Asia. The postscript chapter attempts a broad discussion of potential ways forward for regionalism studies in this respect, but reads as though it were still a partially finished manuscript.

This book is a good contribution to international political economy analyses of the world trade regime. It would be interesting to see a future work incorporating cases of asymmetrical negotiations between regional emerging powers and smaller neighbours.

Nicholas Harper
(Carleton University, Ottawa)


Michael Blain’s book offers new insight into the ritual rhetoric and political violence evident in the war on terror discourse. Combining the concepts of ‘dramatism’ and ‘victimage ritual’ with Foucault’s approach to power relations and knowledge, Blain’s account offers an interesting analysis of the way in which American political violence since 9/11 has been justified through the war on terror discourse. Blain argues that the war on terrorism is ‘a liberal mode of power and subjection by means of victimage ritual’ (p.1), and that the operational definitions and categorisations enforced by the war on terrorism ‘coincide perfectly with the biopolitics of terrorism in the context of a US led Empire’ (p. 130).

In chapters 2 and 3, Blain examines the functions of victimage ritual in violent, political power struggles. Chapter 2 begins with a historical genealogy of the concept of the war on terrorism. In this chapter, Blain merges Michel Foucault’s conception of power and Kenneth Burke’s theory of dramatism and victimage ritual. In Chapter 3, he takes analysis of the war on terror discourse further, by identifying the power relations and discursive ‘tactics’ of victimage ritual. In the first part of this chapter, Blain details the social psychological basis of Burke’s concepts and in the second part links this to specific aspects of the war on terrorism. For example, he highlights Foucault’s mode of subjection in terms of victimage ritual during the Iraq War and demonstrates how the villain–victim relationship is established. Chapter 4 applies, more specifically, the concept of victimage ritual to a discursive analysis of both the Bush
and Obama regimes’ weekly White House speeches, identifying themes such as patriotism, military heroes and freedom. Chapter 5 uses the above analysis to demonstrate the ‘dangers of security’ and the power effects of the heightened security in the war on terrorism. Blain draws on examples such as increased surveillance and the use of torture for ‘intelligence’ purposes.

It could be said that this book is outdated, due to the number of texts that have investigated the war on terror discourse since 9/11. However, Power, Discourse and Victimage Ritual in the War on Terror adds new interpretations of the global war on terrorism, by merging Burke’s dramatism and victimage rituals with more current thinking on the relationship between politics and violence. This book can be recommended to those interested in the role of discourse in politics and more specifically the war on terror, state control and surveillance as well as US foreign policy and hegemony.

Lella Nouri (Swansea University)


Books published in Denmark are not reviewed very often in UK peer-reviewed journals, so this collection of sixteen essays (all in English) about the construction of national identities seems like a welcome exception. While three of the chapters focus on Denmark itself, others address a variety of groups, like Scandinavian immigrants in the USA. The contributors explain how national stories are constructed and told in specific countries, relying on their own ‘stories of peoplehood’ and ‘narrative identities’ which come from the salient concept of ‘national character’ (p. 12). Hence, as editor Michael Böss explains in the introduction, Rogers Smith’s original concept coined as ‘stories of peoplehood’ and ‘narrative identities’ is based on the idea ‘that the creation of a relatively enduring sense of political community requires accounts, narratives, or stories, “political power” stories, and “ethically constructive” stories’ (p. 11). Clearly, the theoretical chapters related to the construction of nationhood in various contexts are the most interesting.

However, some contributions included in this collection are so weak they almost disqualify the whole project, for example chapter 14 on Canada, in which readers are offered such sentences as: ‘The Unconscious Canadian is an ignorant Canadian’ (p. 290). How can a Canadian scholar write a whole essay about Canada and Québec without using one single source in French (pp. 301–2)? How can this book’s editor have included in a scholarly book such a biased essay, without footnotes, doing Québec bashing (a subtle form of racism against Québécois made by the Anglo-Canadians)? As for theory, we are in a desert with these pages that ignore the main concepts (‘stories of peoplehood’ and ‘narrative identities’) explored elsewhere by the previous contributors (pp. 289–302). Other inexact remarks about ‘the Québec model’ appear in chapter 9 (see pp. 196–7), in chapter 13 (see p. 279) and even in the following chapter by noted scholar Francis Fukuyama, who forgets to mention that the English-speaking immigrants in Québec have the right to attend the English schools in Québec, just like all anglophones (p. 309).

Chapter 16 is the conclusion written by the editor; all pages are rich with conceptualisations, useful definitions of core concepts (such as ‘master narratives’), plus methodological elements such as identifying the main actors and agents for a nation’s progress (p. 324). In sum, Narrating Peoplehood amidst Diversity is an uneven collection with strong theoretical foundations and some imbalanced essays about Canada in an emerging field of transdisciplinary investigations and research.

Yves Laberge (Centr’ÉRE, UQAM and Université Laval, Canada)


This book focuses on the controversial role of nuclear weapons in the twenty-first century. The author analyses whether the stability preserved in the Cold War period can be sustained if the number of nuclear weapon states increases. He adopts a heuristic approach, using AWSM@ nuclear force exchange models to build up a hypothetical future. Through these models, he compares the possible consequences of proliferation. Stephen Cimbala identifies two scenarios for the future. One is a world in which the North Korean nuclear weapons programme is dismantled and the number of nuclear weapons states is limited only to the current ones. The second scenario envisages that North Korea, Iran, South
Korea and Japan also join the nuclear club. For the sake of the meticulous analysis of possible state reactions in a nuclear crisis, the conditions of generated alert, day-to-day alert, launch on warning and riding-out-attack conditions are also demonstrated in this model. Although Cimbala admits that he designated the number of nuclear weapons to each state in a hypothetical future notionally, it would be better if he explained how he obtained these numbers in more detail. He also does not elucidate why in some conditions states preserve different numbers of nuclear weapons. For example, he could have stated why, after an initial attack, in generated alert and launched on warning situations Russia can preserve more nuclear weapons than the US can.

This book is for readers interested in the international security field. Cimbala also defines some basic concepts so non-experts can follow up his arguments straightforwardly. The author covers most aspects of nuclear proliferation, and defines his arguments well. However, he could have extended the literature review to differentiate his ideas from other scholars. For example, he argues that the most cost-effective way to prevent terrorism is to stop terrorists getting access to fissile materials (p. 27). This argument is really similar to that of Graham Allison in his book *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe*. Although Cimbala used Allison’s book as a reference in the other part of the book, he does not mention Allison with respect to this idea.

This book is an innovative policy study in nuclear proliferation. Policy studies generally aim at giving concrete answers to a certain policy problem in a timely manner. However, by evaluating nuclear proliferation from a broad perspective and by elaborating different factors, the author reaches a high academic standard, which cannot be expected from most of the policy studies due to time pressure.

Anil Kocaman
(University of Göttingen)


This edited volume analyses the increasing role that the UN Security Council (UNSC) has been playing in the area of human rights. The contributors approach the topic from an international law perspective and focus especially on the developments that came in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks (specifically in the form of ‘targeted sanctions’). The authors provide detailed accounts of UNSC actions (or lack thereof) and current diverging views on the role that the UNSC plays and should play in the protection of human rights.

The questions the book aims to answer can be grouped into four categories: (1) what are the links between human rights and international security that made it possible for the UNSC to claim a role in protecting human rights? (Shraga, Gowlland-Debbas); (2) does the UNSC have the right, responsibility or the capacity to protect or promote human rights? (Ciampi, Gowlland-Debbas); (3) what are the human rights implications of the UNSC’s actions or inactions? (Ciampi, de Vet, Zappala); and (4) to what extent does the UNSC respect human rights itself? (Fassbender).

While the authors present diverging opinions on the UNSC’s role in protecting and promoting human rights they seem to converge on the idea that more action and not less on the part of the UNSC is needed for the protection of human rights. While the contributors make a unanimous call for reform, their suggestions envisage a wider role for the UNSC in the protection of human rights rather than problematising its involvement.

The broad net this volume casts on the topic as well as the detailed information that the contributors bring to specific cases make this book a worthwhile read for scholars not only of international law but also of international relations in general and security studies in particular.

Readers who are not particularly familiar with the topic, or who wish to get a more complete view, would benefit from complementing this volume with the works written by human rights and security studies scholars as this book is heavy in detailed judicial case accounts, and a fuller view would require taking a more critical look into the need for the UNSC to take an active role in the international human rights regime.

Şirin Duygulu
(University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and Okan University)


What is globalisation? Is it a long-lasting process which could bring the nation state to an end, or a result of the
inevitably changing role of the state? Starting with its definitional ambiguity, Yale Ferguson and Richard Mansbach provide readers with an in-depth insight into globalisation, covering both its historical roots and contemporary effects. Globalisation, as a fact dating back several millennia, paved the way for democracy and homogenisation among societies in the economic, political and cultural sense. As the essentials of globalisation – the economic liberalisation process, free trade, multilateral institutions and corporate networks married with the spread of the English language – this resulted in what the world is now. The effects are disaggregated and revealed region by region, leading us to get to know regional dynamics during the globalisation process. In the same breath, the book presents the concept of globalisation that ‘incites passionate advocacy and criticism’ (p. 152) by amalgamating diverse perspectives from neo-Marxism to neoliberalism. What is more, excluding the sharp edges and dominant personal views, the book gives enough space for readers to see more than one viewpoint. The effects of globalisation on migration, for instance, are tackled in two dimensions: one blaming globalisation for creating cultural ghettos and criminal industries; and the other praising the efficiency that globalisation has brought to economic systems.

This book makes a great effort to anatomise the term ‘globalisation’ in a multi-regional aspect, in which the authors draw a successful picture of its evolution by bringing in social and cultural dimensions for consideration. As ‘an evolutionary non-unilinear process’ (p. 41), globalisation has had different impacts on different regions, most of which demand to be analysed under different disciplines in order to understand better the cultural, economic and political consequences. Globalization: The Return of Borders to a Borderless World succeeds due to its broad coverage, and for this reason the book can be viewed as essential reading for students not only of political studies but also from all disciplines in the social sciences. The work appears to be a product of accumulated observations derived from Ferguson and Mansbach’s previous works, where the authors began discussing disappearing borders starting from the 1970s. Readers will certainly enjoy and benefit highly from this experience, making it a significant contribution to globalisation studies.

Tevfik Murat Yildirim
(University of Missouri)


While many scholars in the twenty-first century have so far used concepts such as political identities and social representations to describe how nations see themselves and others, Mark Haas reintroduces the core concept of ideology: ‘The book’s primary purpose is to provide a detailed framework for understanding how ideologies matter in international relations, and which foreign policies decision makers should implement’ (p. xiv). This book’s title inevitably echoes Samuel Huntington’s classic Clash of Civilizations (1996). Here, Haas argues that ideologies – and not civilisations – are the main reason why political leaders often diverge from each other; ideologies ‘are the specific, often idiosyncratic, political principles and goals that leaders both value most highly and use to legitimate their claim to rule’ (p. 4). The author argues that ‘despite the overwhelming importance of these issues, little consensus exists in either policymaking or academic circles about how or to what extent ideologies affect international relations’ (p. xiv). Mentions of Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations are made even though the author distances himself from that previous framework (p. 44). The opening chapter delimits the theoretical framework while the following four chapters are case studies concentrating on countries such as Iran, Syria, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, not by themselves, but according to their relations/conflicts/alliances with the USA.

Haas meticulously conceptualises ideologies into two related dimensions. First, there is the ‘ideological distance’ related to the ‘degree of ideological differences dividing leaders of any two ideological groups’ (p. 5). The author refers as well to the number of ideologies that are opposing; that is, the ‘ideological polarity’, in some cases the ‘ideological bipolarity’ and in others the ‘ideological multipolarity’ (p. 6). Among the many examples of ideologies are ‘communism, fascism, monarchism, and religious fundamentalism’ (p. 4). Many other examples are given further on. Haas concludes that a better understanding of how political leaders conceive ideologies would be most helpful in international relations and for heads of state, especially whenever dealing with Middle Eastern countries. The
conclusion even mentions the ‘Arab Spring’ and the Obama administration’s attitude (p. 285).

Obviously, theoretical and practical discussions about ideologies remain fundamental in political science and philosophy, let alone international relations. Possible articulations with related concepts such as Weltanschauung (world view) would have been possible as well. In sum, The Clash of Ideologies is an important contribution because there are too few books about ideologies in international relations.

Yves Laberge
(Centr’ÉRE, UQAM and Université Laval, Canada)


Disasters have lately been at the forefront of the mass media – the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull in 2010, the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011 and Hurricane Sandy in 2012, to name just a few. In spite of being a natural phenomenon, the magnitude of economic and social damage caused during and after a disaster is contingent on the past decisions of political actors. Starting from this assumption, John Hannigan’s book, composed of nine chapters, provides a lucid review of several aspects of the international politics of natural disasters.

The book starts with a discussion on the disaster–politics nexus and gives a useful definition of disaster as a ‘process’ occurring within socio-economic and socio-political contexts (p. 15). In chapters 2, 3 and 4 the author looks into the development of disaster politics as a ‘policy field’ and the role of various actors as diverse as national politicians, local governments, insurance companies and scientists within the legal and political debates about humanitarianism and disaster relief since the late nineteenth century. Chapter 5 highlights the differences and similarities between the climate change adaptation (CCA) and the disaster risk reduction (DRR) approach. Chapter 6 engages with realist theory in international relations to illuminate the role of political interests and security concerns in providing and accepting relief aids. In chapter 7, the author turns his analysis to the mass media and its variable influence on the decisions taken by political actors during the course of a disaster. In the last two chapters, through his engagement with discourse analysis and new institutionalist theories, Hannigan not only explores the four discursive realms that constitute the policy field of disaster politics but also stresses the rising concerns about securitisation, militarisation and quantification prevalent in disaster politics. He thus underlines the necessity of a humanitarian framework that can replace the ‘insurance logic’ and ‘hazard based’ solutions (p. 158).

Hannigan’s book is a timely and helpful introduction to disaster politics. The book is well written and successfully covers many aspects of disaster politics. Therefore, it is a great resource for students and practitioners of international relations and human security. However, one wonders why there is no single reference to Pierre Bourdieu’s work, let alone adoption of his theory and concepts such as field, doxa and habitus. Since the author defines international politics of disasters as a ‘community of practice’ and a ‘global policy field’ (p. 20), a Bourdieuan approach can serve as a better methodological tool and theoretical basis than the ‘emergent institutionalism’ model preferred by the author.

Kadri Kaan Renda
(King’s College London)


While the scientific understanding of climate change has steadily progressed over recent decades, policy-based solutions have frequently been stymied due to the highly politicised nature of the problem. Both of the edited volumes under review provide a stimulating array of seminal scholars to dissect the underlying causal complexities of this challenging and threatening international phenomenon. Indeed, Paul Harris invokes this danger when he states that ‘for anyone interested in, and concerned about, international affairs, few issues are more important’ than climate change (p. 1).

Harris’ new paperback edition begins with three chapters examining the often overlooked case studies of
Australia and Canada, Russia and China. Of these, Schroeder’s chapter – which utilises the Transnational Advocacy Model to analyse the nascent climate change politics of China – is particularly strong and emphasises norm entrepreneurs within constructivism; a concept that features heavily throughout the book. The volume then progresses to the interrelationship between the domestic and political spheres, examining the European Union and its Emissions Trading Scheme before turning to a long-overdue two-level analysis of climate change policy. Kroll and Shogren’s two-level game-theoretic model examining the interconnection between domestic and global actors is a crucial addition to the international climate negotiations canon.

The final four chapters of the text then introduce more philosophical interpretations of the climate change challenge, with two chapters each on securitisation and equity. Of these, Scott’s chapter on the potential ramifications of terming climate change a ‘threat’ is particularly innovative, while Baer et al.’s final chapter on the formulation of a Greenhouse Development Rights framework is as ambitious as it is superb. As highlighted, each chapter in the volume is a well-crafted investigation which pushes the boundaries of current perceptions of climate change politics. While at times it is hard to develop a sense of a specific theme or direction in the book due to the diversity of topics, this is more than rectified by the style and substance contained within each chapter’s pages. As such, the volume is ideal for specialists in any of the fields covered, or for those who are new to climate change politics and wish to immerse themselves in the latest research across the many manifestations of the subject.

In contrast, Wurzel and Connelly’s sixteen-chapter offering focuses predominantly on the European and EU responses to climate change. Throughout the volume, an emphasis is placed on determining the specific styles and types of leadership of the key actors; a thread that weaves clearly and effectively throughout each topic. Rather than treating the EU as homogeneous, or racing through its constitutive parts as is so often the case, the text provides in-depth analyses of the Commission, European Parliament and the European Council and Council of Ministers, with the result that readers can truly immerse themselves in the diverse structures of the EU. From here, six case study chapters of a range of key EU states – including the UK, Germany, Poland and Spain – are encountered. Each of these texts provides such a strong summary of its state’s climate policy position and how this was reached that it is a shame it was not possible to squeeze any more cases – such as a Scandinavian nation – into this already tightly packed volume.

From here, in a similar vein to Harris’ text, the final four chapters head off in new directions, first with chapters on business and environmental non-governmental organisations, and then with framings of the roles of the US and China. Again, while these later chapters at first appear slightly tangential to the rest of the volume, their inclusion provides a highly beneficial background when attempting to position the EU within a global context. Indeed, as with the chapters on the EU’s structure and Member States, these sections are sufficiently strong to mark this volume out as a must-have for all researchers in the field of international climate change politics, whether specialising in the EU or not. Finally, the editors’ conclusion neatly draws together the diverse and complex range of topics covered within this now seminal volume.

In summary, therefore, the depth and breadth of these texts demonstrates the complexity of international climate change politics. While Harris’ study is slightly broader than that of Wurzel and Connelly, this breadth is not achieved at the expense of analysis but instead provides thought-provoking perspectives on the field. Wurzel and Connelly’s volume is just as strong and the depth provided by its focus on the European Union ensures that it is a text that should adorn the bookshelves of EU and climate change specialists alike. Harris concludes that ‘as the melting of the world’s glaciers gathers pace, it is time for politics to catch up’ (p. 214). With incisive volumes such as these on the market, our understanding of this race is certain not to melt away.

Paul Tobin
(University of York)


Contemporary war has changed. It has moved away from the model of total war and has embraced asym-

This is a landmark book: simultaneously, an ambitious history of the international economic order written from the standpoint of a non-sectarian Marxism; an account of American power in that order; and an interpretation of the domestic political economy of the United States. Panitch and Gindin cast the account in fairly conventional narrative form: they disinter the historical roots of American economic power, stretching back to the original pre-First World War creation of an American regulatory state, and taking us forward to the most recent crisis in the global financial system. They show how the project for global capitalism was shaped in the internationalisation of the New Deal, via Bretton Woods and the Marshall Plan. They demonstrate how the climacteric of power in the 1950s and 1960s reshaped the global economy, consolidating the new, informal American empire. And they show how the world of post-Reagan liberalisation actually used public power to shape an economy that was safe for financial plutocrats. Throughout, there is a recurrent theme: that the international economic order was made – notably by the creativity of American statecraft. The book culminates in a wonderfully illuminating chapter (‘American Crisis/Global Crisis’) which stresses how far the great post-2007–8 crisis is creating a new era of state activism and cooperation. Throughout, Panitch and Gindin are insistent that accounts picturing recent decades as an era of American decline are wrong: they have convincing evidence to show the continuing dynamism and flexibility of American industry domestically, and the continuing centrality of American-created managing institutions in the global economy. The book weaves together rich empirical detail about changing industrial structures with exemplary conceptual clarity.

This book offers profound, and disturbing, challenges for scholars of the international political economy. It challenges received wisdom about American decline. More fundamentally, in offering a sweeping Marxist account of the global order in a language that is accessible, and in a style that reaches out beyond debates in Marxist historiography, it challenges scholars of a non-Marxist persuasion to, quite simply, do better. At the
end Panitch and Gindin offer no clear signposts as to where we go next; but they have provided a hugely convincing account of how we got to our present condition.

Michael Moran (University of Manchester)


Complex challenges emerging from the interconnectedness between local and transnational realities, between interconnected financial markets and global pandemics, and between population movements and climate change have tested IR’s ability to address convincingly their turbulent dynamics. As a result a number of commentators have argued that these dynamics call for the development of a new vocabulary if IR is to offer relevant explanations and understanding. This is a perplexing trend, bearing in mind that the topography of IR theory – especially following the end of the Cold War – has developed into a multicoloured matrix of perspectives and frameworks on the appropriate ways of studying world affairs.

Necati Polat’s book tackles this quandary head on. His insightful examination of the intertextuality of the field draws attention to the overwhelming tendency among IR scholars to propagate new terminology, yet without engaging meaningfully the language of the discipline – especially, the meaning and etymology of the very concepts and perspective that form IR’s axiomatic core. In contrast to conventional explorations, Polat’s discerning vivisection of IR’s mainstream indicates that what underpins accepted paradigms is the active purveyance of the ‘illusion of reality, as the ability to make believe, with the power and artifice to enchant and hypnotise’ (p. 8). The focus therefore is on the ‘narrativity’ (p. 113) of the study of world affairs. Such narrativity usually remains sidelined (if at all taken into consideration) by conventional explanations.

Polat therefore offers a perceptive outline of the metaphors, allegories, images and representations embedded in the story of the discipline. The exploration sets off with a perceptive study of the discursive origins of the ‘international’ (p. 20) and IR’s founding myth to study the conditions of ‘peace’ (p. 39). These narratives provide the contextual background for chronicling the ‘nonconceptual’ (p. 2) notions of ‘difference’ (p. 73) and ‘law’ (p. 103). Finally, the investigation scrutinises the narrative juggernaut of ‘integration’ (p. 124) dominating the Eurocentric language of the discipline. It has to be noted that Polat is quite explicit about the unease that the mainstream feels towards post-positivist (or what are also called post-structuralist) explorations like his. Yet Polat’s account offers a clear indication that IR needs precisely such intertextual disruptions to reinvigorate its engagement with global politics. His book will therefore be of much interest to advanced students and scholars of international relations and political theory.

Emilian Kavalski (University of Western Sydney)


In recent years, international relations has realised that its theorising is predominantly Western minded and has begun asking why there are no theories outside the Western context. With Nationalism, Political Realism and Democracy in Japan, Fumiko Sasaki has demonstrated that there are indeed non-Western approaches, and the discipline is well advised to consider thoughts from South America, Africa, the Middle East and, in her case, East Asia.

Sasaki achieves this contribution by discussing the thought of Masao Maruyama, one of Japan’s leading political thinkers of the twentieth century. Certainly there is, as Sasaki informs her readers, a veritable ‘Maruyama boom’ in Japan and Japanese studies, but in international relations Maruyama is hardly discussed to date. This neglect is unfortunate because Maruyama’s critique on the statism of Japanese society, which Sasaki elaborates in the first three chapters, provides interesting linkages between what in Western IR theory is called realism, critical theory and postmodernism.

Maruyama extensively studied continental European humanities and has been influenced by scholars such as Max Weber and Karl Mannheim. According to Sasaki, this influence is particularly obvious in Maruyama’s criticism of the dominance of the kokutai ideology in Japanese society. Rather than encouraging a self-determined citizenship, this ideology helped to retain
people as subjects and Sasaki vividly describes in the later chapters how this ideology contributed to Japanese nationalist and imperialist ambitions, which culminated in the Second Sino–Japanese War and the Second World War. The majority of Japanese followed these ambitions without ever questioning them. Similar to what we find in Hans Morgenthau’s concept of the political or Hannah Arendt’s civic sphere, Maruyama advocated a form of modernity (shutaisei) to counter this dominant ideology. Maruyama’s shutaisei encouraged people to re-establish a public sphere through fostering human values, such as self-determination and responsibility.

Sasaki’s attempt to introduce Maruyama’s thought to international relations and particularly her elaboration of Maruyama’s understanding of shutaisei makes Nacionalism, Political Realism and Democracy in Japan a noteworthy contribution to IR theory. It is an insightful reading for anyone interested in further elaborating similarities between Japanese and Western political thought, particularly in regard to the above-mentioned links between realism, critical theory and postmodernism, despite Sasaki’s focus on national security in the last chapters, which may confuse some of her readers. However, in addition to more careful proofreading, the book would have profited from a clearer definition of national security because, like Morgenthau’s national interest, this concept is prone to be misunderstood.

Felix Rösch
(Coventry University)


This work offers a solid contribution to the ever popular and expanding INGO and transnational advocacy networks literature, making it a key text both for established scholars and for current students of social movements and civil society. It may also be of interest to practitioners seeking to develop an understanding of their environment and the ways in which their organisation’s nationality impacts its global activities.

Sarah Stroup provides detailed analysis of the role played by national context in shaping the identities and interests of INGOs. Combining insights from the social movement literature and sociological institutionalism, Stroup argues that INGOs ‘remain products of highly institutionalised national environments’ (p. 28). This claim is stretched beyond the usual parameters of political opportunity structure (POS) arguments in that Stroup fundamentally challenges the idea that cohesion between actors in the international arena is on the increase by discussing ‘the continued divergences in organisational practices’ (p. 4). In three Western, industrialised, democratic settings – France, the UK and the USA – Stroup compares six leading INGOs from two main sectors – humanitarian relief and human rights. She examines their national environments and how this shapes their approaches to professionalisation, advocacy and fund-raising, government relations and issue selection. She finds that ideas differ between context to such an extent that, for example, ‘there is no cohesive, or even Northern, human rights sector’ (p. 185).

Stroup successfully demonstrates that rumours of increasing cohesion among INGOs are deserving of critical scholarship, or at least a second look. Her claims are derived from solid empirical work, and culminate in a case study of human rights and humanitarian responses to the politicised conflict in Iraq. Here, divisions ‘among and within organizations’ (p. 199) become more apparent as strategic choices and positions had to be taken by all key players in the humanitarian and human rights sector.

The thesis that difference has a significant explanatory function in the behaviour of INGOs carries important theoretical implications for the study of transnational activism and globalisation. However, a single case study perhaps does not do justice to such a pivotal claim, and it would be interesting to see a broader range of cases where the thesis can be tested. Further, a structural approach gives way to the more agency-focused approach which Stroup originally hints at, while the latter may offer a way of adding texture to an analysis of internal conflict in INGOs. These gaps however confirm the potential for Stroup’s thesis to inspire future scholarship, and most notably she has thrown down a gauntlet to globalisation scholars.

Rosalind Greig and Asuman Ozgur-Keysan
(University of Strathclyde)

This book indicates the continuing significance of nationalism in the twenty-first century. The author argues that older variants of nationalism have recently been challenged by globalisation, regionalisation, transnationalism, migration and diaspora in today’s world. As a flexible, multifaceted ideology, nationalism responded to this cosmopolitan challenge by adapting itself to the changing times and conditions. In the first three chapters, Sutherland focuses on nationalism theories, nationalist ideology and how nationalism is combined with other ideologies. Here the author illustrates the resilience of the older concepts in the newly emerging contexts by focusing on the inter-relationship between ethno-symbolism and modernism, civic and ethnic nationalism, and hot and banal nationalism. The coexistence of communism and nationalism and the compatibility of nationalism with liberal democracy are two other themes discussed in this framework.

In the next three chapters Sutherland analyses nationalism from sub-state, state and supra-state perspectives using the cross-cutting nature of the cosmopolitan challenge. She claims that minority nationalism at the sub-state level seeks greater autonomy, and displays both ethnic and civic (emotional-economic) characteristics by adapting ‘long standing community links to current political environment’ (p. 23). At the state level, nationalism is still instrumental in shaping government legitimacy, and manifests itself in the debates on immigration, citizenship and multiculturalism. And at the supranational level, Sutherland argues that nationalism and supranational (regional or global) cooperation are complementary so far as economic concerns are greater than political ones. She concludes that although the cosmopolitan challenge necessitated reappraisal of nationalist ideology, nationalism remains an essential element of politics in a globalising world.

This book allows for better and more informed debates on the impact of globalisation on nationalist ideology and strategy. The author complements the theoretical focus with empirical evidence and case studies from around the world including Estonia, Vietnam, Fiji, India, Scotland, Bavaria, Quebec, Tibet, Germany, Britain and Southeast Asia. Despite the complexity of the issue, the book is immensely readable. Thus it should appeal to a wide range of readers who are interested in the latest form that nationalism has taken in the twenty-first century. It would also serve as a teaching material in graduate or undergraduate courses on nations and nationalism.

Şakir Dinçşahin
(Yeditepe University, Istanbul)


Onur Yıldırım deals with the period between 1922 and 1934 with regard to Turkey and Greece, which was for both countries a period of ‘national reconstruction’. He especially emphasises that both countries turned their minorities into thousands of homeless and jobless refugees. In the introduction, Yıldırım gives a historical background of the population exchange, the reasons for choosing to study this subject, his methodology and the sources used. He then divides the book into two parts: diplomacy and displacement. In the diplomacy part, the author provides details about the diplomatic processes from both Turkish and Greek perspectives that preceded the decision for the compulsory population exchange, during and after the Lausanne negotiations. Even though the details of the pre-, during and post-Convention times from both sides can sometimes be somewhat boring to read, these sections are important because they represent the first time such a detailed history of diplomacy between Turkey and Greece for the Convention is provided. Before this book, writers on the population exchange usually mentioned the situation of the refugees from both sides only after the signing of the Convention. That is why this book is really important, because it shows us the details of pre-Convention times. The author should be commended for researching these historical details in both countries’ governmental archives.

In the second part, displacement, Yıldırım defines the refugee problem, the reactions to the population exchange from both sides, and the people who tried to be included and also excluded from the exchange in both countries; he gives details of the plight of refugees
and relief efforts by international relief organisations, and he provides a detailed account of the resettlement problems of the newcomers from different regions of Turkey and Greece. The author mentions the Mixed Commission of the League of Nations, the Refugee Settlement Commission of Greece and the Ministry of Exchange, Reconstruction and Resettlement of Turkey, which were established to manage the resettlement of newcomers, and also all the refugee-related matters, in their respective countries. In the end, he concludes that both Turkey and Greece aimed to improve national security and ethnically homogenise their population with the removal of their respective minorities.

Overall, I really recommend this book to scholars of Turkish–Greek relations and particularly the population exchange due to the fact that it is the first time such a detailed account of the exchange has been written.

Nihan Akincilar
(Marmara University, Istanbul)

Comparative Politics


As the title genuinely suggests, this book examines how much freedom racists have in Western liberal democracies to be racist. It brings up the question of how liberal democracies preserve the freedoms of their citizens, while combating racism. The freedoms that the author focuses on are freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of opinion. He takes a historical and geographical approach and investigates how this conflict has been shaped in the USA and Europe, and compares the different applications in these countries by providing the context for their differences. For each of the freedoms, he picks different issues, for example the Holocaust denial laws for freedom of speech; banning racist groups and parties for freedom of association; and hate crime laws for freedom of opinion.

Bleich suggests two principles for determining the boundaries of legal restrictions to these freedoms: measuring harm and public deliberation. He argues that the restrictions are justified when racism provokes violence or extreme hatred. Otherwise, it should be protected by the freedoms of liberal democracies. For determining the limits of freedom to be granted to racists, public deliberation through representative institutions should be employed.

The comparative approach adopted by the author is illuminating in several ways. First, it gives the reader a chance to see the wider picture in one resource. Second, it proves there is no single way to fight racism by showing the different paths that these states pursue. The historical analysis Bleich provides is also helpful for understanding the whole context for the emergence of these different paths. He analyses a sensitive issue in a delicate way and makes a valuable contribution to the discussion empirically. However, the two principles he suggests might not be that convincing, especially for anti-racists. The measuring harm principle is too subjective, since violence is not only physical, and this might lead to different implementations. And although public deliberation is at the heart of liberal democracies, not all victims of racist actions, such as non-citizen immigrants, are part of this deliberation, especially with regard to the representative institutions. Overall, this book is a valuable contribution and a great resource for students of racism and of liberal freedoms.

Pinar Sayan
(Marmara University, Istanbul)


Political Communication in Postmodern Democracy answers the following question: amid a collapse of ‘grand narratives’, the erosion of the mass political party, wider fragmentation of society and concomitant individualisation and popularisation of politics, what is happening to mediated political communication and citizenship in this postmodern democracy? The book, which is a collaboration between (mostly) University of Leeds and University of Amsterdam scholars, compares the UK and the Netherlands.

Two strands unite all chapters, much welcome in an edited collection, which can so easily suffer from
disparate foci. First is ‘mediatisation’, which holds that politics is governed by ‘media logic’ (involving PR and spin, market pressures, popular culture and consumerism, and scandal and conflict); that is, politics is governed by rules created and enforced by political media, which in turn are responding to a more rambunctious and changeable citizenry. Second is ‘de-centralisation’: the complex and often contradictory interactions between (political and media) elites and citizens, which reveal more cynicism but also more affective, populist, issue-based and individualised citizen political participation. In sum, it is hypothesised that politicians have lost the power of direct representation and communication with citizens (mediatisation), while the counter-trend of decentralisation is a new form of individualised and popular politics and citizenship which challenges institutional journalism and institutional politics. The process is not unimodal but, rather, a multimodal, ambiguous and often contradictory one which the chapters address in various ways.

The book has three sections, the first with two chapters outlining a theoretical framework: (1) the de-institutionalisation of politics and rise of a more mediated, embodied and theatrical ‘audience democracy’; and (2) the aesthetic-affective dimensions of political representation. The second section tests mediatisation by looking at news management, spin and public opinion, personalisation, perceptions of political culture (by journalists and politicians), control in the political television interview and politicians’ perspectives on political comedy television. The third section looks at decentralisation: political disconnection from elites, immigration and populism, political efficacy and the internet, online citizen-participatory journalism, socially conscious political consumerism, as well as the politics of reality television. Methodologies include content analysis, interviews, surveys, focus groups, statistical analysis and theoretical and synthesising approaches.

Brants and Voltmer have assembled a collection which admirably seeks to address the changing nature of politics, political media and citizenship, and which fleshes out the democratic implications cross-nationally. This should be essential reading for all interested in these relationships and intersections.

Neil Stevenson
(University of Westminster)


Integrated in the Social Science Research Council’s ‘Advancing Transitional Justice’ series, *Transitional Justice and Displacement* covers an obvious, but previously only incompletely researched, link. Taking stock of cross-national and longitudinal analyses, the book’s eight chapters meticulously relate displacement to each of the four pillars of transitional justice: namely, reparations (including restitutions), criminal prosecution, truth commissions and institutional reform. Additionally, the matters of humanitarian action and gender are treated in separate chapters.

Based on evidence from Colombia, Peru, Guatemala, former Yugoslavia and some sub-Saharan republics, the authors effectively demonstrate that forced migrants, with their particular characteristics when compared to the wider population suffering human rights abuses, have both advantages and disadvantages when interacting with transitional justice policies and are affected by them in distinct ways. They justly highlight that victims, usually regarded as a monolithic group, experience asymmetries in dealing with post-conflict polities. The disparities in impact potential, goals and benefits obtained may result in within-group tensions which can go so far as victims competing internally for status. The overall argument is that durable solutions can be found by addressing not just the legacies of the mass human rights violations that motivated the initial displacement, but also the underlying mechanisms that cultivate creeping human rights infringements.

Perhaps the strongest critique that can be brought against this volume is that the empirical evidence it puts forward is fragmentary. With the exception of the Caprini chapter, which focuses on the cases of Darfur, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Bosnia, the remaining chapters seem to dissect through cases, selecting from each one evidence that suits particular segments of the arguments being built. While this is an acceptable procedure given the exploratory nature of the majority of the studies, the extent to which it is done creates the impression that some sections are only schematic analytical constructions of the subject matter. There is a need for more in-depth case-specific analyses as they are not only better suited to distinguishing...
potential intervening variables and revealing both pol-
isities and displaced individuals and their organisations to
be subjects of political learning, but could also improve
the sense of cohesion of the book.

Although it could stand to gain in persuasiveness if it
developed a more holistic analysis of specific cases, all
in all Transitional Justice and Displacement is a noteworthy
introductory publication on a topic that has received
little scholarly attention in the past.

Adriana Rudling
(University of Sheffield)

Delegating Rights Protection: The Rise of Bills
of Rights in the Westminster World by David
£50.00, ISBN 9780199557769

David Erdos presents a highly original study of the rise
of bills of rights instruments in ‘Westminster’-style
democracies. The book has a strong theoretical and
empirical focus with four case study chapters exploring
the bill of rights instruments introduced in the UK,
Canada and New Zealand, and a fifth chapter exam-
ing Australia, which remains the only ‘Westminster’-
style democracy not to have introduced a national bill
of rights. The book’s key theoretical contribution, dis-
cussed in chapter 3, is the development of the
‘postmaterialist trigger thesis’ (PTT) to explain the
‘deliberate adoption of a bill of rights in stable,
advanced democracies’ (p. 5).

There are two aspects to the PTT. First, where bills
of rights have been introduced in Westminster democ-
racies there has been a gradual entrenchment of a
post-materialist socio-political culture characterised by
the growth of a powerful and influential ‘postmaterialist
rights constituency’. Secondly, these socio-political
factors must be accompanied by a political trigger that
gives incumbent political elites ‘an immediate impetus
for change’ (p. 27) causing them to introduce a bill of
rights. Erdos has identified two possible political trig-
gers. First is an ‘aversive’ trigger, where a bill of rights
is introduced by a resurgent political elite, either in
reaction to the negative experiences of that elite in
opposition, or to a government that was particularly
authoritarian. Second is a ‘threat to political stability’
trigger, where a bill of rights is designed and imple-
mented to provide political stability and national cohe-
sion in the face of threats to both. The author builds a
coherent, lucid and persuasive case for the PTT that
will make an important and long-term contribution to
debates about the institutional protection of human
rights.

This monograph is also to be welcomed for chal-
lenging the dominance that the discipline of law has
acquired in scholarly work on bills of rights, by offering
a socio-political analysis of their origin and develop-
ment. Within the discipline of law, there is an estab-
lished body of academic literature by scholars such as
Stephen Gardbaum who have analysed the ‘New
Commonwealth Model of Constitutionalism’, which
views developments in the protection of human rights
in Canada, New Zealand and the UK as a third way
between a system of strong ‘American-style’ judicial
review and legislative supremacy. Indeed, while Erdos
makes clear that his intention is to address the question
from a socio-political perspective, it would nonetheless
have been interesting to see how the author viewed the
relationship between this piece of research and that
other body of literature.

Peter Munce
(University of Hull)

Gender, Nationalism, and War: Conflict on the
Movie Screen by Matthew Evangelista. Cam-
bridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. 271pp.,
£18.99, ISBN 9780521173544

In Gender, Nationalism, and War, Matthew Evangelista
explores the impact of gender stereotypes on the
militarisation of national movements by examining
several feature films focusing on the conflicts in Algeria,
former Yugoslavia, Chechnya and Quebec. The frame-
work for the analysis is derived from Virginia Woolf’s
Three Guineas, in which she proposes three main
hypotheses on the relationship between gender, war and
nationalism: (1) women assume a passive role in order for
men to be better identified with a militarised masculin-
ity; (2) nationalist movements are instrumental in
improving women’s status; and (3) when young men are
unable to meet the cultural norm of masculinity, they are
more likely to engage in violence (youth bulge). Evangelista
also refers to Woolf’s prescription for peace; that is, women should refuse to fight with arms and to
nurse the wounded, and adopt an attitude of complete
indifference at the time of war by neither encouraging
men to fight nor discouraging them.
Evangelista illustrates Woolf’s theme of ‘society of outsiders’ with reference to Fred Zinnemann’s Western movie *High Noon* (1952). Next he challenges the hypothesis based on the non-violent stereotype of women by looking at the movie on the Algerian national movement, the *Battle of Algiers* (1966) filmed by Gillo Ponecorvo. He claims that in Algeria women were more effective than men at carrying out acts of anti-colonial violence leading to national independence. In his examination of the Yugoslavian movie *Pretty Village, Pretty Flame* (1996), Evangelista demonstrates that the position of women in a relatively egalitarian society is extremely complex, citing examples in which women can be promoters either of national struggle or anti-nationalist movements, even while they are also victims of sexual violence in the conflict. In order to show gender stereotypes in the Russo–Chechen conflict, Evangelista includes analyses of Bordrov’s *Prisoner of the Mountains* (1996), Rogozhkin’s *Checkpoint* (1998), Balabanov’s *War* (2002), Konchalovski’s *House of Fools* (2002) and Sokurov’s *Aleksandra* (2007). He claims that elements of love, redemption and revenge could be found in the attitude of women who either opposed or promoted the conflict in the region. Lastly, he explores the situation of women identified with the non-violent nationalist movement in Quebec as portrayed in Lapage’s *Nô* (1998).

This is a fascinating book which informs the reader about fundamental aspects of national movements in various parts of the world through the lens of gender. Examining these topics through films makes the book immensely readable and enjoyable and also affords the reader insight into the attitude and perceptions of popular audiences. The book will appeal to all scholars and students who are interested in gender studies and nationalism.

Şakir Dinçşahin
(Yeditepe University, Istanbul)


Abortion remains a most contested political issue in many advanced countries. In this book, sociologist Drew Halfmann explores the politics of abortion in the United States, Britain and Canada. In contrast to other existing studies, the book explores abortion not only as a moral and gender issue but also as a social policy and health care reality. Halfmann adopts an institutionalist perspective on both abortion politics and policy, including issues like medical gatekeeping and the abortion services available. Because Canada and the United States are federal countries, attention is also paid to abortion debates at the sub-state level.

Halfmann shows how political and policy institutions impact on the way collective actors such as (pro- and anti-) abortion movements construct their interests, how the availability of different political venues like courts and sub-state arenas shape politics, and how the varying openness of political parties to outside movements structures abortion politics. The story told regarding the role of institutions is a quite subtle and complex one, and alternative perspectives are discussed to stress how institutional factors explain key cross-national variations in terms of abortion policy and group mobilisation. For instance, in the United States, physicians are less involved in abortion policy debates than their counterparts in Britain and Canada, largely because of the unique nature of US health care policy legacies, which have pushed doctors to focus on economic issues and on fighting national health insurance, rather than getting more involved in abortion debates.

This well-researched and convincing book suffers from only a few shortcomings. First, the space devoted to the United States is larger than that devoted to Britain and Canada, and the book is somewhat US-centric. The discussion about religiosity as an alternative argument is fascinating, but the author could have paid more attention to how varying levels of religious practice may affect the uneven political intensity of abortion debates across countries and even between sub-state units. Finally, when publishing social science books, the University of Chicago Press should stop burying references in the endnotes because it makes it harder for the reader to consult and assess the sources cited. Beyond these minor flaws, this is a major book that students of abortion, social policy and/or political institutions should read and engage with.

Daniel Béland
(University of Saskatchewan)

This volume edited by Paul ‘t Hart and John Uhr is part of the ‘Understanding Governance’ series published under the supervision of R. A. W. Rhodes by Palgrave Macmillan in 2011. The main focus of the volume lies around the problems of transition of power and how it is to be understood. The key elements of the analysis revolve around the two themes that shape the structure of the book. The articles chosen by the two editors are written in a very concise and direct manner using a large quantity of data and examples dealing with issues such as the role of elites during transitions, norms and standards during transitions, accountability of leaders and the consolidation of power during leadership change.

The volume does not benefit from an introduction as such. However, the editors stress in the first chapter the importance of concepts such as peaceful transition of power, the importance of holding free and fair elections for the health of a democratic system, rotation of power and the role of leadership. These issues are addressed from an Australian and North American perspective by authors with a homogeneous background in political science, government and sociology, in order to have an exact image of the transition process in the Westminster system.

The major strength of the book lies in the selection of the articles, which give the reader a glimpse of the complex dimension of the transition of power, the importance of holding free and fair elections for the health of a democratic system, rotation of power and the role of leadership. These issues are addressed from an Australian and North American perspective by authors with a homogeneous background in political science, government and sociology, in order to have an exact image of the transition process in the Westminster system.

The variety of topics covered in the book is impressive, ranging from the role of elites during transitions to the accountability of leaders. The articles are well-researched and provide a wealth of data and examples that help to illustrate the key themes of the book. The editors have done a good job of selecting a diverse range of articles that cover different aspects of transition of power, from the role of elites to the accountability of leaders.

One drawback of the book is the absence of a conclusion by the editors, which would have given a fuller structure to the volume, making it possible to assess whether its goals have been attained. This also leaves the conclusion to the reader, thus making the volume even more oriented to the trained reader.

Another issue that can be raised is the one-sided approach, since the authors focus exclusively on the Westminster model of government. The volume would have greatly benefited from a different perspective which could have offered a completely new understanding of the issue.

How Power Changes Hands represents an interesting collection of studies aimed at the trained reader rather than neophytes in the fields of governance and democratic practices. The volume benefits from a good linkage of ideas as it explores exclusively one model. Overall, it represents a useful study for the experienced reader in governance and democratic processes, widening their perspective of the Westminster model.

Teodora Maria Daghie (University of Bucharest)


Mafias on the Move presents an innovative multi-case study which seeks to explain how and why criminal organisations are able to transplant their operations to areas far from their traditional locales. Contrary to mainstream explanations which assume that the motives for legal and illegal corporations in a globalised world are the same, Federico Varese’s account reveals that the transplantation of criminal organisations rests less upon a globalised economy and more upon a particular arrangement of structures within local markets.

In chapter 1, Varese outlines the mainstream scholarship on why criminal organisations attempt to expand beyond their traditional territory. This research finds that the de-territorialisation of the state that has accompanied the forces of globalisation offers the same opportunities to illegal organisations as it does to legal global businesses. In chapter 2, Varese identifies distinct narratives that can be found in the traditional research and he seeks to apply these assumptions to three historical case pairings. These narratives assume transplantation where there is a generalised migration from areas with a high level of mafia activity, migrations that include people with specific skills (in these cases, ‘mafia skills’) and/or where migrations are the result of voluntary or involuntary pressures.

Chapters 3–5 comprise sets of case studies which show cases in which a particular criminal organisation was successful or unsuccessful in its efforts at transplantation. Varese discusses the ‘Ndrangheta’s expansion into Piedmont (successful) and Veneto (unsuccessful), the Russian mafia in Rome (unsuccessful) and Hungary
(unsuccessful), and the Sicilian Mafia in New York City (successful) and Rosario, Argentina (unsuccessful). Each pairing produces some very strong hypotheses which are then tested, as to the extent of Triad infiltration into China (chapter 6). The final chapter revisits the initial inquiry into mafia expansion and offers new insights into the potential for organised crime to expand operations successfully into new markets.

Far from embracing the traditional concepts, the transcendence of sovereignty facilitates criminals, but not for the same reasons one might expect: globalisation affects the way in which criminal organisations operate, but not necessarily where they operate. When mafiosi are present in a given market, the success of transplantation relies on the presence of existing mechanisms for regulating rapidly expanding markets. In the absence of existing state (or pre-existing local mafia) control over suddenly expanding markets, mafias may be able successfully to mobilise their skills and resources to establish new crime families in the receiving state.

Christopher M. Brown
(Arcadia University, Pennsylvania)

General Politics


This book seeks to explain the origins of the current financial crisis by delving into the locus of its origination – at least its apparent origination: sub-prime mortgages. Even though the book is definitely engaging in what Dymski called an ‘urban problematic’ of ‘Subprime Cities’ (p. 304), its chapters provide an understanding of the workings and logic of the mortgage market in general, its securitisation and its innovations, as well as of the secondary market which eventually evolved into a catalyst of the asset bubble in housing. So while the role of race, ethnicity and urban space is central, the book should be viewed as a pathfinder effort to try to understand, through an interdisciplinary lens, the transformation of the mortgage market in the post-Fordism era, especially the last two decades, and its contribution to the current crisis.

Written from a critical social science perspective, all the authors try to place their analysis in a wider context of historical and social dynamics, governmental actions and restructuring of the financial sector without compromising the analysis of the economics of the financialisation of the housing market, especially its sub-prime version, and the linkages between liquidity offered by global financial markets and local markets of ‘spatial fixity’. So through this holistic analysis of the workings of the financialised housing market, the reader clearly understands how high finance is linked with everyday life, transforming its modalities, and how state actions paved the way for such a transformation.

The chapters focus on the US mortgage market – only one chapter looks at the UK and another examines the continental European housing markets – leaving ample space and incentive for future research. A shared perspective of the authors which is worth underlining is that mortgage markets, while supposedly symbolising the possibility of extension of social welfare through markets, instead became the latest venue for households’ exploitation (p. 293).

In conclusion, the book illuminates the ‘urban political economy’ (p. 5) of the housing market, its financialisation and its dynamics, and its chapters have merit both for their empirical data as well as for their theoretical and analytical discussions. Even though some concepts need more elaboration and sophistication – as is the case with any attempt to explore new fields or examine old fields with new lenses, this book should be viewed as a promising attempt to bridge dialogues between different social science disciplines. So its reading will benefit not only economic geographers, but also sociologists, political scientists and, dare we say, economists.

Cleio Politof
(Panteion University, Athens)


Thinking about how media might manage the wider public’s perception of politics is a very timely topic, as the recent debates concerning Zero Dark Thirty illust-
BOOK REVIEWS

The books under review deliver savvy investigations into the contours and the formation of specific media products. Boyd-Barrett et al. aim to analyse the various forms of representation of the CIA (as an iconic reference point for intelligence) in Hollywood movies over time. Their main interest is to elucidate whether such movies with references to or portrayals of CIA work are ‘either providing support to or subverting elite definitions of what the institution of the CIA represents’ (p. 5). Going through five decades (1960s to 2000s) of moviemaking, the book presents analyses of samples of all movies attributable to this genre. Each chapter (the 2000s get rather extensive treatment) is filled with lucid interpretations of a decade’s selected movies bound together by specific threads of inquiry.

This considerable effort to systematise insights is one of the great strengths of the book. Indeed, the importance assigned to the historico-political context, the differentiation made between (depictions of) the CIA as an institution and movie protagonists working for the agency as well as the attention given to the tonality of the CIA coverage prove to be very useful analytical tools. From the low, rather benign profile the CIA had in Hollywood movies during the 1960s to the outrage, criticism and ambivalence of the 1970s, to the 2000s’ uptick in movies representing the CIA as most often competent but morally dubious, the volume provides a very convincing account of how and why movie themes and narratives may have evolved the way they did.

There is a downside, however. Although the authors know that they are in the interpretive business (p. 23), they try to establish a kind of objectivist facade through sampling, coding, calculating and the interspersed reporting of technical details. Such exercise and all the technical prose nevertheless cannot hide the fact that what they are offering are interpretations. One would have wished for a more self-confident methodological handling of this situation. Second, the authors are not shy regarding their normative take on Hollywood as an ideological weapon with supposedly little ‘scope for intellectual originality and dissidence’ (p. xiv). This is puzzling (occasionally even irksome), not least given that one of their study’s results is the surprising regularity of Hollywood movies criticising the CIA (p. 180). Despite this, the book is to be highly recommended for academics as well as a wider audience such as regular moviegoers.

Sarah Maltby’s conceptually dense study focuses on how the (British) military sets out to steer war coverage by the media these days. It needs to be stressed that the overall account given is surprisingly fresh. The author achieves this through the introduction of conceptual tools provided by Erving Goffman and an ethnographically oriented research design. Based on the observation that the ‘mediatisation’ of war coverage is about the multiple mutual accommodations between military and media, the book defines as its core interest the ‘ways in which militaries understand, organize and execute war actions in and through the media’ (p. 5). The specific usefulness of Goffman’s work is clearly visible through its differentiation between a public ‘front region’ where dramaturgies are staged and a ‘back region’ where such strategies are devised and access is restricted. It is most often the ‘back region’, as Maltby shows, where a dynamic of competition between military and media can lead to unexpected outcomes. A second strength of the book is that it is based upon a decade of ethnographic research in the British military and media. Hence, its promise is indeed to make transparent and comprehensible the very understandings of military actors.

While the book succeeds in providing a useful account of Media Operations, that is, the British organisational setting, and the rationales for employing tools such as ABC (Answer.Bridge.Communicate.) and LTT (Lines To Take), etc., the benefits reaped from the ethnographic method are not so clear at first sight. This might be due to the manner in which the results are presented (and hence, most probably secrecy considerations). However, it poses a considerable difficulty for the reader to reconstruct what military actors have said and done when all this material is rather buried in chapters that could have easily passed for purely conceptual ones. Of course, one can learn from the end-notes where empirical material has been incorporated, but the gap is still felt. Nevertheless, what Maltby provides is highly informative and likely to spur further debate. The book can be read as a valuable contribution to enhance the strategic literacy of media people and the public, too. What if ‘honesty moves’ on behalf of the military are primarily used for strategic ‘counter-uncovering’ purposes? How should media handle this? How does the public relate to such mediatisation?

Alexander Brand

(Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany)
This immense handbook gathers 47 chapters into twelve thematic sections (on, among others, public opinion, social impacts, security, public and social movements). As its title indicates, it is the societal dimension that leads all essays, and not climate itself or scientific data.

But first, some teachers might wonder whether this collection of cutting-edge essays is ‘for’ or ‘against’ climate change; in other words, do the contributors all believe in human-induced climate change? In response, Riley Dunlap and Aaron McCright’s chapter 10 investigates ‘Organized Climate Change Denial’ in a balanced, documented way, relying more on argumentation than numbers (p. 144). Elsewhere, Clive Spash’s essay raises a critique of carbon trading, reminding us that ‘regulatory instruments (whether taxes, permits, or direct regulation) are not neutral politically or ideologically’ (p. 558). Nowadays, the focus remains too centred on economic and measurable dimensions: ‘economists pursue efficiency as a narrow, professionally defined, technical matter, which then becomes a dominant form of discourse, negating other concerns’ (p. 558). With this sort of conclusion, it is clear that the focus of this timely book is on the societal and socio-logical aspects of climate change.

A handbook is usually made to gather new ideas and emerging concepts, for instance ‘mobilization by fear’, as discussed in Susanne Moser and Lisa Dilling’s chapter 11 which argues that ‘communicators must temper their own temptation to persuade with fear by recognizing that issues have attention cycles’ (p. 165). A recurrent idea in many chapters is the scientific and political influence of non-governmental actors in this process. Many chapters address issues that have been questioned for a long time: for example Andrew Szasz asks: ‘Is Green Consumption Part of the Solution?’ (p. 594). Among the richest contributions commissioned for this comprehensive handbook, Paul Harris’ ‘Reconceptualizing Global Governance’ recognises that despite decades of negotiations between governments about carbon dioxide, emissions remain high; he proposes new ethical concepts such as ‘international environmental justice’ and ‘cosmopolitan justice’ (p. 640).

For graduate students in search of a topic or theoretical background for their thesis on climate change (either in social science, environmental studies, governance or science), this handbook will provide many emerging ideas and interesting approaches. But more importantly, this excellent handbook would be most helpful for academics and researchers in science and engineering who think they have already mastered the social dimensions of climate change because they have read a couple of articles; they would really learn a lot here.

Yves Laberge
(CenrÈRE, UQAM and Université Laval, Canada)


The Political Responsibilities of Everyday Bystanders is an ambitious book which aims to chart the political responsibilities of bystanders, not only as individuals but also in the broader context of their responsibilities as members of cultural, social, economic, religious and political institutions. The book’s focus is on bystanders to severe violence – people who hold a position of privilege relative to those in the world who suffer from severe violence, namely ‘hunger, poverty, famine, civil war, wards of conquest and invasion, epidemics, pandemics, and genocide’ (p. 1) – rather than perpetrators or collaborators, and it considers acts of severe violence that are products of institutional structures rather than the actions of individuals.

Stephen Esquith successfully engages with contemporary moral and political thinking about the responsibilities of individuals in an interconnected world, and builds on this theory to unpack how bystanders to severe violence can understand and accept their political responsibilities. The book challenges bystanders to consider how institutions, of which they are members, may cause or contribute to severe violence, how they may have benefited from such violence and what responsibilities they may have to remedy the continuing injustices that flow from it. In practice, the author suggests that bystanders’ understanding of their responsibilities is best explored with the help of citizen-
teachers. To him, citizen-teachers are educators in a position to help bystanders understand their responsibilities and their capacity as democratic citizens to alter the institutional structures that permit or perpetuate severe violence.

While at first reading this appears to be a rather convoluted approach to moral reasoning, the author’s exploration of a number of case studies demonstrates how artistic re-enactment of severe violence and the formation of ‘democratic acquaintanceships’ between bystanders and victims, facilitated and moderated by citizen-teachers, might allow bystanders to empathise with victims and begin a ‘critical discursive engagement over causes and allocations of benefits of severe violence’ (p. 207). Esquith suggests that it is through this critical dialogue that bystanders can situate themselves within the institutional frameworks that cause or contribute to severe violence and act to alter those structures.

By exploring the responsibilities of everyday bystanders Esquith’s book makes a valuable contribution to contemporary debate on moral and political responsibilities. It broadens considerations of responsibility beyond the moral or legal guilt of individuals or institutions and highlights important moral and political considerations for democratic citizens as bystanders to severe violence. It is a practical guide for moral thinkers, educators and democratic citizens themselves to explore the responsibilities of bystanders and their capacity to act as agents for positive change.

Sarah Falkiner
(University of Melbourne)


Fischer and Gottweis have assembled a remarkable book which makes a very real contribution not only to the critical policy studies literature but also to wider political analysis in general. A weighty edited collection, the volume follows in the scholarly footsteps of The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning (1993) (also co-edited by Fischer), building upon and supplementing its assertion of policy arguments, not outputs, as the starting point of analysis. In doing so it develops and advances the scope of the argumentative direction in policy studies via the expansion of the former book’s emphasis on argumentation to incorporate key post-publication developments. Specifically, it takes account of the manner in which the argumentative approach, initially heavily indebted to Jürgen Habermas’ critical theory, ‘has converged with other developments in the social sciences focused on discourse, deliberation, social constructivism, and interpretive method’ (p. 1). As the editors list, this collection thereby includes ‘contributions based on discourse analysis, deliberative democracy, collaborative planning, interpretive frame analysis, discursive institutionalism, new media, performativity in rhetorical argumentation, narration, images and pictures, semiotics, transformative policy learning, and more’ (p. 7).

This plurality points to both the strength and usefulness of those approaches which fall under the overarching rubric of the titular ‘turn’, but also points to the inherent tensions therein, making for something of a ‘spiky’ shared space within which they can all fit. There is a key division, for example, between what can be broadly branded as deliberative and agonist approaches to argumentative analysis. This is not something the book’s contributors shy away from. Indeed, part of what makes this work so valuable is that, in drawing together these different authors and theories, a great emphasis has been placed upon not only laying out research tools but also explicating the philosophical, ontological basis of each approach and their subsequent analytical differences and points of conflict.

The chapters are theoretically rigorous – the authors score well on the intellectual duty of the analyst to ‘show one’s workings’ – and consequently this is an extremely valuable book, providing a greater insight into certain perspectives than has previously existed. Vivien Schmidt’s excellent chapter on ‘Discursive Institutionalism’, for example, provides the clearest detailing of her perspective’s underlying ontology yet without becoming lost in abstraction. Personally I would have liked a final, summarising chapter to draw everything together, but overall the quality of the work collected means this has ‘classic text’ written all over it.

David S. Moon
(University of Bath)

This is an interesting book and one that is going to be widely discussed. In fact the book has already been debated and several 'response pieces' have been written. The main claim in the work is that the social sciences and its practitioners can be divided into two groups, each having their distinct culture and consequently different views on what good social science is, and how good social science is conducted. One group, the quantitative culture, relies on numbers and regression analysis and a probabilistic view of causality. The other group, the qualitative culture, relies on in-depth case studies, process tracing and a necessary/sufficient condition view on causality.

The book is organised in four sections, each including three to four chapters. The sections cover various aspects of causal models and inference, within-case analysis, concepts and measurements and research design and generalisation. The chapters are clearly and well written and they contrast what the authors believe are the standard operation procedures in the quantitative culture to their set theoretic version of the qualitative culture. This reviewer found the discussion of scope in chapter 16 particularly interesting. Surprisingly the authors do not include what have been labelled interpretivist accounts in their discussion, mainly because these accounts usually do not attempt to make causal claims. This might suggest that the authors believe that the social sciences should focus on causal claims, but we are never told whether this is in fact their position.

The main point that will cause – and already has caused – debate is whether the sociological truth that different research practices can be found in the social sciences can be translated to an epistemological or even ontological truth. The fundamental arguments elucidate three primary missions of intelligence: information collection and analysis, counter-intelligence, and covert action. The approach is to weave into the debate the wider dilemmas posed by the existence of secret government organisations in 'open' societies. The topics of discussion of the finer points illuminate difficult questions such as why intelligence organisations make mistakes in assessing world events; why some intelligence officers decide to work against their own country on behalf of foreign regimes; and how agencies succumb to scandals, including spying on the citizens they are meant to protect.

This well-written book succeeds not only in these goals but also in ameliorating the potential complexity of issues for students and general readers with a list of figures, glossary of terms, endnotes underpinning rigorous scholarly research, suggested readings and an index. It offers an innovative overview of the issues, theories and themes that constitute both the study and practice of intelligence by linking them coherently.
The arguments are plausible in describing the basic intelligence functions as well as the challenge of accountability. These are supported by examples offering the relationship between information and decisions, albeit restricted to the domestic American experience, and omitting comparison with other countries. It makes its contribution by plausibly showing how the quality of information before a decision maker can be a significant determinant of success or failure. It advises scholarly researchers or practitioners engaged in intelligence to seek to know more about information, where it comes from, its accuracy, how it can be used and what might be done to improve its reliability and timeliness. Johnson concludes by encouraging further study, government reforms and safeguards of national security intelligence to prevent the misuse of this secret power. That is the balance between security and liberty.

Glen Segell
(Institute for National Security Studies)


Two questions lie at the heart of The Political Marketing Game: what works in political marketing and what is the impact on our democracy? Drawing on insights gleaned from an extensive range of interviews, Lees-Marshment’s monograph is packed full of fascinating reflections from practitioners. The book focuses much more on the first question, devoting chapters to the role played by market analysis, strategic development, leadership, different marketing techniques, communication and managing delivery.

To reinforce the main findings, each chapter ends with a series of tables listing the dos and don’ts. The prescriptive list ensures at times that the book has the feel more of a manual than an academic treatise. That description is not designed to belittle the contents of the book. Indeed, packed full of practical advice, this book will be a bible for political operatives to be kept close at hand for frequent reference.

Lees-Marshment offers sagacious views on, inter alia, the importance of investing in detailed research and acting on the uncomfortable findings, building and maintaining a strong political organisation, providing vision and principle, and offering clear, simple and deliverable pledges.

The Political Marketing Game will not appeal to the palate of all political scientists. It does not engage systematically with a body of literature showing the weaknesses of other approaches and the merits of the author’s; rather, this is a distillation of Lees-Marshment’s research, weaving the thoughts and insights of scholars and practitioners into an account of what political marketing is, why it is important, how it should be conducted and ultimately what works.

The final chapters of the monograph are devoted to the second question posed. Lees-Marshment argues that political marketing can be consistent with the improvement of a democracy as it can foster improved communication, enhanced representation and leaders who listen, and can increase honesty about delivery potential and progress. She takes this further by forwarding her ‘theory’ of a ‘partnership democracy’ (p. 223) in which the linkage between voters and citizens is strong and effective.

Few genuine democrats would dispute the benefits of ‘partnership democracy’, but after finishing The Political Marketing Game readers may ask whether such a vision will come to fruition and if not, why not? Although Lees-Marshment does not answer that question, her book provides a wealth of insights into political marketing and merits a place on the bookshelves of political scientists as well as practitioners.

Tim Haughton
(University of Birmingham)


In Insuring Security: Biopolitics, Security and Risk, Luis Lobo-Guerrero offers the first of a three-volume project into the world of contemporary insurance. Lobo-Guerrero approaches insurance as a mechanism of security; one considered by its redrawing of geopolitical divides between countries and by its blurring of the distinction between public authority and private entrepreneurship in stabilising, extending and adapting to new problems in the development of neo-liberal society. Of central importance for Lobo-Guerrero is situating human life itself within the myriad of insurance technologies scrutinised.

The book achieves its goals by examining the deployment of insurance as an epistemic object which
makes uncertainty fungible, rendering the future calculable as an object of governance. In the first chapter, the author offers a fascinating insight into the development of insurance in the thirteenth century. He documents how the birth of insurance was complicated by both ethical and technological issues. Of particular note in this chapter is the entanglement of insurance with religious arguments around pastoral power and doctrine around usury. At the same time, Lobo-Guerrero’s narrative extends into insurance’s underpinning by the importation of Hindu counting systems into Europe.

This concern not just with how insurance developed technologically but also with the sites of authority that insurance implicates and ethical questions around how life is to be governed are key themes developed throughout the book. Subsequent chapters act as case studies, offering rigorous descriptions of the problem spaces in which insurance applies itself in the contemporary period. In the third chapter, Lobo-Guerrero’s attention turns to genetic discourse in which life insurance is inscribed. This microscopic constitution of subjectivity is found to feed into broader geopolitical scales in later chapters. Particularly engaging here are the cases of piracy in Somalia and kidnap and ransom insurance in Mexico. Across the different situations described, it is argued that life is increasingly known by its economic valuation, which must itself be conceptualised by its entanglement with moral and ethical issues.

At the same time as seeping into new domains of application, that which is valued as life under the insurer’s guise simultaneously excludes or devalues other forms of life. What is argued in the conclusion is that subjectivity must be grasped as a multiple entity, one that is attended to by insurance mechanisms which in themselves operate as a heterogeneous ensemble of practices and rationalities.

Nathaniel O’Grady
(University of Durham)


This book offers a comprehensive overview of the different dimensions of policies aimed at influencing the size, structure and health of a population. It starts (ch. 2) with a discussion of the main demographic developments the world is confronted with: the demographic transition to lower fertility, involving ageing and under-fertility in some regions; continued growth in other (mostly the world’s poorest) regions; international migration; decreasing mortality; and changes in global health. The book focuses on how policies affect and respond to demographic developments. John May discusses the institutional and political developments in the last 60 years (ch. 4), on the international stage (ch. 5) and policies made by states to influence their demographic outcomes both in the developing world (ch. 6) and the developed world (ch. 7).

It is easy to see that May has the advantage of years of work in the field: this is not a book by a demographer on demography, but by a World Bank demographer on the social, economic, demographic, religious and moral dimensions of population policies. The range of problems, angles and literature covered is impressive. In this broad approach lie the originality and contribution of this book. People interested not only in describing but understanding and perhaps even changing demographic developments (ch. 9) need the combination of an interdisciplinary approach and a realistic view of the political obstacles for change. May, apart from constantly drawing attention to the reasons why policy makers should take an interest in population, offers a sharp analysis of obstacles and constraints on (but also opportunities for) influencing demographic developments.

Of course, the large variety of topics and perspectives comes at some cost of depth and detail. Although sufficient to get a much better understanding of demographic policies, the book could be seen as a starting point, introducing the developments, relevant questions and mechanisms at work. Causes, consequences and policy variables of demographic shifts are explained clearly and illustrated by the 22 case studies offered throughout the book. The author avoids overly technical terminology, and explains the development in a way that is accessible to readers less versed in the literature. In addition, all the chapters are richly referenced, allowing the reader to explore the issues in greater detail. These features of the book make each chapter a good introduction to an element of population policies, both for policy-oriented demographers as well as for social scientists or policy makers interested in population policies.

Tim Meijers
(UCL – Université Catholique de Louvain)

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This entertaining study by the new Montague Burton Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics might have been better titled Not Really at Home with the Diplomats. It blends history with ethnography and auto-ethnography, benefiting from Neumann’s extensive personal access to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as a planner and adviser and then as Director of Research at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, and his personal struggles to come to terms with the oddities of diplomatic and bureaucratic practice. During his time with the MFA, Neumann admits, he drafted the wrong kind of speech, ordered the wrong catering and at times chafed against modes of behaviour unsuited to an academic temperament.

This is, in short, a fascinating book. Like R. A. W. Rhodes’ equally amusing and enlightening Everyday Life in British Government,1 it reaches parts of bureaucracies other studies cannot reach, demonstrating very effectively the power of ethnography as an approach for political scientists. After a scene-setting introduction, the first two chapters give genealogies of permanent diplomacy and foreign ministries, leavened with tales of the particular experience of Norway’s MFA. The next three look at diplomatic ‘knowledge production’, the roles diplomats play and who diplomats are, with special reference to gender and class.

Neumann traces the process of diplomatic speech writing, finding that such utterances are bland and unchanging because they are produced by practices that emphasise the need for consensus, not analytical edge. He ruminates on the self-perception of diplomats as negotiators par excellence and ponders the intellectual gymnastics they perform in separating private views from official lines. He dwells at length on the one social change that appears to have had any impact on the workings of MFAs in recent years: the push for gender equality.

The success of ethnography often depends on access – and Neumann was clearly granted a great deal. But it also depends on what the ethnographer brings to the site of research. Having served as a soldier, interpreter, part-time diplomat and scholar, Neumann has extensive experience to draw upon. The result is a study of undoubted originality, but one that – as even its author admits in the conclusion – lacks a degree of sympathy for its subject.

Note
1 Oxford University Press, 2011.

Ian Hall
(Australian National University)


This edited volume endeavours to redefine what advocacy non-governmental organisations (NGOs) want and how they try to achieve their goals. In the introductory chapter, the editors state that the literature has treated NGOs differently from firms, emphasising the normative goals that drive these organisations. According to the editors, NGOs are not that different from firms. While they may have liberal normative goals, their instrumental strategies with regard to organisational survival and growth are similar to those of firms and they try to gather resources, compete and cooperate with other NGOs strategically in the same way that firms do. Other chapters provide empirical evidence for this collective action approach by analysing various advocacy NGOs. The chapters in the first part concentrate on issues related to the emergence and structure of advocacy organisations; those in the second part look at these organisations’ tactics and strategies; the third part focuses on advocacy in the international context; and the fourth part includes both a concluding chapter by the editors and a critique of the collective action approach for analysing advocacy NGOs, in order to stir a debate and test the validity of the book’s argument when faced with counter-arguments.

This book overestimates the novelty of its approach to advocacy organisations. There is no uniform understanding of NGOs as naive normative actors. What most scholars emphasise fundamentally is that the goals of firms are different from advocacy organisations. These scholars are aware that NGOs act strategically and compete with other NGOs for funding. They know that NGOs do face collective action problems. After all, the whole literature that builds on Olson’s...
paradox addresses this problem. Thomas Risse, who offers a critique of the collective action approach in this book, rightly asserts that this approach does not offer an alternative but is complementary to the advocacy network literature. At the same time, he warns that the distinction between firms and NGOs remains strong as, unlike firms, NGOs’ ability to be influential in the policy process stems from authoritative knowledge, moral authority and legitimacy. The interest groups literature supports this argument as reputation seems to be far more important than political action committees (PACs) to gain access to and influence policy makers. Despite these criticisms, one can argue that this book provides an informative source which can substantiate our understanding of NGOs’ tactics and strategies to overcome problems and excel in a competitive market of NGOs looking to get funding and influence policy.

Direnç Kanol
(University of Siena)


This collection of essays reviews the recent (largely post-2000) work on laboratory and field experiments relating to corruption. The first five chapters focus primarily on laboratory experiments – reviewing evidence for the impact of gender and culture, the impact of anti-corruption strategies and for the applicability of lab findings for the real world. This is followed by chapters on field experiments covering vote buying and clientelism, the role of information in controlling corruption and an assessment of evidence on top-down vs. bottom-up anti-corruption strategies. The collection winds up with a review by Lansdorff which argues for the importance of reciprocity as a mechanism, rather than an exclusive focus on Homo Oeconomicus.

The collection is an excellent source guide for the most recent research, principally in economics, using experimental methods. It should be read by anyone with a serious interest in corruption and corruption control. But what they will get from it is, on the one hand, an appreciation of the inventiveness and rigour that marks much work in behavioural economics, and on the other, an object lesson in the failure of many economists to recognise the work of other disciplines, and to assume the superiority of their own approaches. One systematic failing in the collection is any attempt to define corruption and to distinguish types of corruption systematically, despite occasional references to the importance of doing so. Another is that it is not written for a general audience, and a great deal of its argument and justification remains within discipline, rather than genuinely engaging with other literatures and methodologies. The collection also fails to reflect critically (until Lansdorff’s conclusion – and reciprocity is a very broad brush) on how to model people’s agency and their choice environments so as to develop more systematic typologies of the way in which these vary.

What the collection does very well is to report an existing body of work and its associated agenda – that is certainly to be commended and is something that political scientists must now take into account. What it should encourage us to do is to think more systematically about how that agenda relates to other approaches within the fields of political science, law, sociology and anthropology. Corruption is a multifaceted problem and demands a similarly multifaceted analysis.

Mark Philp
(University of Oxford)


Music and Politics seeks to be neither a political reading of music nor a musical reading of politics. Rather, it starts from the admirable premise that the borders between the ‘realms of music and politics ... are largely illusionary’ (p. 1). Attempting to correct this, Street draws on political science and theory, popular music studies and sociology to consider a wide range of ways in which music and politics operate in conjunction. His acknowledged focus is popular music, although other forms are considered on occasion.

The first half of the book concentrates on liberal and institutional concerns, with chapters on censorship, music policy, representation, political participation and political organising. At their best, these chapters move beyond all-too-common platitudes that see music as a
good in and of itself, acknowledging the ways in which music is constituted by and simultaneously constitutes political contexts. At their worst, they reinforce simplistic narratives and fail to reveal ideological sleights of hand such as Robert Putnam’s claim that musical participation leads to social democracy (pp. 70–1). Such oversights also mean that the analysis frequently veers towards political readings of music rather than showing how music is always already political.

This imbalance is corrected in the latter half of the book, which becomes increasingly concerned with theoretical issues. Here, there are chapters on the role of music in creating ‘imagined communities’, the politics of aesthetic judgement, ideology and the way in which music embodies political convictions. These chapters skilfully advance the debate beyond an institutional framework, successfully showing how music ‘is politics’ (p. 173), and how it may point beyond – rather than merely play into – the status quo.

A key problem, however, is Street’s assertion of a division between the public and private spheres (p. 8), particularly as a number of the issues considered straddle this divide. Thus, Street can consider music’s role in forming national communities – but there is little on music’s power to (de)construct gender, sexual or racial identities. This may also explain the strikingly Eurocentric, masculine and heteronormative bias of the book: ‘formal’ politics has long been the terrain of these subjects and this carries across to the musical realm – only three of the 30 artists mentioned in the index are female.

These shortcomings notwithstanding, there is much to recommend Music and Politics. It is perhaps a book to dip into a chapter or two at a time rather than read cover to cover, but those who do will be rewarded with an accessible account of the centrality of music to political organisation.

David Bell
(University of Nottingham)


In The Harm in Hate Speech, Jeremy Waldron offers a convincing argument in favour of laws prohibiting hate speech. The central premise of the book is that hate speech undermines the equal dignity of individual members of vulnerable minorities. Contrary to the First Amendment absolutists, who view hate speech as a private act of expression that a liberal government should protect, Waldron understands hate speech and defamation as ‘actions performed in public, with a public orientation, aimed at undermining public goods’ (p. 100). Hate speech undermines, most importantly, inclusiveness, which according to Waldron is a central public good that every democratic society should sponsor and sustain.

Waldron explores the concept of ‘harm’ associated with ‘hate speech’ in terms of the damage it does to its targets and to the public good of inclusiveness. The main issue, he argues, is not what people think but the damage that what they say does to their direct targets, that is, to the members of vulnerable communities. Waldron brings the targets of hate speech into sharp focus and asks: ‘Can their lives be led, can their children be brought up, can their hopes be maintained and their worst fears dispelled in a social environment polluted [by hate speech]?’ (p. 33). These are the main concerns Waldron urges the defenders of ‘free speech’ to take into account while opposing the criminalisation of hate speech. While establishing his arguments, Waldron engages with a wide variety of legal and political theorists and offers a convincing response to objections to the regulation of hate speech as articulated by prominent legal theorists such as Ronald Dworkin and C. Edwin Baker.

The Harm in Hate Speech is a highly engaging and readable book. It presents various key concepts in political theory (such as dignity, harm, group defamation and the concept of well-ordered society) in a comprehensive and concise manner. Besides its theoretical focus, this book also offers a rich variety of ‘real life’ examples such as the public controversies over pornography, the ‘Osborne’ case, the Salman Rushdie case and the burka debates in contemporary multicultural societies. The concluding chapter examines early modern views of toleration as they bear on the regulation of hate speech. Although illuminating, this chapter does not make much contribution to the core arguments of the book. Having said that, this book is an essential read for students and scholars of political and/or legal theory at all levels.

Selen Ayirtman Ercan
(University of Canberra)

How has technology contributed to our living conditions? Altering power balances, decreasing expenses and transparency in both the public and private sector are the most obvious ways. According to Darrell West, high-speed broadband connection, new digital media and the Cloud System will gain power and facilitate our lives.

The author posits that, although the latest inventions have led to more accurate medical treatment results, because all hospitals have different kinds of IT system, it is often the case that incorrect or irrelevant results in the same treatment method occur. If there were just one IT system for the entire health care system then the data flow between hospitals would be much better than in the past and even lead to faster treatment periods.

By exemplifying such real-world incidents the author clearly shows the differences between the private and public sector in terms of efficient technology use. Based on up-to-date research results we are able to have vast information about countries and their use of technology. Moreover, the dissemination of news has become more democratic via blogs, wikis and the increasing use of social media, and consequently the consumption of printed news has decreased. Hence the news presented has become more objective as the gatekeepers who in the past selected news based on their own ideologies now have fewer opportunities to select which news is published in society. This has also caused a great loss in the power of giant news companies in the US, for example.

West ends the book by considering the security concerns of users and potential threats. He also draws attention to how the expenses of both the public and private sector can be reduced by facilitating cooperation between IT companies, which has been referred to as the ‘The Next Wave’. In 2009 in Los Angeles city employees voted to move their email service to Google’s Cloud System to lower costs, and this resulted in a real success. Thanks to the Cloud System, information is much more readily available than in the past, and the author also shows how users can use Cloud to ensure greater security.

To conclude, in this empirical work Darrell West informs the reader in a comprehensive manner about the policies and usage of information technology, and he shows how to handle difficulties while still innovating systems for use in both the public and private sectors.

Ugur Gokay Ortasoz (University of Lille)


This volume by Andrej Zwitter was published in the Routledge ‘Advances in International Relations and Global Politics’ series as part of a larger effort, aiming to provide a comprehensive analysis of the two important questions of terrorism and political violence, and to identify adequate responses to them. The core analysis is divided into the discussion of ‘Human Security and the Causes of Terrorism’ in the first part and ‘The Legal and Political Dimensions of Terror Prevention’ in Part II. These problems are tackled in a concise manner, and are followed by very useful appendices which complete the analysis of the volume.

From the beginning the author makes a clear statement about using the topic of human rights law within the concept of human security throughout the volume. The idea of using broad political and legal concepts in order to tackle these sensitive issues is bold, but the author manages to achieve this in an unbiased and comprehensive fashion. Despite being the follow-up of a doctoral thesis, the volume is well written and the analysis makes good reading for trained readers.

A minor point which has to be mentioned is that the volume would probably have benefited from a crossover chapter designed to make a smoother transition between the two main themes. In addition, while the somewhat one-sided approach gives the reader a holistic perspective on the Western liberal view of the topic, it would have been interesting to have more insights of what is done in other cultures.

To sum up, the book is well written and represents a good first appearance by the author in the academic world. The analysis does not shy away from challenging the conceptual, methodological and policy issues that attend the complexity of the study and the practice of
international relations. Zwitter has provided plenty of food for thought in his extremely erudite and thoughtful study of the ‘complexity’ in the complexity paradigm in world politics.

Andrei Alexandru Babadac
(Free University of Brussels – ULB)

Britain and Ireland


This book is an account of Andrew Adonis’ creation of the academies programme as policy adviser and Schools Minister under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. It is written informally for a general audience. The author makes a series of arguments in favour of academies and concludes with a ‘Manifesto for Change’: a proposal for the transformation of England’s school system which emphasises Teach First, academies, New Labour’s specialist schools and International Baccalaureate-style A levels.

The book offers a lucid, personal description of the frustrations and triumphs of academy promotion, peppered with examples. It includes musings on the prime ministership (p. 64), civil service (pp. 72–3) and relationship between universities and schools (p. 172), which may be of interest to scholars as well as to the general public. Adonis argues that the quality of a school’s leadership and governance is central to its success. He makes a good case for the importance of sixth forms, university sponsorship and high-quality teachers. In other parts of the book there are unresolved tensions. For instance, Adonis wants schools to become ‘community hubs’ but puts much more emphasis on chain academies than community free schools. All-ability intake is praised but so are selective grammar school sponsors.

There is something engagingly onomatopoeic about this book in that its style mirrors the author’s political conduct: the passionate, energetic writing displays genuine concern for children in failing schools, but sometimes steamrolls forward without engaging with opponents. Although the second half of the book responds to the argument that academies ‘cream off’ less challenging students (pp. 127–8) and acknowledges problems with certain academy sponsors, the book is insufficiently reflective on Teach First, religious sponsors and the appeal to private school philanthropy. Adonis’ case would be greatly strengthened if he could cite more than a smattering of anti-academy commentators (such as Melissa Benn, p. 45) and answer their concerns in more depth.

There is a sense, reinforced by the publication timing and frequent use of the first person, that Adonis is keen to wrest his legacy away from the current Education Secretary and proponent of academies, Michael Gove. The success of this endeavour is not assured. This book is highly readable but does not answer many critics or resolve tensions within the academy project. Although the book is generally ‘Good with some outstanding features’, by this measure it is ‘In need of improvement’.

Ursula Hackett
(University of Oxford)


This collection of essays edited by Arthur Aughey and Christine Berberich makes a highly valuable and scholarly contribution to a growing body of literature on the question of Englishness and English national identity. In a reflection of the increasing diversity and distinctiveness of the debate the editors have assembled a diverse and broad range of contributions that examine the ‘conversation’ on Englishness from the perspective of political science, history, sociology and literature. The book’s introductory and concluding chapters set out, convincingly, what the editors were trying to achieve through this work, which was to ‘show how England ... is full of many tales and that to write or speak of the “identity” of England at any one time is to write or speak of the conversation implied in those tales’ (p. 274).

The editors rely on two key ideas from the work of the English philosopher Michael Oakeshott as the analytical lens through which the book is framed: first, the Oakeshottian description of historical change, using the metaphor of the ‘dry stone wall’ ‘to conjure up how historical events are related to each other’ (p. 11). This is used by the editors to show how the ‘varieties of
Englishness stand in relation to one another and to the whole’ (p. 2). Second, they adapt Oakeshott’s idea of politics as a conversation to show how understanding Englishness in these terms is ‘an imaginative rather than a purely functional engagement ... where what is conversed about, explicitly, or implicitly, is the meaning of England itself’ (p. 2).

In addition to the editors’ introduction and conclusion, other chapters worth mentioning, because of their distinctiveness and scholarly contribution, are a chapter by Durham’s Julia Stapleton, an expert in British intellectual history, exploring the writings of Arthur Mee and G. K. Chesterton and the connection in their writings between a common religious inheritance and the English union; and a chapter by Patrick Parrinder exploring perspectives on Englishness in the work of Thomas Hardy and Philip Larkin. Furthermore, the chapters by the trio of academics from the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Hull exploring the left and Englishness (Beech), Gordon Brown and the negation of England (Lee) and the Englishness of Westminster (Norton) ensure that this collection of essays will be of interest to academics with a particular interest in British politics. Each chapter is well researched, lucidly argued and, overall, this edited collection of essays has the potential to be an essential reference point in the ongoing conversation about Englishness in the twenty-first century.

Peter Munce
(University of Hull)


Who were the Liberal Unionists? This question lies at the heart of Ian Cawood’s book, a history of the party from its origins in the Home Rule crisis in 1886 to its merger with the Conservatives in 1912. During this period, the Liberal Unionists were the decisive power in British politics, effectively ending the Liberal Party’s long-standing domination and granting the Conservatives a political pre-eminence into the early twentieth century. Yet for far too long scholars have viewed the Liberal Unionist Party as little more than a way station facilitating their reluctant but inevitable evolution into Tories. Cawood contests this interpretation with a study that gives the party its due as an independent force, one distinct from that of the Conservatives with whom they found themselves in an awkward partnership.

To do this, Cawood begins by reconstructing the emergence of the party as an independent grouping. He demonstrates that, contrary to earlier interpretations, the Liberal Unionists were an ideological cross-section of the Liberal Party, united in more than just their opposition to granting Ireland Home Rule. Priding themselves on their adherence to their principles, they chafed at William Gladstone’s efforts to compel party discipline and viewed their secession from the Liberals as a defence of their independence. Believing that their separation was only temporary, the Liberal Unionists were slow to develop their own party infrastructure. Here Cawood provides a detailed portrait of their efforts to maintain themselves as a viable political force, not just against the Liberals, but against their ostensible allies as well. This was complicated by the polarising presence of Joseph Chamberlain, whose radicalism fuelled uneasiness about his prominence. Yet it was Chamberlain’s embrace of the Conservatives and abandonment of the party machinery after the 1895 general election that proved the fatal blow, as the Liberal Unionists dwindled into increasing irrelevance from that point onward.

Cawood’s book offers a compelling argument for regarding the Liberal Unionists as an independent force in late nineteenth-century British politics. The book falls short, however, in its description of the party’s alliance with the Conservatives. Readers today might find this aspect of the party’s history of special interest, but Cawood does not explore it as effectively as he does other aspects of the party’s development in what is otherwise a solid, well-written work of political history; one that will likely remain the standard account of the Liberal Unionist Party for decades to come.

Mark Klobas
(Scottsdale Community College, Arizona)


The underlying claim of this book is that ‘Learning lessons from history is the most important task of
security professionals in the early part of the twenty-first century’ (p. xi). Although unsurprising when considering the editors’ historical profession, this volume provides a clear and convincing argument for closer attention by intelligence practitioners to the lessons of the past and offers a refreshing and relevant approach to the examination of British intelligence history.

The volume is introduced by Sir David Omand, the former Cabinet Office Intelligence and Security Coordinator, who analogises the work of the intelligence officer in discovering the secrets of the present to that of the historian discovering the secrets of the past. The work is then divided thematically into ten carefully selected case studies. First, in exploring organisation and structure, the former Secretary of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), Michael Herman, tackles the development of the intelligence apparatus post-1945, while Peter Gill considers the thorny issue of intelligence oversight. Robert Dover and Mark Phythian then examine the theme of political interference through the cases of arms to Iraq and Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD), respectively. Third, Matthew Jones, Richard Aldrich and Eunan O’Halpin analyse intelligence learning in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism through the cases of the British in Malaya and Northern Ireland. The final section of the book explores the use of intelligence in avoiding surprise. Former Foreign Office Chief Historian Gill Bennett offers a fresh interpretation of the Suez crisis, Len Scott considers the impact of intelligence during the Cuban Missile crisis, and the official historian of the JIC, Michael Goodman, analyses a report that assesses the intelligence community’s ability to predict and monitor acts of aggression.

Each chapter is insightful, readable and utilises an official document to demonstrate how lessons from the past can be drawn and used for informing contemporary policy concerns. Furthermore, extracts of the relevant document have been helpfully included at the end of each chapter for the reader’s own analysis, perhaps in recognition of the issues surrounding source interpretation.

Although the book could have been enhanced through further discussion of cumulative learning extending longitudinally across the case studies, it would also have been more beneficial to provide practical recommendations for entrenching the learning process into the intelligence community. Nonetheless, the volume offers a fascinating study of key events in British intelligence history and in so doing achieves its objective of being accessible to practitioners, academics and interested readers alike.

Louise Sullivan
(University of Nottingham)


This study is a welcome addition to Bryan Fanning’s previous work. The book draws on the expanding body of research on the experiences of immigrants and responses to immigrants in a country that has seen rapid demographic change in the past two decades. Fanning’s particular focus is on the role of social policy in formulating practices of ‘integration’, which in turn contribute to a notion of ‘social cohesion’ against a backdrop of security governance. He claims that a ‘core argument is that integration debates and goals cannot be meaningfully detached from the social inclusion goals understood to apply to Irish citizens’ (p. 2).

Using specific case studies and experiences of immigrants in concrete situations, the author, on the one hand, draws attention to the particular barriers experienced by immigrants that undermine and prevent their integration into Irish society. On the other hand, using Amartya Sen’s capabilities approach, he examines the dispositions and choices (human, social and cultural capital) of individuals or groups in the social context of such barriers. Using data drawn from a combined analysis of five studies in 2007 and 2008 into the well-being of children, families and neighbourhoods where the host Irish community are defined as socially excluded, the author ‘compares “socially included” immigrants with relatively low levels of social capital but high levels of human capital with “socially excluded” Irish neighbours who nevertheless had high levels of social capital’ (p. 39).

Understanding integration and social cohesion as social facts, governed by a security perspective of immigration, allows the author to explore intersections between social inclusion, integration, social capital and social cohesion in the Irish case in order to move towards a position of positive freedom and functional integration. He does this by successfully constructing
for the reader a foundational picture, through ‘numbers and statistics’ (p. 60), of the possibilities and potentialities for integration by immigrants. He then examines ‘the role of capabilities, social capital and cultural capital as distinct layers of resources that might facilitate functional integration’ (p. 81) through chapters such as ‘some immigrant lives’ (p. 81) and their ‘education and segregation’ (p. 106). His final chapters explore the complex understandings, boundaries and stratifications created by the Irish state in its attempt, and failure, to address social exclusion. This book clearly illustrates the effect of the security-immigration governance perspective that dominates Irish integration policy, and in turn makes pragmatic suggestions of how to address, and perhaps overcome, such exclusionary processes in the Irish case.

Jennifer Dagg
(National University of Ireland, Galway)


The Conservative Party was thoroughly rattled by its catastrophic election defeat of 1997, and academics have long been asking why it seemed so incapable of swiftly rectifying the situation in the sort of ruthlessly pragmatic way that had for so long brought the party electoral fortune. Bringing an excellent contribution to the expanding literature on this question, Richard Hayton has produced an astute account of the most recent period of opposition for the Conservative Party, bringing a new depth of focus to the explanation of change that occurred over the period.

Rather than favouring the restrictions of a chronological account, Hayton directs his argument around the key themes of European integration, national identity, social liberalism and economic policy. His findings may not be warmly welcomed at Number 10 (if one were to hope that insightful political science might make an appearance on the Cabinet Room bookshelves), concluding as he does that the neo-liberal inheritance of Thatcherism is still strongly felt in the Cameronite party. Yet Hayton does acknowledge that David Cameron has modernised the party to an extent, reconstructing its image in the eyes of the voter, and performing a nuanced statecraft which his predecessors in opposition failed to do. Hayton gives an interesting rehabilitation of Iain Duncan Smith, who may, with time, prove to have contributed more to the Conservative Party than was at first thought. He also recognises the more favourable political context in which Cameron was at first operating, with the fall of Tony Blair and onset of the economic crisis, yet he emphasises that this does not provide the whole explanation. Using the strategic relational approach as a theoretical framework, Hayton highlights that agential reading of the environment is paramount, and that William Hague, Iain Duncan Smith and Michael Howard all fell short in this regard, and remain largely responsible for the failure of their leadership to renew the party’s fortunes. Cameron, conversely, successfully negotiated his environment, working within rather than against the slipstream of Thatcherism to bring a neo-liberal agenda into the contemporary era. Hayton, however, underplays a number of sources for this revival that can be traced to actors operating below the radar and in the pre-Cameron era.

That said, with an argument strongly supported by a deep appreciation of primary policy documents and interviews with key actors, Hayton presents a solid description of a party both changed and not changed, in language that remains accessible to the everyday reader without compromising the theoretical integrity required by the discipline.

Martin Monahan
(University of Birmingham)


It is often claimed that within Scotland there exists a strong political commitment to promote social justice and equality. Mooney and Scott’s edited volume assesses the extent to which devolved social policy has reflected this egalitarian narrative. The book offers a timely assessment of Scottish social democracy today, and puts into context the challenges it will face in an uncertain future.

In a rigorous opening chapter, Alex Law provides a Weberian theorisation of the Scottish ‘sub-state’ as an institution that is limited by constitutional constraint but retains at the same time a significant degree of policy-making autonomy (ch. 2). This perspective
provides a useful framework through which to conceptualise the other contributions to the book.

The chapters assess, through ‘the lens of social justice’ (p. 257), a range of key policy areas and their relationship to inequality in Scotland. These include devolved anti-poverty strategy (ch. 4), approaches to labour market legislation (ch. 12) and the politics of preserving a distinctive education policy in the face of creeping marketisation (ch. 9). The essays suggest that while significant constraints on the Scottish government do exist, there remains considerable space under devolution within which more radical and egalitarian policies could be pursued (ch. 3). The fact that Scotland’s political classes have often failed to utilise these powers lays down a powerful challenge to any comfortable (and complacent) assertion that Scottish institutions unambiguously pursue ‘progressive’ policy outcomes.

While the essays treat political and constitutional constraints in a comprehensive manner, the treatment of ‘economic’ constraints remains unsatisfactory. This is in spite of the clear significance that the editors attach to the UK’s deepening fiscal crisis (p. 3). In their conclusion, for example, the editors speak somewhat mystically of the ‘winds’ of economic change (p. 258), as if the politics of austerity are somehow ‘external’ to questions of social justice. In reality, progressive social policy – such as enhanced spending on welfare and social services – can offer clear counter-cyclical benefits during a recession, as well as providing a clear political alternative to the logic of neo-liberal restructuring. A more detailed treatment of the political economy of welfare provision in Scotland would have greatly enhanced the volume’s critical weight.

Nevertheless, the book’s overall contribution is of unquestionable value. The essays themselves are thorough and clear, and each is followed by an extensive list of further reading. The volume will be of great use to anyone researching the state of social policy in the UK’s rapidly evolving constitutional settlement.

Scott Lavery
(University of Sheffield)


Early in this book Caroline Morris observes that electoral law is at the margins of both law and political science. Yet post-election legal challenges to results through the use of election petitions are on the increase in the UK. In recent years, for example, there have been successful petitions against postal vote fraud in Birmingham and, most high profile, against former Labour MP and Minister Phil Woolas. Petitions have been raised, often successfully, against candidates from all major and some minor parties. A parallel development has seen increasing interest in electoral integrity more generally. This book is therefore a timely intervention. Morris raises important issues including: the relationship between electoral law and candidacy; the extent to which parties’ internal candidate selection processes should be governed by law; and whether this should be by standards of contract or public law; the need for reform of the election petitions system; and how a representative may legally be removed from office for misconduct.

Particularly valuable are Morris’ thoughts on whether parties should be seen as private or public organisations in law. Typically, political scientists and law scholars have treated them as the former. However, with increasing regulation and oversight of parties in the UK through a number of legal instruments, Morris argues that parties should be subject to standards of public law instead. If so, this raises a number of interesting future questions for how political scientists should perceive and theorise parties in the UK.

Two areas warrant more discussion in Morris’ treatment of these issues, however, one small and the other considerably larger. First, how does candidacy for the devolved institutions fit with the picture she has addressed? While Westminster may have powers over these issues, to what extent does this apply to the Scottish Parliament or the Welsh and Northern Irish Assemblies? More on this would have been welcome. Second, electoral law is a complex area, which focuses not just on candidates and representatives, but also on who is eligible to register and cast a vote, how they do so, and the placing of statutory obligations on returning officers. Addressing this was not the intention, of course. Nonetheless, a companion volume addressing these wider issues would be an equally valuable resource for public lawyers, political scientists and all those interested in electoral integrity in the UK. In the meantime, the current book is a valuable and recommended intervention, making strong and commendable arguments for electoral law reform.

Alistair Clark
(University of Newcastle)
Given the seemingly inexorable onward march of the personalisation agenda, despite the new challenges to public service delivery, Catherine Needham’s account of how personalisation came to be such a dominant concept in public policy could not be more timely. Needham tells the story of how the campaign by independent living activists in the previously backwater area of social care has, with the work of ‘policy entrepreneurs’ selling its benefits to policy makers from the New Right and subsequently the New Left in search of an ‘emotionally resonant’ way of explaining their reforms, given rise to an entire philosophy of delivering public services. The rapid spread of the concept, Needham argues, lies in its malleability and ability to reconcile (or at least appear to reconcile) a range of traditional tensions in public policy: it can be presented as a way of meeting previously unmet needs without additional cost, and likewise as a radical change in public service delivery, but one whose appeal lies in its timeless common sense.

While insisting on the impossibility of defining personalisation, the author nevertheless provides a wide-ranging and accessible guide to how it can vary along its different dimensions, meaning that Personalising Public Services will play an invaluable role as an introductory student text as well as shaping the debate among scholars.

Needham’s analysis flits between discussions of the particular mechanism of personal budgets in social care to personalisation as a broader political and organisational agenda, in a way that feels a little unsatisfactory at times, with the grounds for extrapolation from the former to the latter not always clear. However, given that the narrative itself often makes broad claims about personalisation based on anecdotal evidence relating to specific projects, this is perhaps understandable. Similarly, while focusing on social care is sensible, given that this is where personalisation first took hold, comparison with the development of the agenda in other areas – discussed only briefly – might have offered Needham greater scope for exploring how the personalisation narrative further evolves as it is applied more widely, and thus reduced her account’s dependence on personal budgets.

This text will likely become a key reference point for future debate over both the impact of the agenda itself and how personalisation can be best understood. Although Needham’s claim that personalisation is first and foremost a narrative of public service reform is largely convincing, the analysis deconstructs the concept in such a way that it could well serve as a starting point for those seeking an approach which allows it to be systematically operationalised and evaluated, raising the prospect of an exciting debate over the nature of the concept in the coming years.

Dan Heap
(Edinburgh University Social Policy Group)


This volume examines the role played by the most senior public servant in the Foreign Office. In a series of insightful studies of several Permanent Under-Secretaries (PUS), the reader is introduced to a less visible but frequently important influence on British policy making from the time of the Crimean War to just after the Second World War. This work is, therefore, a useful addition to our knowledge about British foreign policy in the last years of European supremacy. It has achieved, as the authors assert, the aim of moving ‘the PUS at the Foreign Office into the foreground of historical analysis’ (p. 258).

Obviously, the most important relationship that defined the effectiveness of the men who occupied the office of PUS was the one with their political masters, the Foreign Secretaries. The influence that the PUS exercised was defined, in large measure, by that official’s perception of his own responsibilities and the level of trust he was prepared to give to another. In the most extreme case, that of Lord Palmerston, the PUS at the time, Edward Hammond, was more influenced by than influencing foreign policy. In the end, longevity (he served nineteen years as PUS) served him well, for it allowed him to mould his office into something substantially greater than when he assumed it. His successors, even when unsuccessful in putting their own mark on the post, rested their authority on what Hammond had created. In some cases, individual expertise, such as that which Sir Eyre Crowe or Sir William Tyrell possessed on Germany, further elevated their profile. That
so many of the PUS had recognised expertise on the Eastern Question (seven of the twelve in this book) reflects its significance in British policy.

The extent of the PUS’ influence on policy was also circumscribed by personality. Tensions, such as existed between Anthony Eden and Sir Robert Vansittart (1930–37), are already well known, but that case underscores the intensely personal nature of the relationship. On the other hand, the pragmatic Thomas Sanderson’s (1894–1906) emphasis on a smooth-running ministry easily complemented Lord Lansdowne’s drive to reform the Foreign Office and so he is generally acknowledged as one of the most successful PUS.

A volume such as this harks back to the age of the diplomatists, when policy was reputed to have been less beholden to public opinion. What is clear, however, is that the quest for a ‘consistent and coherent line’, to employ Vansittart’s words, was common throughout the era under study. The ever-shifting dogmatisms to which so many of our leaders subscribe appear to have been as prevalent then as was the demand from officials for greater constancy.

Ben Lombardi
(Defence Research and Development Canada)


This is an important book which presents a series of fascinating chapters on noteworthy parliamentarians across the twentieth century. As political scientists with a keen interest in the culture as well as functions of parliament, we are no doubt aware of John Bercow’s essential undertaking in reconnecting the importance of parliament with the electorate. The writing style is readable, which extends its audience further. Students, academics, politicians, parliamentarians and members of the general public will find this book interesting. Succinctly, it is a highly interesting and enjoyable book written by experts in their fields who are seeking to contribute towards the defence of politics. Consequently, I have no hesitation in recommending this book; indeed, its inclusion on our personal reading lists should be taken as a given.

Andrew Scott Crines
(University of Leeds)


This substantial volume of fourteen scholarly essays is testament to the continuing attention paid by historians to the life and career of William Gladstone. Perhaps Churchill is the only British Prime Minister about whom more has been written. It might be wondered if much remains to be discovered, but these essays do break new – if sometimes peripheral – ground as well as demonstrating how many aspects of Gladstone’s 60 years in politics are still contested.

Just as his contemporaries differed in their assessments of his achievements and motives, so too do the contribu-
tors to this collection. Frank M. Turner contends that Gladstone, because he ‘stood profoundly at one with his age’, now seems ‘elusive, irrelevant or difficult to approach’ (p. 17). In contrast, Eugenio Biagini finds that ‘the great Victorian continues to be part of the current debate’ and ‘has continued to be relevant for the age’ (pp. 310–1). This latter view receives some support from Deryck M. Schreuder whose discussion of Gladstone and internationalism concludes that his ‘experience remains a rich source of reflection on international politics and the role of great powers’ (p. 290). Roland Quinault, in surveying his attitude to war, also suggests that Gladstone cast a shadow long enough to influence Tony Blair’s policy towards Iraq.

Two other complex issues with which Gladstone grappled — the suppression of the slave trade and Ireland’s economic problems — are examined by Richard Huzzey and Allen Warren, respectively, while C. Brad Faught discusses the few weeks in which Gladstone, as High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, failed to persuade the islanders to remain under British rule. This excursion into colonial politics took place in the 1850s, at a time when, as Richard A. Gaunt relates, Gladstone presented himself as a Peelite Conservative. Chris Wrigley documents how his reputation, not many years later, became that of a radical whose policies were widely admired by working people.

In the remaining essays, Jenny West diagnoses Gladstone’s medical problems and considers their possible significance while Denis Paz traces the diverging course of two friendships. Gladstone’s passion for felling trees began, Peter Sewter shows, as a form of exercise but led cartoonists to depict him as a woodcutter, clearing away old restrictions. Finally, two contributors focus on other imagery: Joseph S. Meisel makes some interesting observations on photographs and paintings of Gladstone, as does Mark Nixon on medallions featuring the elder statesman.

David Martin
(University of Sheffield)


Books on the military dimension of the Northern Ireland ‘Troubles’ are rare: not in terms of the coverage of violence emanating from republican or loyalist terrorism, but in the strategic sense of the state’s employment of military power for political ends. It is for this reason that Times of Troubles is such a welcome addition to the literature.

There is also careful analysis of the main events in which the military played a key role here, such as internment, Bloody Sunday, and Drumcree, across nine well-researched and intelligently written chapters. Avoiding the pitfalls of providing a narrow Belfast-centric account, the authors explore the unique dynamics of the second city of Derry/Londonderry. Here they demonstrate a thorough grasp of Irish history and its umbilical connection to the surrounding physical terrain. This is important, particularly since the geography separating urban Belfast from semi-urban Derry or rural Crossmaglen (once the IRA’s feared heartland) remains integral to the story of British soldiering in Northern Ireland.

The book’s structure is designed in a way that affords readers illuminating insights into a multitude of perspectives on the army, including, most noteworthy, republican views on the military. It is testament to the balanced approach taken by Sanders and Wood that they do not permit detail to crowd their analysis, or allow impenetrable jargon to dilute the oral testimonies of people who lived through the worst of the ‘Troubles’. In the end, as the authors inform us, all ‘wars, large or small, exact a price’ paid for by human beings, whether victims or survivors; Northern Ireland was no different.

Indeed, in a notable departure from the academic literature on the ‘Troubles’, Sanders and Wood conceptualise the decades-long conflict as ‘a war’. Scholars generally avoid doing so, though in strategic terms, of course, this was a war (i.e. as a battle of wills between two opponents settled principally through force), even though it was fought ultimately via the medium of emergency legislation and internal security operations, rather than under the rubric of international law. Moreover, for many British soldiers, Northern Ireland had echoes of other colonial ‘small wars’, where they could bring to bear their much-cited but less-read counter-insurgency doctrine.

Times of Troubles also provides many clues for policy makers and defence planners wishing to solve the broader conundrum of employing force successfully in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations.
In these wars, politics dictates the character that war takes, just as much as one’s opponent does. Overall, this is an outstanding book that will have enduring appeal to both students and scholars of Northern Ireland’s troubled past.

Aaron Edwards
(Royal Military Academy Sandhurst)

Europe


Brian Bennett demonstrates great depth of knowledge on Belarus in this clearly and effectively written book. As a former British Ambassador to Belarus, he is uniquely qualified to write on the subject, having personally witnessed some of the most critical events during his service there. Beginning just before Belarus’ independence from the Soviet Union, the book details how Alexander Lukashenko managed to go from managing a collective farm to the Presidency in just four years. Bennett describes how Lukashenko used joint-stock companies whose shares are government owned to give the appearance of privatisation without actually giving up state control of the economy. The book discusses how Belarus’ lack of a democratic tradition and authoritarian instincts made it easier for Lukashenko to dismantle any checks on his power, centralise all authority to the Presidency and remove term limits to enable himself to serve as President for life. It details the intimidation Lukashenko uses to muzzle his people, such as forcing most of them to work on short-term contracts which are not renewed if they choose to speak out, expelling dissident students and firing teachers from universities who dare to protest, and mass arrests and the disappearances of people who threaten the regime.

Bennett explains in great detail the methods Lukashenko has used to stifle any independent voices in the media, such as by forcing newspapers to be printed outside Belarus and then subjected to confiscation by the police, preventing home delivery of independent newspapers through a state monopoly distributor of newspapers and magazines, restricting sales at news-stands, suspending some papers entirely shortly before elections, closing independent radio stations, and beatings and arrests of journalists who criticise Lukashenko. The KGB even declared at a press conference before the elections in 2006 that people who chose to protest in a city square would be considered terrorists, leading Aleksandr Milinkevich, an opposition leader, to say that ‘the people of Belarus were more afraid of the authorities than they had been in Soviet times’ (p. 225). Bennett also spells out how and why a fractured and deeply divided opposition has not succeeded in driving Lukashenko out of office, outlines the pervasiveness of electoral fraud, and closes with a discussion of how Lukashenko might one day leave power. In short, Bennett’s book provides an authoritative and compelling study of exactly how Lukashenko has secured his place as the last dictator in Europe.

Ryan Boudwin
(University of Warsaw)


This substantial volume, edited by Giuliano Bonoli and David Natali, arises from a conference held at the European University Institute (EUI) in 2010. It includes eleven substantive chapters, some of them principally conceptual, some of them primarily empirical, sandwiched between a (substantial) scene-setting editorial introduction and a lesson-drawing conclusion. It includes contributions from many of the most influential analysts of the welfare state working in Western Europe today (the focus here is explicitly confined to Western European experience). Particularly helpful are the editorial introduction (which very clearly surveys the major changes in welfare state experience of the past 20–25 years), Jane Jenson’s chapter on the dynamics of social investment, Crouch and Keune on the dynamics of economic uncertainty and, among the substantive chapters, Ingela Naumann on childcare policies in the ‘new’ welfare state.

Overall, the judgement is that something really has changed in the welfare state in Europe over the past fifteen years. The older perspective (which owed something to Paul Pierson’s argument in Dismantling the Welfare State?) which suggested that, in the face of a lot
of doom-mongering, welfare state politics was remarkably resilient (if genteelly decremental), comes in for some criticism (as do some of Pierson’s expectations about the politics of blame avoidance). There have been important changes – real retrenchment in some areas, a focus upon pro-employment strategies, a lessening in universalism and a growing (sometimes intergenerational) dualism in provision – but these have not always been in the (predictable) neo-liberal direction. Above all, we are encouraged to think in terms of a multidimensional politics of welfare. Whether this amounts to the emergence of a ‘new welfare state’ is, in the editors’ judgement, largely a matter of personal taste.

Overall, this is an invaluable collection. Many of the individual chapters are excellent and taken together they provide the most sustained analysis yet published of the welfare state in these new times. Unfortunately (and despite Anton Hemerijck’s careful analysis in ch. 4), it just was/is too soon to know how catastrophic the consequences of the financial crisis post-2008 (now lumbering into its sixth no-growth year) will prove to be. If the European economy continues to flatline, all bets may yet be off.

Chris Pierson
(University of Nottingham)


The Balkans remains a controversial and contested concept in the scientific community. In history and political studies there has been a long dispute as to the specific social, cultural and political nature and the geographic size and borders of the region.

In The Modern Balkans Richard Hall does not theoretically engage with these questions at any length. He adopts a rather straightforward approach according to which he defines the Balkans as the region of South-eastern Europe which has been shaped by Byzantine and Ottoman political rule for a sustained period, that is, in other words, those areas of the peninsula under the social and cultural influence of both Christian Orthodoxy and Islam. Thus Hall’s study focuses on the lands nowadays known as Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Albania, Greece, the western parts of Turkey as well as Bulgaria and the southern and eastern stretches of Romania.

Hall’s history of the Balkans depicts the main and most influential political events and military conflicts of the region spanning from the Middle Ages to the present. His attention is directed at the intrusion of modernity and modernism in the nineteenth century, the cultural, religious and political ramifications of the development of nation states as well as the impact of the many national wars and the two world wars. The latter third of the book is dedicated to the establishment of Soviet control in large parts of the region, the erosion of communist power and the dissolution of Yugoslavia. The book ends with a brief analysis of the post-socialist period and the problems of transition and finally provides some hints of the prospects of integration into the European Union.

The Modern Balkans hence presents a history of military and political events crucial for Southeastern Europe and an assessment of its most influential leaders and decision makers. The socio-economic analysis or grounding of these political events is not a strong point of Hall’s discussion. Moreover, a contextualisation of specific Balkan developments in the wider European or even world history is largely missing. Nevertheless, the book will be of interest to those readers who seek a quick overview of the regional politics of the previous two centuries.

Kurt Hirtler
(University of Lodz, Poland)


In this timely volume, Colin Hay and Daniel Wincott analyse the historical and future development of The Political Economy of European Welfare Capitalism. This draws from the inspiration provided by Gøsta Esping-Andersen in his book The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism (1990). Within a revisionist account, the authors demonstrate a longer history of welfare, separating the idea of a welfare ‘state’ from that of welfare ‘capitalism’. This allows for a history of provision dating back to the late nineteenth century. It is important to carry out the analysis from here, and not from a ‘Golden Age’ of the post-war period, as it is argued that the former provided the foundations for a set of regime clusters to develop, reflecting both value
and ideational preferences, along with institutional practices.

The primary aim is therefore to demonstrate whether various factors have had an effect on this development, causing either convergence or divergence. Initially, globalisation is taken to task as a process without agency, its primary effect being the discursive construction of economic mobility, which has generated self-inflicted welfare retrenchment by states through the narrowing of eligibility, and lowering of spending in real terms. This is on the basis of welfare being constructed as competitively restraining and viewed through economic imperatives alone. Such an imperative is tied to the process of European integration, seen as inherently negative due to internal market and legal structures, especially when considering the disciplinary process of European Monetary Union (EMU) and the Lisbon strategy. In conclusion, it is argued that convergence has not taken place, with institutional path dependency inhibiting such a process. In fact, in light of the financial crisis, these regimes may be diverging to a greater degree as both endogenous factors, revolving around a failed ‘Anglo-Liberal growth model’, and exogenous factors, concerned with oil price increases, have had a variegated effect on the ability to provide welfare.

While empirically rigorous, there is a lack of focus upon the restructuring of the relations of production across Europe and beyond. If such a conception of globalisation had been invoked, the theorising of endogenous and exogenous would be unnecessary as the uneven processes of capitalist development emanating from ‘the international’ would have come to the fore. This would illuminate how various social class forces have been involved in the development and retrenchment, institutionally, ideationally and materially. Widening the agency within the book, which is prohibitive to the analysis, would remove the limiting focus upon institutional actors as the agents of change.

Jamie Jordan
(University of Nottingham)

**European Monetary Integration 1970–79: British and French Experiences** by Daisuke Ikemoto.

When the United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community (as it then was) in 1973, with the significant agreement of the French, one could reasonably have assumed that their paths towards inevitable economic convergence would have followed similar lines. In fact, history has shown that the two countries have adopted different policies towards monetary integration, as is strikingly demonstrated in the development of the euro.

In a convincing and perceptive analysis of the Anglo–French economic relationship, Daisuke Ikemoto explains how two countries in similar domestic economic situations could reach opposite conclusions on monetary integration based on differences in the nature and culture of their domestic political institutions. In addition, he argues that this comparative approach to the relationship between what appeared to be European partners helps to explain why Britain opted out of European monetary integration at the start of the process and therefore parted company with France and indeed the rest of the European Community (as it had then become) on such an important issue.

Interestingly, Ikemoto calls Britain the ‘awkward partner’ in this two-dimensional relationship, between Britain and France and between Britain and the rest of the Community. He shows how both countries experienced a similarity of economic problems at the first stage of monetary integration, Britain leaving the ‘Snake’ in 1972 and France withdrawing twice, in 1972 and 1974. He explains how the two countries’ economic policy began to diverge only in the late 1970s, when Britain opted out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) while France pursued a reshaping of Europe from within, on the basis of its own vested interests and its status as a major player in the economic development of Europe.

The author claims that the differences between these two countries during this formative period of European economic development have not been fully explained. Doubts about integration were shared by France in the early stages and therefore Ikemoto provides a clearer insight than academic literature to date on the factors that led Britain to opt out of monetary integration. His detailed analysis further offers the opportunity to discover why, how and when the two countries began their parting of the ways.

Ikemoto’s analysis includes an explanation of how various theories of European integration have regarded (or as he claims, disregarded) the influence of domestic politics on the direction of European policy and it
focuses particularly on the national party system in each of the two countries.

William Stallard  
(Independent Scholar)

The Oxford Handbook of the European Union  

This is a rich and comprehensive collection which will serve two main purposes. First, a sequential reader (from first to last page) will be rewarded with a very rich overview of both the law and politics of the process of European integration and of the institutional, economic and social reality of the EU. Second, this book is likely to be one of the first ports of call for advanced students and researchers looking for a primer on any of the topics covered in this collection.

While formally divided into ten parts, the book is structured in four main blocks. First, the reader is presented with theoretically sophisticated (even if perhaps too abstract) chapters on the leading theories of European integration (Part I). Second, the key constitutional moments and key actors are given due consideration in Parts II and III, where the main rounds of treaty writing and reform as well as the most influential actors are considered (with a cunning and very rewarding chapter on failed leaders). Third, the ordinary process of decision making is analysed by means of considering the key cleavages (Parts V and X) and key public debates on European integration (Part IX). Fourth, the substantive policies of the Union are scrutinised, with attention being paid to the ‘original economic policies’ (Part VI), the policies that were added as integration unfolded (Part VII) and with a separate section devoted to defence and foreign policy and justice and home affairs (Part VIII). The combination of these four blocks and the sequence in which they are included in the volume make the whole much more than the parts, as they stimulate the reader to adopt a critical attitude, even if a considerable number of chapters seem to be written in a descriptive and somewhat uncritical style.

While the editors have left their imprint both on the structure of the book and in the concise and accessible character of each of the chapters, the size of the collection may account for the variable degree to which chapters reflect on more recent events, and especially on the present existential crisis of the EU. That is perhaps especially unfortunate in what concerns Part I (integration theories) and Part X (although the overlapping of chs 20 and 56 partially fills that gap). Finally, a stronger editorial hand is missing in Part II. Some chapters (e.g. those on Maastricht and Lisbon) are essentially descriptive, while one chapter (that devoted to the 1951 treaties) is extremely thin on empirics but very detailed on the theoretical implications of the treaty. A more fitting approach for the handbook would perhaps have resulted from using in all chapters the structure of the chapter on the Treaties of Rome.

Agustín José Menéndez  
(University of León and ARENA, University of Oslo)


This edited volume, published as a special issue in European Integration, broadly addresses the strategies of functional and territorial interests within the European Union. It begins with a section introducing the nine contributions. The central argument made is that territorial and functional interests have similar ways of representing their interests in the EU and that these strategies tend to converge. Knodt even states that territorial and functional interests have learned from each other. She shows, for example, that through the years regional offices adopted the strategy of direct interest representation from functional interests. Yet not all contributions in this volume apply a comparative approach between functional and territorial interests. The strategies of a broad array of different organised interests active within the EU are examined. This is one of the great strengths of the book. It discusses a variety of strategies of business associations, civil society organisations, social movements, firms, territorial interests and EU-level interest groups. It points out the great diversity of pathways through which one can study advocacy strategies.

At first, the book seems to suggest that the strategies of territorial and functional interests are strongly alike,
but when studying the different contributions, important dissimilarities can be observed between and within the strategies of these actor types. For example, Pleines points to the difficulties encountered by the functional interests of Central and Eastern European member states when approaching EU institutions directly, compared to the functional interests of older member states. Quittkat and Kotzian find that sub-national and local authorities are disadvantaged compared to EU-level functional actors in the Commission’s different consultation processes. Taking account of the dissimilarities, a trend towards a convergence of strategies between functional and territorial interests can nonetheless be observed. But no evidence is given that these actors actually interact with each other. Is there an explicit exchange of knowledge and collaboration between these interests? This is a crucial question which remains unanswered and this mainly derives from the approach of comparing the activities of functional and territorial interests, without actually studying the interactions they have with each other.

This volume is recommended for all scholars interested in the lobbying activities of interest groups and sub-national authorities. As the editors point out, there is a division between the literature tackling territorial and functional interest representation, and this volume takes a step forward in bringing these strongly similar fields closer together.

Iskander De Bruijcker
(University of Antwerp)


In his book Flying Tiger, Ulrich Krotz offers an intriguing empirical account of the joint Franco–German production of a military combat helicopter (the Tiger), while at the same time aiming to fill a void in international relations (IR) theory by conceptualising how inter-state relations – the Franco–German relationship in this case – are in turn influenced by domestic realities, and how this affects national interests and the security policies of states.

The book starts with two chapters that introduce the research puzzle and the theoretical framework applied in the research. Krotz convincingly argues that established IR theories fall short in explaining the inception of the Franco–German collaborative effort, the ensuing twists and turns in the cooperative endeavour, and its final success after nearly four decades. A constructivist-institutionalist alternative framework is proposed introducing ‘interstate institutionalization and construction’ (p. 29) – of which the Franco–German inter-state relations are one example – as a variable that affects national interest formation. This inter-state-level variable generates routines and common codes of conduct that shape standards of normality, legitimating some policy options while delegitimising others. Its impact on national interests and policies is expected to increase with higher degrees of state authority and state autonomy and when domestic ideas are congruent with the ‘inter-state constructions’ (p. 45).

The empirical part of the book is divided into four chapters which provide an empirically rich and comprehensive analysis of the Franco–German collaborative project, based on a wealth of primary and secondary sources. Apart from exploring the explanatory power of the constructivist-institutionalist model, realist, neoliberal and liberal alternative explanations are also duly reflected on. In doing so, Krotz identifies the added value of his model more precisely, while at the same time giving credit to existing IR theories when warranted.

Overall, the book meets its aim of providing further insights into the dynamics between inter-state relations and domestic realities and how these affect state interest formation and policy definition. Furthermore, Krotz provides a clear conceptualisation and measurement of inter-state relationships. Apart from Franco–German relations, this measurement could also be applied to other relations such as those between Britain and America. That being said, it must also be admitted that the constructivist-institutionalist model does not explicitly include broader international political considerations that may impinge on a state’s national interest formation (particularly in the security domain) and further reflection is needed on the model’s scope conditions. It is nevertheless a thought-provoking book for IR scholars in general and a ‘must read’ for those interested in arms procurement and Franco–German relations in particular.

Gerry Alons
(Radboud University Nijmegen)
This work aims to provide a new analytical perspective on the notion of differentiated integration in Europe, which is currently considered as a ‘hot topic’ by scholars due to the increasingly complex types of agreement existing between states and the European Union. The key objectives of this book are to understand ‘how’ and ‘why’ horizontal and vertical differentiation (as well as integration) vary between policies. In this book, the authors define the European Union as a system of differentiated integration, that is, ‘one Europe with an organizational and member state core but with a level of centralization and territorial extension that vary by function’ (p. 10).

The book is divided into two parts. The first part applies three main European integration theories to differentiated integration: intergovernmentalism, supranationalism and constructivism. The authors outline several conjectures which are derived from these theories with the aim of positioning differentiated integration in each theoretical perspective. In the second part, the authors apply those three integration theories and their respective conjectures to four major EU policy areas: the Single Market; Economic and Monetary Union; Security and Defence; and Freedom, Security and Justice.

By focusing on three important European integration theories, this well-written and very accessible book brings an innovative approach to the study of differentiated integration. It does not fall into the trap of semantic debate over this notion, and provides a large set of empirical examples illustrating the theoretical foundations outlined in the first part. Furthermore, by retracing the evolution of policies and differentiation through the history of European integration, the authors make a considerable contribution to the literature. One might regret the absence of temporary differentiation in the analysis, as the book mostly focuses on primary law. Nevertheless, Differentiated Integration provides a ground-breaking approach and fills an important gap in the literature, at a time when debates on the future of European integration are heated. It is a highly recommended volume for all students of European integration.

Benjamin Leruth
(University of Edinburgh and ARENA, University of Oslo)


For the casual observer, it might seem that after the chaotic decade of the 1990s, Vladimir Putin’s iron fist managed to resurrect a strong Russian state, despite (or probably as a result of) his low esteem for democratic institutions. In Russian Politics, Marie Mendras, a leading French scholar of Russian affairs, mounts a well-constructed attack against such conventional wisdom.

Placing the system of power constructed by Putin into historical context, Mendras argues that far from being strong and effective, the Russian state today is actually weak and inefficient. Mendras documents how during the last twelve years various public institutions that ensured at least a degree of accountability and democratic control have been systematically dismantled throughout the country. Thus, an independent media and judiciary have mostly disappeared, while elections have either been abolished (as happened with the election of regional governors from 2005 onwards) or become meaningless. The only institutions that have been strengthened are the security services, and with them the ability of the state to repress political opposition effectively.

As a result, Russia today is governed by a small group of people who are unaccountable to the society they govern, in a patronage system of rule not so different from the centralised dictatorship of tsarist times. In this system, loyalty to the elites in the centre is the criterion deciding whether state employees are promoted or not. While this secures the hold on power of the ruling elites, the system also leads to a weakened state apparatus that is corrupt and inefficient, with the wrong incentives in place, making it very difficult to implement successfully the industrial and modernisation policies needed to reform the country’s ageing economic structure.

Instead of using chronological order (as many similar books do), Mendras presents a series of topical chapters
which look at the tsarist and communist legacy, Russia’s relationship with the West, and the role of political institutions and the bureaucracy to build a framework which she then uses to analyse Vladimir Putin’s Russia today. To back up her analysis, she skilfully introduces the work of a large number of major Russia watchers. Thus, apart from providing a realistic account of how contemporary Russia works, the book is also a good introduction to leading research about Russian politics in general.

Michael Rochlitz
(IMT – Institute for Advanced Studies, Lucca)


Europeanisation has been a valuable tool with which to examine the EU-induced change in its member states. With its well-equipped analytical toolbox it has been applied rather successfully to future and non-member states. New book-length explorations of Europeanisation in Turkey have recently emerged as well. This book, edited by Çigdem Nas and Yonca Özer, is another valuable contribution to this literature.

The work aims to assess the extent, direction, nature and impact of Europeanisation in an accession country by analysing domestic change in Turkey since the country was given candidate status in the Helsinki Summit of 1999. After an introductory chapter on the Europeanisation literature, the impact of the EU’s transformative power on different policy sectors, issues and actors is examined in eleven chapters.

This well-organised book is a major contribution to research on accession/Europeanisation in several respects. First, it provides not only supporting empirical evidence for the EU’s influence on ‘norms, attitudes, rules and expectations’ in Turkey, but it also tackles the overlooked dimensions of Europeanisation, that is, ‘the lack of change and backlash’ in Turkey, concentrating on the last decade (p. 4). Second, the contributors to the volume also engage in theoretical discussions by employing different models of EU external governance, that is, the external incentives model, social learning model and lesson-drawing model. Third, the book challenges the dominance of the external incentives model to explain domestic change in Turkey by bringing different factors to the forefront. As mentioned by Tanja Börzel, as long as EU policies align with the political preferences and survival strategies of political elites, EU incentives have an impact in Turkey, even if they are costly and even if the membership perspective is no longer credible. In this regard, Europeanisation becomes a bottom-up process in Turkey which mostly has to do with the political calculations of domestic actors to use the EU as a ‘legitimisation device’ (p. 5). Last but not least, the book underlines the fact that the EU’s transformative power has been differential; namely it varies across policy sectors and issues (p. 5).

The book’s only minor weakness is the lack of a concluding chapter from the editors. Furthermore, more comparative policy studies would have further enhanced this volume. That said, Turkey and the European Union will no doubt secure a readership among Europeanisation students and the wider community of those who follow debates closely about EU–Turkey relations and contemporary Turkish politics.

Digdem Soyaltin
(Berlin Graduate School for Transnational Studies)


In this volume William Outhwaite attempts to provide an overview of critical theory and its development since the end of the Second World War. This study, it must therefore be emphasised, does not deal directly with the early thought connected with Adorno and Horkheimer, through work such as the Dialectic of Enlightenment. However, this thought does provide the foundation for some important discussions which frame other thought. Neither does the volume develop an understanding of critical theory through an institutionally based reading. Instead it attempts to articulate the ideas of a heterodox set of thinkers who share intellectual affinities as opposed to institutional ones.

While the study is primarily concerned with post-war Europe, the initial discussion surrounds the pre-war ‘European crisis’, linking the 1929 crash and the rise of fascism as defining processes within which contemporary Europe developed. Outhwaite goes on to examine ‘late (or advanced) capitalism’ and ‘state socialism’. Attempting to revise accounts that critical theory had been uncritical of Western society compared to the
Soviet Union, he attempts to link the early work of Adorno and Horkheimer, and their focus on domination through Herbert Marcuse. The predominance of pursuing ideological preferences to mould consciousness had led to similar totalitarian outcomes, even from highly divergent social foundations. This had become articulated through the bureaucratic nature of Soviet society, and the rise of organised capitalism and high technology in the West. Such scepticism of both societies finds its intellectual lineage within a new utopian vision, the ‘European Dream’. It is evident that no other thinker has had such an effect on this process as Jürgen Habermas, and Outhwaite explores this in some detail. This moves through a discussion concerned with post-national democracy which respects the social pluralism that was born of 1968 and the new social movements that flourished within Europe, creating a ‘public sphere’ which could overcome the lack of a homogeneous demos.

While this study is extremely important in outlining the wide range of thinking concerned with critical theory, there is one primary disappointment. It would have been beneficial to relate this line of thought to others that share similarities in intellectual or normative preferences. This does happen to a degree when Outhwaite discusses neo-Marxism and Foucault, but not sufficiently to illuminate truly their relation to one another. As this is a short volume, this shortcoming could have been overcome.

Jamie Jordan (University of Nottingham)


This book reveals how and why the Member States of the EU comply with the laws of the Union. Diana Panke addresses this issue by analysing why some compliance instruments may be successful while others fail, and which type of compliance they facilitate and why. Panke sets a number of hypotheses, arguing in chapter 3 that judicial disclosures, judgements and sanction threats are only effective if a certain scope of conditions is met. She empirically tests hypotheses by focusing on qualitative analysis of four German and four UK cases of hard and persistent non-compliance with two environmental and two social policy directives. The author reveals that the judicial proceedings are effective if advocates of the parties do not talk at cross purposes and employ suitable judicial interpretation methods by argumentatively entrapping governments (chapter 4). Judgements are effective if they empower compliance proponents in shaming the governments from below (chapter 5). Sanction threats are effective if they are looming and costly (chapter 6). Panke demonstrates that compliance instruments are dependent on issue-specific scope conditions and not on country characteristics. This finding is further supported by analysis in chapter 7, where the UK and German cases are compared by focusing on country-specific variables.

Overall the book is well researched and coherently structured. It is interesting to read and easy to follow the author’s arguments; however, at times it could be found repetitive. The author shows a profound understanding of the underlying political and social issues which emerge in cases of persistent non-compliance between the compliance opponents, proponents and the European Commission. In this regard the book outlines the ever present tension between the aims of the Commission for establishing a level playing field and a tendency of member states to favour a free-rider approach, avoiding costs of compliance. The empirical analysis covers the gaps in qualitative study in compliance theory, as well as serving as a good reference point for the cases covered. The book also provides a comprehensive analysis of the causal link between the application of compliance instruments and governments’ shift towards compliance. Panke clearly demonstrates to the reader how European compliance mechanisms operate and under which conditions they are likely to be effective. The book is recommended to anyone interested in the issue of member states’ compliance with international law in general, since the developed theoretical approach could also be applied to other policy fields and other international judicial institutions.

Jelena Ganza (King’s College London)


James Pettifer is a well-established, highly competent historian with a profound interest in the study of the
southern Balkans. In this book, Pettifer focuses on the origins of the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA) and how it developed from a tiny group in the Swiss political underground to a military force that significantly affected the 1999 NATO intervention against Serbia and the subsequent events in Kosovo. The fundamental argument Pettifer makes is that the KLA roots are found in the Kosovo countryside in Drenica and Dukagjini. Pettifer contends that when the insurgent military tradition was 'coupled' with a clear and focused modern political leadership, the result was a successful insurgency that accomplished enough to open the way to independence in 2008. In this narrative, Pettifer adopts the approach of tracing the long winding road the Kosovo Albanians and the KLA had to take before even the first vestiges of such a force existed, let alone a force with the capacity to begin to worry the Serbian military authorities.

The book is divided into twelve chronologically structured chapters. The first chapter examines the period of the 1920s known as the kakak rebellion era and how the rebellious tradition was central to the foundation of the KLA 70 years later. The subsequent nine chapters narrate how the Kosovo Albanians succeeded in shifting resistance paradigms during these 70 years, from kakak to civil to successful insurgent war. Moreover, Pettifer also explores how the nature of the war in Kosovo fundamentally changed in 1999 as a result of the Recak massacre and how the war became an international issue which ultimately involved the world’s most powerful military alliance. The book concludes with a chapter that examines how the fighting spilled over to Preshevo and to Macedonia in 2001, and an epilogue which stresses the argument that in the right circumstances small underground groups can develop wider political movements that lead to successful insurgencies.

Overall, The Kosova Liberation Army is exquisitely written and well researched. Pettifer’s analysis of how background factors such as tradition, geography and modernity facilitated the development of the KLA as the first successful insurgency movement in Europe since the Second World War is quite appropriate. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the origins of the Kosovo conflict, the modern history of Kosovo, guerrilla warfare and insurgency movements.

Perparim Gutaj
(University of Utah)


Sean Roberts’ book is a study of United Russia, commonly known as the ‘party of power’ (or ‘Putin’s party’), which is the main political party in contemporary Russia. It draws on a wide range of primary sources, most notably 80-plus interviews (including several with members of the Russian parliament) and is the first book-length treatment of this party in English. Roberts situates his study in the literature on ruling parties and dominant-power politics. Dominant-power politics refers to regimes (often labelled ‘electoral authoritarian’) which possess ostensibly democratic institutions but are not in practice democratic; ruling parties are the parties found in these regimes, such as the Mexican PRI. This literature typically views parties as explanations for (or even causes of) macro-level outcomes, specifically regarding strong ruling parties as crucial to the durability of dominant-power politics. This logic applied to Russia would suggest that the rise of United Russia is central to, or even the cause of, the emergence of dominant-power politics in post-Yeltsin Russia.

Roberts shows, however, that this is not the case. United Russia dominates the party system, but it does not have dominance over real power in Russia. Rather, United Russia is entirely subordinated to a ruling group, centred on the federal executive and headed by Vladimir Putin, which is beyond the control of the party. United Russia was created by this group and remains entirely dependent on its resources. United Russia, then, is not a ‘principal power holder’ but an ‘agent of independent power holders in the federal executive’ (p. 35); it is the outcome of dominant-power politics rather than its cause, and its survival depends on the executive rather than the other way around. This is a convincing argument and a welcome corrective to an otherwise potentially misleading comparative literature.

One criticism is that discussions of several topics (party finance in Russia, United Russia’s programme, legislation concerning parties and elections, the arrest of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Russians’ views of electoral fairness) rely too heavily on limited numbers of primary sources with little or no reference to the existing literature. The resulting analysis is less systematic than it should be. It is also perhaps disappointing that Roberts does not propose his own typology for parties of this
type, drawing instead on existing – imperfect – catego-
ries. Finally, there is something paradoxical about a
monograph whose intended audience is obviously
Russia specialists but whose main contribution is to the
comparative literature. I hope, though, that both of these
audiences will read the book because it is a most
welcome contribution to our understanding of United
Russia, Russian politics and the comparative study of
dominant parties.

Kenneth Wilson
(Dongguk University, Seoul)

Citizens’ Initiatives in Europe: Procedures and
Consequences of Agenda-Setting by Citizens by
Maija Setälä and Theo Schiller. London: Palgrave
31969 1

Citizens’ initiatives are procedures that allow citizens to
bring new issues to the political agenda through col-
lective action by collecting a certain number of signa-
tures in support of a policy proposal. This book aims to
compare different forms and designs of citizens’ initia-
tive instruments in eleven European countries, and to
evaluate their function and impact in widely different
political systems. The final chapter of the book shifts its
attention to a higher level and assesses the citizens’
initiative at the European Union level.

The historical and political backgrounds to citizens’
initiatives are summarised, and the procedures of
making popular initiatives are discussed on the basis of
different initiative tools such as full-scale initiatives (ini-
tiatives followed by a ballot) and agenda initiatives (ini-
tiatives dealt with by a representative body). In some
countries, such as Switzerland and Liechtenstein, initia-
tives rest on a rather long tradition, whereas in others,
like Spain or Eastern European countries, they are
relatively recent practices.

The case studies show significant variations in terms
of admissible topics, the number of signatures and ballot
validity requirements, rules concerning funding and
transparency, legality reviews, the role of courts and
other bodies taking procedural decisions, and parliamen-
tary procedures. The research demonstrates that the most
important requirements for initiative procedures are the
number of signatures required and the time limits for the
collection of signatures, which determine the costs of
launching an initiative and therefore the possibility for
all interest groups in society to make use of citizens’
initiatives on an equal footing rather than only wealthy
interest groups. The case studies identify several cases
where the requirements for making an initiative are
rather restrictive and are sometimes even criticised for
being prohibitive such as in Lithuania or in the majority
of German states (Länder). From that perspective the
regulation on European citizens’ initiatives by the Euro-
pean Commission which entered into force in April
2012 provides for the possibility of online signature
collection, which seems likely to encourage member
states to redefine their procedures in that direction.

The book comprises a thorough analysis of the citizen
initiative instruments in selected countries. However,
this book makes only limited comparisons of the impact
of initiative instruments. Not only are the political
systems studied in this book different in many respects
but also the use of initiative instruments occurs at differ-
ent levels of government, for example at the national
level in Italy but only at the regional level in Germany.
Another challenge is the lack of sufficient consideration
given to the strength of civil society as an important
factor in the use of citizens’ initiatives. The book will be
of use for researchers, policy makers and citizens inter-
sted in the means of participatory democracy.

Basak Koyuncu King
(Independent Scholar)

Europe and National Economic Transformation:
The EU after the Lisbon Decade by Mitchell P.
228pp., £57.50, ISBN 978 0 230 29868 2

This volume provides the reader with a description,
analysis and assessment of the Lisbon Strategy. All chap-
ters, except the introduction and the conclusion, analyse
the Strategy from different sectoral perspectives, particu-
larly (1) the macroeconomic (chs 1 and 2), (2) the
economic (chs 4 and 5) and (3) the social (chs 3 and 6
to 8) dimensions of the Strategy. The concluding chapter
engages in a meta-reflection on whether the methodo-
logical goal of the Strategy (achieving objectives through
learning) has been achieved in the sense that the succes-
sor of Lisbon, the so-called 2020 Strategy, reflects
learning
from the Lisbon Strategy (not really, Vilpisâukas tells us).
Besides this division among the chapters, the volume is
structured around two big ‘transversal’ themes, concern-
ing the extent to which the Strategy (1) has transformed

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the EU and (2) has contributed (or not) to the ‘Europeanisation’ of member states.

All chapters seem to support a double and ambivalent conclusion. On the one hand, the Strategy has been a big flop. The EU has largely (and miserably) failed to become the ‘most competitive and knowledge-based economy in the world’. Increases in ‘competitiveness’ have been meagre, and where they have been obtained, they have been the result of reduced labour costs (and consequently, an increased capital income share; for the German case, p. 26). That resonates very poorly with the foundational rhetoric of the Strategy, which prompted one scholar to claim that Lisbon might well become ‘Europe’s Maastricht for the welfare state’ (a quote that has impressed many contributors to the book; see p. 65, p. 135). Similarly, if there is more ready money to finance innovative projects, that is the result of changes in the financial sector, not a spin-off of the Strategy (pp. 92–4).

On the other hand, the book offers support for the conclusion that the Strategy has been a great rhetorical success, as it has fostered a peculiar way of framing and analysing the different policies under its remit. Whether this is to be celebrated or repudiated depends on the normative value one finds in the peculiar rhetoric and frames that came with the Strategy. This conclusion is very strongly supported by Van Deen and Allen (on the tensions between economic and social policy goals), Menz (on competitiveness as a trump card in migration debates) and by the editor of the volume himself (see especially pp. 106–7 on the political economy of ‘better regulation’); also indirectly (and perhaps unconsciously) by Schelkle, Mabbett and Freier’s chapter on ‘choice’ in public employment services.

Although far from an easy read, this volume is a timely contribution to a topic that was excessively fashionable ten years ago, and has now become unwisely ignored by European scholarship.

Agustín José Menéndez
(University of Léon and ARENA, University of Oslo)

The Europeanization of Portuguese Democracy

This book analyses the Europeanisation of democracy in Portugal from the Carnation Revolution in 1974 until about 2010. Portugal has recently come to the forefront of debates on European integration because it has been one of the countries most severely hit by the Eurozone crisis. In contrast to Greece, it has been presented as a rather ‘good pupil’ in the implementation of austerity measures imposed by international financial institutions. However, the academic literature on this country and its relationship to European integration has been rather scarce, and this book is therefore a welcome contribution to a better understanding of the role of European integration in Southern Europe.

The book contains nine chapters dealing with the interaction between European integration and democratisation, the attitudes of political elites towards the EU, the Europeanisation of executive power, of the Parliament, of courts, of interest groups and of public opinion. The general picture that emerges throughout the chapters is that of a mutually reinforcing dynamic between democratisation and European integration. After the fall of the dictatorship, European integration was seen as the means to part ways definitively with the authoritarian past, stabilise the parliamentary system after the years of turmoil that followed the revolution, and modernise an economy whose structures had been shaped by a huge colonial empire. As a whole, democracy and European integration appear as ‘brothers in arms’, as emphasised in Vink’s closing chapter.

Many of the contributions provide valuable insights into the workings of the Portuguese political system. However, the book generally gives a fairly dated impression in the light of recent events linked to the crisis, like a book on the GDR that would have been printed in the summer of 1989. Even if the publishing cycle may be responsible for this, there are very few explanatory elements throughout the chapters that could help explain current events, setting aside the introduction by Nuno Severiano Teixeira highlighting the decade of divergence that preceded the crisis, or Pedro Magalhães’ chapter showing the decline in popular support for European integration. In many ways, it seems that the strong enthusiasm for European integration emphasised in the book has concealed deeper politico-economic logics that are only superficially tackled. As the harsh austerity measures recently implemented by the Portuguese government have been essentially justified by the fact that ‘there is no choice’ in the face of EU commitments, the relationship
between European integration and democracy in this country now seems much less positive.

Alexandre Afonso  
(King’s College London)

The Americas


Richard K. Betts’ book is organised in three parts comprising twelve chapters. Just as the title suggests, the author is intent on drawing a picture of the evolution of American national security, on the line between the threats it faces and the quality of responses it offers to the respective threats.

The hypothesis Betts follows states that the United States might have been a considerable hawk during the Cold War, but the Cold War ended, the US won it and that should be enough to move to the next level and not waste its military resources uselessly, as it has done in some cases identified by the author, such as Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq. The trouble, states Betts, is the fact that American policy makers confound national security with international security and apply the same measures to both. In order to support such views Betts uses as examples the relations that the US has with NATO as its member as well as the difficult relations with China and Russia which threaten to escalate in a negative manner simply due to America’s international behaviour.

The chapters are in fact argumentative essays, all arranged coherently under the theme of the book. In the beginning, the author focuses more on the theory of war/warfare and security policies while the end of the book is filled with scenarios and Q & A sessions on how strategy should work in various cases.

The book is structured as a critique of American mistakes in foreign and security policy. The author sets out to be highly critical of the US government’s situation, especially post-9/11. Based on the choice of topic and the manner in which he approaches it, the book is definitely intended for specialised readers, both university students and dedicated scholars.

The author’s style is very difficult to grasp – too many short ideas followed by too many examples. However, he builds the logic of his arguments gradually. He takes into discussion all possible variables, making a tour de force in history to offer examples and gather support from earlier scholars of the field of discussion. The book is noteworthy for its empirical work, as Betts is keen on approaching matters from various perspectives interrelated to security studies.

The book is well written, raising intriguing questions and offering unexpected but logical answers. Reading it is strongly recommended for those who are still puzzled by the conduct of American security policy abroad after 9/11 until the present.

Oana-Elena Brându  
(University of Bucharest)


This edited book advances the argument that centralised federal arrangements are required to guarantee citizens’ access to government services, and for the well-being of the national political system in Canada because, the editors claim, only a dominant federal government can help maintain democracy, equality, efficiency, national solidarity and diversity in the interest of the whole country and of all its citizens (pp. 5–8). In six chapters, the authors (who, in addition to DiGiacomo and Flumian, include Michael D. Behiels, Brooke Jeffrey, Cheryl N. Collier and Inger Weibust) analyse a variety of different policy domains and issue areas to demonstrate why the federal government has been reluctant to act as a dominant policy initiator and use its legitimate federal powers, and how this has led to inefficient countrywide policy coordination and the malfunctioning of federal institutions. This, they argue, has produced abysmal policy standards and poor organisational performance at the national level.

In the first chapter, DiGiacomo attributes the federal government’s reluctance to remove fully internal (inter-provincial) trade barriers to (1) the historically institutionalised influence of the judiciary on federal authorities and (2) the country’s constitutional design which has been greatly influenced by the concerns advanced under British rule. Collier in the fourth chapter and Weibust in the sixth chapter point to the institutionalised practices and ideas by successive federal
governments as having prevented them from introducing a universal childcare policy and nationwide environmental policy framework/standards. Behiels contends that empowering provinces asymmetrically through legislative and administrative measures can threaten the integrity and stability of Canada’s federal system. Consequently, Flumian argues, a strong leading federal government is required to ensure coherence in national policy development and implementation.

Despite their rich discussions of multiple policy contexts and Jeffrey’s conceptual approach to the current national government’s decentralist federal understanding, the authors ignore the constitutional and structural features of Canada’s federation from the perspective of the provinces. This weakness opens space for counter-arguments, such as that advanced by the substantial literature on Canada’s federal system which argues that intergovernmental relations and inter-provincial policymaking mechanisms are mainly dominated by federal authorities. Nevertheless, the book’s detailed policy analyses and its conceptual outlook on federal government enable readers to observe different social and ideational variables and the federal government’s decentralist tendencies, helping students of federalism to understand the institutional path that Canadian federalism follows and the nature of organisational changes taking place within it.

Ismail Erdem
(Royal Holloway, University of London)


In Engines of Change, Daniel DiSalvo sets out to establish that factions within the two main political parties in the USA have played a bigger role in shaping national politics than has previously been acknowledged. He argues that, contrary to established thinking, factions do not inevitably damage broad-church political parties. He suggests that factions can actually help parties determine their ideological agenda, get legislation passed in Congress and galvanise them for cross-party election campaigns.

DiSalvo’s focus on factions adds a new dimension to the traditional study of US politics which is largely dominated by a focus on inter-party conflict. As few previous works exist in this area, the book starts with his original definition of factions, their roles and causes. He uses these criteria – that factions are subunits within political parties which ‘try to move their party along the Left–Right spectrum’ (p. 7) – to identify twelve factions in US politics since the civil war before investigating their impact on party ideology, procedures and the legislative process. With little context given to the political situation, background knowledge of the historical setting and American system of government is required to appreciate fully some of his assertions.

Despite reiterating the importance of factions throughout the book, DiSalvo’s argument is not always explicitly supported by the evidence he offers. He also appears to be much more comfortable offering value judgements on more recent factions to which he tends to dedicate more space and greater subjective analysis than his narrative accounts of the most historical examples. At times, this somewhat inconsistent structure and approach makes it difficult to piece together his overall conclusions. Furthermore, some of his assertions, such as his analysis of leadership styles in the relationship between presidents and factions, may prove to offer more interesting insights into other aspects of the political process under the guise of this topic area.

Overall, DiSalvo’s work suggests that the nature of American politics, its catch-all parties and separation of powers, means that factions will inevitably develop on both sides of the aisle. Even though it adds interesting insights to the ongoing dialogue about the American party system, the book exposes a broad assortment of motives, tactics and environments for a small but diverse group of factions which threatens to undermine his attempt to establish clear commonalities. All in all, therefore, it is difficult to be convinced that factions shape – more than get shaped by – the broader political context.

Isabel Taylor
(University of Nottingham)


In this expansion on his previous work, The Strategic President: Persuasion and Opportunity in Presidential Leadership (2012), Edwards tests his proposition that pres-
dents must take advantage of the existing opportunities and avoid the temptation to manufacture opportunities. Edwards’ theory attempts to explain why President Obama’s policy-making influence has eroded over the last few years and how institutional changes (in some ways helped by the President) reinforced this erosion.

President Obama was hailed as a once-in-a-lifetime leader who could change and reform the government in a manner to serve Americans better, but Edwards points out why the hype did not live up to America’s expectations. These reasons range from a misunderstanding of public opinion on the issues Obama was most in favour of reforming to seemingly failing to rally grassroots public opinion to pressure a deeply divided legislature to accomplish the President’s legislative agenda.

This book is targeted towards academia and political elites, but is easy enough read for most Americans to understand the book’s message. The methods that the author uses are not overly technical and revolve around the discussion and analysis of polls, interviews and media transcripts. In short, this book adds nothing new to our methodological toolkit, which is fine in this case because Edwards is concerned with an orderly presentation of a whole host of details and examples that buttress his explanation for why President Obama lost most of his political capital over the last three years and is highly unlikely to recoup it.

This book definitely does not leave any stone unturned, but does it succeed in its goal of exposing the Obama administration as having lost the American people and his Democratic majority in Congress due to the President’s penchant for overreach? The jury is still out on this verdict since the study of Obama’s Presidency is very recent, but Edwards’ charges of overreach are well warranted. He is thorough and organised without being concise, and repetitive, which is not necessarily a bad thing in this case. With the amount of information in this book, the armchair political scientist will appreciate the repetition and this allows the book to reach a wider audience.

Overreach is definitely not an overreach, since its argument is well defined and thoroughly supported by the existing research. Even though Edwards uses this to bolster his thesis from The Strategic President, this book can stand on its own as a worthy case study of what to do and to avoid as America’s most well-known and influential policy maker. I recommend this book for those who want to understand the contemporary Presidency and its relationship with Congress as it really is.

Gino J. Tozzi Jr
(University of Houston – Victoria)


Research data, when looked at from a different angle, and at a different time, may often bring out valuable new insights to old questions. Hans Toch’s Cop Watch is a product of such a fresh look into the writer’s earlier research on police reform, bringing to light an under-rated and neglected actor in the process: spectators.

Toch analyses the impact of spectators on police in two moments and two cities where police legitimacy and practices were put under question and reforms were initiated: West Coast City, 1967–71 and Seattle, 2010–11. Examining these two settings, Toch argues that the actors in the processes of policing and of police reform are not only the officers and the villains, or the politicians, but also the witnesses, bystanders and spectators of the police encounter: those who are present, who can see and respond, who can judge and prejudge police actions. And borrowing brilliantly from Greek tragedy, Toch utilises ‘chorus’ as a conceptual tool with which to understand the role of the spectators. In a Greek tragedy a ‘chorus’ observes, watches and expresses opinion, provides support or exhibits disapproval; as Toch writes: ‘it advertise[s] and amplif[ies] the action, converting private encounters into public conflicts’ (p. 4).

Contemporary ‘chorus’ is a product of new technologies. Digitally recorded police encounters are immediately distributed in the media, and new social media create the scene for the ‘chorus’, producing public opinion about policing practices. In this way, witnesses become multiplied and the voices of the ‘chorus’ speak in virtual space. The ‘chorus’ of the 1960s, on the other hand, is less indirect. As an encounter takes place, people who congregate are the only witnesses. They become a part of the encounter, affecting the decisions and actions of the police and the aftermath of the encounter. Yet in both cases, either present or virtual, the chorus ‘convert[s] private encounters into public conflicts’, to which police managements have to respond.

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Toch’s use of ‘chorus’ in this sense is an innovative way in which to understand the workings of the process of police reform initiated towards a resistant police culture. While he refrains from any detailed and systematic theorisation of these rich data, he manages to provide a compelling tale of police reform in two cities, one that bears resemblance to the writing of history from below.

Zeynep Gönen  
(Beykent University, Istanbul)

Asia and the Pacific

Social Activism in Southeast Asia by Michele Ford (ed.). Abingdon: Routledge, 2012. 240pp., £85.00, ISBN 9780415523554

Southeast Asia, with its racial diversity, diverse economy, various religions and beliefs and multiculturalism, is more like a continent than a region of Asia. Such a region, of course, must deal with the expectations of people who mostly wish to improve their social, cultural and political situations in the world in order to follow democracy. In addition, these communities are required to respect their religions, traditions and history, and they occasionally face the difficulty of having the traditional background of society stand alongside the categories of modernism such as democracy, liberalism, humanism and so forth. On this subject, the chapter in this book on ‘Sexuality Rights Activism in Malaysia: The Case of Seksualiti Merdeka’ written by Julian C. H. Lee explicitly talks about ‘sexuality rights as human rights’ in the Muslim majority country of Malaysia.

Michele Ford has edited the twelve chapters of the book in which contributors concentrate on the process of social change and examine case studies from the countries of Southeast Asia. This research pays attention to one significant problem of each country, with the countries divided into three categories of low-income (Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos), middle- and high-income countries. The main topics of this book are: social rebellion in Aceh; the Philippines and democratic transitions; the organic agriculture movement and labour and democracy movement for Burmese migrants; labour activism in Thailand; the relationship between transnational activist networks; local social movement organisations and local politics in the Philippines; peace-building initiatives and the development of a peace movement in Timor-Leste; sex workers and their rights in Cambodia; sexuality rights in Malaysia; and connectivity of Singapore’s premier feminist organisation and the efforts of the Christian Right to take control of it.

Although this well-written work is able to fill a gap in social-political studies in Southeast Asia, it would have been appropriate to have a fully developed chapter dealing with social activism from the opposite angle, for example a Sultanship perspective or Malay-Islamic (i.e. some countries in the Malay Archipelago) outlook on the social changes, where activists still have the issue of democracy versus Islamic states and their policies on the table.

Overall, this academic effort would be a useful resource for students and scholars of social sciences, Southeast Asian researchers, and all those who are keen to know more about the diversity of social activism in Southeast Asia.

Majid Daneshgar  
(University of Malaya)


Centring on the question of why the economic reforms and economic growth of India have failed to reduce poverty successfully, in Red Tape Akhil Gupta discusses the strong correlation between the bureaucracy of India and its poverty. He argues that structural violence, and an inefficient bureaucracy which structurally delinks the benefits of institutional reforms and the poor, have been enhanced by the everyday practices of lower-level state officials. For Gupta, there are three significant mechanisms through which state officials have contributed to the high rates of poverty: corruption, inscription and governmentality.

The book is divided into four parts including the introduction, and each part explains how the three mechanisms are related to poverty. Through a year’s intensive fieldwork conducted in the Mandi sub-district of Uttar Pradesh, the author first shows how the discourse of corruption is developed by villagers and state officials at the local level by means of the ver-
nacular press. This observation emphasises the ‘far more decentralised and disaggregated’ (p. 105) characteristics of ‘the state’ encountered by villagers at the local level – which are different from the usual understanding of the state as being unitary and cohesive.

Second, the author provides evidence of how inscription by bureaucrats has been a key modality in influencing the poor. The discussion in this part shows that bureaucrats have controlled administration regarding the poor by heavily depending on statistics indicating the number of the poor, even though the political participation of villagers in pressurising the bureaucrats has grown. Finally, the author shows the gap between the theory of neo-liberal reforms that include two modes of governmentality (various welfare and empowerment schemes for citizens) and the malfunction in being unable to distribute the benefits of reforms to the poorest of the poor.

This book is very helpful for students of Indian politics to understand the interrelationship between efficient governance and poverty alleviation. The detailed illustrations of fieldwork as well as the theoretical discussion of the Indian state at the bureaucratic level greatly support the author’s arguments. Even though the fieldwork for this book was conducted in the early 1990s when the economic reforms of India were announced, the findings are not outdated since chronic bureaucratic inefficiency is still being observed in many states of India.

Sojin Shin
(National University of Singapore)

The Ashgate Research Companion to Chinese Foreign Policy by Emilian Kavalski (ed.).
Farnham: Ashgate, 2012. 481pp., £90.00, ISBN 978 1 4094 2270 9

The Ashgate Research Companion to Chinese Foreign Policy provides a timely contribution to a growing and very topical body of literature on China’s international relations. In over 30 chapters written by a diverse range of contributors, the volume provides one of the most comprehensive overviews of Chinese foreign policy to have recently been published.

The book is conveniently divided into six thematic sections, although the essays are largely independent from each other. The first part investigates different historical and analytical perspectives on Chinese foreign policy, and surveys the main theoretical approaches to the study of China’s international relations. The second part looks at the domestic sources of Chinese foreign policy, considering both ideological factors such as nationalism and communism, and material ones such as military power and economic development. Part III focuses on the impact of China’s foreign policy, and particularly on how Beijing is able to influence international relations through soft power, cultural diplomacy, the Chinese diaspora and its search for natural resources. Parts IV and V provide an overview of China’s relations with other international actors and global regions. Finally, Part VI is a diverse collection of essays on key issues in Chinese foreign policy including, for example, the status of territories such as Taiwan or Tibet, China’s participation in international peacekeeping operations, its position in climate change negotiations, the role of the internet and China’s space programme.

The volume does not offer an overarching theoretical framework or a coherent and unified approach to the subject, but this is due to the nature of the work rather than any fault of the editor, and in fact it contributes to the richness of the volume. Nevertheless, the concluding chapter by Emilian Kavalski manages to identify some recurring themes which emerge from several of the essays, and particularly a set of important domestic and international variables including nationalism, minorities, economic growth, the ever-present weight of relations with Washington, the Taiwan question and the drive to secure energy resources.

This work seems especially valuable as an introduction to this vast field of studies. More advanced readers may feel that some topics are not treated in enough detail, which would seem largely inevitable given the broad scope of the volume, but they will also appreciate many of the essays for their re-conceptualisation of key issues in China’s international relations.

Salvatore Finamore
(University of Cambridge)

Malfunctioning Democracy in Japan by Yoshiaki Kobayashi.

As Samuel Huntington has previously noted, democracy in Japan deviates considerably from the traditional Westminster model. In this study Yoshiaki Kobayashi
identifies the deficiencies of Japanese-style representative democracy and makes constructive proposals for institutional reform.

On the basis of quantitative research carried out for past Lower House elections Kobayashi argues that representative democracy is not working well (p. 140). According to him the low voter turnout in post-war elections suggests that voters have lost trust in politics (p. 24). To determine the causes, Kobayashi first evaluates party platforms and government expenditure. His findings suggest that the contents of election platforms are not reflected in policy making (p. 25) and that platforms do not influence voting behaviour and election results (p. 35). He sees this as a ‘serious problem for Japanese democracy’ (p. 35) as politicians are not elected for what they stand for and do not represent voters’ wishes. The reasons for this mismatch are twofold: voters misperceive or misunderstand the policies of their representatives (p. 37) and representatives do not keep their election promises (p. 44).

Next, Kobayashi turns his attention to the damage caused by what he calls ‘political noise’ (p. 49). Drawing from the seminal work on rational public choice theory by Anthony Downs, who has suggested that parties compete to win elections, Kobayashi argues that politicians pursue their own self-interest instead of representing the will of the voters (p. 49). To test his hypothesis he looks at the allocation and distribution of benefits such as subsidies or tax income in the electoral districts. His analysis reveals that politicians are using public funds to finance their re-election (p. 59).

As Kobayashi points out, party support has weakened over time as voter disillusionment has increased (p. 94). Nevertheless, the post-war single-seat constituency electoral system has allowed the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to secure a majority in Lower House elections even though it has never had the support of the majority of voters (p. 61). Nor did a new mixed electoral system introduced in 1993 lead to increased issue voting as had been anticipated (p. 127).

In the last chapter Kobayashi makes bold proposals to reform the current system. He looks at the merits of the German proportional electoral system (p. 144) and the stability of coalition governments (p. 143); he encourages parties to issue detailed campaign pledges (p. 141); and he proposes the introduction of national and local referenda and giving citizens the right to elect the Prime Minister directly (p. 155). Finally, Kobayashi wants to eradicate political corruption and overhaul political funding practices (p. 157).

Patrick Hein
(Meiji University, Japan)


This is an important book by an important strategic thinker. Verghese Koithara is a retired vice admiral with strong political, bureaucratic and military connections. But in this volume he strays far from the official line, castigating politicians, civil servants and elements of the armed forces for what he considers the dysfunctional and sometimes lax ways in which India manages its nuclear forces. He reserves his greatest ire for the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), which he thinks distorts priorities and delivers sub-standard material.

In all other nuclear weapons states, such forces are managed by the military, under the command of political leaders. In India, where the armed forces are widely mistrusted by the civilian elite, they are managed by an unwieldy triumvirate of the military, the DRDO and the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). The result, argues Koithara, is that Indians cannot be confident that if their nuclear weapons were needed they could actually be used, bringing into question their value as a deterrent.

Deterrence only works if your opponent is as certain as they can be that you can and will use the weapon you are threatening to use. If they doubt that, deterrence fails. Yet Koithara argues that too many Indian observers – including senior politicians – think that possession of nuclear forces alone is sufficient to deter their putative opponents, including the better-equipped and better-organised Chinese. This is a problematic assumption which has led to a ‘big gap ... between deterrence policy and deterrence achievement’ (p. 13).

To close that gap, Koithara surveys the basics of deterrence theory, the evolution of India’s nuclear programme, its current nuclear strategy and the slow-developing means that it has to realise it. India, he notes, is a long way from a functional triad of delivery systems: its hardware is basic and largely untried, and it lacks robust command-and-control mechanisms and trained personnel. India’s byzantine national security

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bureaucracy, with its significant weaknesses in coordination and policy planning, as well as endemic inter-service and civil–military tensions, is an added complication.

Koithara thinks that India needs to address better the different challenges posed by Pakistan, with a rapidly expanding arsenal, and China, with a force undergoing systematic modernisation. To that end, he puts forward a set of detailed proposals, but whether they will be implemented is unclear.

Ian Hall
(Australian National University)

Southeast Asia and the Cold War by Albert Lau (ed.). Abingdon: Routledge, 2012. 312pp., £95.00, ISBN 978 0415684507

Twelve well-written essays have been assembled to show the significance of modern war for Southeast Asia, a region that encompasses a variety of countries with different cultures and political attitudes. Albert Lau, the editor of this book, has prepared a fully developed introduction in which he has generally developed the main thesis of the ‘Southeast Asia and the Cold War’ project. Lau carefully handles the emergence and influence of the Cold War since 1947 when the US and the Soviet Union became the pivotal elements involved. Although the Cold War ended in Europe, it covered other locations of the globe, particularly in Southeast Asia. As Lau suggests, ‘any resemblance to the “coldness” of the “war” in Europe, however, soon dissipated, for in Southeast Asia the Cold War turned very quickly into a “hot” war’ (p. 2).

This book uncovers the different paths that the Cold War followed in Southeast Asia where, on the one hand, people had been familiar with communism and the Marxist-Leninist mentality since the 1920s. On the other hand, the coalition of Chinese communists with the Soviet Union had a specific influence on neighbouring countries in 1949.

In this regard, Nicholas Tarling opens the book with his essay about the role of Western policies and colonial systems supported by the British. After Tarling’s chapter, the first part of the book begins with the Cold War in the lower arc including the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, British Borneo and Indonesia. The authors in this part discuss the initial presence of the Cold War in Southeast Asia (particularly in the Philippines) and its interaction with decolonisation as well as its impact on domestic and foreign policies.

Part II, comprising five chapters, focuses on the issue of the Cold War in the upper arc which starts from ‘The Cold War and Vietnam 1945–1954’ and ends with ‘the Jakarta Conference on Cambodia, 1970’. In this part Thailand’s role in the Cold War and its involvement in the secret war in Laos are also discussed.

All in all, this book, which contains a useful select bibliography and index, is recommended to Southeast Asianists and students of political studies and foreign policy.

Majid Daneshgar
(University of Malaya)


Liselotte Odgaard offers a thought-provoking analysis of China’s strategic policies, primarily through the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence – territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-interference in others’ internal affairs, non-aggression, mutual benefits and peaceful coexistence – and second, through nationalism. Coexistence and nationalism work together to achieve China’s goals of creating a national security strategy for would-be great powers that do not quite possess the economic and military capabilities required to perform as a global great power’ (p. 6). Odgaard reinforces Sophie Richardson’s idea that while the Five Principles can constrain China’s options in foreign policy, they also maximise China’s interests. By adhering to its coexistence programme while cooperating with the global community China has become a policy maker of the norms that govern the international system.

This book establishes its theoretical basis by drawing upon historical cases of the ‘coexistence’ policy. The first two chapters trace the origins of the coexistence programme in the USSR, India and China, and unravel the benefits of pursuing the ‘coexistence’ policy for Prussia, Britain and the USSR. The variables identified in these cases lead to the main argument: in the short term China is likely to pursue common interests that serve the wider community, rather than solely domestic ones, in an attempt to buy time to acquire full-blown...
great power comparable to the US (p. 26). Chapters 4, 5 and 6 are devoted to justifying China’s cooperative intentions in contemporary border disputes with Russia and India and in the South China Sea; diplomatic actions taken within the UN towards Iran, Sudan and Myanmar; and the Communist Party of China’s (CCP) legitimacy claims in the case of Taiwan, Xinjiang (the Uygur Autonomous Region in the Northwest of China) and Japan.

One of the most noticeable claims the author makes is that although China is not yet considered a ‘full-blown power’, its behaviour to comply with the Five Principles amounts to that of a ‘maker of international order’ (p. 129) through the UN, on a par with the US. However, this comparison seems problematic, and Odgaard herself recognises China’s deficiency in creating a state–society model that could attract allies. Furthermore, she mentions values and identity as key issues for maintaining the coexistence of states, but this point would benefit from further theorisation which would perhaps explain better why nationalism does not encroach on coexistence.

Nonetheless these drawbacks are not serious and they do not diminish the book’s invaluable contribution to a better understanding of what underpins China’s strategic policies. The book provides an enjoyable journey for novices and connoisseurs alike.

Oana Burcu
(University of Nottingham)


Conventional wisdom has it that Chinese officials are relatively shy in front of the camera. Unlike their Western counterparts who must fight for their positions in elections, Chinese officials have to impress their superiors rather than the general public. Such a stereotypical image, even though sometimes appropriate, could certainly not be applied to Zhu Rongji, China’s Premier from 1998 to 2003.

Zhu is well known to the world for aggressively pushing economic reform in the most populous country and the largest transitional economy in the world. He, however, hates to be viewed as an ‘economic czar’ (p. 26), and he is certainly much more than an economic technocrat.

Reading through the 55 transcripts in this carefully edited volume, even an experienced researcher in the field of contemporary China can certainly learn something new. Readers will be amazed by the rich record of Zhu’s views regarding China’s domestic politics, its place in a globalising world and its relations with other powers. And they will also be impressed by the determination, knowledge, passion and wit of the former Premier of China.

The book starts with a helpful foreword by Henry Kissinger, followed by a useful preface from the publisher and several photos of Zhu Rongji. Its main body consists of two parts. The first and shorter part includes the transcripts of Zhu’s four talks with the foreign press along with a speech to the world’s economic and business leaders as China’s Vice Premier, a position he held from 1993 to 1998. The second and major part covers Zhu’s important speeches at home and abroad as China’s Premier. This part is organised into two sections, of which the first one covers Zhu’s speeches in 13 interviews, 8 press conferences and 15 engagements with the Hong Kong press corps and the second one includes Zhu’s 14 addresses to economic and business leaders.

This book is translated from its original Chinese edition, which is reported to have sold over 2 million copies. While the ideas and opinions expressed by Zhu in the book may not always seem appropriate or attractive to readers in the English-speaking world, many people will certainly find it worth reading, for it illustrates how a state leader handles difficult economic and political situations with rich experience and professional skill. It portrays an official who is ‘witty, urbane, exceptionally intelligent, tough in the face of challenge, and at times disarmingly frank’ (p. xi), and it offers a very rewarding reading experience.

Yu Tao
(University of Oxford)


As is now widely accepted, late industrialisation in East Asia was the product of active state intervention in the market. The question Joseph Wong explores in his book is: as economies in East Asia are shifting from industrial catch-up to having to innovate in industrial activity,
where does this leave the ‘developmental state’? Using the biotechnology sector as a case study, Wong compares recent trends in industrial policy making across South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. He finds that the high level of uncertainty at the time of entering the biotech sector led decision makers to stick to strategies that had worked in the past. As a result, certain legacies of the post-war developmental state have endured, such as countries’ distinctive strategies of industrial organisation. However, beneath these continuities, Wong claims, the developmental state is going through a process of radical transformation. To paraphrase Wong’s argument: whereas during the stage of industrial catch-up the state was able to ‘pick winners’ by exploiting pre-existing technologies, state intervention in biotech is limited to facilitating the process of ‘discovering potential winners’ (p. 14). In other words, the state has lost its capacity to coordinate, which hammers ‘the final nail in the developmental state’s proverbial coffin’ (p. 180).

In his book, Wong supports the more general argument that state intervention in the market can only be an option for those economies seeking to catch up. As such, the book will find a readership not only among specialists of Asian politics but also among scholars interested in more theoretical questions of political economy. Wong’s original contribution lies in his analysis of the developmental state itself. Whereas other authors have focused on changes in the structural context (e.g. international liberalisation pressures, democratisation) to explain why the developmental state only has a limited lifespan, Wong focuses on the institutions that constitute the developmental state, arguing that these are not suitable to coordinate industrial innovation efforts.

It remains questionable, however, whether biotech is a good case study for developing a more general argument about state intervention in the market can only be an option for those economies seeking to catch up. As such, the book will find a readership not only among specialists of Asian politics but also among scholars interested in more theoretical questions of political economy. Wong’s original contribution lies in his analysis of the developmental state itself. Whereas other authors have focused on changes in the structural context (e.g. international liberalisation pressures, democratisation) to explain why the developmental state only has a limited lifespan, Wong focuses on the institutions that constitute the developmental state, arguing that these are not suitable to coordinate industrial innovation efforts.

Jean-François Médard’s concept of neopatrimonialism, so endemic to the study of African politics, has rarely been placed in deep theoretical groundings or within a global comparative perspective. This nicely composed edited volume seeks to remedy this state of affairs by charting the trajectory of the term from its antecedents in classical sociology up through its blossoming within the Africanist literature. The book loosens the term’s African exceptionalism, drawing on work from a truly global sample, including Kenya, Nigeria, Niger, the Philippines, Brazil, Uzbekistan, Italy and, finally, France’s African foreign policy apparatus. What these chapters capture well are both the conditions necessary for the production of neopatrimonial relations and their adaptation and mutations over time.

The book’s greatest strength is its attempt to address the conceptual laxity of the term, distinguishing between ‘capped’ or regulated forms of neopatrimonialism and more predatory anti-developmental manifestations. The chapters by Bach and Van de Walle will be particularly useful to students and teachers of African politics wanting a more finely tuned analytical framework for understanding seemingly dysfunctional states amidst democratisation efforts. Bach argues for a differentiation between ‘neopatrimonialism within the state and patterns of neopatrimonialism that permeate the entire state’ (p. 31). Similarly, Van de Walle’s chapter distinguishes between elite clientelism, prebendalism and patronage politics, arguing that ‘the amount of democracy in the system determines the nature of clientelism; the more democratic the system, the more clientelist practices will benefit mass publics; and the more they will be limited to legal and codified behavior’ (p. 116). As a corollary to this point, he locates elite clientelism in the executive branch and mass clientelism in the development of political parties and a more independent legislative branch. Indeed throughout the entire volume, the authors move the discussion away from the dysfunction of neo-patrimonial states towards asking how neo-patrimonial states may display varying
degrees of functionality, productivity and political participation.

While the book is certainly of great use to teachers and students, it would have been nice to see a longer concluding chapter, with more insights teased from the comparative case studies. Given recent work on the ‘development-oriented gate-keeping state’ of Botswana¹ and development patrimonialism in Rwanda,² the topic is ripe for pragmatic discussion. This volume will hopefully stimulate further dialogue as to how neo-patrimonial relations may mutate into more productive and democratic configurations in the future.

Notes


Laura Mann
(University of Oxford)


Given the role of the Islamist movements in reconstructing the politics of the Middle East in the post-Arab Spring era, Nathan Brown attempts to explore in this book what impact the semi-authoritarian regimes had on Islamist movements (p. 9). In parallel with this objective, Brown traces the ways in which these movements react to semi-authoritarian reflexes (p. 84). The Islamist movements in the cases of Egypt, Palestine, Jordan and Kuwait have shown that these movements and their partially autonomous political parties are reflective and they respond ‘to shifting semi-authoritarian opportunities by investing in them without making full commitments’ (p. 10). In this regard, Brown argues that Islamists pose a challenge to incumbent regimes due to their growing commitments toward democratic rules and electoral politics. The book clearly illustrates that the shift from full to semi-authoritarianism has had ‘real’ effects on Islamist movements in these four cases (p. 228).

The author focuses more on the ability of the Islamist movements to ‘play by many shifting rules’ (p. 19). The Islamists have committed to play with the shifting rules, knowing that although they will run they will nevertheless lose. With the exception of Hamas, these movements cannot gain an electoral victory due to the controlled process of political liberalisation. The politicalisation of the movements has led them to learn how to invest and accommodate within the prevailing rules of the game, that is, participation, but not domination. The four cases in this work show that the Islamist movements are ‘flexible, adaptable, and resilient’ (p. 125). In addition, Brown notes that the politicalisation of Islamists – within the boundaries of semi-authoritarianism – reinforces the Islamist movements’ attempts to build ‘consensus and strong organisations that can survive and even flourish with leadership change’ (p. 125).

At this point, the author recalls the empirical question of the inclusion-moderation hypothesis. The findings indicate that the Islamist movements in the region are not monolithic and they are considered to be ‘anti-system parties’ by the incumbent regimes. The more politicised they are, the more likely they are to be oppositional (pp 231–2). Brown argues that the liberalising trajectories of semi-authoritarianism will not lead to full democratisation in the region. Accordingly, the politicalisation of Islamists can hardly bring about regime change in the semi-authoritarian systems as was seen in the cases of Egypt and Tunisia. Nonetheless, Islamists can still play a critical role in fostering ‘democratic practice even within a semi-authoritarian setting’ (p. 13).

Nur Köprülü
(Cyprus International University)


Remapping the Ottoman Middle East is an ambitious endeavour to devise a new analytical framework with which to elucidate the region’s intricate reconstitution during and after the Ottoman period. The book aims ‘to offer a novel way of understanding the Middle East based on previous historical research’ (p. 128) and is novel in its synthesis of a range of empirical and theoretical resources – from new economic sociology to the world-systems theory – which are then reconstructed within an overall framework of institutional historical sociology.
Emrence’s contribution to the field is his reinterpretation of the late Ottoman social, economic and political history through ‘exploring the regionally-constituted, network-based and path-dependent historical trajectories’ (p. 4). Three historical trajectories, namely the coast, the interior and the frontier are identified as signifying variegated patterns in the nineteenth-century Ottoman polity. Starting with a sweeping review of the current state of Ottoman historiography, Emrence provides a synoptic outline of the strengths and weaknesses of existing approaches to the study of late Ottoman developments. The next three chapters unpack the unique features of each historical trajectory based on Emrence’s ‘spatial, path-dependent and comparative approach’ (p. 128). Accordingly, it is argued that these different trajectories ‘were shaped by market relations and the discourse of modernity on the coast, the imperial bureaucracy and the notion of Islamic state in the interior, and religious trust networks and politics of mobilization in the frontier’ (pp. 4–5). The book is wrapped up with two brief chapters on the specific form these trajectories took in the early twentieth century and a brief restatement of the importance of the trajectory model for Ottoman studies.

While the text offers a detailed discussion, the demarcation and naturalisation of competing social forces as geographical units pose challenges to the scope and plausibility of its analysis. For example, the three cases that form the basis of the interior trajectory – Anatolia, Syria and Palestine – receive extremely uneven treatment. Conceptual ambiguities further undermine certain aspects of the overall argument, such as the utilisation of the concepts of ‘modernity’ and ‘class’. Given the centrality of modernity to the work as the ultimate destination of all three trajectories, the term itself is only thinly defined and is mostly employed as a descriptive apparatus. Similarly, the latter concept is severely undertheorised, which signals a disparate melange of both a political (e.g. local notables, imperial bureaucracy) and an economic category that receives its content from the process of surplus appropriation (e.g. wage labourers, peasantry).

Remapping the Ottoman Middle East sets out an engaging but equally demanding research agenda for the study of late Ottoman transformations. Its real impact will be determined by the degree to which it captures the interest of other scholars to follow its fresh conceptual framework.

Cemal Burak Tansel
(University of Nottingham)


In this book David Kiwuwa presents the reader with a comprehensive and explorative account of how Rwanda has attempted a second transition towards a democratic process following the 1994 genocide. He achieves an often elusive balance between informative description and cutting-edge analysis which makes this book suitable for academics and students alike. The theory chapter offers a comprehensive review of the literature surrounding ethnicity and transition. It is summarised with a defence of the integrative model as the most appropriate method for analysing the role of ethnicity in transitional politics. Kiwuwa describes the model as ‘a transitional model that primarily rests on four principal pillars: unity, equality, trust and institutional engineering as the (basic) foundation for a potentially successful political transformation to a democracy within deeply divided unipolar societies’ (p. 24). He claims that his original offering to the canon comes from his study of unipolar societies and in doing so he successfully extends the research in this area.

Through the inclusion of a detailed historical background on the situation in Rwanda, and the role of various historical factors in the creation of the situation the country finds itself in, Kiwuwa successfully broadens the potential readership of his book as there is little requirement of prior knowledge. The historical chapters also offer a further advantage in that they systematically demonstrate the role of pre-colonial and colonial experience in the formation and entrenchment of a divide along ethnic lines.

The issue of ethnicity and the role it plays in politics is an important one, and this book goes a long way in explaining and analysing the role of the pre-colonial and colonial historic situation in creating the situation in Rwanda. However, it also takes an interesting step further and I believe succeeds in delivering on Kiwuwa’s claim: ‘I set out to re-examine the potential premise for successful transition within a deeply divided ethnic society characterised by a high degree of
ethnic consciousness ... this research clearly shows that
democratic transition is markedly difficult but certainly
not impossible within political structures still charac-
terised by intense ethnic consciousness’ (pp. 159–60).
Ethnic Politics and Democratic Transition in Ruanda is an
interesting and well-presented case study of the attempt
at democratisation in a country that has suffered great
losses as a result of an ethnic divide, and is a valuable
contribution to the literature.

Gemma Bird
(University of Sheffield)

The Scramble for African Oil: Oppression, Cor-
rupption and War for Control of Africa’s Natural
Resources by Douglas A. Yates. London: Pluto

Rising oil prices over the last decade have spurred
scholarly interest in the pernicious effects of oil on
economic and political development in exporting
countries. Douglas Yates’ book fits into a growing lit-
erature on the so-called ‘oil curse’ by bringing aca-
demic theories to a non-specialist audience and
illustrating them with a variety of illuminating case
studies of African oil-exporting states.

Each of the book’s nine substantive chapters com-
bines a discussion of an academic theory about an
aspect of African oil politics and a case study ‘test’ of
the theory. Yates explores neo-colonial trade relations
in Gabon, multinational corporations in Angola, ‘good
governance’ in Chad, the ‘rentier state’ in Equatorial
Guinea, military rule in Congo-Brazzaville, intellectuals
in Cameroon, democracy and political parties in São
Tomé and Príncipe, independence struggles in Sudan
and armed resistance in Nigeria. The theoretical
sketches are succinct and accessible without being
overly simplistic and the case studies vividly connect
the theories to historical and modern developments.

The final chapter concludes by offering suggestions
for ‘unscrambling the scramble for African oil’ (p. 218),
including combating corruption, distributing oil rev-
enes directly to citizens, boycotting African oil, using
oil for social development (for which Venezuela is
Yates’ preferred model) and moving towards a post-oil
economy. Yates clearly has high regard for ‘power from
below’: ‘All of the positive changes in African oil states
have come from some kind of transformation in con-
sciousness that shaped popular resistance to (the) oil
business’ (p. 236). He writes with clear admiration for
African activists in oil states such as Mongo Beti, Ken
Saro Wiwa and John Garang.

The book would have benefited from more inter-
action with the quantitative literature on the resource
curse. While large-n studies may indeed ‘eliminate the
multitude of details and variations which make each
country unique’ (p. 2), critical engagement with this
work would have been more constructive than dismis-
sal. Nevertheless, Yates’ focus on Africa usefully high-
lights the interaction of oil with region-specific factors
rarely explored in statistical studies.

Overall, this book succeeds in providing an intro-
duction to academic work on the resource curse in
Africa for non-specialists beyond the journalistic
accounts that have proliferated in recent years. It serves
as a stark reminder of the consequences of the global
demand for oil while urging us to support measures to
turn the curse into a blessing.

Barry Maydom
(Nuffield College, University of Oxford)