

# Book reviews

## International law and organization

**International organizations as law-makers.** By José E. Alvarez. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005. 650pp. Index. £75.00. ISBN 0 19 876562 2.

This is an interesting and thought-provoking book which explores the ability of organizations to enact rules. However, there is little discussion of what 'law-making' actually means. As a result, we find ourselves with a very interesting book, by a very competent author, that does not discuss the subject the title suggests it should.

Most lawyers would consider law-making to be something that emanates unilaterally from a source which may be a legislative institution or an executive body. In the Anglo-Saxon world courts will 'make law' but, since that law is often merely *inter partes* and without general application, few would consider courts 'law-makers' in the general sense.

In the case of international organizations it would perhaps have been appropriate to discuss such themes in order to place the subject-matter in its correct focus. The section of the book which seeks to identify law-making activities in the traditional sense is limited to pages 109–273. Even here, the author strides from discussing actions by the Security Council to environmental impact assessments by the World Bank and recommendations by the International Labour Organization. Many would agree that these institutions do develop international law but it would have been interesting to learn in greater detail how and why such activities should be classified as 'law-making'.

Even more controversial are the following sections, where the author discusses treaty-making and dispute settlement by international organizations. It would have been useful to have an analysis of what 'law-making' means in the opinion of the author, as most treaties have no effect except *inter partes* and this limited effect is even more pronounced in dispute settlement.

Four decades ago the subject of the unilateral regulating power of international entities had not been explored. Since then there have been a number of important monographs and articles on the subject. One may be surprised to see few references in Alvarez's important volume to these sources, or to the general themes of their exploration by a number of scholars (for example in writings by Skubizewski and Arangio-Ruiz).

The author is perhaps caught up in unwarranted distinctions, for example between 'public' and 'private' areas of law. There is increasing evidence that, specifically in the field of international organizations, such a distinction is a fallacy: how else do you explain the legal consequences of the privatization of some international organizations? Did they cease to be subjects of international law just like that? Is it more logical to adopt a wider definition of 'subjects of international law' and still regard them as subjects in international society?

The merit of the present volume lies in the author's wide perspective, incorporating much material from the realm of international relations. International relations academics are often one step ahead of (most) international lawyers as their focus is on how states actually behave. The lawyers' view tends to be that states should behave according to (their) textbooks. It is refreshing to find a work not limited to the views of lawyers and, as Hamilton Fish Professor of International

## *Book reviews*

Law and Diplomacy at Columbia University, the author is well placed to be acquainted with wider issues.

Considering the wide and trans-disciplinary approach of the author—who competently strides into areas of International Relations—it would have been even more useful to adopt a wider view of legal subjects, as indeed International Relations scholars have done ever since influential writers like Hedley Bull developed specific ideas on this subject.

From a formalistic point of view it is sad to note that renowned publishers like Oxford University Press clearly delegate the task of formulating an index to people other than the author, since this results in odd entries and obvious omissions. As this could have been a useful reference book the lack of a useful index is particularly painful. Also, there is no bibliography.

On the whole, this is a most interesting book although it does not really live up to the title it has been given. With another title a reviewer would have problems finding faults or anything to criticize from the point of view of substance.

*Ingrid Detter, Académie de Verrey, France, and St Antony's College, Oxford, UK*

**International human rights lexicon.** By Susan Marks and Andrew Clapham. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005. 449pp. Index. Pb.: £20.00. ISBN 0 19 876413 8.

A lexicon would normally list entries or headings in a systematic way to enable the reader to find keywords within the field covered by the lexicon. This is not the case with the book by Susan Marks and Andrew Clapham. Their work is more like an anthology of articles on international law and human rights, arranged in alphabetical order.

The selection of sometimes surprising topics makes reading from cover to cover a little difficult and disjointed but, if the book is picked up by a reader who has little time available and wishes to delve into an interesting article, this resource is useful.

Headings range from democracy to international crimes and there are chapters on both terrorism and privacy. One cannot agree with everything the authors say. For example, few would agree that 'human rights are not and cannot be grounded in religious conviction' (p. 310). This perhaps underestimates the effect of the Ten Commandments on the historical development of respect for human rights, which after all mainly reflect the duties of individuals towards each other.

As for the arrangement of topics some might think that 'Protest' (pp. 273–8)—which forms part of a special article—could have been included in the chapter on 'Democracy'. Also, since the authors attempt to cover 'War crimes', why shy away from the important issue of civilian rights? There is a section on 'Environment' but nothing on 'Development' in spite of links that the United Nations suggested at the Rio Conference in 1992. Other relationships may also have been overlooked, for example the connection between 'Terrorism' (pp. 345–58) and 'Torture' (pp. 359–83), and the connection between 'International crimes' (pp. 223–57) and 'Women' (pp. 411–29). Furthermore, there are no cross-references.

The authors might be targeting a less erudite audience than they are likely to have since they feel the need to remind us that the word 'democracy' comes from Greek (p. 62). Also, there are some instances where the authors may have overemphasized the influence of Asian thoughts and values (pp. 36–41 and pp. 95–7), for which they display considerable respect. This is most interesting but the section on 'Culture' (pp. 33–48) should perhaps have been counterbalanced by reference to other value systems.

There are numerous references to conventions that do not include dates and other details are also lacking. One would have thought that the authors could have easily indicated the year of the Torture Convention (p. 361), the European Torture Convention (p. 362) and the Convention against Racial Discrimination (p. 298), and given a number to the Protocol on Racial Discrimination to the European Convention (without a number it is difficult to locate it among the host of attached Protocols). Such omissions reduce the value of the book for the dedicated scholar who may not be sure to which legal document the authors refer.

## *Foreign policy*

This is an unorthodox book with non-legal references and numerous quotations from various non-lawyer authors, some famous (like Orwell), others more obscure. But it makes interesting and challenging reading among other more tedious works on international law. It is notable that Oxford University Press has published this original volume.

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## **Foreign policy**

**America's failing empire: US foreign relations since the Cold War. By Warren I. Cohen.** Malden, MA, and Oxford: Blackwell. 2005. 204pp. £50.00. ISBN 1 4051 1426 6.

The end of the Cold War marked a watershed in international affairs. American foreign policy had to adjust to new realities. It proved a difficult task to identify the salient features of the new era, diagnose the main problems and formulate a coherent strategy. Warren Cohen's new study examines the successive attempts of US administrations to make sense of this new environment. He begins with the inauguration of George H. W. Bush in January 1989 and closes with the official end to the occupation of Iraq in June 2004. The main focus is on the president but Cohen offers neat assessments of the key foreign policy figures in each administration.

Bush utilized a talented and experienced team. He might be criticized for not being tough enough towards the Chinese government after the Tiananmen massacres, but his administration saw final victory in the Cold War, the jailing of the Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega and military success for the US-organized coalition that threw the Iraqis out of Kuwait. In addition, he 'responded extraordinarily well to evidence of North Korea's nuclear program' (p. 31). In 1992, an election year during which no one wanted to appear soft in handling the issue, inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency revealed discrepancies between North Korea's declarations and the facts on the ground.

Unfortunately for Bush, his success in removing threats to US security meant Americans no longer felt foreign affairs were so important. The electorate turned to Bill Clinton, a state governor who promised to concentrate on the domestic economy. His foreign policy team was 'uninspired—and uninspiring' (p. 57). Aiming to balance the federal budget, he made cuts in overseas commitments. He also focused on trade rather than security concerns in his international policy. His criticism of Bush's policy on China, Somalia and Bosnia came back to haunt him. Two American Black Hawk helicopters were shot down and 18 American soldiers killed in Somalia when the much reduced US forces, originally sent by Bush to safeguard humanitarian aid, expanded their aim to overthrowing the most powerful local warlord. Clinton ordered a swift withdrawal. His domestic advisers dissuaded him from humanitarian intervention, 'reinforcing his disinclination to use force'. He vacillated over Bosnia, showing his 'unwillingness to provide strong leadership'. His failure to respond to genocide in Rwanda—'indeed his administration's obstruction of UN efforts to save the lives of hundreds of thousands of Tutsis in Rwanda—was probably the most reprehensible moment of his presidency' (p. 64). He acted reluctantly and belatedly in Bosnia and Kosovo, and only after thousands had died.

Moreover, he did not apply the expected tough sanctions against China. At first he temporized, then in 1994 he abandoned his concern for human rights and granted Most Favoured Nation status to China. Iran was another problem tackled ineffectually. Initially it appeared he would take a tougher line, branding Tehran an 'international outlaw' for its support of terrorists and its nuclear programme. But some minor concessions by a more moderate leader, Khatami, allowed Clinton to waive congressionally mandated sanctions. On a more positive front, he contributed to the peace process in Northern Ireland and tried to press for an agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, achieving concessions from the Israelis but rejection of a deal by Arafat. Clinton, however, 'rarely provided his foreign policy team with guidance. He rarely led. His interests and concerns were elsewhere and when events forced him to engage, his first inclination seemed to be to test the domestic political winds' (p. 71).

If the Clinton administration frequently lacked direction from the top, this could not be said of the presidency of George W. Bush. Cohen paints too rosy a picture of Clinton's legacy. The economy was hardly in a 'superb condition' (p. 123). There were worrying signs of Islamic terrorism against the United States, though Bush's advisers chose to ignore warnings from Clinton officials. Both Iran and North Korea were serious, unresolved problems. Nevertheless, his portrait of the central individuals, the policy-making processes and policies pursued is justly mordant, though he recognizes that Bush assembled a 'superb, highly experienced team' (p. 125)—Colin Powell as Secretary of State and Condoleezza Rice as National Security Advisor, as well as Paul Wolfowitz and Donald Rumsfeld. It was the vice-president, Dick Cheney, who dominated the foreign policy agenda. Powell was often out on a limb, unable to prevent the unilateralist approach that soon alienated allies. This was most starkly exposed in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Rumsfeld rejected the idea of a broad coalition for the attack on Afghanistan where the regime was harbouring the Al-Qaeda organization that had launched the attacks of 9/11. Although the Taliban regime in Afghanistan was quickly defeated, the Americans failed to capture bin Laden, reluctant to risk US forces on the dangerous task of tracking him in the mountains.

There was a similar display of unilateralism and even greater self-confidence in the war in Iraq in April 2003. Swift military victory and the removal of Saddam Hussein seemed to confirm the optimism. It was soon replaced, however, by ever growing concerns as US forces became bogged down. Cohen rightly condemns the criminal neglect of a postwar plan. Moreover, the Iraq obsession distracted the administration from more urgent problems presented by the nuclear weapons programmes of North Korea and Iran. Cohen rightly believes that the neo-conservatives did not create this ambitious, hubristic policy. They merely provided the 'rationalizations for the action the two men who dominated the policy process, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, wanted to take' (p. 186). But ultimately the responsibility for policy rested with the president about whom, he concludes, '[h]istorians of American foreign relations will not be kind' (p. 186).

Warren Cohen's book has begun that assessment. It provides a marvellously clear, authoritative and judicious account. He is rightly unsparing of the many failings of the last decade and a half. George W. Bush is predictably derided and Clinton's limitations are neatly delineated. The unlikely hero, in a qualified way, is George H. W. Bush, whose defeat in 1992 suggested the passing of a mediocre figure. For all his exaggerated talk of a 'new world order' emerging from the ruins of the Cold War, many would now welcome his more measured approach to America's role in the world.

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## **Conflict, security and armed forces**

**The new wars.** By **Herfried Münkler**. Cambridge: Polity. 2004. 224pp. Index. £50.00. ISBN 0 7456 3336 6. Pb.: £15.99. ISBN 0 7456 3337 4.

**The new western way of war.** By **Martin Shaw**. Cambridge: Polity. 2005. 164pp. Index. £45.00. ISBN 0 7456 3410 9. Pb.: £14.99. ISBN 0 7456 3411 7.

Ideas about the changing nature of war in the contemporary era have caused much debate in recent years and these two books offer different contributions to these debates. Herfried Münkler's book provides a good overview of the 'new wars': mainly intrastate wars that are characterized by the breakdown and failure of the state. Münkler argues that at their root, the new wars differ from classical interstate wars in two ways: through the commercialization and privatization of force and through the asymmetrical nature of such wars. These two facets tie in with the main theme of the 'de-statization' of war. The 'old' wars were interstate wars, that relied on the organization and financing of the military through the state, ensuring that, to a large extent, wars were engaged in with particular goals of the state in mind. In new wars, state structures have become irrelevant in both of these respects: new wars do not necessitate the

formal structures of the old wars because of their reliance on untrained fighters and light weapons and their financing is self-perpetuating. The new wars rely on war itself to provide for war: wars themselves are profit-making enterprises. Münkler gives a good account of the historical rise of the state as a monopolizer of war and then proceeds to show how this model is deteriorating.

These major features lead to numerous other characteristics of new wars: the avoidance of set-piece battles; a focus on terrorizing and targeting civilians (and often ethnic cleansing); a protracted nature resulting from global linkages which provide accessible resources; the recruitment of 'soldiers' from the disaffected and disadvantaged; and the de-formalization of war—i.e. war is rarely declared, rarely ends definitively, and rarely follows the codified rules of war. The important role of the media is also discussed, in terms of how the belligerents in the new wars use the media as a weapon, as a way of visually demonstrating the impacts of violence. Such usage is intended to sap the political will of a stronger opponent. Along these lines, Münkler includes a chapter examining international terrorism as an offensive strategy of asymmetric warfare that also has a place in the context of the new wars.

The book provides a clear overview of contemporary war and the diverse aspects of new wars, that particularly hones in on (and is good at conveying) the economic dimensions. However, despite these virtues, the book, like many other attempts to characterize the 'new wars', begs a number of questions. First, it forms a rather idealized image of 'old' interstate war, which it uses as a contrasting model for the characteristics of new wars. However, it is never clear exactly which wars this idealized model applies to, or for how long a period it might have lasted and there is no direct systematic comparison between old, interstate wars and new wars. This leads into the problem of causation: are new wars just the cause of recent state collapse or are they part of longer trends in the decline of total war? Finally, the role of western military power in the new wars is not clearly articulated. While Münkler shows that the West obviously forms a part of the asymmetry of force found in new wars, and particularly in terms of the development of military strategies that avoid high costs or risks, it is not clear how the military power of western states directly relates to the new wars. The West is mainly discussed in its various capacities to counter asymmetrical war and possibly to use force to stop new wars.

Martin Shaw fills these gaps, with a number of important ideas on the new 'western' way of war. While ostensibly focusing on the West, Shaw is clear that the West's move towards low-risk interventionary wars goes hand in hand with the new wars that Münkler, among others, has ably described. As such, they are part of a broader global complex of war, or a world military order. In order to better conceptualize this order, Shaw draws on Mary Kaldor's concept of the 'mode of warfare', which sees war as a part of the broader context of social relations, while not entirely reducible to those relations. As such, Shaw clearly puts new wars and the new western way of warfare within the context of industrialized total war: that the beginnings of a new warfare represent the end of trends that began in the nineteenth century.

Shaw contends that the new mode of warfare conforms to a 'global surveillance' mode, characterized by the indirect mass mobilization of forces (from the small specialized professional armies of the West to the informal, dispersed and underground forces of the 'new wars') and, crucially, the global surveillance of military ventures by state institutions, law, markets and media. If in industrialized total war, war could legitimately dominate politics, economics and society as a whole, in the new mode of warfare, war has to 'nestle into the interstices of polity, economics and culture' (p. 55). In the West especially, war must be seen to be somewhere else: not only spatially, but also by not affecting the running of the economy or stopping electoral politics.

Having set the global context of the mode of warfare, Shaw goes on to detail the role of the West within this framework, which he argues is characterized by 'risk-transfer militarism'. This is where the overlaps between Münkler and Shaw are quite clear, as they both examine the cost reduction strategies of western approaches to warfare. However, Shaw delves deeper into these strategies, showing how they are part of broader social trends: they are not just about the high economic costs of waging war, but also part of the overall post-militarization of western

societies. The abstraction of western societies from the military, seen in the trend in the West towards ending conscription and the subsequent use of small professional armed forces, creates societies much less inclined to accept military casualties as a worthy sacrifice.

As a consequence, strategies of 'risk-transfer war' push risks away from western soldiers, and towards non-western civilians, as a way of bracketing war off from western societies. War for western states is to be completely removed from the home state: soldiers will not die, economic life will remain constant and politics will continue as usual. As such, this is a different reality from total war, where all three of these factors were consumed by the pursuit of war itself. Shaw is careful to note that this is not to say that civilians are directly targeted, as this is certainly not the case. However, civilian casualties are seen as unavoidable side-effects of risk-transfer strategies. As the main way of avoiding casualties to western forces is through high-altitude 'precision' bombing campaigns, such casualties are highly likely.

While Münkler concludes by discussing the overall problems for security policy that the 'new wars' create, Shaw's conclusions go further. Shaw charts the decline or challenge posed to the new western way of war posed by the US-led 'war on terror', and in particular, through a detailed examination of the 2003 Iraq war. Shaw's analysis becomes a normative argument about the future not only of risk-transfer militarism, but of war itself. He challenges the idea of humanitarian wars based on notions of the just war, in order to promote a 'historical pacifism', dedicated to protecting civilians everywhere. While it may be possible to derive different normative conclusions from Shaw's analysis, nonetheless his cosmopolitan claim for the right to life of all people is a compelling piece of engaged social science and does much to clarify what is at stake in contemporary warfare.

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**Critical security studies and world politics. Edited by Ken Booth.** Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. 2005. 336pp. Index. \$62.00. ISBN 1 555 87825 3. Pb.: \$24.50. ISBN 1 555 87826 1.

The Critical Security Studies (CSS) project has become increasingly important within contemporary efforts to reconceptualize security away from the confines of (neo-)realist strategic studies. This edited collection explores some of the spaces within which such a reconceptualization could emerge, outlining possible routes towards the considerable task of an 'emancipatory politics calculated to promote a more humane humanity' (p. 16). As such, this volume is structured by three 'core' concerns around which adherents or sympathizers of the CSS project coalesce, albeit loosely and not without contestation: security, community and emancipation. Each section comprises a brief introduction, followed by two theoretical chapters and one illustrative chapter demonstrating the applicability of that concept to a contemporary security issue. Booth's concluding chapter explores the possibilities for developing these, primarily critical, grounds for consensus into a more concrete and distinctive theory of security as such.

Despite this book's frequently explicit rejoinder that attempts to denote or delimit the CSS project are likely to engender difficulties and contestation, three shared areas of impetus do successfully bind the individual chapters together. First, there is a perceived need to rethink security in light of a number of dislocatory or transformatory experiences characterizing contemporary world politics. New security threats such as terrorism and disease pandemics, accompanied by realignments of political identities and loyalties, render the need to reconceptualize security all the more urgent for many of these authors. Second, there is a shared concern to rethink security away from the 'iron cage' of political realism (p. 4) in light of its inability to grapple with these changing dynamics and its complicity within existing relations of domination and exploitation. Finally, and more affirmatively, there emerges consensus regarding the need for a creatively catachrestic conception of security devoid of statist and exclusionary connotations, and linked instead to the emancipation of individuals and communities. It is difficult to challenge either the normative appeal or the contemporary prescience of any of these motivations at this general level of abstraction.

One area within which the explicit aims of the CSS project and the structuring of this volume could perhaps have been more congruent, however, concerns the selection of case-studies employed to illustrate each of the three core concepts. The sophisticated analyses of post-Cold War peacekeeping operations, Australian foreign policy and conflict in Northern Ireland undoubtedly demonstrate the benefits of CSS in *deepening* the agenda of security studies. Less clear, however, is the value of any of these chapters in *broadening* that agenda to new issues, threats or ‘problems’ of security. Each of these issues is clearly accessible within more traditional approaches to security in a manner that is less evident, for example, for environmental threats or disease pandemics. As such, the extent to which any of these chapters successfully or fully problematizes the statist or militaristic assumptions driving orthodox security studies perhaps merits attention. Further justification of these selections would have improved this book’s contribution to broadening this agenda.

In spite of this concern, the value of this book is clear in setting out the parameters of one of the major emergent approaches to international relations and security studies. Integrating conceptual sophistication with a genuine commitment to questions of praxis and change, *Critical security studies and world politics* offers a novel and distinctive, although fruitfully heterogeneous, collection of attempts to (re)conceptualize contemporary global politics.

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## **Politics, democracy and social affairs**

**Gulliver unbound: America’s imperial temptation and the war in Iraq.** By Stanley Hoffman and Frédéric Bozo. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. 2005. 153pp. Index. Pb.: £14.99. ISBN 0 7425 3600 9.

One of the most unfortunate consequences of the diplomatic manoeuvring that preceded the war in Iraq was a deepening of the rift between the United States and France. After the US withdrew the second UN resolution authorizing the Iraq war, commentators on both sides of the Atlantic suddenly found reasons to condemn their erstwhile ally as untrustworthy, dangerous or morally adrift. But fortunately a few sensible voices emerged to shed light on the substantial differences of opinion between the US and France. Among the most prominent of these has been Stanley Hoffman of Harvard University, a renowned commentator on international affairs and a citizen of both countries. In this insightful short volume, comprised largely of conversations with historian Frédéric Bozo, he sums up his observations on the perils of America’s recent imperial adventures and issues an impassioned call for restraint, dialogue and good sense on the part of both nations.

Perhaps the most important contribution of the volume is Hoffman’s balanced and persuasive analysis of the steps that led up to the rupture in Franco-American relations in March 2003. He attributes the roots of the crisis to a number of factors including traditional American franco-phobia, an underestimation on the French side of the extent to which Americans saw Iraq as part of the war on terror and a delayed realization on the part of the French diplomatic corps that the neo-conservatives meant business in toppling Saddam Hussein. He argues that France’s decision to block a vote on the second resolution authorizing force against Iraq arose from its realization that for the US war was already inevitable and that the effort to achieve a second resolution was theatre aimed to satisfy British Prime Minister Tony Blair and to force an explicit choice on the members of the Security Council. By pointing out important overlooked facts—that France, for example, had specified in December 2002 the number of soldiers it was willing to contribute should there be a joint military operation—Hoffman dispels the myth that France was determined to block the US action in Iraq out of spite.

At the core of Hoffman’s analysis lies the conviction that the neo-conservatives who drove foreign policy in President Bush’s first term are a breed apart from the statesmen who had shaped foreign policy in the past. Hoffman reminds us that ‘the sort of men and women who defined

foreign policy around Bill Clinton and Clinton himself were, as de Gaulle had said of John F. Kennedy, “Europeans” with whom one could discuss and with whom one could disagree, but who, despite the differences in power, were actually partners’ (p. 11). The neo-conservatives who have captured control of the foreign policy establishment would brook no such disagreement, in part because they saw the presidency of George W. Bush as an opportunity to consolidate American power in a way that previous presidents were unwilling to. The neo-conservatives have ‘a certain contempt for the clichés of liberals, particularly the idea that one had to take into account public opinion, that one should not go too far, and that the American people are deeply interested in foreign policy only when threatened’ (p. 42). What is most alarming for Hoffman is how this aggressive but relatively small group became able to capture or neutralize large parts of the foreign policy establishment and single-handedly abnegate America’s long-standing commitment to restraint in international affairs. In part they could do this because they had a “vision” to offer, one which was radical, utopian and imperialist abroad’ (p. 145).

In the latter half of the book, Hoffman pays considerable attention to the political and moral problems concerning regime change and concludes that such a policy is corrosive for international order. Looking at Iran and North Korea, he notes that the policy of preventive war will only encourage other states to develop nuclear weapons to protect themselves; in his words this is ‘another recipe for turning the world into a jungle’ (p. 73). Such a policy has only led the US into a trap in Iraq, as American forces confront a bitter choice: ‘moderation in the form of some tacit accommodation with insurgents and resisters leaves them in at least partial control, all-out assaults on them play into their hands, insofar as popular support is concerned’ (p. 109). For Hoffman, the solution is clear: a withdrawal of American and British forces from Iraq, a renewed commitment to the fight against Islamic terror and a reorientation of American foreign policy towards accepting the limits of international institutions and universal norms on the free exercise of its power. Only by explicitly rejecting the ‘cult of force’ of the neo-conservatives can America rescue itself from an increasingly desperate and hopeless situation in Iraq and restore international order.

As with any book comprised of interviews and short articles, there are omissions and questions unanswered in this text. For example, the book does not address how the weakness of the Iraqi government may hinder efforts for an orderly American withdrawal. Yet its virtues are far more important than its faults. Its unflinchingly honest account of the events of the last four years makes this volume a significant contribution to the recent literature on American foreign policy. Without resorting to hyperbole or crude accusation, Hoffman has provided an analysis that is persuasive, elegant and scrupulously fair to both the US and its critics. While remaining acutely aware of the bitter choices that the US now faces in Iraq, he has also charted an alternative vision for American foreign policy, one that relies on self-restraint, pragmatism and mutual consent. It is a vision that should be heeded in Washington and elsewhere.

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**The limits of global governance.** By **Jim Whitman.** Abingdon: Routledge. 2005. 167pp. Index. Pb.: £18.99. ISBN 0 415 33903 0.

Since the end of the Cold War there has been a flurry of proposals aimed at improving the ability of international institutions to provide effective global governance. These proposals range from sector-specific blueprints, such as those on a new ‘international financial architecture’, to sweeping ideas for reorganizing world politics according to models of ‘global social democracy’. These ambitious reform programmes have often been accompanied by frustration at the slow pace of change in global institutional arrangements, for which the hostile attitude of the American superpower or more generally the stubborn refusal of many governments to accept substantial limits to their sovereignty is frequently blamed. This elegantly written volume suggests that the lack of political will may not be the most daunting obstacle to global institutional design. Jim Whitman delves into the deeper causes of the systematic failure to effectively govern a broad range of pressing global problems. In short, he argues that the world is becoming more complex,

that this causes the emergence of problems that are more complex and that the development of governance mechanisms to address those problems lags far behind this growing complexity.

The first three chapters of the book dissect the concept of global governance in the context of ethical, political and cognitive questions generated by globalization in its various facets. Whitman offers a useful overview of the debates about governance and critically discusses the main uses of the concept of global governance in the literature: to characterize the impact of individual empowerment generated by increased opportunities for transnational communication and networking; to describe the growing density and strengthening of multilateral organizations in world politics; to identify the sector-specific dynamics of cooperation in domains such as global finance, health and the environment; and to capture the total sum of the efforts of state and non-state actors to cope with issues of common concern. The fourth and fifth chapters look at global governance through the lens of concepts used in the study of complex systems—such as feedback, homeostasis and self-organization—and review the challenges that public policy must face as a result of growing complexity, notably the declining predictability of the consequences of human action, the difficulty of determining causation when it spreads across sectors, borders and time, the tendency of human activities to combine and interact in unexpected ways, the implications of scientific uncertainty and the limits of ‘reductionist’ science. Subsequently Whitman briefly examines the role of power and accountability in global governance and presents what he calls a ‘case study’ on disseminative systems (that is, systems that are widely dispersed and facilitate interaction among agents). The final chapter revisits the main themes explored in the book.

Whitman illustrates his arguments with numerous examples drawn from a wide range of policy domains, although references to environmental problems and policies predominate. While the book puts on display an impressive amount of evidence on the mismatch between the complexity of the problems and governance capacity, few examples receive more than a cursory discussion, and perhaps a set of systematic and detailed analyses of specific governance initiatives would have strengthened the author’s conclusions. A limitation of the book, especially from the point of view of those interested in using it for teaching, is the limited signposting it offers to readers: the introduction does not help them to grasp the structure of the book as a whole and the content of each chapter, and most chapters do not start or end with overviews of the key arguments presented in them.

It is unlikely that Whitman’s arguments will deter committed global governance reformists from developing and advocating blueprints for sectoral or global public policy. But he has provided a useful corrective to excessive optimism and a healthy warning that there are plenty of pitfalls on the path of global institutional design.

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**Une société internationale en mutation: quels acteurs pour une nouvelle gouvernance?**

**Edited by Laurence Boisson de Chazournes and Rostane Mehdi.** Brussels: Bruylant. 2005. 384pp. Pb.: €62.00. ISBN 2 8027 2106 2.

This volume disappoints and delights, in unequal measure. It contains potentially valuable contributions to the current scholarship of international affairs, particularly as concerns the role of non-state actors and their participation in global governance. In that sense, the book is true to its title, ‘A changing international society: who are the actors in a new form of governance?’.

The book’s weaknesses, however, are at least as glaring as its strengths and make it virtually certain that its value will go unnoticed, unless they are corrected. Weaknesses and strengths alike stem from the book’s source: continental European—and especially French-speaking—international relations academe, the clarity of whose thinking is often obscured by the opacity of its expression.

*Une société internationale en mutation* forms part of three collections of international relations texts produced by the Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches Internationales et Communautaires at the Université Paul Cézanne at Aix-Marseille. The two opening chapters are provided by the

organizers of this study, while the remainder of the book, 16 essays by individual authors, is divided into two parts: 'The universal framework' covering the UN, WLO, WTO and World Bank and 'The regional framework' covering the EU from various angles including competition policy, trade unions and security.

Beginning with the book's weaknesses—and putting form before substance—the editing is sorely inadequate, especially coming from so venerable a publisher as the Etablissements Emile Bruylant in Brussels. The two initial chapters, while they make some valid points, are overwritten, random and fail to introduce the essays that follow. At no point does there seem to be a uniting intellect behind the material presented in the book. Nothing draws the chapters together or gauges their relative importance. There is no index, no bibliography and only the briefest of author biographies. The book shows evidence of scanty proofreading, including non-conformed chapter subtitles and even an inconsistent use of inverted commas and French *guillemets* (« »). Through more than 380 pages, such editorial negligence becomes off-putting to the careful reader.

The weaknesses of substance lie in the methodology of a scholarship that is content to describe and classify the findings from primary sources without passing judgement on the validity of the sources themselves. Some chapters remain theoretical and definitional, asking questions they make no attempt to answer. For example, in the essay on the UN and multinational companies, the author relates accounts drawn from transcripts alone, asking (importantly) who actually participated in certain sessions, while an e-mail or website visit might have provided the answer for the reader. More deeply, too many essays eschew the inclusion of international relations events, preferring instead to examine structures and institutions at the expense of actions and impacts. Consequently, some of the essays have the air of university examination papers: formally composed but ultimately lacking in serious insight.

It is a failing of much 'Anglo-Saxon' international relations writing, on the other hand, that it favours the concrete over the theoretical and the polemical over the analytical. On these points, *Une société internationale en mutation* comes into its own. Virtually nowhere in this volume is there any trace of the author's politics or partisanship: the intellectual integrity of the analysis is entire. Even more importantly, the chapters that do live up to the best standards of continental European and French-speaking theoretical analysis do so brilliantly. The chapter on the international governance of environmental issues is well researched, clearly presented and genuinely enlightening. The chapter on the hybrid governance of world trade provides equal intellectual stimulus. So do most of the EU chapters, especially the one devoted to security and defence.

The book is too good to dismiss and not good enough to endorse. The solution might be an English translation, eliminating some superfluous chapters and many superfluous notes, adding a proper introduction and conclusion, rigorously edited to international publishing standards—and with a second edition in French to match.

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**First democracy: the challenge of an ancient idea.** By Paul Woodruff. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005. 284pp. Index. Pb.: £14.99. ISBN 0 19 517718 5.

Paul Woodruff's study is structured on the basis of a number of guiding themes, for example freedom from tyranny, the rule of law and the danger of reasoning without knowledge or proper education. These values, in the author's view, underpin democracy and are contrasted with 'false friends' such as majority rule and voting without real choice, the latter a practice lacking any proper claim to democratic legitimacy (pp. 3 and 11). However, his first reference in the introduction is not to ancient Greece, but to the significance of ancient Greek values for American democracy (p. 4).

Like Churchill, the author provides a very positive view of democracy: 'Yes, democracy is hard to achieve; yes it is impossible to make perfect. But democracy is not a utopian ideal, because it takes human imperfection into account better than any other ideal of government.'

The greatest merit of democracy, therefore, lies in the checks and balances which it offers as protection against abuse and the almost inevitable corruption by power (p. 6).

In the section entitled 'The new complacency' Woodruff criticizes the current US policy of exporting American-style democracy to 'less fortunate corners of the world'. In his view, such tactics make an honest and genuinely beneficial discussion of the merits of democracy almost impossible (p. 7). The author seeks to remedy this with his book, a bold endeavour by any standards. Making a few high-profile points against current US policy, such as election funding and Guantanamo Bay, he warns the reader and his fellow citizens that 'Frightened by many dangers around us, we may be tempted to trade our freedoms for what looks at the time like safety' (p. 18).

Like John Dunn's book *Setting the people free* (2005), Woodruff sees the spirit of democracy in freedom from tyranny. He adds the inclusion of all citizens in governance based on 'Natural equality' (ch. 6), although he accepts that in the modern state not every citizen can be heard (pp. 13 and 68). Against this background, one feels tempted to apply Woodruff's 'Symptoms of tyranny' to the current Bush administration: 'a tyrant is afraid of losing his position and his decisions are affected by this fear; a tyrant tries to rise above the rule of law, though he may give the lip-service to the law; a tyrant does not accept criticism' (p. 66). Under 'Courage', Woodruff argues that an entire democratic state can in fact exercise tyranny if it has an empire. Mentioning pre-emptive strikes in the subsequent paragraph, his reference to ancient Sparta sounds very much like a criticism of the Iraq war (p. 78).

Such examples, where Woodruff draws on ancient sources with considerable power of analysis, can only arouse misgivings when applied to current American politics. However justified his criticism might be, the ancients did not write for twentieth-century America, much less for the purpose of assessing the merits of its form of government.

More generally, Woodruff offers a number of quite shrewd political insights such as 'Lies are not a consequence of debate; they usually come from fear of debate' (p. 189). However, these read more than anything like advice to his fellow American citizens, especially in the afterword entitled 'Are Americans ready for democracy?' (ch. 10). This leads me to believe that this book will be of more interest to American political activists and the left-leaning intelligentsia than to scholars of ancient Greece. This said, the book is entertaining, very readable and accessible to a wider audience than just academia.

*Thomas Hörber, University of Victoria, Canada*

**The opportunity: America's moment to alter history's course. By Richard N. Haass.**  
New York, NY: PublicAffairs. 2005. 242pp. Index. £14.99. ISBN 1 58648 276 9.

The United States has the opportunity to define an era characterized by prolonged peace and prosperity brought about by integration and 'made possible by American primacy successfully translated into influence and effective international arrangements'. The thesis is bold and broad, set out in engaging, clear and concise prose that advocates specific arguments and a host of prescriptive observations through chapters on sovereignty, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, economic integration, relations with the other great powers, political integration and the lessons of the current debacle in Iraq. The work is of course that much more riveting because Haass was, until mid-2003, the director of policy planning in the State Department during the first Bush administration, a position previously occupied by George Kennan. Indeed the jacket makes the explicit link that *The opportunity* could have similar potential to that of the articulation of containment in 1946 and 1947. The book is even more engaging because of the level of disagreement that Haass maintains with many of the Bush administration policies on the issues mentioned above, and given his wide experience in US government and policy-making through various administrations from Carter to Bush, decades of service.

The opportunity to fashion a world in the shape of the US agenda is, however, presented in a more benign spirit than Dean Acheson's suggestion of the mid-1940s, that the US had the chance to grab hold of history and make it conform. Haass obviously assumes the benign intent

of the US and its foreign policy in the world. He writes eloquently on the ‘challenge’ which ‘is not simply to erect an international society with commonly accepted restraints but to fashion coalitions and institutions that promote certain objectives sought by the United States and embraced by others’. Moreover, US objectives must include the need to persuade others to work with the US ‘and to persuade them that it is neither wise to work against the United States, given its strength, nor necessary to work against it, given its intentions’. Laudable though that might be, one still hears the voice of a fairly paternal, powerful view of the world. Many would simply disagree with the statement on intentions, but there is little attempt to engage potential detractors.

Haass provides a series of good outline discussions that could form the basis of much debate on world order and democratic representation within his vision, but his argument is of course informed by a conservative and realist disposition on world power. He engages the US relationship with other ‘major powers’ directly and recognizes the problems surrounding the legitimacy of the UN Security Council given its skewed representation within a much changed world since 1945. He eschews the option that the world could descend into the old balance of power systems so wasteful of resources or into chaos and violence, with the obvious preference for integration and multilateralism. Throughout the book, however, the premise, which is so prevalent and potentially so offensive, is that even if the US expends much more energy on diplomacy, engagement and integration, contrary to the trends of the Bush administration, the agenda and the opportunity are still American. This thesis does not bode well for notions of pluralism in the international order. Even if the obvious threats to the US are excepted, there are still a range of voices and opinions across the world that have read the history of the post-1945 period as one in which even the benign policies of the US—integration, open door economies, political and ideological hegemony—have been the source of trouble and discord. While Haass is clear that the US needs to listen much more and that its foreign policies have of late been counterproductive (there is a very blunt and honest account of Iraq), the question is still one of degree. Censuring France over its threat to veto the resolution on Iraq, with an eye on the future Haass writes, ‘a doctrine of integration and efforts to construct a rudimentary international concert will only advance if those who disagree with a given policy forgo the option of actively opposing it.’ Haass is well aware of and quite frank about the opposition to US policy and the widespread anti-Americanism that has risen in recent years and no doubt his analysis of the bent of this administration has indeed contributed to that phenomenon. Still, *The opportunity* would benefit tremendously from a thorough engagement with a more pluralistic vision of world order. Perhaps it is precisely because the US is largely perceived (rightly or wrongly) as an essential architect of a period of world history that has witnessed such inequalities and such conflict that its views will not be acquiesced to based on intentions; they may be in part based on its power and hegemony and these issues transcend the misdirection of the current administration.

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**Setting the people free: the story of democracy.** By John Dunn. London: Atlantic Books. 2005. 246pp. £16.99. ISBN 1 84354 211 0.

John Dunn’s study of democracy starts with the word itself and closely follows Quentin Skinner’s contextualization, exploring the meaning and content of a word by tracing its course through history back to its etymological roots: ‘Why firstly a *European* word? Why secondly a *Greek* word at all? Why, thirdly, this, of all Greek words?’ (p. 52).

In his first chapter Dunn takes the reader back to ancient Greece, where the concept, despite Pericles’s outstanding role in Athenian democracy, came in for sophisticated criticism. After the ancient lawgivers Draco and Solon who wielded quasi-dictatorial powers (p. 32), Plato dismissed democracy as the rule of the mob and much preferred his vision of a philosopher-king as the ideal form of government (p. 45). Although Aristotle argues that only the *homo politicus* is truly human (p. 49), he ranks tyranny, oligarchy and democracy itself with deviant forms of

## *Ethnicity and cultural politics*

government, contrast unfavourably with monarchy, aristocracy and *politeia* (very similar to Rousseau's idea of the *volonté générale* as the underpinning of legitimate democratic rule), beneficial forms (p. 47). Leaving Thucydides aside, the two most prominent sons of Athens therefore rejected the political system cherished for centuries by their fellow citizens as the best way to avoid tyranny or subjection to the arbitrary rule of others without appeal against their decisions. Significantly, as Dunn points out, the context of rule by the people in Athens was that of a city-state with the largest navy in ancient Greece, manned by these very people, a state in which the dominating tendencies of a wealthy aristocracy were not as strong as in those polities depending on land armies—Sparta is the obvious exception to this rule (p. 28).

Dunn readily concedes that the democracy of old has little in common with its modern forms (p. 18), not least because the direct democracy of a Greek *polis* would be entirely impracticable in much larger modern states with far larger populations than the roughly 30,000 Athenians enjoying citizenship (p. 35). The best example here is that of the United States, where a form of representation had to be found to accommodate all the former colonies, with massively divergent interests, seeking to create a union (p. 78). Dunn traces the institutional evolution of democracy remarkably well in his analysis of the *Federalist papers*, largely the work of James Madison, a set of essays on federalism and representative democracy, the American brand of which deliberately excludes the people from any form of direct power (p. 75). In representative democracy the division and balance of power, essentially between the representative legislature and the executive, become crucial in order to avoid tyranny and maintain the freedoms of every citizen—thus preserving the essence of democracy (p. 80).

The meaning attached to the term democracy has therefore come full circle: from the great store set by democratic freedoms among Athenians, if not among Athenian philosophers; through a long period of rejection, as corrupting and dangerous, until the late eighteenth century; to being a battle-cry during the French Revolution, not least for Maximilien Robespierre (p. 92); to a reappraisal of democratic values in modern times, which eventually, from the second half of the twentieth century, led to a very widely accepted view of democracy as the embodiment of legitimate and stable rule. This is the answer to Dunn's question 'why this *Greek* word?' One answer to the question 'why a *European* word?' is offered, Dunn tells us, by Max Weber in his preference for Europe over China by reference to the 'Protestant work ethic', with the corollary that Europe also wins recognition as leader in terms of political aspirations and ideals (p. 53). The answer to the question of 'why a *Greek* word?' Dunn naturally sees in its etymological roots (p. 54).

A degree of awkwardness in the early part of the book (p. 20) is dispelled in the later sections by a remarkably extensive and illuminating presentation of some of the most crucial historical developments which underpin our present societies, in their wide variety of democratic forms. The book should therefore provide a broad audience with a thorough understanding of the concept and the development of democracy.

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## **Ethnicity and cultural politics**

**Landscapes of the jihad: militancy, morality, modernity.** By Faisal Devji. London: Hurst. 2005. 184pp. Index. £15.95. ISBN 1 85065 775 0.

Of the many epithets used to describe Al-Qaeda's jihad, 'ethical' is not one that readily springs to mind. Yet, in this at times brilliant and deeply disturbing essay, Faisal Devji sets out precisely to unravel what he calls the 'ethics of jihad'. His purpose is to demonstrate that current concerns with security and strategy as means of containing Al-Qaeda's violence cannot ultimately account for either its power or durability. The key, he suggests, lies in the shrouded, decontextualized 'landscapes' of aesthetic and ethical behaviour, which lend substance and meaning to the jihad. Access to these 'landscapes', however, depends upon setting aside any understanding of the jihad

as an integral part of traditional politics of the kind concerned with a geography or history of common beliefs. Instead, he argues, the jihad represents a new kind of global practice based on ethics—a mode it shares with other post-Cold War global movements in their common disregard for territorial frontiers and contempt for instrumental politics.

Devji recognizes, however, that few global movements accord as central a place to violence as does the jihad and he moves with resolve to address it. He claims that the jihad's lack of any clearly defined cause and its want of 'intentionality' indicate that the resort to violence may be 'accidental'—a by-product, as it were, of 'the very instability of the political in the age of globalization' (p. 162). Whatever its current importance, therefore, he thinks violence may well turn out to be a short-lived effect of the jihad. Not so the challenge posed by it to traditional sources of Muslim religious authority, which stand in danger of being irreparably damaged, fragmented and dispersed. Therein, however, are also concealed the seeds for radical change, involving nothing less than the 'democratization of Islam'. This, Devji concludes, will be Al-Qaeda's most enduring legacy, securing for Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri a place in the history of modern Islam as the real heirs of Muslim liberalism, whose course was doomed to failure by the instinctive conservatism of its followers.

There is no doubt that Devji's argument, which he pursues with extraordinary panache, serves as a useful corrective to claims that Al-Qaeda's jihad is a mere aberration having little or nothing to do with Islam. What he demonstrates with immense skill is just how much the jihad *does* have to do with Islam, but in ways more suggestive of 'pick and mix' than any coherent doctrine grounded in elaborate theological or political genealogies. At the same time, by expounding the jihad's attitude to violence as merely the unintended effect of a larger ethical discourse, Devji can appear at times to be almost casual in his treatment. This would perhaps not matter much if it did not bear so heavily on an explanation of how Al-Qaeda's currently dominant attribute as a purveyor of violence might perversely be recast in the future as an agent of creative change.

These concerns aside, the book raises other substantive issues. Not the least important of these is Devji's working hypothesis that globalization has rendered irrelevant all politics based on national or local causes. This is still contentious but Devji makes little allowance for the debate surrounding it. He is right of course to point out that the failure to establish ideological states in the Islamic world (with the exception of Iran) has contributed significantly to the disintegration of old-fashioned fundamentalist politics. However, the espousal of national causes by Islamist groups with transnational pretensions like the Jama'at-i-Islami in Pakistan is a sobering reminder that such causes still remain powerful sources of political legitimacy in the era of globalization. And even if, as he emphasizes, the jihad is less concerned with ideological states, it is unclear how a movement forced to operate in such extremes of clandestinity (so fittingly evoked by the 'landscape' of the cave) can realize grandiose projects such as to threaten the historical corpus of Islam. One fears that Devji, in outlining the global impact of the jihad, may here be extrapolating unduly from what is after all, fundamentally, the ethos of a minority of Muslims living mainly in the West or in exile. This, in turn, raises the question of whether Al-Qaeda's jihad should be labelled a 'movement' at all or whether it is best studied as a 'sect', bound by a narrow and fragmented understanding of Qur'anic truth. If so, its fate—like that of all sects with a 'heretical countenance' emerging from within strongly scripturalist traditions like Islam—needs to be considered from a much broader perspective.

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**Globalization and the Muslim world: culture, religion, and modernity.** Edited by **Birgit Schaebler and Leif Stenberg.** Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press. 2004. 400pp. Index. \$39.95. ISBN 0 8156 3024 7. Pb.: \$19.95. ISBN 0 8156 3049 2.

It is difficult to review this collection of lectures given at the Harvard Center for Middle-Eastern Studies. Each lecture merits its own review. Although concerned with globalization, none of the lecturers was an economist. Moreover no distinction is made between Arab and Muslim. Yet all

Arabs are Muslim, but not all Muslims Arabs. Furthermore, however broadly defined in these texts, globalization is an economic phenomenon: cross-frontier trade based on IT and satellite TV communication. How it affects the Muslim world depends upon the relevant country, tribe, sect concerned, also the nature of the economy and how sophisticated the relevant institutions—banking and stock exchange—are. Saudi Arabian banking, for example, flourishes even if customers are paid premiums instead of interest because of the Qur'an forbidding the payment of interest. People like making money world-wide, be they Christian or Muslim, and Middle Eastern oil-rich countries, in particular, are no exception. Qatar has just opened its third stock exchange and has a most sophisticated economic landscape. Quixotically, it is in the West with the EU's dogged resistance to reducing agricultural subsidies that possibly anti-globalization sentiment is most marked. Globalization cuts both ways for East and West and now it is Asian (partly Muslim) economies which are overtaking the western world commercially.

Yet Islam may well affect the degree of sophistication and direction of globalization adopted by a particular country, for example Malaysia. But where cultural considerations are relevant they usually remain subordinate to political and economic factors. Globalization is one thing, the Muslim world another. Saudi Arabian women are not permitted to drive cars and only reluctantly allowed legal protection against abuse by their husbands, as with the unfortunate TV announcer Ranier Bax. Yet flashing her predicament around the horrified 'global village' by satellite TV highlighted her case and led to some relief. Economically, there is little or no contradiction between globalization and Islam save where specifically American influence is resented. Significantly, the September 11 attacks took advantage of global communication networking in order to pierce the heart of western capitalism, expressing antagonism towards America for interfering politically in Islamic affairs. So what this book tells us about the effect of globalization upon the Muslim world is mainly in the cultural domain.

Particular highlights include Sayres S. Rudy's mini-thesis on 'Political evaluation and Islamist trajectories', which merits a review in its own right. Jocelyne Cesari writes with great discernment on 'Islam in the West: modernity and globalization revisited'. Catharina Raudverri provides interesting insights into devout Turkish women's demeanour towards the demands of faith and society. Anne Marie Oliver's moving contribution propels us into the ferment of the Palestinian problem and accuses Hamas of encouraging naive followers to take the Qur'an too literally, which of course also occurs elsewhere in the Muslim world. Oliver includes the fable of the frog and the scorpion for good measure.

This reader felt that the volume would have benefited greatly from a postscript to these lectures, which were originally given pre-9/11. Surely 9/11 knocked many theories for six!

*John A. S. Abecasis-Phillips*

**Foreign territory: the internationalization of EU asylum policy.** By Oxfam. Oxford: Oxfam GB. 2005. 131pp. Index. Pb.: £5.00. ISBN 0 85598 5577.

This timely report provides a concise account of recent developments in EU asylum policy. These include interception of asylum seekers on the periphery of the EU, intervention in transit countries for asylum processing, intervention in the region or countries of origin for readmissions and addressing the root causes of migration flows. Interception and readmissions have been in effect for many years through a range of EU, bilateral and multilateral agreements. Extra-territorial processing and protection in the region are currently only at the proposal stage.

The first two chapters outline the background to global refugee flows and the development of EU asylum policy from the Tampere European Council meeting in 1999, when a five-year period to 2004 was set during which the drafting of five directives on minimum standards was to form the basis for the development of a common European asylum system. Tampere was also fully committed to a joined-up policy approach across foreign and external relations, humanitarian assistance and development, particularly in relation to transit countries and conditions in countries of origin.

Chapter three focuses on the qualification and procedures directives. It notes the ways in which member states have reduced protection for asylum seekers firstly by including the notion of internal flight alternative in the qualification directive (which allows for the return of asylum seekers to ostensibly 'safe' areas within the countries of origin) and secondly by standardizing a list of safe third countries and safe countries of origin in the procedures directive. The poor information on countries of origin used in EU member states is the main stumbling block to refugee protection in both cases.

Chapter four deals with migration management on the margins of the EU and notes the controls already in place, including interception of asylum seekers at sea, the posting of immigration liaison officers overseas and the introduction of carriers' sanctions.

The Seville Summit of 2002 marked a speeding up of third country involvement in the joint management of migration flows. The report notes that readmission agreements are now the preferred policy instrument even though these may result in the return of individuals to a country through which they may have passed only in transit. Agreements are also often made irrespective of the human rights record of the state concerned.

Chapters five and six examine initiatives in the region of origin including resettlement schemes (currently limited in scope) and the suggested development of an EU regional task force. As Oxfam notes, direct intervention offers the potential for a greater understanding of regions of origin. Given the overriding concern with migration management, however, the authors correctly question whether a greater regional presence would merely strengthen the repertoire of pre-entry controls.

The background to the UK's 'new vision' proposal of 2003 is also outlined. This advocated a dual approach focusing on improving conditions in the region of origin through regional protection areas and transporting asylum processing to the regions of origin and transit through transit processing centres (TPCs). Although TPCs were widely condemned at the time as a form of burden shifting, a critical perspective in the report on the role of the UNHCR in adopting some of the more contentious measures outlined in the UK's 'new vision' would have been helpful. Indeed, several commentators have argued that the idea of extra-territorial processing may have been given a new lease of life by the UNHCR's subsequent three-prong approach (see Heaven Crawley's *The UK, the EU and forced migration*, 2005).

The final chapter concludes by addressing the root causes of refugee flows. A series of detailed recommendations is also appended. In addition to presenting strong evidence of the increasing internationalization of asylum policy through copious case-studies, this report also underlines the continuities with earlier developments. The conclusion would appear to be that EU asylum policy remains firmly anchored in the security and migration management agendas of member states, rather than a commitment to alleviating the causes of forced migration.

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## **Political economy, economics and development**

**Local players in global games: the strategic constitution of a multinational corporation.** By Peer Hull Kristensen and Jonathan Zeitlin. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005. 376pp. Index. £75.00. ISBN 0 19 927561 0.

**Multinationals and global capitalism: from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century.** By Geoffrey Jones. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005. 352pp. Index. £65.00. ISBN 0 19 927209 3.

**Leviathans: multinational corporations and the new global history.** Edited by Alfred D. Chandler, Jr and Bruce Mazlish. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005. 248pp. Index. £45.00. ISBN 0 521 84061 9. Pb.: £15.99. ISBN 0 521 54993 0.

Possibly more than trade *per se*, international flows of capital epitomize the contemporary global economy. Foreign direct investment is a complex phenomenon that drives world trade (more

than half of global exchanges of goods and natural resources, and possibly an even higher percentage in the case of services, take place within the boundaries of firms), influences exchange rate policies and impacts, through a variety of channels, on domestic and international politics no less than on nations' industrial relations and innovations systems. The three books reviewed here provide unique contributions to contemporary globalization debates by providing an accessible survey of the growth of multinational enterprises in the world economy over the last two hundred years (*Multinationals*), a broad spectrum of studies on the role they play within the framework of the new global history (*Leviathans*) and an in-depth and highly original analysis of the mechanisms whereby a collection of assets in different locations can be tied up into a coherent corporate entity (*Local players*).

Over the past two decades Geoffrey Jones—currently at Harvard Business School—has produced a long list of scholarly masterpieces on British multinationals. In his *summa*, he highlights the role of entrepreneurs in building the first global economy and demonstrates how the multinationals they had created shifted strategies as political and economic chaos erupted between the two world wars. It was only in the late 1980s that global capital flows again reached the record pre-1914 levels and in almost a century of backlash hardly any of the issues of the global economy have found a lasting solution. No surprise then to notice how entrepreneurs and managers are now facing, even after dramatic changes in economic policies and major technological shifts, very similar political, ethical, cultural and organizational challenges. Clearly, time, size and the wider political and economic context all count in explaining the operational quandary of multinationals and this is where Jones is at his best, painting a fascinating collection of stories spanning national borders at different times and in different environments. That multinationals do not operate in a vacuum has always been clear in the eyes of scholars and is indeed the main reason why they have become the anti-globalists' scapegoat, although it is only more recently that the notion has come to permeate the international business studies community. Again, Jones does a very nice job of reviewing the impact of multinationals and their relations with governments. What emerges is compelling evidence on the diversity and discontinuities of the globalization process.

Alfred Chandler—another Harvard Business School professor who almost single-handedly invented contemporary business history and whose influence is still justifiably inescapable—has teamed with Bruce Mazlish to produce a rich collection of essays on multinationals that offer a totally global perspective, not portraying them simply as economic entities but also taking into account the social and cultural contexts. In two separate chapters, Mira Wilkins and Geoffrey Jones mostly recount the history of multinational enterprises to the 1980s, highlighting discontinuities and continuities, while Sei Yonekura and Sara McKinney show the heterogeneity of multinational forms, using Japan as a case-study of organizational innovation. The cultural and social implications are examined by Neva R. Goodwin, focusing on workers, and by Bruce Mazlish and Elliott Morss. In their original contribution—that demands a fast updating—they ask whether participants at the 2000 World Economic Forum in Davos constitute a global elite, which Mazlish and Morss argue they do, although they cautiously conclude that an accurate mapping of their physiognomies is much needed. The contributions in part three, which concerns the governance of multinationals, touch on some of the issues that emerge from *Multinationals'* survey of the impacts of foreign direct investment. Robert A. G. Monks examines governing the multinational enterprise and the emergence of the global shareowner, Zhu Jia-Ming and Elliott R. Morss discuss the financial revolutions of the twentieth century and Stephen J. Kobrin focuses on multinational corporations, the protest movement and the future of global governance.

What happens when previously autonomous firms from different countries, each with its own identity, routines and capabilities, come together inside a single multinational corporation? Can a cooperative strategy be established that advances the development of the multinational as a whole, or do mutual misunderstandings and the unintended consequences of strategic interaction among the players lead instead to endemic conflict and disintegration? *Local players* tackles these novel and important questions through an empirical study of the strategic

constitution of an 'actually existing' multinational. It does so by tracing the historical construction of the multinational corporation from the confluence of multiple formerly independent firms and analysing the interacting web of strategies pursued by different actors within it. The analysis reveals how workers, unionists, subsidiary managers and corporate executives pursue separate strategic games rooted in their local contexts, whose global outcome contrasts sharply with idealized views of the multinational as an integrated and coordinated organization. By comparing these findings with those of the broader literature, the book proceeds to a theoretical examination of the challenges of managing the multinational and the difficulties of resolving them through conventional organizational means. The authors propose new procedural solutions aimed at fostering mutual recognition and knowledge exchange within the multinational corporation and explore how a multinational public may be created to press for the necessary reforms in corporate governance. As the success of such reforms is far from preordained, the book concludes with a series of alternative scenarios that illustrate the many obstacles to a smooth continuation of the globalization process.

Each of these three excellent books is a major contribution to our understanding of the origins and development of the multinational corporation, its dynamic role in shaping the global economy and its multifaceted nature and interests. *Multinationals*, in particular, is likely to remain a reference for researchers, academics and advanced students of international business, business strategy, comparative management and international political economy for many years.

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**The new masters of capital: American bond rating agencies and the politics of creditworthiness.** By **Timothy J. Sinclair**. Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press. 2005. 190pp. Index. £15.50. ISBN 0 8014 4328 8.

In 1994 bond rating agencies stood by as Robert Citron's interest rate bets propelled Orange County into bankruptcy. One month before the Asian crisis in July 1997, both Moody's and Standard & Poor's gave a Thai bond investment grade ratings. Funds permitted to hold this bond because of this rating shortly suffered huge losses in forced sales. Twenty-four days prior to the December 2001 Enron bankruptcy, Moody's delayed downgrading the company. Despite these reputational crises and increasing public scrutiny the fortunes of both companies have since soared. Between 2002 and 2004 Moody's profits grew from \$288.9 million to \$425.1 million. This book offers a timely examination of the authority behind this resilience and the political power of the credit rating business. Sinclair makes the case for taking bond rating agencies seriously as political economy actors.

Credit rating agencies fulfil an ostensibly technical, functional and bureaucratic role. Companies employ them to pronounce on the relative soundness of their debt. Their perceived neutrality lends the capital allocation process the semblance of a neutral, objective and optimizing efficiency. Agency judgements directly determine the cost of capital. Indirectly, economic and social policy decisions are circumscribed by the necessity of agency approval. Sinclair prises open this world by placing in tension an instrumental, rationalist mentality and a constructivist approach sensitive to the socio-historical constitution of multifarious, mutable realities. The former constitutes the 'mental framework of ratings orthodoxy', while the latter plays the role of analytical foil. Three supporting arguments frame Sinclair's investigation. Investment is a coordinated social process subject to increasingly centralized judgement. Separating economics and politics, knowledge is intersubjective and collectively consequential. Governance is diffuse and subterranean, shaping 'the nature of working life and the limits of democracy'.

Chapters two and three examine the agencies' internal organization, the rating process, and the relation between rating and regulation. Here Sinclair shows how the power and authority of the agencies came to be established, how rating works and is experienced, and the constitution of expert authority through state-agency interactions. Subsequently, the key question of the derivation of rating power and its limits is addressed by mapping the rating orthodoxy and its

constructivist foil onto the tablet of the three supporting arguments. The propulsion to a peculiar global convergence is revealed as contingent and politically effective. Chapters four, five and six investigate investment, knowledge and governance in corporate, municipal and sovereign rating. This provides a rich empirical resource and exposes through an excavation of the contemporary record the relational and structural power of the agencies. Examples include the determination of the policies of the Australian state of Victoria by a post-1992 election double notch downgrade, and the structuring of the North American Free Trade Agreement's arena by Standard & Poor's 1993 purchase of the Mexican agency, Caval. The penultimate chapter argues that in the face of crises, weaknesses in the rating process and increased contestation, agency power and authority have expanded.

This is a powerful first intervention in the international political economy of credit rating. Sinclair generates an explicitly political and nuanced understanding of this apparently arcane economic process. However, some emergent properties of the rating process have now become central. Particularly, the increasing quantification of rating analysis and the corresponding constitutive role of the agencies in burgeoning markets for financial innovation require greater attention. The divergence between the quantitative models now used to evaluate hybrid derivative products may call for a related constructivist approach, opening the 'black boxes' of global finance. Furthermore, the agencies play a broader role than the focus on bond rating implies. They are for instance key actors in global banking and auditing regulation. A book of this quality and pertinence will inspire a rich progeny.

*Duncan Wigan*

**Labour in a global world: case studies from the white goods industry in Africa, South America, East Asia and Europe.** By **Theo Nichols and Surhan Cam.** Basingstoke: Palgrave. 2005. 244pp. Index. £55.00. ISBN 1 4039 3979 9.

This book, a contribution to the Economic and Social Research Council's Future of Work Programme, examines the diffusion and significance of modern management practices for workers in developing countries. The authors, in collaboration with a team of local researchers, consider one manufacturing sector, large household appliances (or white goods), in five emerging countries—South Africa, China, Taiwan, Turkey and Brazil—and compare their findings to the UK market.

The book sheds light on an important sector that has been largely ignored by economic and sociological literature. Chapter one offers an analysis of this industry's evolution, market structure and trends. The industry has long been shielded from globalization. High transport costs, country-specific preferences and brand loyalty have resulted in market segmentation and permitted the coexistence of regional and national players, alongside only three truly global players. By looking at the UK white goods industry, the study highlights the challenges faced by other traditional manufacturing sectors in many OECD countries. High rates of market saturation and strong competition have put a downward pressure on unit prices, triggering restructuring and lay-offs. Over the last 15 to 20 years, the white goods industry has undergone a profound change marked by rising concentration (through mergers and acquisitions), rationalization (through automation of production and organizational change) and internationalization (through outsourcing of production and foreign investment to penetrate higher-growth markets in developing countries). As the UK experience shows, most national producers (but not their brands) have disappeared, swallowed by their larger competitors, and new players from emerging economies have made significant inroads on the international stage. By looking at how these firms from the 'periphery' have emerged as international competitors, the study brings interesting insights to the debate on the internationalization of the firm.

The most original contribution of this book is the analysis of management practices and working conditions in developing countries through field work and interviews in large white goods factories. The authors want to provide 'specificity and evidence' to the debate over the

implications of the new international division of labour on the ‘form and meaning of work’ (i.e. over some consequences of globalization)—a debate that often lacks a solid empirical ground.

The case-studies reveal a number of interesting findings that are worth mentioning here. First, foreign participation in developing country firms has brought about a widespread introduction of modern management and human resource techniques, such as total quality management, lean manufacturing, quality circles, training and annualized hours, resulting in significant improvements of plant productivity and product quality. The plants reviewed ‘do not represent “the industrial revolution over again” but rather an industrial revolution with modern technology and modern management methods’ (p. 208).

Second, workers in these factories believe they have good jobs. They are generally well-paid jobs characterized by superior working conditions including social security rights and trade unionism. Benefits also arise outside the factory. As some Turkish workers put it, working in these companies ‘endows workers with creditworthiness at local shops, gives them higher status in their neighbourhood, opens up a range of social activities and can even improve marriage prospects’ (p. 156).

Better wages come, however, at the cost of greater pressure to meet production targets, strict supervision and requests for flexibility in contracts and working hours. A major transformation—often supported by new labour laws and regulations—has taken place in these countries resulting in the replacement of permanent labour with contract labour. In fact, although they acknowledge the benefits associated with their job, most workers do not want their children to follow them into similar jobs.

Another interesting aspect concerns industrial relations, which in most of the reviewed developing countries are traditionally of an authoritarian kind. The case-studies suggest that change is taking place towards better recognition of workers and their greater involvement in decision-making. What is less clear is the magnitude of this change, which seems to be relatively small.

The study also addresses the issue of trade unions. Although they are recognized by management and have a high membership, trade unions have played a different role in each country (quite different from unions in industrialized countries) and do not command—with the exception of Brazil—the workers’ loyalty. Workers tend to rate management higher than unions, suggesting that the latter are not adequately serving workers’ interests.

Overall the book is well researched and provides interesting reading. The main shortcoming—acknowledged by the authors themselves—is that the wealth of information and analysis of work practices in developing countries is not adequately matched by a comparison with industrialized economies. The discussion of management practices, labour market trends and factory regimes in these countries is limited to a few pages in the chapter on the UK and the final chapter. For research that aims to investigate the global dimension of labour, this is quite unfortunate. In fact, the original project design of comparing white goods factories through field work in two advanced and two developing countries could not be pursued. Researchers were denied access to UK factories and had to discard the chapter on South Korea (although some findings on this country are discussed in the final chapter).

The study concludes that globalization is not a universal process, at least in terms of working conditions. Although white goods workers in both developed (UK) and developing countries are working in similar conditions and under similar modern management methods, the latter are subject to very different and less stable contracts. The analysis would have benefited from a deeper discussion of labour practices in another advanced country, where white goods manufacturing is a more significant industry (e.g. Germany or Italy).

Despite these limits, the book offers valuable and grounded insights, escaping the trap of selective evidence that so often undermines the scientific credibility of many ‘globophile’ and ‘globophobe’ claims.

*Federico Bonaglia, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, France*

## **Energy and environment**

**The new accountability: environmental responsibility across borders.** By **Michael R. Mason**. London: Earthscan, 2005. 224pp. Index. £65.00. ISBN 1 8440 7066 2. Pb.: £19.99. ISBN 1 8440 7067 0.

This is an excellent book. It brings together insights from environmental management, critical geography, normative theory and international law to offer a robust defence of a version of democratic accountability by which the direct and indirect producers of pollution and waste can be held responsible for the transnational environmental harm that they create.

The central claim for this book is a specifically cosmopolitan one—‘processes of public answerability for harm rest most justly on treating all victims (real or potential) with equal respect’ (p. ix). Mason is concerned about the mismatch between ‘national territories of governmental responsibility and transboundary pathways of (potential) harm’ (p. 2). He therefore adopts a non-territorial and critical pragmatist notion of the public—*transnational* publics—to identify both those who are affected by transboundary and globalized environmental harm *and* a site from which emanates resistance to environmental harm and pressure for norms and procedures of democratic accountability. The theme through all of this is that accountability rests on a dialogic ethics, on the creation of open and deliberative spaces of communication. In setting out the conditions for such an argument, Mason goes beyond a simply theoretical interrogation. He produces empirical support for his analysis—to justify his claims but also to demonstrate how his normative frameworks of accountability might be given material form.

Mason’s device is to start with multi-scale categories of transboundary risk, that recognizing that risk is extended and intensified by the ways in which the ‘temporalities and spatialities of environmental change ... are scaled up by the socio-economic forces of globalisation’ (p. 11). After establishing a conceptual framework for transnational accountability for environmental harm in chapter one, Mason explores the contribution of non-state and civil society actors to the development of a transnational public space and cross-border demands for norms and practices of accountability. He does so while also acknowledging the (sometimes politically motivated) challenges that demand that NGOs demonstrate their own democratic legitimacy and accountability structures. This is followed, in chapter three, by an examination of the international/global governance responses and the extent to which substantive and procedural norms about harm prevention, democratic access and accountability have been incorporated into multilateral environmental agreements. Chapters four, five and six consider specific case-studies—the WTO, the development of effective and enforceable liability and compensation regimes (with a focus on marine oil pollution liability) and transnational corporations—to examine the potential for affected publics to hold to account those responsible for cross-border environmental harm, regardless of the nationality or residence of the victim(s). Mason concludes, in effect, that new accountability norms do exist although I am inclined to think that they have been adopted more grudgingly than is suggested here. As Mason observes, their institutionalization in structures of global governance is a process of gradual evolution, halting and uneven, and often constrained by existing neo-liberal and sovereignty norms. He also suggests that the challenges are not insurmountable and finishes the book with a number of conditions for realizing democratically organized transnational and global publics.

The challenges addressed here are not simply legal or regulatory ones. They are, as Mason points out, about expanding our moral horizon. His arguments for doing so are persuasive but even those who are not persuaded need to be able to engage with the kind of analysis that is presented here. This is a carefully managed investigation, providing a mix of analysis of the ‘is’ and a thoughtful articulation of the ‘ought’. It makes an important contribution to a growing body of literature on contemporary cosmopolitanism as an ethical and political project and it also contributes to a critical normative debate in the global politics of the environment.

*Lorraine Elliott, Australian National University, Australia*

## History

**Poisoned peace: 1945—the war that never ended.** By Gregor Dallas. London: John Murray. 2005. 739pp. Index. £25.00. ISBN 0 7195 5478 0.

In his preface Dallas makes the point that ‘Perhaps all books are basically autobiographical: it is interesting to note how historians build up subjects ... which are obviously by-products of some feature of their childhood or youth.’ He explains how he was born in 1948 and, ‘from a privileged rural background’, was impressed by the bomb ruins and poverty in the London of the early 1950s and ‘naturally and autobiographically ... came to ask: what actually happened to Europe in 1945?’ (p. xiv). It was a book he ‘had to write’ (p. xvi).

The story starts in Berlin on 30 April 1945 with the Soviet Army attempting to capture the Reichstag, the importance of which they greatly overestimated. Apparently, they were unaware of Hitler’s bunker only yards away. Dallas manages to bring out the senselessness of those final days of Hitler’s Berlin where, in one shelter, ‘Young boys sold cyanide pills they carried in baskets’ (p. 12). Yet he meanders quite a lot and here and there this leads him astray. In Germany, the experience of the First World War did not give rise to a literature of ‘disillusionment and pacifism’ (p. 15). Surely it was a complicated mosaic of warriors and pacifists? What about Remarque’s *All quiet on the western front*, Renn’s *Krieg*, Frank’s *Niemandsland*, Johannsen’s *Vier von der Infanterie*, Arnold Zweig’s *Der Streit um den Sergeanten Grischa*?

After Berlin we go back in time to the liberation of Paris in 1944. He is interesting on de Gaulle’s visit to Moscow via Cairo, Tehran, Baku and Stalingrad in 1944. De Gaulle regarded Stalin as ‘a dictator secluded in his own craftiness’ (p. 327). Yet Dallas believes he, like Churchill and Roosevelt, had illusions about the Soviet leader (p. 329). The evidence he presents indicates otherwise; de Gaulle showed dignity, courage and determination in dealing with Stalin.

Dallas writes interestingly on Stalin, life in Moscow and the building of the Soviet empire. He takes a poor view of the Germans, the main body of whom, ‘until well into the war, accepted, and did not reject, their Führer’ (p. 378). The reality of the time was probably far more complicated. It should never be forgotten that a majority of them did not vote for the Nazis in the last free election of November 1932. Fear of Bolshevism (given the KPD’s record), economic chaos, intimidation and Hindenburg’s support for Hitler were enough to tip some, mainly conservatives, into the Nazi camp in 1933. Dallas also seems sceptical about the German opposition. Clearly this was not like the opposition in the 1914–18 war, but opposition did exist. Take a town like Dortmund. According to Kurt Klotzbach’s study, in 1940 there were 3,964 in prison, 1,492 of them for so-called political crimes. The number of political delinquents rose to 2,771 in 1941, 3,319 in 1942 and 3,448 in 1943. We are also treated to the tragedy of Warsaw, the avoidance of tragedy in the liberation of Paris, a convincing picture of the chaotic German surrender negotiations in May 1945 and the manoeuvring at Potsdam.

There is an equally convincing, and often forgotten, description of Britain’s economic position in 1945 (pp. 528–9). Dallas is a great Churchill fan (p. 510) and is a bit hard on Attlee’s Labour Party. He cannot be blamed for not thinking much of Stalin, who was certainly pursuing his own agenda and was highly suspicious of his western allies, but did he really prefer the Hitler–Stalin Pact to dealing with the US, Britain and France? Dallas rightly mentions the Soviet spy rings in Britain, the US and elsewhere but underestimates those in Germany (p. 362). He criticizes the foolish sympathy of top British officials for the Soviet Union (p. 265). Were not all four, Stalin, Churchill, de Gaulle and Roosevelt, pursuing their own agendas?

The book is full of telling and amusing vignettes. One of the best is that of President Truman playing Paderewski’s Minuet in G for Stalin and Churchill at Potsdam! The book contains a useful glossary of names with brief biographies for each entry but, unusually, ‘well-known figures, such as Churchill, Montgomery, de Gaulle, Stalin. etc., are not listed’. The glossary of organizations is also useful. There is a chronology of 1944 and 1945. The bibliography lists many English-language and French books but few in German. There are a number of interesting

## History

photos as well as, inevitably, many seen before. Altogether Dallas's volume represents a great deal of work and is a useful addition to the literature on the period.

David Childs, *University of Nottingham, UK*

**Britain, the Six-day War and its aftermath.** By Frank Brenchley. London: I. B. Tauris. 2005. 185pp. Index. £45.00. ISBN 1 85043 406 9.

At the age of 87 Frank Brenchley, who in 1967 became Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office for the Middle East, has brought out a sparkling little book about Britain's major attempt in that year to avert the Arab–Israeli war, from whose consequences we are all still suffering. He remains very loyal to the memory of his chief, George Brown, and with good reason, since this was a foreign secretary with drive, imagination and force of personality. There were also some other personal characteristics (in such areas as being 'invariably not sober at the evening meetings that he regularly called') which Brenchley sums up by quoting the assessment of Eugene Rostow, then US Under-Secretary of State, that Brown was a 'man of vision whose foibles and eccentricities, extraordinary as they are, are more than outweighed by his good sense and courage' (p. 25).

What Brown was attempting to do was to abandon the low profile kept by Britain since Suez and to save the Arabs from themselves by organizing a massive naval intervention of behalf of Israel. When after the Suez/Sinai war the Israelis had evacuated the positions they had occupied athwart the Straits of Tiran (the throttle point at which the Gulf of Aqaba runs into the Red Sea proper) they had received declarations from the maritime powers in favour of freedom of navigation in and out of the Gulf. Now, ten years later when Egypt was proclaiming a blockade of Israeli ships at the Straits, President Charles de Gaulle was telling the Israeli foreign minister: '1967 is not 1957'. If Britain could mobilize an international maritime force to hold the Straits open for Israel's use, this would in practice have been the only way to prevent the three Arab states bordering on Israel from being totally smashed and their territories of Gaza, East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Golan Heights (as well as, for a time, Sinai) being placed under Israeli occupation and settlement.

Brown's scheme did not have the united backing of the British Cabinet or of the American administration (the State Department being in favour, the Pentagon against). But, as Brenchley precisely lays out, the Foreign Secretary's persistence and sense of urgency were enough to carry the qualified approval of Prime Minister Harold Wilson and President Lyndon Johnson. But neither was prepared to embark on a mere Anglo–American initiative; they both wanted more backing and Johnson, already ensnared in Vietnam, wanted time to build up congressional support. The moment for action by others was allowed to pass, U Thant made things worse by handling the UN's role ineptly and the volume and accuracy with which Egypt was then hit was so effective that Egypt simply refused to believe that the offensive came only from Israel. British and American planes must also have been involved. For three months the Arab oil exporters observed a total ban on supplies to both countries. In one chapter the author tells the story of the furious fight to refute the 'Big Lie'.

Brenchley points to two instances following the Six-day War of Brown taking a personal initiative towards repairing relations with the Arab states. When he flew to New York for an emergency session of the UN he abandoned without any reference to Downing Street the uncontroversial speech prepared for him by officials and substituted a pro-Arab address with plenty of emphasis on the unacceptability under the UN Charter of territorial gains made by conquest. He is also given credit for initiating and carrying through the restoration of diplomatic relations with Egypt, which in fact had been broken off by Egypt in its capacity as an African country as early as 1965 as a gesture against British lack of action against Rhodesia. It was a lucky circumstance that, by the time President Gamal Abdul Nasser had committed the diplomatic *gaucherie* of asking for Sir Harold Beeley by name, he had already been chosen. By way of discussing the aftermath of the crisis the author takes us, with the sure hand of an insider, through

the negotiation of Security Council resolution 242 and the abortive UN mission of the Swede Gunnar Jarring. In regard to the former he deplores Brown's taking the credit to himself which rightly belonged to Lord Caradon and his official team.

Brenchley's book, which is written with the elegance and clarity one likes to associate with his old department, is topped both by a prologue on the Foreign Office's policy-making machinery and by a first chapter which is a brilliant short summary of 'Britain's moment in the Middle East' and is tailed by six telling appendices of useful documents. These include the advice given by the British chief of staff on the type and scale of multinational force required to ensure freedom of passage of the Tiran Straits. In what is a predominantly good-tempered book the one exception that the author allows himself is in reference to Harold Wilson's 'duplicitous attempt in his memoirs to conceal this British initiative' (p.128).

*Keith Kyle*

**In the midst of events: the Foreign Office diaries and papers of Kenneth Younger, February 1950–October 1951. By Geoffrey Warner.** Abingdon: Routledge. 2005. 224pp. Index. £60.00. ISBN 0 714 65622 4.

The Labour governments of 1945–51 are justly celebrated for their domestic legislation. But these years were also of major significance in foreign affairs. Britain committed itself to a continued world role. Involvement in the occupation of Germany, participation in the European-wide Marshall Plan, commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty each signalled a new departure. Above all, the unprecedented wartime Anglo-American special relationship was continued and adapted to a new conflict, the Cold War. Geoffrey Warner's edition of the Kenneth Younger diary and papers offers the only senior Foreign Office (FO) minister's insight into British foreign policy in the period. There were two foreign secretaries: Ernest Bevin, who died in 1951, and Herbert Morrison, who wrote a bland autobiography. Younger's predecessor as minister of state, the second in command at the FO, was Hector McNeil and he produced no diary or memoir. This volume charts the last 20 months of this significant government which encountered a range of important issues: the Schuman Plan, German rearmament, strategy and diplomacy in the Korean War, questions about the new communist-controlled China and the challenge to Britain's role in the Middle East.

Younger did not keep a diary in the strictest sense, for it was not completed on a daily basis but rather was written every few weeks, but it was not altered at a later date. As Warner says, 'What the document lacks in immediacy, it more than makes up for in reflection' (p. 4). Moreover, there are few 'more convincing portraits of a once-great administration in decline than that which emerges from the pages of Kenneth Younger's diary' (p. 4). He is incisive on both his own performance and that of ministers. His judgement on Bevin is tempered by respect and recognition of his ill-health, but by January 1951 he felt the Foreign Secretary lacked the 'stamina for taking difficult decisions' (p. 54). He tries to be generous to Morrison, saying he was good to work with in a way but adds that he 'has no confidence in him' (p. 78). There are astute assessments of officials: he is critical of those covering the Middle East and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company crisis in particular (p. 89) and complimentary about those handling the Far East (p. 76). He conveys a vivid sense of his experience as an FO minister: he speaks of being tired and not able to read papers and talk to friends and MPs. 'I feel out of touch with everything but the FO which is thoroughly bad for my judgement' (p. 13). He is happily free of *amour propre*, offering, for example, an honest appraisal of one of his speeches to the House of Commons.

If the mechanics and temper of office are brought to life, the diary is even better at deepening our understanding of substantive issues in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Anglo-American relations overlay all these questions. He conveys the tone as well as the content of Anglo-American disagreement over Taiwan and communist China, over Korea in late 1950 and early 1951 when the UN forces seemed to face imminent defeat after the intervention of Chinese 'volunteers'. On 11 December he wrote of a 'strong war psychosis' in America. It is clear that these are the

observations of someone who has tried to look beyond the immediate events. So he is critical of American policy to China. The diary also contains his doubts about the seriousness of the Soviet threat, suggesting that it was not as great as Washington imagined and, therefore, did not warrant the scale of the rearmament programme embraced by both Britain and the United States.

Geoffrey Warner has done an excellent job of editing Younger's papers. A deft introduction provides an informative commentary. Extensive footnotes clarify issues and provide a valuable guide to further reading. The diary is interspersed with a helpful, unobtrusive explanatory text, leading the reader through the course of events without trying to advance a particular interpretation of them. He lets the diary speak for itself. It reveals how, even in its supposed heyday, the special relationship was always a more complicated beast than some of its proponents would claim. If the Clement Attlee governments left a legacy of a continued Anglo-American special relationship, they also bequeathed through Younger a strain of constructive and thoughtful scepticism about the nature of that collaboration.

*Michael F. Hopkins, Liverpool Hope University, UK*

**The Nixon administration and the death of Allende's Chile: a case of assisted suicide.** By **Jonathan Haslam**. London: Verso. 2005. 255pp. Index. £16.99. ISBN 1 84467 030 9.

This is an interesting and unusual book. However, the title does not accurately reflect the content. The unwary reader might assume that this is yet another exposé of the immoral actions of the US in aiding or even organizing the coup in Chile. The subtitle is a better guide. The role of the US is, assuming I interpret the subtitle correctly, that of aiding the end of a political experiment that was, essentially through its own actions, heading for a dramatic collapse.

Given the concentration on internal matters, the focus on the US in the title and at various parts in the text is a little puzzling. This book reads as a well-written narrative about the tragedy of the Popular Unity government's collapse. The involvement of the US at various stages and in various ways is by now well known and the author does not add much to our knowledge. But then we come across statements such as 'A notable feature of the coup that always suggested special outside management was the extraordinary degree of efficiency and ruthlessness in its implementation' (p. 223). I am not sure this suggests anything more than that the Chilean military was well prepared for the coup: given the openness of the Chilean political system it was easy to know whom to repress; given the weakness of the government repression was relatively easy; and, while there may well have been US and indeed Brazilian involvement in matters such as interrogation techniques and torture, this hardly suggests 'management'.

Yet this is a book well worth reading. It is unusual in two ways. First, it represents thorough work in the archives of various foreign ministries such as those of the UK, France and Germany, as well as the now increasingly accessible archives of multiple agencies in the US. The author makes excellent use of this material and it is interesting to see what the various embassies in Chile wrote on the turbulent politics of the time—the comments of the French and Brazilians seem particularly acute. This alone would make the book a welcome addition to the writing on the origins of the 1973 coup.

More important, however, is the analysis of internal events in Chile. Few episodes in recent Latin American history have produced writing which tends to polarize either as a defence of the Popular Unity government or as a condemnation of it (the Cuban Revolution is a parallel case). This reflects a continuing polarization in Chile between those who defend the coup and the regime that followed, and those who denounce it. The book under review, however, achieves an unusual degree of objectivity in its analysis of what was wrong with the Allende government. The author argues that central to its failings was Allende himself, romantic defender of the extreme left while at the same time trying to pursue politics within a legal and constitutional framework. Time and time again the author shows Allende's inability to face the unpleasant facts of trying to force through such radical change with such a limited power base, and his misplaced faith in his ability to out-manoeuvre his opponents. The author is highly—and rightly—critical

of the extreme left groups such as the *Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria* and some of the socialist party politicians who grossly exaggerated the revolutionary will of the Chilean people, yet alarmed the right sufficiently to intensify its opposition to the government. The incoherent economic policy of the Popular Unity government also receives a critical if brief treatment.

The author leaves no doubt as to his condemnation of the coup and its aftermath, but he has performed a valuable service in providing a balanced, critical account of those tragic years. The book is very well written and the reader is soon caught up in the narrative drive as events unfold.

*Alan Angell, University of Oxford, UK*

**Michael of Romania: the king and the country.** By Ivor Porter. Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2005. 328pp. Index. £20.00. ISBN 0 7509 3847 1.

Ivor Porter's biography is a fascinating account of a period of Romanian history almost buried by over 40 years of communist propaganda. It belongs to a new wave of historical writing on Central and Eastern Europe that, after the collapse of communism in 1989, attempts to revive an under-researched period of history. This may partly be a reflection of the growing realization that the analysis of post-communist states merely in terms of their transition towards market economy status is insufficient and that, to understand the future of these states, an in-depth consideration of their pre-communist past is necessary.

This book is particularly informative for a western audience, for whom many of the characters and movements mentioned will hitherto have been no more than the backdrop to the rise of communist domination in the region. Its publication is also timely, following the 2005 celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. In Western Europe that anniversary is for many the close of a period whereas for Romania and its neighbours it marks the beginning of the reassessment of a period which previously could only be treated through the prism of political imperatives. It is a subject with which the author has a peculiar familiarity. As a member of a secret British military mission to Romania during the Second World War, Porter spent eight months as a prisoner of the Romanians (who were allied with the Germans until King Michael led a *coup d'état* against the fascist government of Antonescu in August 1944).

Porter's work faces the challenge of all biographies: how to combine concentration on an individual's life with a satisfying account of the political and social changes in that period. This is particularly acute here for a number of reasons. To a non-Romanian, much of the background against which King Michael's life must be understood is unknown. Furthermore, it was only for a brief period (largely between 1944 and 1947) that the King was to any real degree in control of the events surrounding him.

This work's great merit is that it collates a number of sources that have never been used before. This is an authorized biography and Porter was granted access to the King's personal archive as well as a series of interviews with the King and his immediate circle over the years. The book is therefore a valuable addition to the literature on the Romanian monarchy.

Where the book fares less well is in setting the trajectory of its subject's career within the context of events inside and outside Romania. The downside of Porter's heavy use of primary sources from the King's circle is neglect of contemporaneous material from other sources. Particularly absent are eyewitness accounts from the key players of wartime Romania. Although most of them died as political prisoners after the King's abdication in December 1947, some went into exile and could have provided insightful details about King Michael's rule. The reader would also gain from more detailed information about the characters who are only now becoming objects of study again, such as the interwar politicians Iuliu Maniu, Barbu Stirbei and Dinu Bratianu.

As half of the book deals with Romania's wartime years (a period which Porter previously covered in the volume *Operation autonomous: with SOE in wartime Romania*) there is perhaps too much reliance on Porter's personal experiences and the King's archives to the detriment of original material. This is disappointing given that, since 1989, much more information concerning, for example, the activities within the communist movement in the late 1940s has become available.

There is little attempt to place events in their European or global perspective. This may not be important in the case of the Second World War given the reader's familiarity with the era, but it is a drawback at other stages of the work. Some of the parallels with events in other countries raise questions which would have been worth exploring; for example, why it was that King Simeon of Bulgaria, likewise deposed at the end of the Second World War, was able to return to the heart of political events, whereas King Michael's influence on Romanian politics since the collapse of communism has been less evident?

Despite its weaknesses, the work is well written and enjoyable. The tone of the book is somewhat reverential in its portrayal of the monarch and his family, probably the result of Porter's contact with him after the 1947 abdication. The strength of this book is that it is an authorized biography, although it cannot claim to be definitive.

Dana Armean

## Europe

**The enlargement of the European Union and NATO: ordering from the menu in Central Europe.** By Wade Jacoby. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2004. 287pp. Index. £45.00. ISBN 0 521 83359 0.

Jacoby's book sets out to explain behavioural patterns in the process of the enlargement of NATO and the EU in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). It is also an attempt to suggest 'what outsiders can offer to help foreign societies reform' (p. 118). The attraction of this area and the impact of the re-emergence of CEE states in general European politics is clearly reflected in the large number of recent publications, another example being Steve Wood's *Germany and East-Central Europe: political, economic and socio-cultural relations in the era of EU enlargement* (2004). Like Wood, Jacoby believes that Germany was of great influence in the enlargement process—adding the US as the main driving force once Russia had been suitably accommodated in the 'partnership for peace'.

Jacoby's main focus is firmly on Hungary and Czechoslovakia, with a lesser emphasis on Poland and countries such as Sweden considered only on the periphery. The chapter on the Common Agricultural Policy (ch. 3) adds interesting detail to the often unduly western view of farming in the east, going well beyond the simplistic analysis of the CEE countries as, in this area, little better than a burden on the EU budget (p. 114). This is a good example of the value of Jacoby's empirical approach, which is also particularly strong on the adaptation of the CEE countries' militaries to NATO, notably as regards their non-commissioned officers and the problem of conscription (p. 164). The main precondition set by NATO was civilian control of the military (ch. 4). Here, Jacoby demonstrates a full understanding, in particular, of the difficulties the Czech and Hungarian military had to contend with. From a Warsaw Pact tradition, the generals were used to political authority but they were not used to democratic civilian control, to say nothing of the internal bargaining process for budget shares (p. 125). And although the process of military adaptation went relatively smoothly, the ineffectiveness of both the Czech and Hungarian military—not too surprising considering the budget cuts of about 50 per cent in the post-communist years—in the Balkan wars came as a grim reminder that the changeover into NATO was not yet accomplished. Not least because of these military shortcomings, the US perception of NATO changed from that of a military to a political organization—one of the main findings of this book (p. 178).

Jacoby's structure of categories such as templates, thresholds and patches constitutes an attempt, following a political science method, to introduce theory as a guide to the analysis (see table one, p. 6). However, this often seems contrived and sometimes too complicated, missing the main objective of making the complex context of eastern enlargement more readily understandable to the reader. The author is aware of this problem and alleviates it to some extent by relating his findings to established theory such as historic, rational and sociological institutionalism

(ch. 6). Finally, out of the woodwork of political theory, Jacoby underlines the historical importance of the enlargement in bringing the countries of Europe together again (p. 185), the core political objective from the very inception of the European integration process, which was firmly based on the realization that division could only be conducive to conflict.

Overall, this book is a readable and well-informed case-study of CEE, notably in the military fields. Although its empirical approach is predominantly based on the experience of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and later the Czech Republic and Slovakia, a range that might be thought too narrow, the findings for these countries are cogent and conclusive and can *mutatis mutandis* be applied to most CEE countries. The book will therefore be of value to academics and other professionals, as well as to the general reader.

*Thomas Hörber, University of Victoria, Canada*

**International relations and the European Union. Edited by Christopher Hill and Michael Smith.** Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005. 469pp. Index. Pb.: £20.99. ISBN 0 19 927348 0.

This book is a welcome contribution to the debate on the European Union (EU) for several reasons. For one, it takes stock of the varied and often substantial EU engagements in external affairs, be it development, trade or security. Moreover, it integrates insights from International Relations (IR) theory, which so far has been negligent in its treatment of the EU, and insights from public policy and comparative studies, which focus on the EU but not on the wider international implications of it.

The book does not solve the IR–EU puzzle once and for all but it provides ideas for renewed inquiry. This is all that could be hoped for in a book with multiple ambitions: it aims simultaneously to fill a theoretical gap and provide a comprehensive overview of EU external affairs, and to do so at a textbook level.

Like all good textbooks, and this is clearly one, this book provides first an overview of the complex whole and then accessible presentations of its parts. The organization is classical: part one (three chapters) provides an overview (of theory as well as the EU's global activity); part two (five chapters) analyses institutions and processes; part three (eight chapters) deals with issue areas; part four (two chapters) reverts to the overview and lessons learned. This presentation works well not least because the individual contributions are of high quality and cover all the main facets of the EU's external relations.

The need to organize an accessible textbook is a theoretical drawback, however, and one might ask whether the editors should have defined their ambitions differently. In the preface they state their theoretical ambition to connect the study of the EU and the study of IR, and they seek to do so by way of their own conceptualizations and choice of contributors. In chapter one they outline the concepts—in fact three perspectives. These are: the EU as a 'sub-system' of IR; the EU as part of the 'wider process' of IR; and the EU as a 'major power' impacting upon IR.

We encounter these perspectives mainly in the chapters written by the editors, however, which is to say the introduction, the conclusion and the chapter on the EU and the United States (in part three) written by Michael Smith and Rebecca Steffenson. The conscious development of concepts related to the editors' agenda tends to get lost particularly in parts two and three, the main body of the book. The editors bravely sum up issues and findings in the conclusion, but it does not add up to specific propositions or suggestions. More effort should probably have been put into this development to meet the theoretical ambition.

The contributors do not ponder big questions of complex theory, which is entirely appropriate for this type of book, but rely on theoretical ideas and conceptual constructions that could have connected more clearly to the editors' framework. Sophie Vanhoonacker relies on historical institutionalism to account for the EU's institutional development (ch. 4); Reuben Wong provides an illuminating account of theoretical differences on the issue of Europeanization (ch. 7); Karen Smith favours a sociological or constructivist understanding of the process of enlargement

(ch. 13); and Andrew Linklater likewise relies on sociological perspectives as he contends that the EU represents a 'civilising process' and a 'challenge to traditional power politics' (ch. 17). Simon Nuttall relies not on a big theory but instead on middle-range concepts in his excellent overview of problems of coherence and consistency (ch. 5), and Loukas Tsoukalis relies on the idea of certain economic 'orthodoxies' to account for the EU's position in the world economy (ch. 11). Wyn Rees's account of the external face of internal security (ch. 10) and James Mayall's presentation of colonial legacies (ch. 14) are less explicit on concepts though equally thorough empirically.

Jolyon Howorth's contribution on security and defence issues (ch. 9) is noteworthy not only because of its qualities but also because he feels obligated to take a stab at theorists allegedly in search of 'monocausal' explanations. This stab does not inhibit Howorth from developing his own IR conceptual toolbox, essentially a liberal-constructivist one. Howorth's approach is symptomatic for the book: it eschews big theory, so much so that the theoretical ambition of the editors is partly undermined, but it does position itself theoretically and it is too bad that this position—a liberal-constructivist middle ground where most if not all the contributors operate—does not connect more explicitly to the editors' conceptualizations.

Students confronted with this book will be sure to gain many insights and the book will no doubt serve as a useful point of reference in many instances. They will encounter a European construction with diverse external engagements and lacking in coherence—a state of affairs also reflected in the editors' conceptualizations of the EU. The one thing students will not encounter is a challenge to the theoretical middle ground—say, for example, in the shape of realist, Marxist or critical interpretations of the EU.

This is what is on offer: an excellent overview of EU external affairs, a recommendable textbook, a partly explored liberal-constructivist IR research agenda and a textbook safely situated within the comfort zone of the theoretical middle ground.

Sten Rynning, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

**The politics of exclusion: institutions and immigration policy in contemporary Germany.** By Simon Green. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2004. 162pp. Index. £45.00. ISBN 0 7190 6588 7.

Studying immigration policy is fascinating, for it tells us a great deal about how a given political community views itself and how that self-conception changes over time. How thick or thin are the borders that surround the community? What are the processes and rituals that govern inclusion and exclusion? In his classic work on the ritual maintenance of communal boundaries, Arnold van Gennep mused in the opening passages about the possible disappearance of political borders in modern Europe (*Rites of passage*, 1909/1960). This was before the two world wars, the vicious return of chauvinistic nationalism, massive population displacements, ethnic cleansing and genocide, much of it in one way or another launched from Germany. Germany's self-image had significant consequences for Europe's twentieth century. Today that Germany is European and democratic, but its politics of exclusion remain problematic.

Green has produced a clearly written introduction to an extremely complex policy area known as *Ausländerpolitik* in Germany. This policy field includes numerous subjects, but Green wisely limits his discussion to immigration, foreigners with ordinary residence and citizenship policy. Policy-makers and academics alike will find this book a valuable resource in tackling a policy field which is anything but straightforward.

Green uses Peter Katzenstein's framework of viewing the domestic German state as a 'semi-sovereign state', a state that is fractured through federalism, separation of power, national institutions and well-organized social interests (*Policy and politics in Germany: the growth of a semi-sovereign state*, 1987). Katzenstein predicted slow and incremental policy change in Germany and this is exactly what Green finds. One could even call it *Staupolitik*, or traffic jam politics.

Many will approach the text already familiar with Germany's adherence to *jus sanguinis* or the principle of descent in citizenship law since 1913, rather than *jus soli* or the establishment of

citizenship based upon place of birth. The author avoids entering normative discussions about patterns of inclusion and exclusion in liberal democracies, but he carefully notes the costs of such exclusion, especially for the guest workers invited to the country between 1955 and 1973 to help with postwar labour shortages.

One critical consequence of this path dependency is that Germany's foreign population has continued to grow as children of non-citizens have effectively been denied citizenship, until very recently. This has led to significant problems in terms of their political and social integration, especially for Muslims primarily from Turkey. As a group, they are more likely to have weak language skills, lower educational attainment and thus higher levels of unemployment. Without citizenship, access to state employment, including education, is barred. This is a classic formula for social alienation and the associated problems that come with it. Green hints at the symbolic nature of much of the political debate around immigration and I, for one, would have loved to see more of this in the current work.

Paradoxically, the 1977 government brief that established that Germany was 'not a country of immigration' also recognized this problem of social integration. But for the next 20 years little changed. Indeed, even with the recent liberalization in 1999, the rate of naturalization is so low that the foreign population still continues to grow.

Green's work bears reading by those not directly interested in immigration policy *per se*, because this case-study points to the significant problems of governing Germany today. Although there are other solutions to the growing demographic imbalance between workers and pensioners than simply increasing immigration, what is stunning is Germany's inability to even begin a serious discussion along exactly these lines. In this policy area as well as others, the semi-sovereign state 'has caused the gap between policy necessity and policy reality to widen' (p. 142).

*Mark A. Wolfgram, Oklahoma State University, USA*

**Europe and the recognition of new states in Yugoslavia.** By Richard Caplan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005. 186pp. Index. £45.00. ISBN 0 521 82176 2.

The European Community/European Union recognition process for the former Yugoslav states has been criticized by Balkan specialists from both academic and practitioner communities. In terms of international law, the EU has been accused of undermining Yugoslavia's territorial integrity and, through the use of political conditionality as central to the recognition process, criticized for undermining the new states' rights to self-government. Normatively, the EU has been condemned for abusing its relationship of asymmetrical power over the region. On functional grounds, the EU intervention has been blamed for undermining international and regional processes of conflict prevention, encouraging republican leaderships to renege on minority rights guarantees and directly sparking the war in Bosnia.

Richard Caplan's book, a useful addition to his work on international trusteeship (see, for example, *International governance of war-torn territories*, 2005), sets out to establish that the EU and, more particularly, its retrospective project of international state-building in the Balkans, is innocent on all charges. This book is therefore much more (and much less) than an empirical study of the interrelationship between EU policy and Yugoslavia's disintegration. In fact, it is the broader political and theoretical analysis, especially the discussions of international law and international norms, and, in the penultimate chapter, an interesting consideration of the post-Cold War development of the use of political conditionality in aid and trade policy, that are the main appeal of this work. His spirited defence of the EU interventionist role in Yugoslavia's breakup is three pronged: criticism on the basis of international law would be a backward-looking 'legal formalism'; criticism on the basis of self-interested or neo-colonial practices would fall into the trap of 'structural realism'; and criticism on the basis of outcomes would be to overestimate the EU role and underestimate the importance of republican and regional 'forces of violence'.

Regarding international law, Caplan favours a dynamic understanding, highly sensitive to the emerging importance of norms of democratic governance: 'the EC, although departing from

international law, would appear to have been pushing at the limits of the prevailing normative vocabulary rather than transgressing those limits altogether' (p. 93). International law assumes states to be independent entities, pre-dating international legal recognition. This made the question of international recognition controversial for Croatia and even more so for Bosnia. Rather than being merely declaratory—recognition of an existing fact—the recognition of the new states was central to their constitution as independent legal entities. The EC effectively laid the framework for Yugoslavia's dissolution and ruled on the boundaries and political make-up of its constituent parts. It was, for example, the EC's Badinter Commission, not Yugoslav authorities, which decreed that the federal republic was 'in the process of dissolution' and that republics could only secede within their administrative boundaries. However, the process was managed in an entirely ad hoc way, the Badinter Commission having no clear, or public, rules of procedure while its opinions were not legally binding and only selectively followed by the EC (pp. 36–7).

It is more difficult for Caplan to dismiss the relevance of external power relations to the process of Yugoslavia's dissolution. He attempts to establish that the legitimacy of the EC/EU role stems not from its power in the region or its perceived security interests in stability, but rather from the normative character of the EU. This is not like colonialism, where western powers restricted equal rights on the basis of 'standards of civilisation'. There is apparently no inequality or double standard here as the EU is itself 'a civilizational project', extending the norms of good governance and democracy internally and therefore entitled to impose them in the region because 'The EU's backyard is its future' (p. 178).

Regarding the critique from effects, Caplan relies on a number of hypothetical arguments to assert that the EC ad hoc intervention, pared down largely to the question of formal recognition, cannot be blamed for the war in Croatia (recognition prior to a settlement of the status of the Croatian-Serb minority) and prolonged conflict in Bosnia (recognition despite no consensus between the three main ethnic groups). Regarding the empirical material one cannot help feeling that his analytical approach leads to a fairly disjointed—he states himself that the focus on analysis necessitates a non-linear approach which moves backwards and forwards in time (p. 11)—and selective reading of events and relationships. For example, we are over halfway through the book before there is even a reference to the Brioni agreement, brokered at the end of the 10-day Slovene war in July 1991, where the EC gave the Slovene and Croatian republics international status, fundamentally undermining the international legal standing of the federal government.

Today, with the EU having started accession negotiations with Croatia, Serbia-Montenegro and Bosnia and new talks regarding Kosovo's future status, Caplan's study of recognition and political conditionality is certainly a timely one. It would appear that Mill's cited injunction is still a relevant one: where people are given their 'statehood' as a gift from external powers, rather than democracy and liberty, they 'will have nothing real, nothing permanent' (p. 169).

*David Chandler, University of Westminster, UK*

## **Russia and Eurasia**

**Kazakhstan: power and the elite.** By Sally N. Cummings. London: I. B. Tauris. 2005. 208pp. Index. £40.00. ISBN 1 86064 854 1.

This book is a timely addition to the literature on Kazakhstan, providing useful and interesting reading on the eve of Kazakhstan's December 2005 presidential election, in which Nursultan Nazarbayev faces the toughest competition since assuming the presidency in 1990.

The book offers the most in-depth study of Kazakhstan's elite to appear in English, and is persuasive reading for those interested in the challenge of state-building in post-Soviet states in general and Central Asia in particular.

Chapter one provides a great deal of information about the nature of politics during the first decade of independence and some, albeit not a great deal, information about the economic

transition that the country went through. It gives the reader a sense of the political environment surrounding that transition.

The heart of the book is devoted to a study of the political elite itself, its membership identified through a 'snowball' approach, and offers a description of the elite's background. Cummings then offers a rich analysis of how the elite have legitimated their power through the opportunity that independence afforded them to try to create a new national ideology. She goes on to discuss how formal structural and informal social means were used by the elite to maintain their authority. Cummings demonstrates how they were able to use the opportunities of state-building to this end, bending the rules of the game to reinforce non-democratic outcomes, outcomes that meld pre-Soviet, Soviet and post-Soviet experiences.

As Cummings makes clear, the Kazakh elite have shaped their environment, both historic and contemporary, to reinforce their hold over power. They have not, however, achieved the kind of shared attitudes necessary to build an elite consensus on how the system should evolve. It is this very lack of consensus which, in Cummings's own reckoning, gives the Kazakhs the best chance of supporting political innovation and reform.

*Martha Brill Olcott, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, USA*

**Radical Islam in Central Asia: between pen and rifle.** By **Vitaly V. Naumkin.** Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. 2005. 283pp. Index. Pb.: £22.99. ISBN 0 7425 2930 4.

A senior Russian scholar of the Middle East, Naumkin has given us insights into the workings of three leading actors in Islamic radicalism in contemporary Central Asia—the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami (HTI) and the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT). His introduction provides a succinct history of Central Asian Islam, acquaints readers with a rather overwhelming list of relevant terminology and briefly surveys the theories that seek to explain political Islamic extremism. Not surprisingly, Naumkin decides to discard them all, preferring to stress an orientation towards a 'culture of violence' against a background of widespread disgruntlement.

In contrast to the weaknesses and mistakes manifest in the pages that address the Soviet period, Naumkin supplies interesting material as he moves on to the post-Soviet years. He has interviewed figures with crucial first-hand information and acquired some fascinating documentation, including IMU leaflets. The picture he portrays of the IMU's evolution is extremely complex, so much so that it is not always easy to follow, and he is fully aware that the reliability of many of his sources—above all the official version put out by the Karimov regime—is questionable. Naumkin believes the IMU to be a terrorist organization with proved connections to the Taleban and Al-Qaeda.

Naumkin is more systematic and original when he discusses the HTI, which he considers likely to become the focus of political Islamic opposition in Uzbekistan (p. 118) given its various sources of strength. Over time, the HTI is thought to have abandoned its original intention of setting up a caliphate by non-violent means and the security organs have discovered weapons in the homes of HTI members (p. 178). The dissemination of HTI literature seems to have lessened since September 11, most materials distributed in Uzbekistan being apparently brought from over the Tajik border (p. 158). Indeed, the HTI's success in Tajikistan is particularly interesting given the strength there of the IRPT, and considerable tension exists between the two parties (pp. 160–3) although the authorities spread rumours regarding their alleged cooperation.

The bottom line regarding the HTI and other radical Islamist parties and groups seems to be that, at least on the surface, their activity has recently decreased. Naumkin is not, however, convinced that the threat to the security of the Central Asian countries has diminished. He believes that the Islamists may simply have gone deeper underground (p. 186) and retain significant 'political potential' with support even among certain elite circles (pp. 187–8).

The last party to deserve discussion is the IRPT. The first part of this chapter reviews the evolution of the Tajik civil war and Naumkin does a fine job of explaining the achievements of

## Sub-Saharan Africa

the two sides—the Rahmonov government and the IRPT—and the residual dangers still looming ahead. It seems incongruous that backward Tajikistan should be the one Central Asian successor state where Islamists have been incorporated into government and religious parties legalized, even if neither Islamists nor Rahmonov's Kulyabi clan are totally satisfied, both entertaining apprehensions regarding the future and continuing to jostle to improve their respective positions. Some IRPT leaders have almost totally abandoned their Islamist stand in order to become an integral part of the political scene and a regular parliamentary party. Others are concerned that their moderation on Islamic issues leaves the door open for more radical forces, especially the HTI (pp. 236–40 and 246). By 2004, however, the IRPT seemed to be recuperating from earlier setbacks and once more enhancing its influence, particularly at the local level. Yet it had not solved its main problem: how to remain within the establishment and retain its hold on its traditional constituency which inevitably tended to move towards the radical HTI.

The book has a long list of unfortunate errors—stylistic, linguistic, syntactical, orthographic—which make reading difficult and repetitive. The index is far from satisfactory. The reader cannot but wish that more effort had been expended in editing a book dealing with issues of prime significance for all students of Central Asia and for all those involved in the practicalities of making that area a more congenial one for its inhabitants. If long term stability is to be attained in the region and in each of its constituent countries, the experience of three very different Islamist parties over the past 15 or so years and their relations with the governments in question need to be carefully studied, understood and analysed. Naumkin's book is one more step towards this goal.

Yaacov Ro'i

## Sub-Saharan Africa

**Darfur: the ambiguous genocide.** By **Gérard Prunier**. London: Hurst. 2005. 212pp. Index. Pb.: £15.95. ISBN 1 85065 770 x.

**Darfur: a short history of a long war.** By **Julie Flint and Alex de Waal**. London: Zed. 2005. 176pp. Index. £36.95. ISBN 1 84277 696 7. Pb.: £12.99. ISBN 1 84277 697 5.

These two short books should be considered essential reading for anyone wishing to gain a sophisticated understanding of Darfur's ongoing conflict and the international responses to it. Read in tandem, the two volumes provide largely complementary histories that paint a disturbing picture of a region devastated by local factionalism, national political turmoil and international meddling.

Gérard Prunier's account represents the first in the *Crises in World Politics* series published in partnership with the Centre of International Studies, University of Cambridge. It unfolds in largely chronological order to chart the *longue durée* of Darfur's history with chapters focusing on independent Darfur (pre-1916), the region's chequered relationship with Khartoum (1916–85), Darfur's growing marginalization and the manipulation of ethnicity in the region (1985–2003), the counter-insurgency and 'quasi-genocide' unleashed by Khartoum and the response of the world's media, NGOs, international organizations and key states (2003–5). Throughout his narrative, Prunier devotes substantial attention to explaining how local ethnic identities were shaped—often by outsiders—in ways that fuelled rather than reduced the likelihood of violence. In the later sections of the book he spends considerable time discussing how the war was labelled and understood by outsiders and the paucity of accurate casualty figures despite the considerable, albeit belated, international attention.

Julie Flint and Alex de Waal's book is also part of a new series called *African Arguments* published by Zed Books in association with the International African Institute. It is organized thematically with chapters on the people of Darfur, the government of Sudan, the Janjawid, the rebels and the current war. The final chapter, 'Endgame', provides a rather cursory discussion of the international responses, focusing (briefly) on the African Union and the United Nations. Flint and de Waal's account is certainly an easier read than Prunier's denser prose. It also

provides a clearer dissection of the backgrounds of the participants in the current conflict and offers many fresh details from behind the scenes of resistance and oppression in Darfur.

Although the focus and style of both books is different their authors agree on several fundamental points. First, developments in Darfur have been inextricably related to Sudan's national politics (particularly the schisms within Khartoum's ruling elite) as well as the international politics of Chad's civil war and Muammar Qadhafi's expansionist foreign policy. Second, the government of Sudan helped orchestrate the recent atrocities even though it could not always control the outcomes on the ground. Third, both accounts agree that the prospects for achieving a genuine resolution of Darfur's conflict any time soon are slim. This is in spite of—and arguably partly because of—the design of the so-called Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army. That said, neither book dwells on the detail of possible solutions to the conflict.

Finally, both books draw similar conclusions about a floundering African Union, an indecisive Security Council and timid responses from western states that claim to support the idea that international actors have a responsibility to protect civilians being terrorized by their own government. Of the two volumes, Prunier's offers the more detailed and scathing analysis of the response of international society, especially the UN's Commission of Inquiry and the western states most closely involved, namely the Troika (US, UK and Norway) and France. While Flint and de Waal characterize international responses to the crimes committed in Darfur as 'too little, too late' (p. xiv) Prunier concludes that western support for 'African solutions to African problems' became 'the politically correct way of saying "We do not really care"' (p. 124). From such expert authors, these are damning indictments.

Paul D. Williams, University of Birmingham, UK

**Institutions and ethnic politics in Africa.** By Daniel Posner. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005. 360pp. Index. £40.00. ISBN 0 521 83398 1. Pb.: £17.99. ISBN 0 521 54179 4.

Daniel Posner has written an intriguing book, which deserves attention. He has two main ambitions. The first is to apply to political science some of the insights about ethnicity generated in other social sciences, chiefly anthropology. The second is to present a 'theory' to explain, or even predict, the use of identity cleavages for politically instrumental purposes. Based on a combination of institutional and rational choice theories, the book is a case-study of the politics of ethnic and language divisions in post-colonial Zambia. At the same time, it is an attempt to show that the method used can be applied anywhere in the world, since identity issues matter everywhere. The book belongs to a spate of recent studies in the US seeking to revisit key political themes from a more 'scientific' perspective. The questions are perennial but such work claims to bring sharper and more comparative relevance to them.

*Institutions and ethnic politics in Africa* is a well-organized and clearly written book, making it easy both to understand how the argument is constructed and how Zambia is studied. Following a pellucid introduction, which lays out the book's theoretical and analytical aims, Posner presents the Zambian case-study in great detail. Part one is a historically informed explanation of why the country's identity divisions tend to be along ethnic and linguistic lines. Part two explains how coalition-building was influenced by the shift from single- to multi-party electoral politics. Part three confirms the explanatory value of the theory by testing competing explanations. The final chapter seeks to extend the argument in two ways: first by examining the merits of regime change rather than mere coalition-building and second by looking beyond Africa.

The argument about the use in Zambia of language or ethnic divisions for politically instrumental reasons is demonstrated with precision and the conclusions reached are convincing. For this reason, the book will be profitably read by those who are interested in Zambian politics. However, country specialists will not have waited for the publication of *Institutions and ethnic politics in Africa* to work out how identity cleavages have been instrumentalized. In this respect, the book's conclusions will not come as a surprise to sociologists and anthropologists working on Zambia or Africa.

But Posner's ambition goes beyond the African country since the case-study is primarily intended to demonstrate the validity of the theory that cleavage politics can best be understood by a combination of institutional and rational choice theories. On this account, the book is both strong and weak. It is strong because it incorporates into political analysis the (primarily) anthropological insight that identities are complex, historically constructed, overlapping and changeable. Furthermore, it builds on the notion that identities are used politically for instrumental reasons, which are well explained in the book. Many of the examples given are indeed confirmation that individuals and communities seek to maximize political advantage by resorting to one aspect of their identity. This approach is indeed an advance on those political studies which assumed that a single and unchanging attribute of social identity conditioned political action in a straightforward way.

However, the book is weak in two key respects. The first is the assumption that all forms or identities are equally politically 'instrumentalizable' or negotiable. It is broadly true that individuals will operate politically on the basis of the type of identity that will reap greater dividends. But this raises many questions. A key one is the assumption that all people behave merely as 'individuals' regardless of the communities in which they live. Another is that there are a number of identity markers that are more significant and less open to instrumental use. In India, for instance, the so-called untouchables may benefit from quotas in their favour and thus vote accordingly but in the present cultural context it is not open to them not to be untouchables—a form of identity that has an overwhelming impact on every aspect of their social, economic and political lives. Similarly, Muslims may use the religious card when it suits them but they may also behave in what appears to be an 'irrational' fashion simply because they are not prepared to compromise on the issue of so-called Islamic 'values', regardless of political outcomes. There are thus limits to the presuppositions about individualist rationality such as it is understood by institutionalist or rational choice theorists.

The second has to do with the book's theoretical claim. It is undoubtedly true that Posner's theory is more sophisticated than the simplistic ones peddled by those who believe identity to be determined by a single factor, like ethnicity. At the same time, it is unclear how his discussion of Moldova or India is more instructive than many studies with no theoretical ambition but appropriate knowledge of the history and culture of these settings. The political ambiguities of countries in which multiple identities overlap and collide is often best understood by those who are able to make sense of their composite and protracted process of social and political sedimentation. The reason Posner's study of Zambia is convincing is not primarily because the theory is powerful but because the author's knowledge of the country's history is deep. Therefore, the jury is still out on whether theory of that ilk truly adds value to historical insight. In the end, it seems dubious whether the heuristic claims of institutionalist and rational choice theories can be sustained other than in the context of an in-depth cultural and historical analysis of the cases they profess to explain.

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**Civil militia: Africa's intractable security menace? Edited by David J. Francis.** Aldershot: Ashgate. 2005. 328pp. Index. £55.00. ISBN 0 7546 4452 9.

The Darfur crisis in Sudan has once again brought to the fore considerations of the role and implications of civil militias in Africa and their activities in conflict zones on the continent. Interestingly, despite the hype about terrorist lairs in the Horn of Africa, the security problems posed by civil militias on the continent are far more serious and wide-reaching than concerns about terrorism. However, western policy-makers generally ignore the major challenges posed by civil militias to security. The book under review is thus a major contribution to the field of African security and a very competent approach to a serious problem.

In general, past literature has seen civil militias in Africa as state-derived undertakings that promote the interests of key state actors. In this reading the agency of such paramilitaries is

generally downplayed. A different interpretation sees civil militias as non-state projects with the militias being in conflict with and against the state or, in the case of certain conflicts, allied to state interests but separate. A more nuanced perspective, which dominates the book, is that civil militias are multifaceted and outwit attempts to dichotomize. Indeed, militias may straddle both state and non-state realms, reflecting the informalization of politics and security across the continent and defying western-centric attempts to categorize and taxonomize.

After an introduction by the editor, Gani Josés Yoroms writes on the theoretical considerations surrounding civil militias in Africa. This is followed by Joe Alie's extremely interesting chapter on the Kamajor militias in Sierra Leone, asking whether they were liberators or nihilists undermining society. Kenneth Omeje stays in West Africa with a careful consideration of the Egbesu and Bakassi Boys, weaving into his account a discussion of the mysticism and spiritual elements behind these phenomena. Ruben Thorning then draws together case-studies from Nigeria and Indonesia to look at civil militias from a comparative perspective. Istifanus Zabadi asks the key question 'are civil militias threats to national and human security or assets?', drawing on material from West Africa. Zabadi rightly points to the use of militias by actors within state structures to highlight the negative aspects of such militias. Usman Tar then brings us a highly topical discussion of militias and state violence in the Darfur region.

Cage Banseka looks at civil militias in Cameroon while Belachew Gebrewold links militias to the general militarization of society in the Horn of Africa. A. Byaruhanga Rukooko then examines the long-standing civil war in Uganda, looking at the role civil militias play in political transitions. Remaining in the Great Lakes region, Mucharia Munene examines the infamous Mayi Mayi and Interahamwe militias. Finally, Jeremy Ginifer and Hooman Peimani bring the book to a close with a discussion of the challenges to post-conflict security in spaces where civil militias operate/have operated.

As the contributors make clear, it is a fact that in a disturbingly large number of African spaces, elites have encouraged corruption and undermined state institutions, often using violence. The aim is to stay in power and profit. Loyal associates are permitted access to economic opportunities such as smuggling or illicit goods such as drugs while many African rulers increasingly operate like racketeers, selling exemptions from prosecution or using control over the state to help business partners. Problematically, civil militias often have a distorted notion of civil society—a society based on expediency and governed not by law but according to the whims of militia leaders and/or members. Important aspects of society become subject to the unchecked authority of the self-appointed militias. In these circumstances, security can become a major problem as there are no clearly defined or verifiable rules governing conduct.

Prolonged experience of militia activity severely weakens states and further fractures them, calling into question the very legitimacy of a 'state' that cannot even guarantee basic security. The crucial legacy of militias is to generalize authoritarian military values and attitudes which are on the whole anti-social and dismissive of 'normal' politics. While it is arguable that civil militias may in the short term protect sectional interests, they leave an inheritance of uncertainty and fear and set examples whereby power and influence can be attained through the gun.

The book under review asks these and other extremely important questions. The editor should be congratulated for putting together this valuable collection. Indeed, the volume is recommended to anyone interested in African peace and conflict as well as general African politics since it appears, regrettably, that militias are not going to go away any time soon.

*Ian Taylor, University of St Andrews, UK*

**The African Union: pan-Africanism, peacebuilding and development.** By Timothy Murithi. Aldershot: Ashgate. 2005. 174 pp. Index. ISBN 0 7546 3953 3.

The African Union (AU) was launched in July 2002, effectively replacing the Organization of African Unity (OAU) which had been the premier continental organization in Africa. For much of its existence the OAU had, in effect, acted as the 'trade union of African heads-of-state' and

had, unfortunately, lost much of its credibility. That this was a tragedy is not in doubt: Africa needs unity and strong and disciplined leadership willing to take hard decisions pertaining to both domestic governance *and* Africa's involvement in global political and economic affairs. In the era of globalization and the hegemony of neo-liberalism this is perhaps now more imperative than ever before. The book under review makes a valuable contribution to our thinking about the OAU's successor and where a pan-continental body such as the AU should go.

Murithi contextualizes the OAU and why it was deemed defunct, and also what impulses led to its reincarnation as the AU. One of the main criticisms of the OAU was that its charter was, in the post-Cold War era when democratization and human rights (largely, admittedly, western-defined) were in the fore, out of date. In particular, its narrowly defined concept of sovereignty was seen to, in practice, protect dictators hiding behind the principle of non-interference. This principle, drawn up in the 1960s at a time of great power machinations and adventures in Africa, was understandable from its particular historical origins. However, it was used by both African leaders and their various extra-African allies, be they capitalist or socialist, to bolster the position of incumbent elites, often against international sanction. The net effect of this for the average African citizen was largely negative as it was widely observed that this principle, originally designed to prevent outside interference in the era of decolonization and the Cold War, was exploited to defend autocrats, often against their own people. It was perhaps this, more than anything else, that made the OAU suspect in the eyes of many, particularly as 'non-interference' meant that the OAU only played a very limited role in quelling Africa's conflicts.

The new body promises to be different from the OAU. But, like its predecessor, the AU is an ambitious project fraught with all sorts of difficulties. It is difficult, for example, to see how vitally needed African unity will be achieved given the current tensions that continue to wrack the continent. Furthermore, ideas for the AU include creating an African parliament and a court of justice. Presently, however, it is quite difficult to see how the AU can be democratic and have a parliament if many of its constituent member states are not and do not possess such institutions. The role of civil society in promoting civic involvement and democratic input will be crucial in this regard.

As Murithi points out, the AU was launched at a time of growing questioning of the basic neo-liberal philosophy that underpins contemporary capitalism, frequently cast within the catch-all term 'globalization'. Some observers may proffer the view that this juncture opens up space for Africa and that perhaps the AU may be a vehicle to advance this. However, there remain limitations to this, both externally through the workings of the powerful global market and its capitalist actors, and internally through the actions and attitudes of African elites themselves. Murithi is rightfully critical of the actions of such leaders and the detrimental effect they have had on the continent's post-colonial experience.

But perhaps most fundamental of all to the AU's potential is the *practical* application of the AU's founding principles. Statements of intent and declarations are surely not enough on their own: the history of modern Africa is replete with failed institutions and initiatives. If the AU breaks this cycle of dashed hopes then it will have achieved something. Certainly, the people of Africa will need to hold to account the elites who have been so active in advancing the AU, particularly as it has frequently been based on the grounds that it will advance democracy in Africa. Such a commitment has been agreed and *signed by African elites themselves*, and there can be no retreat. Their commitments need to be measured against actual concrete action rather than accepting at face value the various pronouncements made on extremely important issues.

In this sense, an ongoing critique of the AU and its claims to promote a new dawn for the continent is vital. Murithi's book is a good start and will likely be a point of reference for all scholars working on this important—if neglected—international body.

*Ian Taylor, University of St Andrews, UK*

**Politics in francophone Africa.** By Victor T. Le Vine. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. 2004. 430pp. Index. \$68.00. ISBN 1 58826 249 9.

It is a curious fact that some of the best academic work on the politics of francophone Africa has been done over the past 50 years or so by American scholars. There are a handful of British and German specialists, and a large *oeuvre* by French writers that has ranged from 'official orthodox' to the recent radical revisions of history by journalists and activists, but much of the essential work is transatlantic.

Le Vine's book lies in that honourable tradition. He himself has contributed to this body of study with two important volumes on Cameroon and a host of other published material. In a way, this book distils 40 years' experience of the subject, which makes it a rewarding read for those who have been gripped by the special complexity of francophone Africa.

The subject is richly intricate even if you restrict yourself, as Le Vine has done, to the 14 countries of the two former federations in West and Central Africa and the two trust territories of Cameroon and Togo. For it involves the vertical and the horizontal—France's relations and influence over the 14, the stories of the countries themselves and their relations with each other in the context of independent Africa.

Part of the dilemma of political scientists, especially in the contemporary world, is that they have to involve themselves in both analysis of structures and the presentation of history, often as it is unfolding. The author manages to encompass this dilemma well by taking in the broad sweep with two key narrative sections—one being the story of 'Political life and institutions' in the movement to independence between 1944 and 1960. This is later followed by a chapter on 'Experiments in power, 1958–2003' which deals with a number of crucial experiences in countries like Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon from the perspectives of single-party authoritarian rule. Another central chapter tackles 'Re-democratisation' and demonstrates Le Vine's synthesis skills at their magisterial best, piecing together some of the successes and failures of the past 15 years.

The book is essentially thematic, demonstrating ideas that he has worked on during long years of appraising aspects of the subject-matter, notably 'Political cultures'. His fascination is with political power and how it relates to the practical experience of the 14 countries over 50 years, seen through the prisms of, for example, ethnicity, ideology or religion. In this way he is able to cover most of the important political experiences of this period, taking one back, for example, to the now half-forgotten phase of the Afro-Marxists during the 1970s and 1980s in such countries as Congo-Brazzaville, Benin and Burkina Faso, where rhetoric and style mostly proved more important than substance.

The immense richness and variety of the subject cannot help percolate through the book, as one would expect when dealing with vivid and often alarming personalities such as Emperor Bokassa and the dictator Sekou Touré. Le Vine's often prosaic approach misses some of the historical passion, but his immense experience ensures that all the key issues and episodes are covered, often with engaging flair, especially when his own personal experiences are alluded to discreetly. There are luxuriant footnotes for those that appreciate these things, some excellent appendices and a very complete bibliography, although for those seeking to use the book as a research tool the index is a little perfunctory.

Le Vine navigates his way adroitly through the arguments about neo-colonialism, but shows his awareness of the polemic. He views *la Francophonie* as not much more than an updated and 'racially sensitive' version of *la mission civilisatrice*. He is especially good on Cameroon, which is his forte, and manages to bring the reader relatively up to date on the appalling breakdown in Côte d'Ivoire, now so central to the future of the whole idea of francophone Africa. Others such as Mali or Togo are done less justice, but in a wide-ranging synoptic book like this, such compressions cannot be avoided. Finally, he is deftly understanding of the bizarre politics of the Benin Republic—take, for example, this quote he has unearthed from Eboussi Boulaga on the 1990 national conference, which 'had the beauty of the unique, the incomparable thing. The Benin Conference did not export. Its copies are always defective, not to say caricatures.'

Kaye Whiteman

## Asia and Pacific

**America's miracle man in Vietnam.** By **Seth Jacobs.** Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2005. 392pp. Index. Pb.: £16.50. 0 8223 3440 2.

Seth Jacobs, Associate Professor of History at Boston College, has written a fascinating and thought-provoking book. He examines the cultural climate of the 1950s that allowed a Catholic, Ngo Dinh Diem, to come to power in the newly created Republic of Vietnam, a predominantly Buddhist country. Jacobs concludes that Diem's rise to the presidency was the direct result of support he received and decisions made in the United States, not in his homeland.

For Jacobs, 1950s America was a place of unusual and almost unprecedented religiosity. Not since John Winthrop and his Puritan followers called the New World a bold experiment for corrupt Europe to emulate, had religion so dominated American foreign policy. From President Eisenhower and his moralizing Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to refugee doctor Tom Dooley and publisher Henry Luce, US cold warriors saw the conflict with communism in apocalyptic terms. When offering a counterrevolutionary alternative to Ho Chi Minh and his communist followers south of the seventeenth parallel, Jacobs argues, Americans simply looked for a leader who was staunchly anti-communist and deeply religious. Chiang Kai-shek, Ramon Magsaysay and Syngman Rhee shared these qualities with Ngo Dinh Diem, proving that US policy-makers cared little about the local cultural climate in Asia.

Jacobs is at his best in the middle chapters of the book when describing the power of Cold War Catholics on the domestic American political scene. If ever there was a Catholic moment in the US, the Eisenhower years were it. Senators Mike Mansfield, John F. Kennedy, Patrick McCarran and Joseph P. McCarthy joined Cardinal Francis Spellman, Bishop Fulton Sheen and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover in providing the moral underpinnings for US foreign policy. That Catholics took the lead in anti-communist activity is no accident. Jacobs recalls that American Catholic leaders had led the fight against recognition of the Soviet Union in the 1930s. When others saw the Soviets as a useful ally in the Second World War, leaders from the Catholic community voiced their opposition. By 1950, when American public opinion turned against the Soviet Union, America's Catholic population was 'the vanguard of the anti-red zeitgeist' (p. 81).

In this climate, US policy-makers mixed powerful religious feelings with negative racial stereotyping to conclude that Vietnam (and the rest of Asia) needed a western caretaker to see it through its adolescent political development. For many Cold War Americans, Asians were like children who needed to be brought along slowly. Jacobs wonderfully describes the many books, essays, movies and radio programmes that reinforced this idea. From the blockbuster films *South Pacific* and *The King and I* to Tom Dooley's powerful memoir *Deliver us from evil*, the message was clear: Asians needed American help.

Ironically, the only weakness in this outstanding book is Jacobs's discussion of Ngo Dinh Diem within a Vietnamese political and cultural context. Jacobs is clear why the US picked a Catholic to lead its nation-building experiment in South Vietnam. What he is less clear about is where Diem fits in South Vietnamese political culture. There are some purely Vietnamese reasons why Diem came to power that do offer a counter-explanation to the overly determined religious climate of 1950s America.

This is a small criticism of an otherwise excellent book that is highly recommended to students of the Vietnam War, Cold War America and the history of American foreign relations.

Robert K. Brigham, Vassar College, USA

## **North America**

**Addicted to oil: America's relentless drive for energy security.** By Ian Rutledge. London and New York: I. B. Tauris. 2005. 269pp. Index. £20.00. ISBN 1 85043 674 6.

One of the most interesting issues in international relations is the link between the internal characteristics of states and their external behaviour. In this clearly written and carefully organized study, energy economist Ian Rutledge argues that the motorization of American society and the consequent high demand for oil have been key factors driving US foreign policy since the Second World War.

Rutledge begins by briefly reviewing how the US became committed to a pattern of economic growth that was dependent on high levels of oil consumption. The US 'addiction to oil' was not inevitable but rather the result of decisions made by politicians and business leaders during the middle decades of the twentieth century to expand markets for oil and automobiles by motorizing American cities.

The increasing dependence of the US economy on oil and the private automobile deeply influenced US policy towards the Middle East. As the oil crises of the 1970s demonstrated, however, reliance on Middle East oil entailed liabilities. The US sought to escape dependence on Persian Gulf oil by promoting oil development in other parts of the world. These efforts, which included plans to increase domestic oil production (primarily in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska), to develop a western hemisphere oil partnership with Canada, Mexico and Venezuela, and to promote the rapid development of Caspian and Central Asian oil, failed to displace Persian Gulf oil from its dominant place in the world oil economy.

As the US deepened its embrace of patterns of social and economic organization premised on high levels of oil use, increases in world-wide oil consumption in the 1990s, especially in China and India, led to warnings of a looming crisis in world oil supplies. The global nature of world oil markets meant that shortfalls anywhere would be reflected in higher prices, if not shortages, in other parts of the world.

Rutledge avoids the contentious issue of whether world oil production is reaching a peak and focuses instead on the massive investment in exploration, development and refining that would be needed if world productive capacity is to keep up with surging world demand. The focus of this investment would have to be the Persian Gulf because the region possesses two-thirds of world oil reserves. On the other hand, Persian Gulf producers have little incentive to double production, which they would have to do to meet growing demand, since they could earn the same or higher revenues from lower production and higher prices.

This background supports Rutledge's argument that the desire to assure access to adequate supplies of oil at reasonable prices was a key factor in the Bush administration's decision to go to war with Iraq. The September 11 attacks on the US not only provided an opening for the US to move against Iraq but also underlined the disadvantages of relying on Saudi Arabia to ensure US energy security. The oil industry ties of the President, the Vice-President and the Secretary of State may have played a role in the decision to go to war, but Rutledge's discussion makes it clear that, given the reluctance of Americans to curb their appetite for oil, almost any US administration would have been concerned about access to Persian Gulf oil.

Even readers who reject Rutledge's argument that the US war on Iraq was ultimately about oil can still gain important insights into the role of oil in US foreign policy. Although the overall argument is solidly supported by careful research, it would have been stronger if Rutledge had also analysed the role oil has played in establishing and maintaining US pre-eminence in the postwar international system. In addition to being central to military power and economic prosperity, control of oil has given the US leverage over its allies and its former and prospective enemies. Finally, fuller discussion of developments in the North Sea, West Africa and Russia would have made this valuable study even more useful.

*David S. Painter, Georgetown University, USA*

**America: sovereign defender or cowboy nation? Edited by Vladimir Shlapentokh, Joshua Woods and Eric Shiraev.** Aldershot: Ashgate. 2005. 220pp. Index. £35.00. ISBN 0 7546 4428 6.

The title tells us very little about this book and a good thing too since it does not inspire confidence in the contents. As it is, the real subject of the book is anti-Americanism and the various forms it has assumed in a number of nations: Germany, Russia, Colombia, China, Egypt, India and Lithuania. Anti-Americanism has become an intensely studied subject since 9/11, though of course there were some important works published before this date and indeed the theme has a long history. 9/11 focused minds sharply on America, initially in the form of a sense of sympathy for the loss of life, but quickly followed by reflection on the reasons why some might want to attack the US. In many instances, as these chapters amply demonstrate, sympathy was swiftly replaced by anger at the US, particularly about the invasion of Iraq.

Much ink has been spilt on the attempt to define anti-Americanism. The authors of this collection of essays have taken a different and in some ways more fruitful path. They have sought to bring greater precision and depth to the debate by means of a systematic study of attitudes towards the US in a range of carefully chosen countries. The method involved content analysis of major publications on the basis of a 'codebook' which was comprised of a number of opinion survey questions and a list of response options. Coders were employed in the countries in question to analyse a range of publications and the results were tabulated to produce an overall assessment of the level of anti-Americanism. The questions were designed to identify opinion in leading publications on the immediate reaction to 9/11, who they thought the suspects might be, what the causes of 9/11 were, how America should react, how 'your' own country should react, and attitudes towards the American government and its people. The aim was to produce a snapshot of opinion about the US in the aftermath of 9/11. In addition, there are short historical chapters on each country's relations with the US. It makes for an interesting package.

The authors' methodology has some advantages over standard opinion polls since it looks in more detail and greater depth at the expression of opinion. On the other hand, much depends on the skill and consistency of the coders who generate the data on which the interpretations are based. The editors evidently went to some lengths to build in safeguards, not least because the coders were often working in languages which the editors did not know, but we have to take a good deal on trust. Nevertheless, the outcome is useful information about elite views in these countries and in this connection the editors make comparisons with standard opinion polls, producing the overall conclusion that elites tend to be more anti-American than the masses. Another general finding is that there is a correlation between individual countries' concerns about the terrorist attacks and their attitude towards the US. Generally 'higher levels of denunciation of the terrorist actions of Osama bin Laden brought higher levels of sympathy and support for the United States'.

This is hardly an earth-shaking conclusion. While we gain a good deal of information about individual countries, the question of anti-Americanism as a general phenomenon remains elusive. But perhaps that is the point: anti-Americanism is a variegated phenomenon, inflected according to the traditions and values of individual nations. If we are content to think of anti-Americanism in this way, there is much to be gained from reading this book since it shows how every country and culture has specific opinions about the US. This book also demonstrates that examining anti-American opinion inevitably draws the researcher into the wider relationship between any particular nation and the US, indicating that anti-Americanism is frequently a dependent, not an independent, variable. What indeed is 'anti-Americanism' in these circumstances? Can it be considered a discrete phenomenon, an 'ism' with an independent life of its own, or is it simply a term of abuse which some people use to label emotions they disagree with? Or is it something else? This book leaves these larger questions unanswered but usefully informs us about opinion of America in a variety of countries.

*Richard Crockatt, University of East Anglia, UK*

**Devastating society: the neo-conservative assault on democracy and justice.** Edited by **Bernd Hamm**. London: Pluto Press. 2005. 312pp. Index. £55.00. ISBN 0 7453 2362 6. Pb.: £17.99. ISBN 0 7453 2361 8.

The first part of this book examines 'The power cadres' in contemporary American society. Between them, the contributors argue that the 'Bush gang' (p. xii), whose eponymous leader's family has profited in the past from its ties with the Thyssens, 'the main supplier of weapons to the German war machine' during the Second World War (p. 23), gained power as a result of a 'judicial *coup*', whereupon neo-conservatives were able to execute the 'takeover of US foreign policy' (p. 56). Thereafter, 'the possibility of complicity on the part of the Bush administration' in the events of 9/11 'is very real' (p. 85).

There is more. Part two looks at 'The neo-conservative destruction of American society', analysing the threat to civil liberties posed by executive power after 9/11, the contemporary underlying structural weaknesses of the US economy (which the neo-conservatives may have exacerbated, but for which they are not responsible), the continuing propensity for corporate crime (which existed before neo-conservatism and which will persist after its current ideological significance has waned), the extent of poverty, homelessness and hunger in the US and the impact of the administration's allegedly overt anti-environmentalism.

'The world hegemon' (Part three) has contributions from Noam Chomsky, William Blum and Michel Chossudovsky. All of these have previously been published elsewhere, although Blum's catalogue of American interventionism overseas since 1945—in which Vietnam has marginally less space devoted to it than Chad—has been updated. The book concludes with a survey of 'The other America' (Part four), which lists those groups opposed to both neo-conservatism and its depredations of American politics, society and culture (along with their website addresses).

Those who find the book's polemical and partisan arguments convincing may easily dismiss criticism of it as further evidence of the misguided ideological thinking that either tolerates neo-conservatism or even finds it appealing. But that is to miss the point. Judged on their own terms, these essays are uneven. Some are well written, thoroughly researched and make original arguments. Others repeat familiar speculation as fact, often referencing websites as corroboration, without any suggestion that what is presented as authoritative is merely the repetition of unsubstantiated allegations.

Moreover, indictments of the domestic repercussions of aggressive capitalist enterprise and ideological critiques of contemporary American foreign policy must be placed in the broader context of America's development as an industrial society and global superpower. Some contributors adopt such a wider perspective. In so doing, however, they run the risk of not blaming the devastation of American society solely on the 'neo-conservative assault' of the book's title. Indeed, those looking for a reasoned and sustained critique of neo-conservatism will not find it here. This, coupled with the fact that three of the most interesting chapters are recycled from elsewhere (and it is the names of their authors that appear, along with that of the editor, on the front cover), might lead to the conclusion that the book's title and marketing strategy is misleading the innocent buyer. This surely cannot have been the editor's or the publisher's intent. That is the problem: conspiracy theories tend to be contagious.

*Jon Roper, University of Wales, UK*

## **Latin America and Caribbean**

**The third wave of Latin American democratization: advances and setbacks.** Edited by **Frances Hagopian and Scott P. Mainwaring**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2005. 432pp. Index. £45.00. ISBN 0 521 82461 3. Pb.: £18.99. ISBN 0 521 61320 5.

The last quarter of a century has witnessed the longest period of democratic government in the history of Latin America. This volume seeks to explain the reasons for its (re)emergence after

decades of authoritarian rule and its remarkable survival in the face of manifold socio-economic problems that in the past had led almost inexorably to democratic breakdown and military intervention.

Scott Mainwaring and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán examine the general factors at play in the emergence of the 'third wave' after 1978 and its continued resilience. They downplay the explanatory power of standard theories of democracy based on modernization, class structure and economic performance. It was the poorer rather than the more developed countries of the region that initiated the third wave in the late 1970s; democracy emerged in countries, Bolivia for example, where the class structure was unfavourable; and democratic governments have survived in countries such as Argentina in the face of severe economic crisis. They attribute exogenous factors—ideological influences, the shift in US foreign policy away from support for authoritarian regimes during the Cold War, the growth in mechanisms for supporting democracy within the Organization of American States and Mercosur during the 1990s—with altering the odds in favour of democracy. Democracy's emergence, it is argued, is better explained by the decline in ideological polarization—making politics less of a zero-sum game—and by the sea-change in attitudes to democracy exhibited both on the left and the right, resulting in a reduction of the military role in politics. The main problems facing Latin American democracies stem from poor economic performance, high crime rates and citizen disenchantment. This has led in some instances to the rise of the anti-party politician—epitomized by Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and Evo Morales in Bolivia—a development that is decried as bad for democracy.

Nine country studies serve to illustrate the diversity of the regional experience. Three contributors consider how democracy has fared in the three largest countries. Steven Levitsky ponders the strengths and weaknesses of Argentina's post-1983 democracy: a broad democratic consensus, relatively strong parties and a robust civil society has been offset by the instability of the rules of the game within the democratic regime. He posits that the strength of the links between the Peronists and civil society enabled the system to survive the challenges of neo-liberal reform, an insight suggesting that it is the quality of political representation that can ensure regime survival under adverse economic circumstances. Kurt Weyland argues that Brazil's democracy has become increasingly sustainable due to social-structural developments, the political incorporation of the left, the strengthening of presidential prerogatives in a bid to overcome executive-legislative deadlock and a growing elite, if not popular, consensus on democracy as the only game in town. The measure of the change in Brazil is the smooth transition to a Workers' Party (PT) government in 2002 in contrast to elite concern over its prospects in 1989. Beatriz Magaloni's chapter considers Mexico's transition from a dominant party authoritarian regime to a competitive democracy. She argues that the Institutional Revolutionary Party's (PRI) decision to permit the establishment of an independent electoral tribunal in 1994 was a crucial milestone in the process. It was the unforeseen economic crisis following the devaluation of the peso that served to erode the party's electoral base upon which it had relied to maintain itself in power. Magaloni, unfortunately, stops short of any consideration of how democracy has prospered after the landmark election of Vicente Fox in 2000.

The next three contributions address the challenges faced by countries with little prior experience of democracy. Bolivia's new democracy in the 1980s, according to René Antonio Mayorga, was predicated on the shift to a market economy, the emergence of a moderate multi-party system and constitutional reform. The unique feature of the president *in practice* having to be elected by the Congress has created an incentive towards coalition-building, thus avoiding the legislative-executive splits found in other Latin American presidential systems. Mayorga shows how this system began to unravel in the late 1990s, leading to a profound crisis of governability that led to the ousting of President Sánchez de Lozada in 2003 (and his successor in 2005). The establishment of a functioning democracy in El Salvador is the subject of a chapter by Elisabeth Jean Wood. The peace process, in which international actors played a significant role, allowed for the withdrawal of the military from politics and for the inclusion of the Left in the political

process. She stresses the importance of neo-liberalism for reconciling the modernizing fraction of the elite to the opening of the political system. Even the current low quality of democracy, she concludes, 'marks a fundamental sea change in Salvadoran politics' (p. 201). Similar sentiments are echoed by Mitchell A. Seligson in his chapter on Guatemala. Here the democratization process suffers from a crisis of expectations engendered by the over-ambitious commitments made in the 1994–6 peace accords, the constraints of a low tax base, the growing phenomenon of intra-ethnic violence, a burgeoning crime rate and the absence of a democratic culture. In contrast to El Salvador, the role of the military has not been significantly reduced.

The scenario painted for the remaining three countries surveyed in this volume is altogether more bleak. Ana María Bejarano and Eduardo Pizarro offer a perceptive analysis of Colombia's 'besieged' democracy. They see two contradictory tendencies at work: moves towards greater democratization at a formal level alongside a deterioration of basic citizens' rights and liberties and of civilian control of the military. In contrast to other countries in the region, Colombia's two principal guerrilla groups have continued the struggle, exacerbating the left–right polarization that has diminished elsewhere. This has led to the partial collapse of the state, always historically weak, in large parts of the country. Martín Tanaka examines the case of Peru, the only country to suffer a democratic breakdown with President Alberto Fujimori's *autogolpe* in 1992. He argues that *Fujimorismo* was a consequence of the actions taken by the main political actors under particular circumstances, rather than a product of Peru's problems in the 1980s. He charts the vicissitudes of Fujimori's decade-long authoritarian rule, seeing an emerging consensus in favour of democratic accountability in its aftermath. Michael Coppedge reprises his argument about 'partyarchy'—the extreme domination of the political system by two parties—as being at the root of the decline of democracy in Venezuela. This manifested itself in the growth of electoral abstention, the inability to maintain public order, the growth in insubordination by the armed forces and weakened party loyalties. This has allowed an anti-system politician like Hugo Chávez to emerge. Under Chávez, he contends, the country has ceased to be a liberal democracy, its system of checks and balances having been removed between 1998 and 2000.

Frances Hagopian draws the disparate strands together in an admirable concluding chapter. Underpinning Latin America's third-wave democratization has been a more propitious international environment, a decline in ideological polarization, the effect of neo-liberal economics in attenuating the historic conflict between capital and labour, the retreat of the military from the political arena and institutional reform. Her discussion of citizen attitudes to democracy, based on survey responses and rates of electoral participation, leads her to conclude that there is no necessary correlation between perceptions of government performance and support for democracy. Finally, she offers some tentative reflections on the effectiveness of adequate political representation as a buttress for democracy.

The contributors to this volume for the most part fulfil their mandate to explicate the advances and shortcomings of democracy in contemporary Latin America. They may be commended for exhibiting high standards of analytical clarity, although a few authors (Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán and Coppedge) engage in some rather opaque statistical analysis and Magaloni adopts a rather convoluted 'game' to explain the PRI decision to accept an independent electoral tribunal. Two authors also forfeit some of their objectivity when discussing the role of 'anti-system' actors. Mayorga too readily dismisses the 'peasant movements' of Felipe Quispe and Evo Morales. The latter's Movement to Socialism is a legitimate political actor; Morales polled a good second in the 2002 presidential election and the party won 4 out of 9 departments, 27 congressional seats and 8 out of 27 senatorial seats (and in December 2004 won 452 municipal seats). Coppedge also, without offering any evidence, too readily castigates Hugo Chávez as an 'immoderate, intransigent, and intolerant politician' (p. 297) and refers to him as *commandante* Chávez (p. 312, n. 16), thus likening him to Fidel Castro. Such attitudes seem to betoken political elitism.

These quibbles aside, this work is an important and thoughtful contribution to the ever growing literature on Latin American democratization.

**Institutional reforms: the case of Colombia.** Edited by **Alberto Alesina**. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2005. 373pp. Index. £48.95. ISBN 0 262 01214 6. Pb.: £22.95. ISBN 0 262 51182 7.

After another unsuccessful attempt to achieve economic progress during the 1990s, Latin Americans are looking for new formulas that may help them escape their frustration. Whereas in the last decade the Washington Consensus was seen as the answer to the interventionism of the 1980s, now attention is focused on the institutional framework.

The complexities and peculiarities of the region reach a paroxysm in the case of Colombia: the combination of one of the most stable democracies in the region with a violent, four-decade guerrilla conflict continues to attract the attention of academia. Colombia is one of the least unequal economies of the hemisphere but, at the same time, has a homicide rate ten times higher than the United States or even neighbouring Argentina. These contrasts explain both its appeal as a case-study and its political importance for the rest of the region.

In this volume Harvard's Alberto Alesina compiles nine articles by a prominent group of economists and political scientists, including Colombia's current Minister of Economy Alberto Carrasquilla. Their aim is not 'to produce new theories' but to suggest 'ideas that are politically feasible and require few legislative transaction costs'. The book discusses Colombia's recent economic performance, the problems of political representation in the country and the potential of reform in the electoral system. Using the 'new political economics' approach (which introduces political analysis and institutional constraints to classical economic theory), there are also chapters dedicated to the budgetary procedure, the effect of the justice system on crime rates, the decentralization of fiscal institutions, educational reform and the need for greater Central Bank independence.

The 1991 constitution is frequently charged with most of Colombia's recent deficiencies, including 'unbalanced' governance, the escalation of violence and the reduction of economic growth since the mid-1990s. Accordingly, the country's institutional shortcomings—expressed in the fragmentation of Congress, the intervention of the courts in the legislative process and the incentives for the executive to by-pass the legislature—are seen as a threat to economic stability.

The authors' recommendations range from sensible and clearly defined proposals (such as allowing the re-election of mayors so local administrations have long-term incentives, or the need to remove government officials from the board of the Central Bank) to others that can hardly be described as 'feasible' (such as halving the size of the Senate and giving the president 'fast track' powers).

Of course, institutional reforms are greatly needed in Latin America to reduce corruption and make the political system more accountable to voters. However, the idea that a change of rules and laws would automatically bring success may simplify the magnitude of the challenges Colombia faces.

*Juan Pablo Spinetto*

**Hugo Chávez and the Bolivarian revolution.** By **Richard Gott**. London: Verso. 2005. 315pp. Index. Pb.: £9.99. ISBN 1 84467 533 5.

Hugo Chávez is an enormously polarizing figure and if anything has become more so during his period in office. He is also one of the most politically significant presidents to have emerged in Latin America within the past generation. Richard Gott is a sympathizer and a lucid and clear exponent of the virtues of Chávez and the Bolivarian revolution. This is the second edition of a book that originally dealt mainly with the political rise of Chávez and with the political beliefs that he embodied. About half of the new edition is taken up with events since Chávez took office at the beginning of 1999 and about half is essentially a recapitulation of the 'background and rise' subject-matter of the original edition. Both parts of the book are genuinely informative, and the new post-1998 discussion gives a full account of the most important ups and downs of the Chávez administration.

Anybody wanting to learn about Chávez and his government would benefit from reading this book, although someone seeking balance would be well advised to read it in conjunction with more critical accounts. Gott's story is one in which the nationalist and popular aspirations and ideals of Chávez and his supporters are tested by the cynical political manoeuvring of his opponents, with Chávez winning the decisive encounters because of his greater popular support. This version of events, while controversial, is tenable. While certainly no liberal in his attitude towards constitutional checks and balances or towards property rights, Chávez has consistently proved to be more popular than his opponents. He could not govern as he has done without enjoying real popular support. This book certainly helps explain why Chávez is as popular as he is. Moreover Gott, while making it clear where his own sympathies lie, never quite travesties Chávez's political opponents. Where there are genuine differences of view between Chávez and his opponents, Gott offers a clear explanation of what they are.

However, the work does put a great deal of emphasis on the personality and political style of Chávez himself, and there are structural issues that could have done with more emphasis. While Chávez's personal courage, common touch and political flair are undeniable, he has also been a lucky politician who took office just when the international oil price touched a long-term low point and he has benefited enormously from its dramatic rise. Chávez has also been lucky in taking office when once fashionable market reforms were running into difficulties across most of Latin America and since early 2001 he has been able to score some easy debating points against an unusually arrogant and unpopular US administration—at least in Latin American eyes.

The harder question is whether Chávez will be able to use these temporarily favourable circumstances to build anything lasting. Popularity is no guarantee of good government. Even Chávez's most bitter antithesis, Carlos Andrés Pérez, enjoyed strong popularity when his period in government coincided with the dramatic oil bonanza of the 1970s and he was still popular enough thereafter to win a second term of office in 1988. Pérez's achievements did not stand the test of time and it is still too early to say whether Chávez's determined efforts to spread the benefits of oil money will produce better long-term results.

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