International Relations theory


John Mearsheimer’s The tragedy of great power politics is the most significant contribution to realist theories of international politics since Kenneth Waltz’s 1979 book, Theory of international politics. Mearsheimer calls his variant of realist theory ‘offensive realism’, a term he did not coin but has adopted enthusiastically. The core of the theory is a synthesis of the realism of Hans Morgenthau (Politics among nations) and Waltz. Like Morgenthau, Mearsheimer argues that states seek to maximize their relative power. Unlike Morgenthau, he does not attribute this behaviour to a lust for power that is inherent in human nature. Instead, Mearsheimer follows Waltz and argues that the anarchic structure of the international system compels states to struggle to survive. He parts company with Waltz, however, in arguing that this quest for survival drives states to seek power aggressively and relentlessly. Mearsheimer labels Waltz a defensive realist, on the grounds that Waltz claims that states will sometimes limit their power and act with restraint to maximize their security.

The logic of offensive realism generates pessimistic conclusions about international politics. Mearsheimer declares that ‘international politics has always been a ruthless and dangerous business, and it is likely to remain that way’. The great powers strive to become regional hegemons (global hegemony is impossible to achieve) by maximizing their own relative power and by attempting to prevent other great powers from achieving hegemony in their respective regions.

In Mearsheimer’s realism, the distribution of power shapes the pattern of great power politics. The most important component of power is land power, the military capability to conquer territory. As great powers increase their relative power, they become more expansionist. The distribution of power also influences the dynamics of alliances. In balanced multipolar systems—those in which no great power can become a hegemon—great powers tend to ‘pass the buck’ to other countries instead of vigorously balancing against threatening powers. Balancing is more likely in bipolar systems or in unbalanced multipolar systems that include a potential hegemon. War is least likely when there is a bipolar distribution of power, more likely in balanced multipolarity, and most likely of all in unbalanced multipolarity.

The tragedy of great power politics makes several noteworthy contributions to realist theory. In addition to explicating the logic of offensive realism, Mearsheimer defines power clearly and carefully attempts to measure it. He adds to theories of alliance formation by arguing that great powers do not usually choose between balancing and bandwagoning, but between balancing and buck-passing. Mearsheimer also brings geography back into realist theory. Whether a state is surrounded by oceans, buffer states, or threatening great powers affects its choice of allies and propensity to expand.

Mearsheimer tests offensive realism by applying it to the history of great-power politics from 1792 to 2000. As one might expect, his reading of the historical record generates much support for his theory. Historians will doubtless quibble about some of his interpretations and choices of secondary sources. They almost certainly will take exception to his attempt to offer explanations that rely entirely on the distribution of power while according no causal significance to the role of
leaders, ideologies, or domestic politics. Moreover, one cannot help but wonder whether Mearsheimer sometimes tries too hard to interpret history to support his theory. For example, he argues that the ‘stopping power of water’ rendered the policies of the United States and Great Britain less expansionist than those of continental powers such as Germany and France. Japan, however, looms as an obvious exception to this proposition, leading Mearsheimer to claim that Japan expanded because its neighbors were so weak. If weak neighbours motivate expansion—even when the difficulty of overseas invasions should prevent it—why did the United States not conquer Canada and Mexico? Mearsheimer tries to address this point in a footnote, but his claim that the United States was deterred by Canadian and Mexican nationalism is not persuasive, because Japan’s neighbours in North-East Asia were also nationalistic.

Mearsheimer’s theory also is undermined by its emphasis on territorial conquest and the concomitant elevation of the importance of land power. Looking forward, it is unlikely that territorial conquest will be as important in great-power relations as it was in, for example, the Napoleonic Wars and the World Wars. It is difficult, if not impossible, to conquer a great power that has nuclear weapons. The relative importance of the threat of territorial conquest might be further reduced by the emergence of terrorists armed with weapons of mass destruction. Mearsheimer’s framework does not readily accommodate security challenges from actors other than states. In fact, ‘terrorism’ does not even appear in the book’s index.

The weakest chapter of the book is the final one, which offers brief but forceful rebuttals of potential criticisms, predictions about the future of Europe and North-East Asia, and prescriptions for US policy. His forecasts of instability are necessarily tentative because Mearsheimer recognizes that nuclear deterrence can be a force for peace even when the distribution of power predicts intense conflict and war. Mearsheimer’s recommendation that the United States attempt to retard the growth of Chinese power will strike many observers as impractical, counterproductive, or worse.

These weaknesses notwithstanding, The tragedy of power politics is an outstanding work of realist theory in the tradition of Carr, Morgenthau and Waltz. It draws upon earlier generations of realist scholarship and offers refinements, critiques and innovations. Because it is written in a clear, accessible style, it will become a standard text in many International Relations classes. The clarity of the book’s style should not, however, divert attention from the importance and sophistication of Mearsheimer’s theoretical contribution. Critics of realism will find The tragedy of great power politics wrong-headed, irritating, unduly pessimistic—and impossible to ignore.

Sean M. Lynn-Jones, Harvard University, USA


Some reviewers of the now quite large number of volumes produced in reaction to 11 September have expressed disappointment at the inclusion of material already published or only lightly reworked, with the implication being that what was written in the past can be of only limited use in a transformed situation. Whatever may be the case with other authors, Halliday’s book, a selection of his essays written during the last decade, rather triumphantly demonstrates that the tools for understanding the world which produced 11 September were readily available before it happened. Not to the point of anticipating the attack itself, but certainly to the point of charting the intersecting pathologies which made it possible and which continue to take their toll on the human capacity for sensible decision-making in the dangerous aftermath. Halliday’s approach mingle commentary, analysis and reportage. It is rich in example and rarely makes a general point without concrete reference in support or, equally important, in qualification. He is insistent that what individuals, groups and societies say they are doing must always be weighed against what they actually do, and indeed that in the contradictions between the two lie the beginnings of wisdom.

It is typical of Halliday to point out that in his demand that US troops vacate Saudi Arabia, Osama bin Laden has redefined as sacred all Saudi Arabian territory, and not just the holy places of Mecca and Medina, a claim that for Muslims has no legal or religious foundation. It is also typical
of Halliday to point out that the radical causes which have sustained the European left in recent
times have nearly all originated in the same United States which many on the left persist in seeing
as the cause of most of the world’s troubles. The exaggeration of the power of the United States
for both good and evil is a trait which unites many otherwise disparate groups, and Halliday is
refreshingly scathing on this subject. Examination, self awareness, a long historical view and the
disciplined avoidance of intellectual dishonesty are his themes whether he is writing about
terrorism, fundamentalism, anti-Muslimism, globalization or anti-Americanism. He invokes
reason in his introduction as a guiding principle, and writes in his short concluding essay that:
‘The root cause of this crisis is intellectual, the lack of realistic education and democratic culture
in a range of countries such that irrational hatred and conspiracy theory prevail over reasoned
critique’. In Halliday’s scheme, this emphasis on unreason does not displace other causes of
conflict and violence, whether economic, political, or religious, but the defeat, or more precisely,
the containment of unreason, is the most critical of the strategies for cure. It is also a special duty
of academics and other intellectuals. The recent Gallup poll, which showed that an astonishing 89
per cent of people in Kuwait believe—or say they believe—that Arabs were not involved in the
attack on the twin towers, suggest the possible extent of that unreason even in a state which was
saved by western intervention, as does the fact that the question about the identity of the attackers
was not even allowed to be put in polls in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Morocco. But Halliday, in
discussing similar evidence in this book, never presents it in isolation, or without noting that only
slightly higher forms of unreason influence even societies where a regard for truth is better established.

Within this general framework, Halliday puts forward a number of distinctive ideas and
prescriptions. One is his illuminating concept of the ‘Greater West Asian Crisis’. He notes how the
once largely separate troubles of the Arab world, Iran, Afghanistan and the sub-continent have
become more linked without being in any sense merged. There is more linkage than there was,
and this helps to explain some developments, but the linkages can also be exaggerated, particularly
by those, like Saddam Hussein, with a vested interest in doing so. Another is his proposition that
the laws of war, or some version of them, should apply to terrorism of both the state and non-
state variety. Those who use political violence recoil from such an idea, in part because of the
way it legitimizes the other side, but Halliday is surely right to argue that ‘the only adequate
response … is to develop a moral and legal position to deal with the conduct of war and to place
terrorism in such a framework’. In his advocacy of both general and particular solutions, however,
Halliday always emphasizes the limits of human action. The world is not a place, he argues, that
can easily be fixed, and sometimes there are no solutions, or at least only solutions that will take
effect after many years have passed. With his all azimuth common sense, Halliday has put together
a book that is at once sobering and encouraging, a welcome combination in these difficult times.

Martin Woollacott, The Guardian, UK

Democracy, liberalism, and war: rethinking the democratic peace debate. Edited by

The polemical and deconstructivist intent of Democracy, liberalism and war is well-indicated by its
epigraph: ‘The only worthwhile answers are those that blow up the questions.’ All of the volume’s
contributors are deeply critical of Democratic Peace research, yet the arguments of individual
contributors sometimes undercut each other. Whereas some see the empirical phenomenon of
liberal–democratic peace as a chimera, others view actual peace among capitalist states as evidence
of neo-imperialism. Some essays argue that liberalism and democracy should not be treated as
trans-historical categories; others suggest that certain undesirable attributes of these institutions
persist across time and space. Several chapters attack the ‘embedded statism’ of DP research, others,
its ‘abstract individualism’.

Even considered chapter by chapter, few of the critiques seem as damaging to the DP as other
previously published criticism. Timothy Kubik’s argument that Kant envisioned a never-realized
peace dependent on civilian militias is highly persuasive, but probably less devastating to the post-Kantian research program than Kubik suggests. Himadeep Muppidi claims to find strong rhetorical evidence against the DP in the statements of Indian policy-makers regarding autocratic China and the democratic US, yet Muppidi does not dispute that India went to war only with China.

Though potentially more damaging to the basic claims of DP proponents, the charges of other contributors possess problems as well. Michael Mann’s wide-ranging essay brings up numerous arguments that, if fully developed, might eventually lead to ‘nail[s] in the democratic peace coffin’ (p. 82). Yet in its present form, the essay’s most adequately supported attack is on Rudy Rummel’s claim—somewhat peripheral to the DP—that democratic states are unlikely to oppress outgroups within their borders. Also problematic is Barkawi and Laffey’s essay, which attacks DP scholars’ focus on relations among sovereign states as ‘narrow’, ‘simplistic’, ‘ahistorical’, ‘Eurocentric’ and ‘geographically naive’. While this charge of ‘statism’ is not inaccurate as applied to DP proponents, it seems a bit perverse in that it has long been the realists—arguably still the most powerful critics of DP research—who have been primarily responsible for limiting IR research in this way.

In perhaps the most intriguing essay in the volume, David Blaney extends contemporary philosophical criticisms of Rawlsian liberalism in domestic politics to the international sphere, leading him to suggest that liberalism’s need for an ‘other’ renders it inherently conflictual. Yet one potential objection to Blaney’s argument is that the failings of liberalism in domestic politics may look less bad when evaluated by the ‘thinner’ moral standards of politics beyond borders. When, for example, Blaney reproduces Fred Dallmayr’s charge that liberalism engenders ‘disinterest and aloofness’, many in IR will interpret this as evidence in support of a proposition that liberal states are less likely to harm their neighbours.

In sum, despite the fact that these and other chapters put forward stimulating arguments, the book as a whole fails to deliver on its promise of ‘blowing up’ the democratic peace debate. A more provocative collection of DP critiques might consider some harder cases (e.g. relations between Norway and Sweden) and might even follow that great deconstructivist Nietzsche—a scathing critic of democracy and peace, but also a firm believer in their complementarity—in approaching the philosophical problematic of DP with a greater willingness to be surprised.

Peter Furia, Ohio State University, USA


Everybody interested in Europe’s future should read Ole Wæver’s theoretically sophisticated essay on ‘The EU as a security actor: reflections from a pessimistic constructivist on post-sovereign security orders’. He argues that the EU has become the principal security actor by establishing joint rule at Europe’s core, replacing the balance of power, collective security and security community patterns of Europe’s anarchic past. He depicts the slow pace of enlargement as successfully using Europe’s magnetic quality to increase the security of borders and minorities in Central and East Europe. Additionally, the core states are beginning to take on the responsibility of intervening to preclude local-level security spirals in the Balkans. His pessimism is due to the fragility of the present combination of identity, security and integration in this future-oriented project. He surveys the differing internal discourses within Germany and France to show how disintegration is possible, especially were a NATO-first security system to lead France to take a different view of its future in Europe. He argues that European diplomats have not been able to offer a role for Russia that would enable Russian leaders to come in positively. The argument for suzerainty as against anarchophilia raises two questions he does not consider: the likely failure of slow enlargement to bring in Turkey, and the possibility of the US adopting a similar role of suzerain to the world. However, he acknowledges that the case for taking Europe-level responsibility for security implies downgrading his own hopes that democratic societies would no longer have to give priority to security over freedom under the law.
International ethics

The fundamental instability of the thesis that European states, like individuals, need to incorporate the Other in order to become a self is also illustrated in the ten other essays on the future of international theory, political theory and European unification. The Lacanian ‘Everyone is Other and I am not Myself’ has become the modern version of Hobbes’ psychology of the insecure individual. *Leviathan* is much cited, but usually in the context of invoking communities, networks or globalization as alternative frameworks. Marlene Wind is particularly effective in showing how the recognition within a sphere of the supremacy of the European Court of Justice may have transformed the Hobbesian doctrine of the relationship between power and law, opening the possibility of a plurality of competences. Rob Walker suggests that the metaphor of networks would get around the problem that integrationists and intergovernmentalists, IR theorists and political theorists are all tied to a misleading Hobbesian concept of territorial and historic claims of sovereignty. Steve Smith agrees that international theory has hitherto been unable to account for the European combination of structural anarchy and powerful institutions. Nicholas Rengger follows Hedley Bull in treating Europe dismissively as a ‘neo-medieval global polity’, a ‘fairyland’ without a set of beliefs strong enough to legitimate political values. Lene Hansen discusses the feminist agenda in the context of Europe—that the liberal notion of the individual and the under-representation of women in economic and political institutions have led to a ‘gender problem’, which the Parliament and Commission are unlikely to solve by promoting greater rights, more information and more representation for women.

The chapters by more empirical researchers are even more tentative. Jeff Huysman cannot see Habermas’s point in arguing that both a more open immigration policy and better conditions in Eastern Europe are needed. He points out that both immigrants and emigrants have ties to more than one society, leading him to suggest republican participation rather than residency as the criterion for citizenship. However to reach this goal of politicization, he acknowledges Guiraudon’s arguments for helping migrants by stealth, prioritizing managerial and judicial means. His pragmatic conclusion is to ‘tread carefully’ lest the politicization of flows and assimilation cause a backlash from those hostile to immigrant communities and European integration. Similarly Lykke Friis and Anna Murphy worry that enlargement will put at risk the legitimacy of the Union in the eyes of citizens of the present Member States. Randall Germain raises the Machiavellian question of how as ‘a new order of things’, the European Central Bank will establish its authority with relevant communities. However, he does not discuss whether established authorities will be its enemies, but merely suggests that research contracts to academics will somehow bring new friends through an unlikely will to be transparent. Didier Bigo may be right that there is now more cooperation between European armies and police forces, but overlooks the long history of state preoccupation with internal enemies, the protection of nationals abroad, and even the use of police methods developed in their colonies. Yet he makes a good case that in Europe threats to civil society were taken seriously before ‘societal security’ became adopted by IR theorists and American agencies in the 1990s.

The editors and the Copenhagen Research Project on European Integration are to be congratulated on the production of this volume.

Christopher Brewin, Keele University, UK

International ethics


Ward Thomas sets himself the challenging task of finding some middle ground between what we might call ‘rationalist’ and ‘reflectivist’ accounts of the essence and function of norms in international politics. While accepting the state-centrism of rationalist theory and at least a ‘thin’ form of rationality on the part of states in that they are at least held to act purposively (p. 19), Thomas nevertheless wishes to challenge the claim made elsewhere that ‘norms do not matter because they are mere words’ (p. 19). Far from being mere epiphenomenal reflections of power and
Book reviews

interest, norms ‘can in their own right not only constrain states in how they pursue their interests but more fundamentally shape state interests themselves. Norms are both products of power and sources of power in the international system (p. 3).’ Thomas also seeks to move beyond the ahistoricity of most rationalist accounts of international politics by looking at the way that particular norms have changed over time.

In two case-studies he examines what he sees as the long-standing norm against international assassination and the more recent form against the aerial bombing of civilians in warfare. Assassination had long been considered a normal modus operandi for political leaders in both the ancient and medieval worlds, and it was not until the eighteenth century that attitudes began to change under the impact of the condemnation of the practice by historians and political philosophers (p. 57). By the late eighteenth century, the norm is firmly entrenched in ‘international society’, a development further strengthened both by the rise of a political constellation in Europe defined by sovereign, territorial statehood and by the codification of the laws of war that began in the second half of the nineteenth century. A prohibition against assassination was, of course, in the institutional interest of the leaders of this new, Westphalian system but Thomas’s point is precisely that the norm, at least in part, predated this development and hence needs to be understood in ideational as well as material terms.

In the second case-study, Thomas claims that even during the so-called ‘total war’ of the mid-twentieth century norms continued to exert some influence. Norms against the use of assassination and chemical weapons held up pretty well over the course of the Second World War and, though material changes overwhelmed the relatively new and fragile norm against the aerial bombing of civilians, it is instructive, Thomas suggests, that even here Germany and Britain refrained from attacking each other’s civilian populations for almost a year after the formal declaration of hostilities, when pure considerations of interest might have dictated otherwise. The norm has, moreover, been revived to a great extent in the period following the Second World War. His fundamental point is that the relationship between norms and interest is an intersubjective one.

Much of this is plausible enough but the danger for this kind of ‘middle-of-the-road’ treatment is being hit by traffic coming in either direction. Realists, at least of the classical Morgenthauian kind, would find relatively little to disagree with here and, indeed, Thomas’s conclusion seems to pull him back much closer to a realist/materialist position than one anticipates from his introduction. Conversely, of course, many reflectivists may feel that Thomas does not go anything like far enough. Thomas’s caution may, in part, reflect the more generally hostile reception that reflectivist accounts receive in the American academy, unlike the situation in Britain.

Whatever the difficulties involved, one empathizes with Thomas’s search for the middle ground and this remains a well-written, thought-provoking and ultimately impressive work.

Mitchell Rologas, University of St Andrews, UK

International law and organization


In the post-11 September world, humanitarian intervention may seem a less pressing question for international affairs than it did in the two years following NATO’s intervention in Kosovo. As the United States, the United Kingdom and others curtail human rights at home, the prospect of intervening (or claiming to intervene) to protect human rights abroad appears less probable than it did in the closing days of the twentieth century. To choose but one example, there is no longer even hand-wringing at the silence over Russia’s military actions in Chechnya.

Nevertheless, human rights and international humanitarian law remain central to debates about whether and how to use force. This engaging collection, first published as a special edition of the International journal of human rights, provides an important set of perspectives on how human rights language and norms were used in the course of the Kosovo intervention, and its immediate aftermath.
The book is divided into six parts. The first, ‘Perspectives’, provides some useful background on the terms used to discuss Kosovo, including an examination of the term ‘genocide’ and a critique of its deployment by NATO officials during the air war. Part Two looks at the human rights violations prior to NATO’s air strikes. This includes a chapter by William Walker on the OSCE’s Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), which he headed, but adds little on the crucial question of his discovery of the massacre at Racak in January 1999 and its significance in triggering NATO’s bombing.

Part Three considers the conduct of the war itself. One early interpretation of the conflict was that it marked a sea change in high-tech warfare, with its extensive reliance on cruise missiles and high-altitude air strikes. Hilaire McCoubrey, in one of his last pieces of writing, examines the international humanitarian law problems to which such conduct gives rise. (With hindsight, the more significant aspect of Kosovo might be the combination of such air strikes with a proxy war fought on the ground by the KLA—a strategy adopted in the US-led action in Afghanistan and mooted for Iraq.) Parts Four and Five examine the aftermath of the conflict; written less than twelve months after the bombing ceased, they are now more reflective of that time than, perhaps, of Kosovo’s lasting significance. Part Six presents some useful documents.

Opinion among the contributors is, understandably, divided on some of the key questions raised by Kosovo. Why were the terms presented to Serbia at Rambouillet more onerous than those offered after a 78-day bombing campaign? Was the expulsion of Kosovar Albanians exacerbated by the commencement of hostilities, or merely used as cover for an existing plan? Did NATO’s concerns about its own casualties justify conduct that increased the threat to civilians on the ground? And is the Kosovo that we see today, mostly purged of its Serb population, the Kosovo for which NATO went to war? If the broader question of whether ‘humanitarian war’ will be a lasting feature of international affairs has been overtaken by more recent events, such detailed interrogation of each decision to use force remains an important responsibility of all students of international affairs.

Simon Chesterman, International Peace Academy, USA


Some users may hesitate in setting aside their much-loved hard copy of International who’s who 2002 in favour of this CD-ROM version, but it is most definitely worth it. The installation process is straightforward (even for the more ardent technophobe), and once completed the CD-ROM does not need to be inserted into the computer again.

This version represents a lot more than a simple regurgitation of the same 20,000 entries in the book with a few graphics thrown in for good measure. What really makes this CD-ROM version stand out is the way that it allows the user to manipulate the interactive nature of the medium to their full advantage. The biographies of the leading figures from many cultural spheres ‘included solely on merit and achievement’ can now be searched for not only by the traditional means of surname only, but by profession, birthplace, education, achievements, etc. Whether the user is determined to chart the progress of those nineteen born in Aberdeen, to check out the four Buddhist leaders listed on the database, or is curious to see why the one listed actuary made it to the top 20,000, this system, which is ideal for browsing, will fulfil those desires.

Additionally, it is possible to combine search criteria, print out entries and to use the indexes of royal families and new names listed since the last edition. This CD-ROM is an invaluable source of information. It is easy to use, flexible to the demands of the user, and what’s more, available at the simple click of a mouse.

Jessica Delaney, Royal Institute of International Affairs, UK
Conflict, security and armed forces


This is not an easy book to read. It is opaque and often repetitive. However, it is original and stimulating, full of illuminating insights and examples and innovative formulations.

The book develops a series of interconnected arguments. One is that the new wars are characterized by transborder networks of state and non-state actors linked into the global shadow economy. In these networks, the distinctions between people, armies and generals no longer have any meaning. The global shadow economy is the way in which the South is reintegrated into the Northern economies. It is based on illegal or extra-legal forms of exchange and characterized by ‘non-liberal’ relations—by ‘non-liberal’ I understand him to mean that these relations are not based on free economic exchange or on equality before the law. This new global shadow economy is as much a part of globalization as the new regionalism, the new formal interconnections of trade and money. Since these networks involve violence, the difference between war and violent peace is one of amplification or of acceleration of these relationships. The networks are not ‘value-free’. They involve ‘normative, cultural and political relations capable of agency in their own right’ (p. 191).

A second related key argument is about what Duffield calls the ‘strategic complexes’ of ‘liberal peace’. By liberal, he is referring to liberal political and economic tenets and by ‘peace’, he means conflict resolution and social reconstruction. Duffield argues that these new complexes of state and non-state actors mirror the networks that characterize the new wars; they have the same morphology, to use the term of the sociologist, Manuel Castells. ‘The emerging relations between governments, NGOs, militaries and the business sector are not just a mechanical response to conflict. In fact they have a good deal in common in structural and organisational terms with the new wars.’ They are ‘both forms of adaptation to the effects of market deregulation and the qualification and attenuation of nation-state competencies’ (pp. 13–14).

Yet a third argument concerns the development discourse adopted by the ‘liberal peace’ complex. Duffield argues that the development discourse has been radicalized during the 1990s by the encounter with new wars. Development is increasingly about security. Wars are viewed as a consequence of underdevelopment, hence development is increasingly seen as a form of conflict prevention. The new view of development, as I understand it, involves social transformation and modernization in order to establish a rights-based, self-sufficient development. This is linked to what he calls the ‘new humanitarianism’. Instead of the neutral humanitarianism of the late 1980s, which was about saving lives, a new more ‘political humanitarianism’ has been developed, which involves targeted aid and the linking of relief to development.

However, and this is yet another argument, this radicalization is merely cosmetic. It is partly the result of the need for NGOs to repackage themselves for their own survival. Words like human rights are reinterpreted to mean what the aid agencies are already doing. Aid still operates according to a mechanistic pseudo-scientific logic, which fails to take into account the complexity of the environment in which the ‘liberal peace’ complexes operate. The consequence is that ‘liberal peace’ often accommodates and is even complicit with the underlying relationships that characterize the new wars.

The book ends with a fascinating case study of the Dinka in Sudan, showing how displaced persons from the South become sharecroppers and bonded labourers in the North. This occurs with the active, though not intentional, connivance of the aid agencies, which have failed to understand or take into account the political context.

There is much to agree with in this book. But I am left with questions. Perhaps most importantly, the argument about the shared morphology of liberal peace and the new shadowy networks has the effect of diminishing or downplaying the sheer brutality and horror of the new wars. How, I wonder, would the book have been rewritten in the aftermath of 11 September.
Conflict, security and armed forces

With the outburst of a new much more robust American-dominated form of interventionism to constrain the net wars, might we not feel a bit nostalgic for liberal peace, with all its failings?

Mary Kaldor, London School of Economic and Political Science, UK


In this timely atlas of current crises throughout the world, Colonel Andrew Duncan (a London-based defense analyst and former British defence attaché in Tel Aviv) and Michel Opatowski (a cartographer in Tel Aviv) seek merely to explain the origins of the conflicts rather than to prescribe policies by which to solve them. Duncan and Opatowski, also co-authors of War in the holy land, note that one classic cause of conflict revolves around ownership of land, which is further exacerbated by religious tensions, as in the dispute between Israel and the PLO (p. 1). Two other enduring causes of conflict are the shortage of resources and drug trafficking. ‘Drugs, their use and distribution, cause more problems in the world today than anything else’, they write. ‘The list is endless: the impact on mental and physical health and its human and financial cost; the spread of AIDS; crime to pay for drugs; turf wars between pushers at street level; outright war between producers at country level; terrorism to deter governments in producing countries from cracking down on trafficking; money laundering; bribery and corruption’ (p. 25).

One should not read Duncan and Opatowski’s strategic atlas at bedtime, for its dire message will most likely cause insomnia. A decade has passed since the end of the Cold War and the world is even more dangerous, they assert. While interstate wars may have diminished, intrastate wars have multiplied, given the absence of the restraining effect of the two superpowers. These ‘savage civil wars’, along with ‘violent cross-border non-state actors’, ‘ferociously assertive dictatorships’ are going to be the ‘hallmarks of our planet’, writes François Heisbourg, chairman of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, in the Foreword of the book (p. xii).

Written before 11 September 2001, Duncan’s next assertion rings chillingly prophetic: ‘The twenty-first century may well witness the first deliberate use of city-destroying weapons since the obliteration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945’ (p. xii). Now that an international network of suicidal terrorists (Al-Qa’ida) have used civilian airliners as weapons, it is only a matter of time before such terrorists gain access to weapons of mass destruction. In fact, according to a CNN report, CIA Director George Tenet revealed in early February 2002 that Osama bin Laden has indeed been trying to acquire nuclear weapons. ‘If nuclear weapons appear to remain firmly in the grip of states, the combination of regime instability, as in Pakistan, with the spread of nuclear weapons, is not a reassuring one’, Heisbourg reminds the reader. Biological and chemical weapons are also more accessible to terrorist groups and other non-state actors, given recent advances in bioengineering and biochemistry (p. xii).

Heisbourg also draws the reader’s attention to a crucial paradox in the UN Charter that will probably have to be resolved before lasting peace can be achieved. Article 1 (section 2) states that the UN’s purpose is to ensure ‘friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination’. However, Article 2 (section 7) declares that ‘nothing contained in the present charter shall authorize the UN to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state’. Ironically, most intrastate conflicts (such as the one in Kosovo in 1999) are caused by the desire for self-determination and the lack of human rights (p. 2). However justified NATO’s intervention in Kosovo was under Article I, it violated Article 2, as the Russians and others fervently pointed out.

In short, Trouble spots contributes to the literature on current conflicts and its genre is unique. The only other ‘strategic atlas’ remotely similar is Gérard Chaliand’s Strategic atlas: comparative geopolitics of the world’s powers. However, unlike Duncan and Opatowski, Chaliand emphasizes geography and population, downplaying high technology systems and weapons.


Book reviews

This strategic atlas, moreover, would enhance any graduate or undergraduate syllabus for courses in international relations, particularly in security studies. Up-to-date information, clear prose and ample maps will hold the attention even of undergraduates.

Johanna Granville, Clemson University, USA


The end of the Cold War produced expectations that military force and the conflict that had characterized the previous fifty years would decline, possibly even disappearing in a New World Order. However, it quickly became evident that global disorder had broken out, and that the use of force remained high on the international agenda. This posed considerable difficulties for everyone, but perhaps most for the remaining superpower. Analysts have had a busy, although not always fruitful, decade attempting to resolve the dilemmas. Clearly, this book will not provide all the answers, but it is an absolutely essential starting point in the quest.

The first part of this book concerns 'Morality and force'. Hehir argues that war has permeated debate on the use of force. The views range from stressing war as indefensible, to war as outside normal expectations of morality, to the other extreme of war as justifiable within a clear moral construct. Since 1991 there has been great debate about the continuing validity of these views. Smith suggests that US military intervention, despite being greatly criticized, could yet be a considerable force for good when defending democracy and human rights. The two successful interventions were in Germany and Japan, but more recently ‘fine sounding words’ regarding intervention have either been dismissed or condemned. One key reason was Vietnam; but another was Somalia, which lashed back fiercely against US attempts at intervention. Russett is more interested in how US hegemony can be used to secure peace in circumstances where major conflict seems remote and where the threats emerge from rogue-states and terrorism. The US should deter challenge and adventurism, especially from China; it should promote NATO expansion by accepting Russia as a full member, and it should promote linkages that produce peace in major partnerships, deterring and isolating aggression. However, the US cannot impose its preferences; it needs to mobilize support and receive approval of legitimate aims. ‘If a Pax Americana is to survive the 20th century, it cannot be based solely on American power and narrow self-interest’ (p. 55).

In the section discussing 'Force and diplomacy', George accepts that force will remain a necessary instrument; yet the ‘variety of novel settings’ in the international system create difficulties. Threats can deter or coerce but the level of appropriate and legitimate force remains contentious. George uses the example of the ‘impassioned’ and ‘acrimonious’ debate concerning US intervention in Third World conflicts during the Reagan era. Some argued for caution, whereas others said that diplomacy could hardly be credible without necessary force. Murray uses the experience of the Gulf War, and especially the way that debate has focused on the inconclusive end of the conflict rather than the decisive initial intervention. He accepts that US intelligence was woeful. In the complexity of the post-Cold War this is a deficit that has to be corrected. Nor is he convinced that the much vaunted ‘information revolution’ will overcome the problem. He adds that far too much attention has been given to the technological aspects of the Gulf War and not nearly enough to the political and strategic. Woodward uses the example of US involvement in Bosnia to demonstrate the military reluctance to intervene—("We don’t do mountains"). But without force, diplomacy seemed almost paralyzed, a belief confirmed by many by the utter failure of the EU. Post-Cold War conflicts did not exhibit clear-cut reasons for intervention. ‘Lost also was an appreciation of the difference between peacekeeping and war-making’ (p. 125).

In the ‘Force, politics and society section’, Lindsay argues that the tension between president and Congress has regularly affected US intervention. Yet since 1991 there has been confusion, and by the time of the Bosnian crisis US policy was deeply contested and the necessity of intervention was only hesitantly conceded. It became clear, however, that Congress did not welcome involvement of US forces in UN operations, and that the complexity of post-Cold War...
Conflict, security and armed forces

situations interacted with the complexity of US domestic politics. Kohut argues that there has always been reluctance among Americans for intervention abroad; he adds that new priorities and conceptions since 1991 have added new complications. Americans accept there is danger in the world, and they believe that in some circumstances US forces will be required. They remain somewhat interventionist-minded, but their hearts are very much deep in the US. Yet, as Moskos points out, since 1991, US forces have taken part in over 30 overseas deployments, nearly all concerning peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention. Simultaneously, US forces declined in numbers and there have been significant changes in race, gender and class.

The final section discusses the ‘Revolution in force’, and Krepinevich analyses the technological revolution in US armed forces. Although the US seems certain to face a major challenge in the future, a key danger may be the diffusion of the present technological advantage the US currently enjoys. The present emphasis on US power projection of air and naval forces could become especially vulnerable to information technologies and integrated coastal defence systems. Biddle gives the Gulf War the credit for changing perceptions. The US ability to break large and sophisticated forces with high-technology weapons stimulated the idea of a revolution in military affairs. Some argued for a prolonged period of ‘unassailable’ US advantage, whereas others suggested that war would resort to terrorism, low intensity conflict and the use of weapons of mass destruction. Biddle suggests that many of those arguments have serious analytical shortcomings. He says that a much more incrementalist approach is likely, and he proposes, ‘essential continuity in military affairs’. Use of the Gulf War is dangerous, in part because the US was able to capitalize on the many strategic mistakes made by the Iraqis. Future conflicts are not likely to involve the same degree of fundamental errors.

To sum up: this is an important book—go out and buy it.

Alan Warburton, Lancaster University, UK


NATO after fifty years contains fourteen essays about NATO’s post-Cold War identity and is divided into four main sections: ‘The transatlantic relationship’, ‘NATO as an international organization’, ‘NATO in theory and practice’ and ‘The long view’. S. Victor Papacosma (History Professor, Kent State University); Mark R. Rubin (French Professor, Kent State University) and Sean Kay (Political Science Professor, Ohio Wesleyan University) edited this volume. Papacosma and Rubin are also Director and Associate Director, respectively, of the Lemnitzer Center for NATO and European Studies at Kent State University. The contributors include Ted Galen Carpenter, Stanley R. Sloan, Julian Lindley-French, Frédéric Bozo, Steven L. Rearden, Robert S. Jordan, Andrew A. Michta, Jeffrey Simon, Pierre-Henri Laurent, Allen G. Sens, Kori Schake, Nina Khrushcheva, and Lawrence S. Kaplan.

Not all of the essays can be discussed individually here. This reader found the essays by Carpenter, Rearden, and Schake especially interesting. In his essay, ‘NATO’s search for relevance’, in the first part of the book, Carpenter (Vice President for Defense and Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute) asserts that US decision-makers should stop trying to transform NATO into some kind of crisis management organization (in the Balkans, for example) and instead realize that the alliance has become obsolete. A new, Europe-focused organization run by Europeans should be formed that would then limit the US’ risk exposure (p. 39). Carpenter points out that NATO’s war against Yugoslavia was not a complete success and should instead be judged in its full context. ‘The spectacle of Albanian Kosovars attacking KFOR peacekeepers attempting to block them from cleansing Kosovo of its remaining Serb inhabitants (as well as Gypsies and all other non-Albanians) is only the most visible and potent symbol of a morally murky and strategically questionable intervention’ (p. 38).

In his essay in the second part of the book, Rearden (an independent consultant in Washington) is more optimistic about the alliance’s future, stating that: ‘Although NATO remains first and
Book reviews

foremost a military organization, it has re-emerged in the post-Cold War era as a mechanism for promoting and sometimes compelling political and social change. Countries that were once part of the Warsaw Pact nemesis are now more open societies with free-market economies and closer ties to the West, thanks in part to NATO contacts’ (p. 75).

In the third part of the book, Kori Schake asserts that the security agendas of the United States and Europe may be diverging, particularly over the issue of nuclear proliferation. ‘Every North Korean or Iranian missile test further raises public concern about the vulnerability of American territory’, she writes (p. 196). Although she wrote her article before President Bush’s decision to abandon the ABM treaty and to develop a ballistic missile system (attacking ballistic missiles in flight), she warns that the US possession of such a system and Europeans’ lack of one might strengthen the impression Europeans have, rightly or wrongly, that Americans are ‘too ready to threaten and use force to achieve their aims’ (p. 197). Americans, in turn, may continue to view Europeans as unwilling to defend their interests and oblivious to the high costs of credible self-defence.

Papacosma’s compilation of essays is unique, both in its choice of both advocates and opponents of NATO expansion and in its use of non-American authors with different perspectives: Bozo (University of Nantes, France); Lindley-French (Western European Union Institute for Security Studies in Paris, France); and Sens (University of British Columbia, Canada). I would recommend the book for graduate students or advanced undergraduates in courses on American Foreign Policy and International Relations.

Johanna Granville, Clemson University, USA


NATO enters the twenty-first century is a compilation of eight essays that examine the internal discord in NATO since its expansion eastward. Edited by Ted Galen Carpenter (Vice President for Defense and Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute), the book conveys a sense of urgency: disagreements among NATO members are increasing in intensity now that there is no Soviet threat imposing unity on defiant members of the alliance. Dr Carpenter intended for the book to become the ‘basis of a searching debate about the future of European security’.

This volume differs from other edited volumes on NATO expansion published in 1999–2001, in that the authors are all American and appear critical of expansion. Other books examine the perspectives of other countries and either approve the ‘enlargement’ of the alliance or evenly debate its pros and cons. See, for example, Robert W. Rauchhaus, ed. Explaining NATO enlargement (2001); S. Victor Papacosma, et al., eds, NATO after fifty years (2001); James Sperling, ed, Europe in change: two tiers or two speeds? (1999).

Besides Carpenter, other contributors to NATO enters the twenty-first century include Alton Frye (Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations); Alan Tonelson (Research Fellow, US Business and Industry Council Educational Foundation, Washington DC); Amos Perlmutter (Political Science Professor, American University); Christopher Layne (Visiting Professor, University of Southern California); Richard Rupp (Visiting Assistant Professor, Purdue University); Kori Schake (Research Professor, National Defense University).

Two of the most interesting essays are those written by Carpenter and Tonelson. Carpenter argues that NATO’s new ‘strategic concept’, which was presented at the 50th anniversary summit in April 1999, is more of a ‘conceptual muddle’ rather than a ‘coherent blueprint’ (p. 7). This plan for the future, he claims, was designed to ‘appease certain self-seeking parties’ within the alliance, but it turned out to be nearly irrelevant (p. 177). Dr Tonelson’s essay deals with the contentious issue of burden-sharing. He posits that the European allies have not helped to shoulder the financial burdens because the United States has never given them sufficient incentive. Rather, US leaders send mixed messages; they complain about European ‘free riding’, but simultaneously proclaim that European security is of paramount importance to the United States. Tonelson points out that the Bosnian and Kosovo crises were clearly not Article 5-type threats and that the
Conflict, security and armed forces

United States had no obligation to get involved. The fact that it did signalled to the Europeans that the Americans will always rescue them, he argues. Quoting Representative Barney Frank (Democrat–Massachusetts): ‘America’s European allies are threatening to become foreign policy “welfare recipients”. Unless compelled to do so, they will never pay their own way’ (pp. 53–4).

Graduate students and advanced undergraduates with some knowledge of US–European relations will find this book useful.

Johanna Granville, Clemson University, USA


In this volume, the US expert on air power, Benjamin S. Lambeth has produced a detailed and convincing exposition of the progress and achievements of NATO’s 78-day air war against Yugoslavia in 1999. He sets out the course of the war in great detail, and the book is likely to remain a foundation work in all future assessments of the conflict. It is, in effect, as near an official history of the war as we are likely to get for a long time, as the work was commissioned by the Department of Defence, and although it contains the usual health warnings about the views expressed being those of the author, not the Department, it is based on official material. It is also of considerable value in considering events on the ground, as the progress of the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA) and the Yugoslav Army (VJ) engagements is closely recorded and analysed.

In general, Dr Lambeth sees the alliance as achieving victory almost in spite of its general strategy, as USAF ideas on how to conduct the war were clearly at variance with those of standard NATO doctrine, and the well known targeting and associated political problems within NATO that have been widely discussed in academic circles, in the press, and elsewhere, are brought into sharp focus. At the time, these disputes were widely seen by observers as being between the US and the UK, on one hand, and on the other, France, and those basically pro-Serb countries like Greece, and others in NATO who shared these preconceptions, and who in some cases did not appear to really want to wage the war at all. This was certainly true, at one level, but in other ways, the ‘old believers’ who caused so much delay and difficulty over targeting were actually carrying out traditional NATO doctrinal prescriptions. The USAF was in process of developing a new doctrine, which has now been put into operation in Afghanistan.

The book is strong and clear on the basic political responsibility for the ethnic cleansing, stating that ‘Milosevic’s unleashing of large-scale atrocities in Kosovo and his truculent defiance of NATO denied the alliance the quick settlement it had counted on and left both NATO and the Clinton administration with no alternative but to continue pressing the air attacks until NATO unambiguously prevailed’. Dr Lambeth sees the air war as very ineffective in its early stages, as early as page 25 there is a sub-heading, ‘The air war bogs down’, and some of the most interesting sections concern the disputes within the alliance over what was happening on the ground, the need for a NATO ground force, and the possibility of close coordination with the Kosova Liberation Army. This seems to have taken place at an earlier stage of the war, and to a fuller extent than is generally realized. The author says that as early as Day Six of the war, General Wesley Clark sought approval to put real pressure on the regime by attacking the Defence and Interior Ministry buildings in Belgrade. This was refused, on the grounds that such attacks were ‘premature’, and the account given of the following events is likely to be of relevance to the Milosevic war crimes trial, as the subsequent two weeks were the period of most intense ‘ethnic cleansing’ in Kosovo. The question is bound to arise of how far the nations in NATO, who sought privately to appease Milosevic and achieve a diplomatic settlement, were actually accomplices, however unconscious, in Milosevic’s plans. During these weeks, Dr Lambeth comments that, although the communications centre in Pristina had been taken out on 6 April, ‘the air effort as a whole remained a faint shadow of Operation Desert Storm, with only 28 targets throughout all of Yugoslavia attacked out of 439 sorties in a 24-hour period in the operation’s third week’.
Book reviews

Dr Lambeth considers that the KLA factor was important in some aspects of the NATO victory, writing that ‘despite NATO denials throughout the air war that it was aiding the KLA, it became evident that cooperation between the two was considerably greater than had been previously admitted… the KLA had as early as April 10 begun to supply NATO with target intelligence and other battlefield information at NATO’s request’. The book goes on to give an account of the crucial battle for Mount Pashtrik, as part of the KLA offensive ‘Operation Arrow’, which although lost on the ground by the KLA, turned out to be a pyrrhic victory for the VJ, as it exposed their units in the open to subsequent NATO air attack.

He also disposes of a number of prevailing myths about the operational aspects of the war. On the question of civilian casualties being caused by the fact that aircraft were alleged to be operating at over 15,000 feet height, in fact this was not the case, and he makes clear that heights as low as 5,000 feet were authorized for some activities. One or two awkward facts emerge in the book for local governments, so that, for instance, the much criticized use of (or non-use of) Apache helicopters in the Task Force Hawk was compounded by the refusal of the FYROM government to allow them to operate from its territory, where General Clark had intended them to be based. Instead, they had to operate from the very geographically unfavourable Albanian environment.

These and many other matters will be the subject of historical research and political debate for many years, and this fine book will be a starting point for all rational evaluations of NATO’s victorious campaign. It will also be an important reference point in future discussions about NATO enlargement, as presumably the administrative and political problems involved in achieving consensus for actions in future wars will not be eased by the admission of new members. There seems, for instance, little doubt that Hungary was a major actor in the moves against early consideration of a ground war. But the underlying major message is about the growing disparity between US and European technical and operational capacity, for as Dr Lambeth puts it, tactfully, ‘one of the most surprising aspects of the Allied Force experience was what it revealed about the extent of the discontinuity that had been allowed to develop between US air power and that of most other NATO allies’.

James Pettifer, Conflict Studies Research Centre, UK


The main focus of this book, written to inform the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, is the size and shape of US forces, and how to accommodate military needs in an environment of possible budgetary restrictions. Nevertheless, the author was prescient enough to include a chapter on home defence, with mentions of Al-Qa’ida and bin Laden.

At least temporarily, 11 September has changed the ground. Not only will substantial sums be devoted to home defence, but Department of Defense programmes, which should have been ended or severely limited, will be given a further lease on life. The author is pro-missile defence but in a limited and balanced way. He is sensible about the China–Taiwan issue, and helpful in analysing the military balance on the Korean Peninsula. In light of those and similar analyses, he urges US forces to prepare for a two-war scenario. This marks a change from the prior US policy of preparing for two major regional crises. More generally, he urges modestly slimmer and lighter forces. When, in a less charged climate, the US comes to the hard decisions, this book’s approach will have much to commend it.

O’Hanlon takes a sensible approach to the procurement problems facing the US military. Most equipment purchased in the Cold War is now nearing the end of its useful life. Assuming that the current force structure is maintained, it must be replaced. The advice is that some of the replacement equipment should be of the very latest technology in order to produce some ‘silver bullet’ forces. Many more improvements should be made by upgrading current systems such as F16s or F18s, incorporating better sensors or avionics. This is consistent with his cautious though not negative approach to the RMA.
O’Hanlon sees no reason for the US to scale back its role in the world significantly, nor to increase its defence budget drastically. Given the US’ great military superiority, it may be questioned whether in principle O’Hanlon’s approach could not have been more radical, particularly given the overwhelming air and naval assets that the US can bring to bear. However, politically more radical reductions would find very few takers at present, though expenditure on heavy ground forces, which are not of obvious utility in meeting US security needs, and on the most advanced manned aircraft, may have to be limited in the foreseeable future. 11 September will give a boost to missile defence, however illogically, and there will be great pressure to bring advanced UAVs and other new technology into service. Meanwhile, home defence may make great calls on a straitened budget.

In sum, this is a sensible book by a knowledgeable author. There is food for thought here and useful information for any outsider considering the future of US defence. Its misfortune is that though the author was aware of the terrorist dimension, the impact of the attacks is likely to give greater impetus to specific developments that he could not have allowed for.

William Hopkinson

Civil society: history and possibilities. Edited by Sudipta Kaviraj and Sunil Khilnani.

This volume offers a refreshing discussion of the by now ubiquitous concept of civil society and this for two simple, but eminently important, reasons. The first is that it probes the history of the notion of civil society in western political theory. The second is that it approaches the question of its relevance to the so-called Third World by means of an examination of the historical context within which it has been employed. It is a method that is well-suited to the understanding of what is a notably slippery notion—appropriated as it has been in the recent past by a vast array of political actors throughout the world, ranging from the anti-communist movements in Eastern Europe to the World Bank and assorted NGOs. Indeed, the issue as to why such attention has been devoted to a concept that had all but disappeared until the late seventies would in itself make for a fascinating study, since at the very least it would reveal the excessively instrumental view that is presently taken of what is blithely claimed to be a ‘universal category’. Civil society, however, is less concerned with explaining the revival of the notion than it is with its present worth.

The book is in two parts: one devoted to a discussion of the concept’s theoretical genealogy in the West; the other with its use, and abuse, in the South. The reasons for this division are clearly expounded in the introduction, and Sunil Khilnani’s first chapter is a most pellucid exposition of the book’s intellectual trajectory. Part I includes chapters on the idea of civil society in pre-modern Europe (Antony Black), on John Locke’s conception (John Dunn), on the Scottish Enlightenment (Flavia Oz-Salzberger), on the Enlightenment and the institution of society (Keith Michael Baker), on Hegel and the economics of civil society (Gareth Stedman Jones) and on the Marxist tradition (Joseph Femina). Together these provide an admirable introduction to the various strands that have combined to create the modern idea of civil society. Part II combines chapters on the Third World: Jack Goody on Africa, Partha Chatterjee on India, Luis Castro Leiva and Anthony Pagden on Latin America, Thomas Metzger on China, Sami Zubaida on the Middle East, and Rob Jenkins on the uses of civil society in the international community. Geoffrey Hawthorn and Sudipta Kaviraj conclude with more general examinations of the relevance of the concept to the South.

Although all the individual contributions to Civil society fulfil their brief effectively—and here it is well to praise the strong editorial hands—it is as a volume of coherently composed and assembled chapters that this book scores most highly. Indeed, fears that such a collection of highly individual pieces would fail to gel are banished by the inordinate care taken by all the authors to
write in a way that makes our understanding of the concept more historically secure as well as more analytically astute. The conclusions to be drawn from the book are both sharp and modest. First, the current notion of civil society issues from the historical experience of western societies and it is expressed in terms of western political theory. Consequently, it is otiose to assume either a precise substantive definition or a specific type of relation between state and civil society. Second, the operation of civil society as it is presently understood in the West presupposes an agreed definition of politics and of the self, as well as an ‘institutionalised dispersion of social power’ (p. 30)—conditions which rarely obtain in the South. Third, civil society is, in practice, grounded in particular cultures, which means that ‘advocates of civil society must look for ideas bearing some resemblance to these in other cultural traditions, and begin to build arguments from some intelligible points of connection, rather than from the moral “outside”. Will, not force, must constitute the durable basis for civil society outside the West’ (p. 323).

For all the confusion, and wishful thinking, that currently mark out the notion of civil society, this volume restores hope that some common framework can be provided that makes the debate about the usefulness of the concept more meaningful. This book is highly to be recommended to all those, within or outside the academe, who are minded to venture to employ such an elusive idea. The international community—most especially international organisations, NGOs and aid organisations—would do well to pay close attention to the book’s conclusions.

Patrick Chabal, King’s College London, UK

State in society: studying how states and societies transform and constitute one another.
By Joel Migdal.

State in society is a collection of essays written by Migdal over the past two decades. Indeed, by now the author is associated with the ‘state-in-society’ approach, which he has developed during that period, and it is useful to have brought together in one volume his most important writings on the subject. Taken together with his 1988 book, Strong societies and weak states: state–society relations and state capabilities in the Third World, the present volume makes it clear how Migdal’s thinking has evolved in the last fifteen years. What it shows is that the author has been at the forefront of North American political scientists seeking to make sense of the troubled political evolution of the formerly colonized part of the world. His dissatisfaction with the canon in comparative politics and his relentless quest for an approach that would reflect events in the real world have led him to propose a framework of analysis—‘state-in-society’—that aims to make sense of the manifold inconsistencies and contradictions of the state in the so-called Third World.

Apart from the first part, a fresh introduction written for the book, the rest of the volume consists of previously published articles organized in the following sequence. The second part centres on rethinking social and political change; the third develops what the author calls a process-oriented approach to the relationship between state and society; the fourth addresses the links between micro- and macro-level change; while the last focuses on studying the state in its historical setting. Although there is a logic in the way in which the chapters have been connected, the book never acquires the homogeneity that it needs. Indeed, the chapters remain individual pieces, written for specific purposes that combine badly and do not ultimately amount to a systematic development of the author’s approach. We come at the ‘state-in-society’ framework from a variety of different angles and this lack of systemic perspective is largely responsible for the sense of conceptual vagueness that emanates from the volume.

The author’s thesis is that contemporary states in the Third World are neither as coherent nor as powerful as ‘standard’ political theory would intimate. In particular, they often lack the institutional capacity to implement policies and, even more, to direct social and economic change. This is because, despite their ostensible constitutional centrality in modern polities, they are prey to myriad pressures from groups in society that either have a stake in influencing policy or an interest in reducing the scope of state action. In such circumstances, therefore, the best way to
understand the role of the state is to analyse, historically, its relations with society. As Migdal says: ‘[T]he state-in-society approach points researchers to the process of interaction of groupings with one another and with those whose actual behavior they are vying to control or influence’ (p. 23).

The strength of this argument is that it does stress what is self-evidently crucial in the understanding of contemporary politics in the Third World: states cannot be understood *sui generis* but must be conceptualized in their relationships with society. It is a useful corrective to those (mostly North American) approaches that presume to understand politics solely by means of a study of the ‘autonomous’ state—although it might be pointed out here that outside of the US academe, this is not an argument that anyone would wish to contest. However, at a time when rational-choice theory is seeking conceptual dominance, it is well to remember that political science ought to help explain the ‘real’ world and not the fantasy land of those who reduce political action solely to the pursuit of individual self-interest. Nevertheless, this book falls short in two respects. First, it is not the systematic development of the ‘state-in-society’ approach we were entitled to expect. Second, and more significantly, it remains excessively bounded by a view of comparative politics that is troubled by conceptual fuzziness—as a reading of the definition of the state demonstrates: ‘The state is a field of power marked by the use and threat of violence and shaped by (1) the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory, and (2) the actual practices of its multiple parts’ (p. 16 [italics in the original]). Although Migdal’s is certainly one of the more enlightening approaches to issues from across the Atlantic, it reveals the limitations of a political ‘science’ that finds it difficult conceptually to keep up with the changing nature of contemporary Third World politics.

Patrick Chabal, King’s College London, UK


Reclaiming imperialism as a central category from the insipid debates on ‘globalization’ is the central aim of this unreservedly critical book by James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer. Amid the descriptive, explanatory and ideological weight of globalization theory, their intention is to expose the class project behind dominant thinking and practice in order to thus ‘unmask’ the social content of globalization as imperialism. ‘It is ironic’, after all, ‘that precisely when the conditions so well described and explained by the concept of “imperialism” have become truly global, it has been abandoned as a tool for understanding what is going on and informing political practice’ (p. 8).

Most tellingly, the authors uphold ‘a view of the new role of the state in a context of globalisation, whereby the real issue is seen to be not the reduction of the size and powers of the state, the loss of national sovereignty or the hollowing out of state responsibilities and functions, but the realignment of the state towards the interests of the transnational capitalist class’ (p. 20). It is this view that is then carried through various chapters that, among others, develop a critical analysis of globalization ideologues, the constitution of transnational capitalism in Latin America, the uneasy relationship between capitalism and democracy, and the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the service of capitalism. Attention is also importantly cast on the task of forging a new revolutionary subject from the present juncture and uniting an incipient anti-capitalist consciousness among movements currently struggling against globalization. Overall, the concept of imperialism is hailed as much more precise than ‘globalization’ in defining this terrain of domination and resistance.

Perhaps, though, readers might require more excavation of the potential and pitfalls of the utility of the concept of imperialism. If one could request embedding the discussion within the contours of classical theories of imperialism (e.g. Bukharin, Lenin, Luxemburg), then it becomes imperative also to demand an understanding of how imperialism has changed over historical periods. Imperialism, as Robert Cox has elsewhere argued, is a broad and loose concept that needs to be defined in relation to specific historical conditions rather than viewed as an unchanging historical
‘essence’. Hence a preference in the latter’s work for an understanding of the structural features of imperialisms that characterize hegemonic and non-hegemonic world orders, or differentiating between the historical specificities of liberal imperialism; the rivalry of the ‘new imperialism’; and the phase of ‘monopoly liberal-imperialism’. This is not to say that recognizing such structural characteristics within imperialism is beyond the scope of Globalization unmasked, just that this reader would have favoured discussion along some of the above lines to push the argument further. Indeed, more use could have been made, for example, of the fluid notion of the ‘imperial state system’, first present in James Petras and Morris Morley’s US hegemony under siege: class, politics and development in Latin America. The imperial system, rather than the state itself, becomes the departure point here in enquiring about the configuration of capitalism by the agency of transnational classes. Hence maintaining the exposure of globalization as a class project while nevertheless differentiating between imperialism and hegemony, rather than succumbing to their conflation. That said, the contribution of this book to the unmasking of globalization as a class project and returning attention towards the theory and practice of imperialism should be applauded. Engaging with its premises could become a necessary first step in expanding this enterprise.

Adam David Morton, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, UK


Will Kymlicka is a philosopher at Queen’s University, Ontario, Canada, and Wayne Norman is professor of business ethics at the University of British Columbia, also in Canada. Montserrat Guiberneau is a Catalan teaching politics at the Open University in Britain, and John Hutchinson is an Australian historian now teaching at the LSE. The edited volumes include contributions in a variety of academic subjects in the social sciences, arts and law (but no natural sciences or anthropology).

This biographical background sketch is useful in determining the content of these books. The Canadians expound philosophically the issue of minority rights with particular reference to language groups and indigenous peoples. This debate has more resonance in Canada than in Britain for obvious reasons, but the general discussion of democracy, pluralism, liberal nationalism and multiculturalism can be adapted to non-Canadian contexts, up to a point. However, the international affairs dimension is largely missing, for example, the protection of minority rights by international law and international institutions. A European approach would be more aware of these areas, given the long history of attempts at minority protection from the League of Nations to the current International Criminal Tribunal at The Hague. The ‘Citizenship’ volume lacks any serious treatment of European examples, notably the troubled question of citizenship and language rights for Russian speakers in the Baltic countries. Multiculturalism is now being debated in a British context. For example, this issue has been discussed lately in the context of Home Secretary David Blunkett’s opposition to both Muslim schools and Asian spouses immigrating to Britain through arranged marriages. It would be interesting to get an academic commentary on this. Kymlicka’s Canadian perspective leads him to advocating power-sharing and federalism for language and ethnic groups (but really only for French Canadians; ‘indigenous peoples’ require another form of accommodation). This is not really a defence of multiculturalism or consociationalism, rather it is more a system of minority rights within a liberal–democratic nation-state with over-arching common institutions. These distinctions may well baffle readers.

Kymlicka deals with ‘Citizenship in an era of globalization’ in the context of an article by David Held on the subject. This is more germane to international affairs. Kymlicka rejects a
Politics, democracy and social affairs

transnational democratic citizenship, yet he states that we should promote important moral principles such as human rights, democracy and environmental protection internationally, even if our ‘democratic citizenship’ remains national in scope (p. 326). This hovers uneasily between supranationalism and internationalism, though leaning to the latter.

Guibierneau and Hutchinson proclaim that they are ‘understanding nationalism’, which should be easy for them, since they have written extensively on the subject. However, this is a collection of other people’s writings, with three exceptions, some of which are mutually incompatible in their understanding of nationalism. Putting them together under one theory is clearly impossible, yet such a theory is badly needed. However, one contributor, John Breuilly, explicitly attacks theorizing or even ‘an approach’ about nationalism ‘as a whole’ (p. 49). Perhaps a contribution or two from biologists, psychologists and anthropologists might help, since they are more accustomed to scientific method and general theory. In the meantime, I fear that understanding nationalism ‘as a whole’ has some way to go.

James Kellas, University of Glasgow, UK


Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 there has been a proliferation of literature on immigration and the changing meaning of borders. Much of this literature has been inspired by postmodernist and poststructuralist theories.

Globalists, whether of liberal or Marxian stripe, have focused on the rising importance of the economic and transnational, and the consequent decline in salience of territoriality in general and the state in particular. Kenichi Ohmea has, for example, gone so far as to talk about a borderless world (1990). Weaker versions of globalism leave the state and the state system in, but put many non-state actors and systems alongside them, for example, Clark who said ‘territorialization remains a check on globalization’.

This collection of essays contests the poststructuralist and globalist theories on ‘the waning role of the state’. All authors combine theoretical reflections on the control capacity of the state and case-studies on territorial policing by the United States and the various nation-states of the EU. They highlight the inherent tension between, on the one hand, liberalism’s principled demand for openness and, on the other hand, the attempts by liberal and democratic nation-states to prevent the entry of immigrants.

The thirteen chapters are grouped in three parts with the headings ‘Historical and comparative perspectives’, ‘US border controls’, and ‘European Border Controls’. The authors underline in the words of John Torpey that the state’s ‘monopoly on the legitimate means of movement’ has been an essential corollary of the monopoly on the legitimate use of coercion in a world of states (p. 35). This Weberian-inspired new notion is used for testing whether state control still persists or whether it has been undermined by globalization. With the exception of chapters 10 and 11 (describing the impact of the immigration politics on the EU and offering normative advice to politicians), the chapters all conclude that immigration controls are the most compelling exception to liberalism in the operation of the world economy. The case-studies on the US–South Florida, US–Mexican, US–Texan borders and the EU–Eastern European borders testify to the transformation of the means of state control. Border control has for example been ‘externalized’ (p. 57) via visa regimes, carrier sanctions, transnational cooperation and international and bilateral agreements (p. 58). Inside the states, state control has been outsourced to an array of private and regional actors who assume the ‘sheriff’s deputy’ function (pp. 36, 57). The EU states outsource border control to the future eastern members of the EU. The concept of ‘remote control’ (pp. 38, 56) is used to demonstrate how border control is moved closer to the source of immigration and away from the central state, both domestically and internationally. In that way, the state is arguably decentralizing and privatizing still more border control and thereby showing
the capacity of liberal democratic states to reinvent forms of border control (p. 71). Hence, what we are witnessing is not a disappearance of borders but a change in the meaning of borders (p. 10).

This volume is highly recommendable, especially because of the close link between theory and empirical analysis. Furthermore, by means of their well-conducted case-studies, the authors nearly succeed in convincing the reader that the state remains the ordering principle with regard to the control of immigration. But only nearly, as the authors themselves admit that state control has unintended effects. The more the state ‘privatizes’ control and outsources it to sub-national, regional and transnational actors, the more the nature of the state changes, which tends to undermine their own argument about the role of the continuing role of the westphalian territorial state in controlling the flows of migrants. Outsourcing and privatization may, in due course, reveal themselves as very strong challenges to the central power container, leaving more room for decentralized regional or urban spaces, which escape state control.

The nature of the state—or rather the nature of the borders—is changed fundamentally by the very fact that the the ‘remote control’ policy of the state shift away from the central state (p. 65) by ‘externalizing’ it (as some of the authors write) or by ‘internalizing’ it, as the well-known French researcher Didier Bigo argued in his book Polices en réseaux: l’expérience européenne. Some of the chapters are indirectly inspired by Didier Bigo’s work, for example, that by Malcolm Anderson, a renowned expert with numerous articles and books on the meaning of borders to his credit. One might thus wonder why the authors have not discussed Bigo’s notion of ‘Möbius’ ribbon’, i.e. the situation where one never knows whether one is inside or outside. In fact, the authors themselves blur the borders between the nation-states by demonstrating how various actors inside and outside the state play together or against each other. But they conclude that the control of the movement of people across borders continues to consolidate states as territorial (p. 226). This may be a convincing argument when applied to the concrete means of control, but it is much less convincing when it comes to analyzing the unintended effects of this control. Moreover, the authors are not clear about whether they consider the EU as a state or as a state-like institution. Both notions are used without explaining the difference between the two.

Despite this, the volume makes inspiring reading by virtue of its deliberate challenge to radical postmodern theory about the future of the state and its meticulous documentation. What one might have wanted to be included, however, is a comparison of the EU control of the eastern borders with its attempts at controlling its borders along the southern Mediterranean periphery, i.e. those states which are not likely to become members of the EU.

Ulla Holm, Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, Denmark


Though the 2001 British General Election was widely thought to be one of the dullest in recent history, it has still produced a bumper crop of books dedicated to revealing the how and the why of the second Labour landslide. The latest count suggests that there are already no fewer than six volumes dedicated to this feast of democracy, and rumour has it that still more are on the way.

First and foremost among all these books is the ‘Nuffield’ study, a volume of which has appeared for every one of the sixteen general elections since the war. This series benefits from a remarkable continuity among its principal authors. David Butler, Fellow of Nuffield College, has either written or co-written every one of the studies since 1950. His co-author, Dennis Kavanagh, a Professor of Politics at the University of Liverpool, is still a relative novice, having only co-written every study since February 1974. Both principal authors bring experience, wisdom and a tenacious commitment to faithfully recording the details of each election. Their labours ensure that each development in campaigning and communications techniques can be placed in its proper historical context.

Those unfamiliar with this most prestigious series on general elections will appreciate a brief summary of its structure. The principal authors start by reviewing the major social, political and
Ethnicity and cultural politics

economic developments in Britain in the period between general elections. They then move on to provide a detailed account of changes that occurred in the parties; the ups and downs of political figures, organizational changes and the shifting perceptions of strategic opportunities. Other authors examine specific issues such as ‘Politics in the air’ (Martin Harrison), ‘MPs and candidates’ (Byron Criddle) and ‘The local battle, the cyber battle’ (Chris Ballanger). Among those chapters not written by the principal authors, the contribution by Martin Harrop and Margaret Scammell (‘The press disarmed’) on the shifting allegiances of the national press, stands out as particularly well-informed and insightful. For all those who delight in such things, the book also contains an incredibly detailed appendix on elections since the war, a regional breakdown of the vote, notes on outstanding performances and constituency by constituency results. This is followed by a very detailed—yet thoroughly absorbing—analysis by John Curtice and Michael Steed, which explains exactly how the vote shares, tactical voting, the exceptionally low turnout and the electoral system contributed to a second Labour landslide.

One of the joys of the Nuffield volumes is their commitment to straight reporting of what happened: the ‘how’ of the general election is reported in great and objective detail. The principal authors also enjoy access to major decision-makers in all the parties and so manage to convey the perceptions, expectations and frustrations of those at the very centre of the campaign. In particular, the chapter on the Conservative Party’s travails sheds light on why the Tories failed to learn the lessons of their defeat in 1997, and chose to focus on peripheral issues, such as Europe, law and order and immigration during the campaign proper. William Hague, it is simply noted, ‘failed to communicate a clear image of modern Conservatism or to establish its relevance to the country he sought to govern’ (pp. 62–3).

The 2001 Nuffield study lives up well to the exceptionally high standards of its predecessors. Those who find the 2001 general election interesting, or who wish to think about why Labour won its second landslide and why the Tories went down to their second worst defeat since 1832, would do well to read other volumes, such as the Britain at the polls, 2001, edited by Anthony King. However, those who wish to have one reliable book on the 2001 general election should look no further than this remarkable volume.

John Bartle, University of Essex, UK

Ethnicity and cultural politics


This volume is a selection of essays that address the issue of the universality of human rights. Are human rights universal? Or are they culturally bounded and hence lacking universality? This is, of course, not a new issue, but recently it has drawn renewed attention largely because of the so-called ‘Asian values debate’, which began after the 1993 Bangkok Declaration on Human Rights. This debate has triggered a series of publications, this volume being the latest. Earlier edited volumes include, for example, Joanne R. Bauer and Daniel A. Bell, eds, The East Asian challenge for human rights and Michael Jacobsen and Ole Bruun eds, Human rights and Asian values: contesting national identities and cultural representations in Asia. So a natural question to ask is whether this volume has anything new to say.

One interesting feature about this volume is the contributors. A majority of them are area studies scholars, trained and teaching in the US. By their profession, these scholars are, as Andrew Nathan notes in his contribution, sympathetic to the cultural relativist position. Yet because of their life experience in the US, they are also personally attracted to the idea of universal human rights. It is interesting to see how these people, who take cultural relativism seriously, argue against the rejection of universal human rights by some of the Asian governments.

One can extract at least two lines of arguments from the rich and complex essays in the volume. One line of argument, put forward by contributor Michael Barnhart and endorsed by the editors,
is actually to downplay the ethical significance of cultural differences: empirical cultural relativism does not imply normative relativism, nor does empirical cultural convergence imply normative universalism. Rather, values and morality are an autonomous enterprise, which can be justified or challenged only by internal, rational/ethical argumentation. So it will not do to reject the universality of human rights just by saying, for example, that as a mere fact, Chinese culture and people do not accept western ideas of human rights. But this is not to say, as Barnhart notes, that we do not need to pay attention to cultures. Even though values are ultimately grounded by rational ethical arguments, we need ethical ‘raw data’ as inputs for critical reflection and, it is hoped, agreement. These initial ethical inputs come from cultures. A process of critical dialogue and intercultural exchange would be very useful to the search of a normative and rational consensus on universal human rights.

But how to understand a culture? This brings us to the second line of argument in the volume. This argument intends to revise the traditional view that culture is a core uncontroversial set of values and psychological dispositions that gives a group of people a common identity. Instead, contributors to this volume adopt the new approach of cultural studies, which sees culture as unstable, discursive and constantly contested (pp. 10–12). In this way, they argue that when Asian governments use their cultures to reject universal human rights, they often rely on one-sided and politically motivated interpretations of culture that conceal intense internal differences and contests among members of that cultural group. Thus, area studies scholars in this volume give themselves the task of analyzing the politics of the human rights movements and anti-rights forces in various cultures, in order to ‘determine when and how human rights claims might be agreed upon across treacherous philosophical, ethical, political, and sexual divides’ (p. 12).

Both lines of argument are not new, but are already standard positions in moral philosophy and cultural studies respectively. Nevertheless, they are sound, and if pursued rigorously they would be very useful to an analysis of the relationship between human rights and cultural diversity. The two lines of arguments are applied with different degrees of rigour in the volume. The essays on China and Islamic fundamentalism seem more successful than those on Israel and Russia. The theoretical essays are of uneven quality. The volume as a whole is of mixed success.

Joseph Chan, The University of Hong Kong

The political economy of global communication: an introduction. By Peter Wilkin.

How are power relations changing in the so-called information society? Are they, for example, changing in favour of anti-systemic movements whose members can now coordinate global protests over the Internet? Or are intelligence agencies and private corporations benefiting most, through surveillance and ‘customer management’ software that can cross the divide between public and private sphere? For Peter Wilkin, the information society is a ‘complex process of transformation in world order’ (p. 122) but a transformation that, despite its complexity, can be assessed against straightforward criteria based on human security and basic needs. When judged on this basis, new information and communication technologies may have the potential to enhance public scrutiny of powerful private or state institutions, thereby increasing their accountability. But Wilkin is in no doubt that current trends are leading decisively in the opposite direction. He argues that the inexorable commercialization of communication infrastructures and industries is reinforcing ‘private tyrannies’ (p. 121) at the expense of the public good. Human security is the book’s underlying theme, as it belongs in a series on ‘Human security in the global economy’. In Wilkin’s definition, human security requires more than satisfying basic needs. It is about dignity and autonomy and the chance to make informed decisions based on rational and unconstrained debate. Because communication industries and infrastructures shape world order at the local, national, regional and global levels, they are decisive in either promoting or undermining human security. And since the communication landscape is dominated by privately owned corporations whose objectives conflict with public needs, inequalities between people with power and those without are widened.
It is an argument based on ample empirical evidence, most of it gathered by other authors. Wilkin, a specialist in International Relations, researched the Internet coordination of anti-capitalist protest at the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle in 1999. For this book, however, he relies heavily on published material, notably from the United Nations Development Programme’s annual Human development report, Edward Herman’s and Robert McChesney’s path-breaking study The global media, and other works by a roll call of leading communications scholars. Upon this synthesis of secondary sources Wilkin rests his exposition of fundamental flaws in the neoliberals’ account of the information society, which sees detached and egotistic individuals freely picking and choosing from innumerable communication options on offer in the capitalist marketplace. Given the book’s conception, and its extensive contents page, it may not matter much that it has such a skimpy and arbitrary index.

There is, moreover, a lot to be said for the circumspect way Wilkin adopts the globalization model advanced by Richard Falk in a 1993 collection edited by Jeremy Brecher and others. This presents a bifurcated process in which globalization-from-above (by transnational business and political elites) is challenged by the globalization-from-below activities of civil society groups. Wilkin highlights the interpenetration of these two supposedly separate trends by demonstrating that civil society includes many actors who, due to their genesis and funding, serve the very same interests that shape globalization from above.

Naomi Sakr, University of Westminster, UK

International and national political economy, economics and development


International Political Economy (IPE) is a growth industry—more and more undergraduates are studying it and research on the field is proliferating—and yet there is a dearth of historically informed and theoretically grounded introductory texts. Robert Gilpin and Joan Spero’s admirable work notwithstanding, no one has offered a text which places IPE firmly within the academic field in which it was founded and to which it owes the greatest debt, that is, International Relations (IR). Wilson and Economides have co-authored a book which rectifies this shortcoming and which is an outstanding introduction to the issues and institutions of contemporary IPE.

Perhaps the greatest strength of Economides and Wilson’s book is that it is avowedly political in its analysis. Both authors are self-confessed non-experts in IPE—Wilson’s interests are in IR theory and Economides’ in foreign policy analysis—hence they are well suited to explain that which is central to IPE and yet too often left out: the political dimension and ideological colouring of international economic relations. While IPE emerged in the 1970s to address the intellectual ‘mutual neglect’ of international economics and international politics, increasingly IPE is moving away from the political and towards the economic and technocratic. Such movements detract from the subject’s intellectual appeal and policy relevance and Wilson and Economides do well to remind us of IPE’s original purpose.

The book is set out in three parts. The first considers the classic triptych of approaches to IPE—liberalism, nationalism and Marxism—in an approachable and historically grounded fashion. The book then turns its attention to the institutions of the international economic order. Here it considers Bretton Woods and international monetary arrangements, the institutions of international trade and the question of North–South disparity. Finally, the third part examines some of the key emerging issues of IPE with attention paid to aid, sanctions, regionalism and globalization.

The economic factor in international relations is not a flawless work. In general the text would have benefited from a little editorial finessing, chapters end rather abruptly and occasionally lack the sign-posting which would help the reader navigate the work. Furthermore, it seems strange not
Book reviews

to have given international production a more systematic consideration, more specifically, the
neglect of multinational corporations is somewhat remiss. The book is the product of a series
of lectures that the authors gave at the London School of Economics and, at times, this pedagogical
origin is a little too evident.

Having said that, this book is a first-rate introduction to IPE. Its other virtue, beyond its
recuperation of the politics of IPE, is that it is written without an American accent. The book
neither retreats into anti-American barbs nor uncritically praises the benevolent hegemon, rather
it takes a critical and an international perspective on the subject. This internationalism
is refreshing in what is still very much an American social science. In sum, Economides and Wilson
have written an ideal introduction to IPE—it breaks the ice for the student in an engaging and
historically informed manner which avoids the patronising style of American textbooks and the
obsession with technical detail of more recent IPE offerings.

Nick Bisley, University of Reading, UK

Globalism: the new market ideology. By Manfred B. Steger. Lanham, MD: Rowman &

Globalization and the European political economy. Edited by Steven Weber. New York:

Approaching globalization from absolutely opposite methodological directions, the collision of
these two books is instructive. Steger argues that public perceptions of globalization (social process)
are shaped by a narrative of globalism (ideology) advanced by globalists (neo-liberal agents), who
use avenues in media and popular culture to present a simplified, idealized story at odds with the
lived experience and insecurity felt by citizens. Normatively, in showing how one agenda domin-
ates, Steger seeks to show how these ideas can be overturned in favour of a more egalitarian,
cosmopolitan world order. He successfully uses Ricoeur and Gramsci to develop a notion of
globalism as an ideology, then through a critical discourse analysis assesses both academic and
public discourses of globalization.

This is a potentially profitable step: the public debate is part of the globalization phenomenon,
and any attempt to exclude analysis of public debate and the exercise of ideological power is an
ideological move itself, imposing a veneer of objectivity on the neoliberal project. However,
Steger uses this as an excuse to lapse into a loose interpretative approach, positioning himself
within the debate but not explaining how that helps us to understand the phenomenon under
study—globalism as an ideology. Looking at how globalism is sold, the author analyses
’significant’ texts in which claims are put forth concerning the desirability of globalization, e.g.
globalization is a democratic, integrating force which is uncontrolled and unstoppable. Fine, we
have all seen such claims, but Steger assesses them on a totally unsystematic basis. With no
sampling strategy, we cannot know whether Steger hasn’t simply chosen phrases from texts to fit
his argument. This matters to his project: taking on globalism in an ad hoc style leaves him open
to the very claims of ‘distortion’ he levels at the globalists. Accepting the inevitability of one’s
subjectivity does not mean abandoning all hope of validity and reliability.

By contrast, Weber’s edited study is a deliberately simplistic, scientific exercise. The book
aims to assess what impact globalization has on European governance structures. That Euro-
pean governance structures may impact on globalization is not initially considered, for it would
complicate Weber’s Political Economy Null Hypothesis (PENH): beginning from institutional
equilibrium (dependent variable), globalization (independent variable) hits from outside the
system, and the new disequilibrium causes actors to mobilize and press for change using various
strategies, ultimately reshaping the institutional framework. Each chapter examines a case using
the analytic narrative method to test whether this reductive causal path bears any relation to
reality.
It soon becomes apparent that change is more complex. Actors don’t simply respond evenly to external pressures, rather responses vary from country to country, national political institutions mediate, external pressures are not legitimate—e.g. demands to ‘open up’ are rejected where social bargains hold—and to the author’s dismay, the globalization ‘variable’ turns out to be partly constituted from within Europe: ‘Unfortunately, the arrows go both ways.’ (p. 277) The collapse of his PENH model, Weber remarks, ‘is a powerful reminder that simple arguments can distort just as readily as they can reveal’ (p. 273). Weber has provided rigorous proof of the existence of the very distortions Steger is concerned with but cannot pin down. These two entertaining attempts are thus a useful stepping stone towards capturing the nature of globalization.

Ben O’Loughlin, New College, Oxford, UK.

Challenges of Globalization: ‘It’s global governance, stupid!’

In a globalizing world, global governance is becoming an increasingly urgent and complex problem. This, of course, depends on the definition of a globalizing world as well as on the definition of global governance. Both developments are not entirely new, rather it is the intensification of profound change that generates a difficult challenge in respect to the question of how to manage globalization in the twenty-first century.

The importance of a more effective global governance was shown in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in New York and Washington DC. In a globalizing world, new global challenges cannot be handled by national governments. This is true in terms of international terrorism, drug trafficking, money laundering. And it is a fact of life that a globalizing world needs more global economic governance. The Asian financial crisis in 1997–8, the Russian crisis in 1998, the collapse of the new economy in 2000, but also the breakdown of the WTO ministerial conference in December 1999 in Seattle, have clearly shown the need for more global economic governance.

Anybody interested in new challenges in global economic governance should read the excellent book edited by John J. Kirton and George M. von Furstenberg. This book is the sixth in Ashgate Publishing’s series on the ‘G8 and global governance’. This series began in 1998 ‘using the annual G8 summit as a catalyst for an edited volume that explores the central themes in the emerging dynamic of global governance’ (p. xv). In this current volume, the editors broadened the coverage of the G8 summit in three important ways. First, it analyses the changing international economic order and focuses on the efforts by a wide range of actors to determine the content and impact of the G8’s agenda. By doing so, the book puts emphasis on the traditional international political-economy pillars of finance and international trade, but also on the new digital economy. Second, the book addresses the major transformational forces currently at work, such as digital revolution, and it discusses the question of how the international community can work out an effective way of governing the global economy. Third, the book analyses in depth the question of international order and the role of international institutions.

This book begins with four papers focusing on ‘New challenges in global “new economy” governance’. Nicholas Bayne sets in his paper ‘Managing globalization and the new economy’, the broad foundation for the book by examining the process of globalization and the effort of the G8 to manage it from 1994. Thomas C. Lawton, in his paper entitled ‘The new global electronic economy’, deals with the corporate foundations of, and governmental response to, this ‘new economy’. He also discusses the problem of governance in the era of the global electronic economy and the consensus, confusion and contradictions surrounding regulation and control of the Internet and e-commerce. In Chapter 4, ‘Creating rules for the global information economy: the United States and G8 leadership’, Michele Mastroeni looks in detail at the origins and success of the US approach to fashioning this new regime. George M. von Furstenberg, in his paper
‘Transparent end-use technology and the changing nature of security threats’, critically examines the meaning and implications of transparency, and the new international financial architecture.

The ‘New directions in global financial governance’ are analysed by four other authors. In his paper ‘Continuity and change in the global monetary order’, Sébastien Dallaire examines the discourse and policies over the past 20 years of the G7 and the IMF and analyses the international development discourse. The task of modernizing the mechanisms of global financial governance, and especially Japan’s role, is being explored by Saori N. Katada in her paper ‘Japan’s approach to shaping a new international financial architecture’. In Chapter 8, ‘Japan, the Asian economy, the international financial system, and the G8’, Kunihiko Ito continues this exploration of the Japanese and Asian approach to international financial system reform. It seems like Japan moved, in the last ten years, from a role of solving global financial problems to a role of being the source of these problems. This raises the question: in a rapidly globalizing world, where will the centre of global economic governance effectively lie? John J. Kirton addresses this question in Chapter 9 ‘Guiding global economic governance: the G20, the G7, and the International Monetary Fund at century’s dawn’.

Part III of this book, ‘New directions in global trade governance’, broadens the focus to examine the second traditional domain of the global economy, i.e. international trade. In his paper ‘The G7 and multilateral trade liberalisation: past performance, future challenges’, Nicholas Bayne reviews the contributions made by the G7 and G8 Summits thus far to strengthening the international trading system. In Chapter 11, ‘Securing multilateral trade liberalisation: international institutions in conflict and convergence’, Theodore H. Cohn examines the important role played in multilateral trade relations by the OECD, the G7, and the Quad, and the relationship of these institutions to the GATT/WTO.

Last but by no means least, Heidi K. Ullrich explores in Chapter 12, ‘Stimulating trade liberalisation after Seattle: G7/8 leadership in global governance’, the role of the G8 in stimulating trade liberalization in the post-Seattle environment. In this excellent paper, Ullrich analyses the events leading up to the Seattle disaster and the sources of stalemate. She argues in favour of a more active and more adequate leadership role of the G8 in global governance to stimulate further trade liberalization. This, of course, is true for other issues of the G8 agenda as well. And it seems that the political momentum is moving in this direction. Two examples: the French minister of the economy, finance and industry, Laurent Fabius, argued in favour of a more responsible leadership role of the G7/8 to tackle the causes of world poverty (see his op-ed piece in the Financial Times, 8 February 2002). And the British Prime Minister Tony Blair increased the pressure on the G8 to help open markets for the poorest nations.

We are living in the age of globalization, and politics is nowadays global. We have to think of ‘Sept. 11th’, of the threats of weapons of mass destruction, of religious fanaticism, of climate change, of global financial and economic crises, but also about the challenges of a growing digital divide and the challenges of a grotesque global inequality. All those global challenges are raising the profound question that is being dealt with in this superb book—and that is: how to manage globalization in the twenty-first century. We are living at the beginning of a new era with new opportunities and new challenges. The international community will have to find answers to these daunting questions. And everybody interested in this subject will find a lot of information, detailed analysis and some answers but also new questions concerning the new directions in global economic governance in this excellent book.

Bernhard May, German Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin, Germany


The 14 papers in this collection investigate Leslie Armijo’s thesis that type of capital inflow affects the pace of transition to democracy. More specifically, she argues that most types of inflow tend to support the extant political system but that portfolio capital, because of its volatility, can retard
a democratic transition that is already underway. A few papers lend support to this proposition. Mary Ann Haley argues that foreign capital does not support labour—the group most interested in democratic transition. And Tony Porter thinks that developing countries and non-governmental organizations are usually excluded from decision-making on international standards in, for example, the IMF, NAFTA and ‘international investment agreements’ (but it is not made clear how this relates to democracy at the state level).

In fact, most essays find precious little support for Armijo’s hypothesis. These can be grouped around Randall Stone’s counter-thesis that international portfolio-capital disciplines governments to adopt sound economic policies, especially the containment of inflation. As historically high inflation is the enemy of democracy, the adoption of such economic policies is a vital step on the road to democracy.

Supporting the ‘foreign capital as a sound disciplinarian’ view, Stefano Manzocchi makes the important point that there is little evidence that capital flight from East Asia in 1997 was caused by an economically capricious contagion that destroyed sound domestic economic environments. Similarly, William Gruben argues that inconsistent domestic economic policies brought on the Mexican devaluation of 1994. Carlos Elizondo Mayer-Serra writes that ‘in Mexico in 1994 the “structural power of capital was, on balance, a force promoting cautious but genuine political democratization”’ (p. 134). Walter Molano, in his comparison of the Latin American and East Asian economic crises of the 1990s, puts them down to ‘macroeconomic mistakes’ that were punished by capital markets. Danny Unger argues that after the 1997 financial crisis in Thailand the new government was supported by ‘big business’ and the middle class—‘those groups most apt to be able to strengthen democracy in Thailand’ (p. 296). And in Vietnam, Jonathan Houghton sees the Communist Party still in total control. Jeffrey Winters thinks that the ebb and flow of international capital in Indonesia has had little effect on its democratic institutions.

Peter Kingstone thinks that Brazil’s governing elites—either elected or military—during the twentieth century have used foreign capital for as long as possible to reward themselves without much deepening of the country’s shallow and ‘inchoate’ democracy. But he does not think that foreign capital has been instrumental in quashing latent democratic tendencies—they simply did not exist in Brazil. Also, John Echeverri-Gent, illustrating with India, argues that the argument that financial globalization curtails democracy ‘extrapolates from an obscure base-line founded on unexamined assumptions about the nature of financial regimes prior to globalization’ (p. 207).

Armijo, in the concluding chapter, admits that ‘most developing countries would be worse off in the absence of foreign capital inflows whatever their form’ (p. 329), but she remains largely unpersuaded. Indeed, one has to wonder whether a succession of case-studies is the best way to examine the functional relationship between democratization and capital inflow. Various regression analyses of the determinants of capital inflow have been conducted, some using ‘political stability’ as a regressor. In principle, the latter can be made the dependent variable with capital inflow among a suitably chosen set of independent variables.

Paul Hallwood, University of Connecticut, USA


Globalization holds a central place in contemporary political thinking and writing. Yet, it often remains an unanalysed deus-ex-machina. Alternatively, discussions get lost in opaque technical details. This book is different, and therefore deserves our attention. It analyses one particular aspect of globalization: financial globalization. And it argues, in comprehensible terms, that a ‘Tobin tax’ could be used to counter the drawbacks of globalization. Most significantly, as indicated by the title, Patomäki is convinced that a Tobin tax could be used to democratize the globalization process.

The initial three chapters explain the need for such a leverage. Patomäki analyses the ‘global financial market’ as a social system. He shows why this social system makes financial market actors behave according to short-term horizons and leads them to push for the deregulation of finance.
following a closed logic of financial orthodoxy. Patomäki traces the influence these actors have on the rapidly-growing direct and structural power (chapters 2 and 3 respectively), which globalization confers upon them. He then points out that the consequences are opprobrious. Most governments find themselves in a catch-22 situation: ‘if you do not back the financial actors up, crises are more likely and also likely to be more severe. If you back them up, you are encouraging them to take excessive risks, thereby creating conditions for crises (besides paying for the gambling of these financial actors)’ (p. 24).

This general analysis of the social system of international finance stands on its own and can be read as a critical discussion of the globalization of international finance. It is designed to (and does) convince the reader that those who express serious misgivings about financial globalization have good reasons. But, even if this point is well taken and exceptionally well-argued, it is a classic and the originality of the book lies elsewhere: in the attempt to address the question of alternatives, and of the Tobin tax in particular (chs 4–7).

The tax, Patomäki argues, is technically and politically feasible. Technically, Patomäki points to the possibility of using the electronic organisation of forex trading for taxing by ‘writing a few lines into the existing programmes’; he points to the difference the level and degree of universality of taxation will make and suggests ways of limiting ‘tax-evasion’. Politically, Patomäki argues that the Tobin tax is feasible even if resistance against it is strong and even if all countries do not participate; it is feasible as long as there is a core group of countries (not necessarily comprising the US and the UK) supporting it. Finally, Patomäki points to the emancipatory potential of the tax. A Tobin Tax Organisation set up to manage the tax could eventually be used as a basis for the construction of a more democratic international financial order.

This discussion of the Tobin tax as a leverage for democratization is an impressive accomplishment. It ventures into a field that is in quick evolution. The tax has been on the agenda both of the French National Assembly and the EU finance ministers since this book came out. Moreover, this book has to deal with complex and contradictory information about practical details, such as whether or not electronic trading is a help or a hindrance for controllers. And finally, the author must engage in speculative argumentation. Yet, Patomäki is convincing in his handling of these inherent difficulties. By presenting solidly grounded arguments, the book makes a constructive move forward in the debate about democratizing (financial) globalization.

Anna Leander, Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, Copenhagen, Denmark


This book makes an important contribution to the continuing debates on pension reforms in the context of developing and transition economies (DEs). While not containing detailed empirical results, this book should be of interest to anyone involved in policy-making (reforming or establishing pension programmes) and pension fund investment in DEs, or those looking to understand the practicalities and structure behind various pension schemes.

Pension reform is a highly debated topic because of the huge fiscal burden of government-run pension schemes. This book addresses questions related to pension revolution and its different pillars, whether pension reform models—which require a significant role for private defined-contribution pension funds—provide DEs with an optimum pension system (providing social welfare and forming an engine of economic development). This study specifically advocates the appropriateness of public management of funded systems in DEs with relatively large formal sectors, in an attempt to create a sustainable ‘pensions in development’ approach.

One of the most critical issues in pension reform strategy is to reduce fiscal costs for the state, giving way to the fully funded system. The notion that Pay-As-You-Go schemes will decline in importance over time and the fully funded system would then gradually emerge as the dominant system continues to remain the key theme in the policy circles of many countries around the world. In this regard, it is the transition period which could remain as a debatable issue in
individual countries, depending on the extent of the fiscal problems facing each country. The book under review does not touch upon these issues while talking about different pension systems.

This study lacks by not paying much attention to the changes in pension systems on the macro economy, such as indicators like national savings, investment and growth. Essentially, the authors provide a historical documentation of different pension schemes in many DEs and suggest expanded options without any quantitative prognosis of impact assessments. However, by providing an assessment and factual review of what various countries around the world have done, this book could assist decision-makers in forming an effective and viable pension policy.

Finally, the authors discuss the role of pension funds in emerging capital markets, drawing policy implications for DEs. The trajectories of funded national pensions systems and national financial systems are perceived as closely entwined. Currently, it is widely assumed that the private management of funded retirement savings schemes is crucial if positive capital market impacts are to be achieved. The key nexus between pension funds, both public and private, and capital markets, relates to their impact more on bond markets rather than on highly volatile equities.

Given this close nexus between pension fund and bond market, the choice between public and private pension and retirement savings provision is clearly ambiguous. The authors argue that continuing public, rather than increasingly private, management of pension fund assets remains the most sensible, certainly potentially the safest, option. However, by not considering the analytical macroeconomic consequences arising from different pension schemes, the book falls well short of providing a helpful quantitative treatment of a growing issue in world development.

Sushanta K. Mallick, Royal Institute of International Affairs, UK


In 2000, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) produced a report entitled Corporate social responsibility: making good business sense. In it, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is defined as ‘the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life’. 85 member countries and many prominent multinational corporations participated in the working group that produced the report. One Shell senior executive was co-chairman of this group. At first glance, what could be wrong with big multinational corporations acting to ‘improve the quality of life’ for all? Corporations would simply voluntarily (or involuntarily) have certain ‘socially responsible obligations’ imposed on them.

David Henderson argues in Misguided virtue: false notions of corporate social responsibility that these obligations, as embodied in CSR, do much more harm than good. For Henderson, CSR represents a clear break from traditional corporate value-setting and is a much more systematic and far-reaching doctrine that many top-level managers are now accepting as an article of faith. By assembling an array of reports from the OECD, WBCSD, UN and many big multinationals, Henderson paints CSR as a policy mired in ill-defined terms and irresponsible thinking. One example is the idea that companies should have a ‘triple bottom line’, where economic, social and environmental goals all factor into a company’s financial statements. Yet what would the criteria be for achieving these goals and who would set them? Uncontroversial answers to these questions could only arise if a broad consensus were to be reached among governments, special interest groups, corporations and their shareholders. Such a far-reaching consensus has not materialized and is not likely to materialize soon.

Henderson’s most salient point is that CSR could have potentially dire consequences in the developing world, a place where CSR is supposed to be the most beneficial. An implemented CSR policy like uniform international labor standards would actually reduce welfare for workers by raising corporate costs. If a company is compelled to pay $x more per hour for labour in developing countries, it will have to employ less of it to keep costs from rising. Such standards would be additionally costly for businesses because they would have to devote resources to CSR.
enforcement. When revenues are diverted to such activities, profits are lowered. The costs of lower profits to people in the developing world is the value of what could have been produced with these profits (e.g. greater spending on technology and education). One well-documented case of CSR undermining sales, profits and share value occurred with Levi Strauss, where managers failed to prove that their company could be driven by social values in addition to profits. A result of Levi’s attempt at more socially responsible behaviour was the closing of many plants in the developing world.

*Misguided virtue* straddles a fine line between vigorous critique and polemics when itemizing all the ills of CSR. However, the author is highly persuasive in calling into question lofty and, perhaps, unrealistic expectations in terms of corporate behaviour. It is too soon to tell whether CSR is simply a phase and/or a public relations ploy. Nonetheless, *Misguided virtue* is a striking indictment that should cause any manager to think twice about unquestioning acceptance of CSR.

Matthew J. Rosenberg, Council on Foreign Relations, USA

**Energy and environment**


This book is part of the series ‘The political economy of global interdependence’ edited by Thomas D. Willett. It addresses the behaviour of political actors in the international oil market since 1971, focusing on the issue of what determines cooperative behaviour among oil producing countries. While much of the book is concerned with OPEC, the behaviour of non-OPEC players is also considered and there are chapters on their links to OPEC, illustrated by a case-study of Norway. Following an introduction that outlines the methodology, three chapters cover the market and political context, and the price and production policies of OPEC. There is a chapter on Saudi Arabia entitled ‘A hegemonic power’ and a chapter that addresses the question ‘OPEC: a successful cartel’. The book concludes by drawing together the findings of the previous chapters and relating them to International Political Economy.

The book is something of a disappointment. Part of the reason is that it is framed around the methodology of International Relations and its more recent offshoots. This turns into a field day for jargon, abstractions and some very strained analysis. To be fair, specialists in these areas of methodology may well find this fascinating. However, for us lesser mortals it is hard going, repetitive and borders on the turgid. The book reads like an over-zealous PhD thesis which demands ever further links to the theory to ensure academic respectability. Furthermore, at the end of the process, it is not obvious that anything particularly new or interesting emerges despite the methodological gobbledygook. This is particularly so since his approach ultimately generates a series of ‘explanatory propositions’ which would seem self-evident to most economists.

As part of the process of using the methodological framework, the author covers various aspects of the history of the international oil industry. This is based largely upon secondary sources. While the range of these sources used is extremely impressive and comprehensive, the result is less than satisfactory. This reviewer has a great many points of disagreement with the author on who did what to whom and why. For example, he claims that OPEC was not formed ‘… as a result of any crisis’ (p. 49). This reviewer would suggest that the cut in posted prices which sired OPEC was perceived otherwise by the governments at the time, whose revenue subsequently fell and could have fallen further at the whim of the oil companies. While such differences of opinion are perfectly reasonable and make for an interesting debate, there are too many heroic generalizations scattered throughout the text. These are less acceptable. For example, the author asserts that: ‘The relationship between consumer and producer countries has a political–ideological dimension, as key oil producers are former colonies of the consumer countries’ (p. 47). Yet of the 15 major producers in 1965 listed in Figure 2.2, only four could be described as such (neglecting the US!), while another three were subject to mandate powers or long-term
Energy and environment

treaty relations. Of the 15 for 1995 in Figure 2.3, only three were former colonies and two subject to long-term treaty relations. There are also irritating errors. For example, the author asserts (after pointing out the heavy concentration of oil reserves in the Middle East in 1995) that: ‘The coal reserves were located in major consuming countries like the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany’ (p. 37). Yet the last two countries accounted for less than seven per cent of global coal reserves. The author also perpetuates the myth that it was OAPEC which instituted the Arab oil embargo of 1973. While, to be fair, this error was compounded by a series of newspaper advertisements from the Arab League at the time, claiming it as an OAPEC initiative, it is a view which OAPEC itself has long been unhappy about and has tried to rectify.

On balance, the book contributes relatively little other than an application of International Relations theory. It is too complex and theoretical to be recommended as an introduction and the history offers little that is new or insightful to the industry specialist.

Paul Stevens, CEPMLP, University of Dundee, UK


‘What are we to make of the current debate on climate change?’ With this question Eileen Claussen opens this edited book summarizing the work written by experts and previously published by the Pew Center on Climate Change. As we have to expect from Eileen Claussen, President of the Pew Center and previously Assistant Secretary of State in charge of the climate negotiations, this book provides you with all the information necessary to answer this opening question. Despite being sent to print directly following the failure of the Sixth Conference of Parties in The Hague (COP-6), in November 2000, and the US withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol in March 2001, this book still manages to focus on the positive and practical.

A year on, the world looks very different: in July 2001 the Bonn Agreement was reached, and in November 2001 the Marrakesh Accords sealed this political agreement in solid legal text. Many governments of industrialized countries are preparing for formal ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, many of them aiming for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg. The Kyoto Protocol could thus be a reality by the end of 2002, leaving the US alone and on the sideline.

Climate change: science, strategies, and solutions is very clearly structured. The book begins where it should, with the impact of science and climate change. Then it moves on to the strategies around the world and the economics of action (and inaction). Before turning to the latest developments, both in the international negotiations and in the US legislature, the book optimistically devotes several chapters to innovative solutions.

The book describes the science as convincing and alarming. Combining the effects of greenhouse gases, aerosols (cooling) and natural changes, the ‘observed climate changes are consistent with changes predicted by climate models’ (p. 7). Climate science should help policy-makers decide which targets to adopt, and to which climate change to adapt.

Many strategies exist to mitigate climate change. But what works? While in developing countries there is often a lack of technological options, in the industrialized countries, political and cultural problems restrict action. ‘Twelve years after former President George Bush stated: We “must have a clear commitment to emission reductions”, the United States has barely started discussing exactly what such a commitment would entail’ (p. 86), the book gives as an example. In the European Union, similarly, environmental concerns were approached with caution in some countries afraid of losing jobs in the coal mining industry and afraid of energy diversity after the oil crises of the 1970s (p. 89).

The book goes into detail on the strategies and problems in the main industrialised country regions and looks into the options in developing countries. While the EU’s minus eight per cent Kyoto target is likely to be difficult, ‘the political commitment to reduce [greenhouse gas] emissions … is strong’ (p. 111). The US government is described as ‘divided and gridlocked on
the climate issue’ and the public as ‘confused’ (p. 116) at the start of 2001, making President Bush’s withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol understandable. ‘Changing the definition of the problem [from climate change to sustainable development] … may be the only option that will persuade many of the developing countries to buy into the solution’ (p. 127), ignoring that it is the US and not the developing countries that is disregarding its commitments!

Many of the problems boil down to economics, according to the book. A simple cost-benefit analysis is often not possible. The benefits of acting on climate change are difficult to assess, the adverse effects of climate change, the costs of these adverse effects and the distributional effects are very uncertain. An extra difficulty is the intergenerational equity concerns for the long term. However, economic models give very different costs estimates, with the highest being a factor of ten or more than the lowest.

Finally, the book gives an excellent—albeit one year old—analysis of the current developments. The description of the US climate action is very enlightening for non-American readers, explaining the roles of the important players, the real meaning of various resolutions and amendments, etc. However, while Bush has been silent on any alternative so far, the debate in the US has really come to life in the last year. Before COP-6 Parties were looking ‘to distort the mechanisms’ to suit their targets. One important underlying factor for the failure for the talks at COP-6 was a ‘philosophical gulf’ between the EU and the US. The US focuses on short-term cost effective measures, believing that technologies will bring salvation in the longer term; the EU aims for long-term behavioural changes that would curb fossil fuel use.

‘It will be some time before clear forward momentum develops’ (p. 357) is the book’s slightly pessimistic analysis. ‘The future of the Protocol rests … on what alternative the Bush Administration proposes’, adding that ‘the increasingly strong science demands a global framework that (1) achieves real emission reductions, (2) is market-based and cost-effective, (3) can be sustained over a long period of time, and (4) includes, at some point in time, all nations that emit significant quantities of greenhouse gases’ (p. 359). The Kyoto Protocol meets these criteria, the international community recognised that, and has agreed the Bonn Agreement and the Marrakesh Accords, creating the legal framework for Kyoto.

Christiaan Vrolijk, Royal Institute of International Affairs, UK


This is the second volume in a series on environmental change and foreign policy. The first, produced by the same editor, covered ‘Climate change and American foreign policy’. Its successor lacks a similar concentration upon a particular policy area. Instead we have ten substantive essays without a common theoretical or empirical focus other than a concern with some aspect of US external environmental policy since the Nixon presidency. The net result is inevitably partial and pluralist in character. As the editor admits in his introduction: ‘The short conclusion of this book is that there are many active forces shaping US international environmental policy’ (p. 34).

In a book such as this, one often wishes that the contributors would engage with one another or at least with a common problem. There are, indeed, some interesting juxtapositions. In the section on national security, Braden Allenby, a Vice-president of AT & T and former Director of Energy and Environment at Lawrence Livermore, proposes a four-fold taxonomy for environmental security with resource, energy, biological and ‘traditional environmental dimensions’. The purpose is to ‘generate an analytical framework that supports the evolution of the environmental security concept into operational programs and projects’ (p. 56). The next essay by Jon Barnett has very different origins. Barnett provides a critical and sometimes amusing reading of the environmental security aspects of the 1998 US National Security Strategy. This highlights the ‘discursive tactics’ of the official authors and concludes that: ‘The US government’s assessment of risks is far less a matter of credible scientific assessment and far more a matter of the politics of identity and Otherness’ (p. 85). The following chapter by Douglas W. Blum constitutes a brief case-study of
Energy and environment

the way in which US commercial energy and geopolitical objectives towards the Caspian Sea obstruct sustainable development.

The next six essays are grouped under the inclusive heading of ‘Domestic and International Politics’. Srin Sitaraman re-tells the story of the development of the ozone regime in terms of three levels: local, national and international. John Barkdull provides a close account of the Nixon administration’s advocacy of an ocean dumping regime and reminds the reader of the former’s, usually forgotten, green credentials. Barkdull’s theoretical conclusion favours a state-centric approach but one in which the role of policy entrepreneurs and the interagency review process assume major importance.

In what may well prove to be the most significant essay in the book, Robert Falkner departs from both the state-centric and structuralist/Marxist interpretations of the role of the corporate sector in US environmental policy. Replacing them with a ‘business conflict’ model, he provides a fascinating outline analysis of the corporate role in the development of ozone, climate and biosafety regimes. Not the least of the benefits of using business conflict assumptions is the revelation of the space which may be available to governments to manage events through the exploitation of corporate rivalries and conflicts of interest.

The remainder of the section comprises some quite specialized contributions. Morton Boas writes a detailed account of how American NGOs were able to influence the policy of the multilateral development banks towards sustainability. Elizabeth de Sombre’s contribution is of interest because it shows that, contrary to much accepted wisdom, the use of trade sanctions (even when contrary to WTO rules) can be effective in changing behaviour. The specific instances analysed involve US action with respect to whaling, and the tuna–dolphin and turtle–shrimp cases. Whaling is the subject of Kirsten Fletcher’s chapter, which chronicles the recent trials and tribulations of maintaining US leadership at the International Whaling Commission.

Finally, in a separate normative section the editor, Paul Harris, enters a plea for the United States to raise the sights of its environmental policy above the pursuit of short-run economic and energy interests. ‘In short, by doing what is right—by doing what is equitable—in its relations with the rest of the world, the United States can best protect its national interests and ensure its future status as a great power’ (p. 260). This conclusion hardly follows from the rather mixed but often useful contents of the preceding pages, but it is one that will be widely endorsed, except perhaps in George Bush’s Washington!

John Vogler, Keele University, UK


Around ten years after the breakdown of communist regimes in the East, William Chandler takes stock of what has been achieved in the field of energy and environment in that region. In the eight chapters of this book, Chandler comprehensively covers developments in the energy sector, including end-use efficiency, nuclear safety and security, petroleum and gas industry and the coal industry.

Chandler finds that macroeconomic reform and large-scale privatization have dominated the transition process in the region. Changes in energy consumption were achieved mainly through changes in the supply side, and hardly on the energy demand side. As a result, energy price reform could not be effective, leading to high rates of non-payment rather than a rectification of relative energy prices. Chandler suggests that in the next phase of reform, energy efficiency programmes could enable the consumer to improve their economic prospects while enabling them to pay bills when energy prices rise. Inspired by Kornai, the famous Hungarian economist, he calls this ‘creating a safety net’.

Although the initial breakdown of economic production took place across the entire region, countries have performed differently during these ten years of reform. For example, while Belarus has fallen into dictatorship, few other countries in the Far East have followed a similar path. Russia
and Ukraine’s economic downturn has only stabilized in recent years; energy efficiency has continued to decline. The frontline EU accession countries, Hungary, Czech Republic, Latvia and Poland, however, have made better progress. Energy intensity in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic has fallen by one-fifth, thus de-coupling economic growth and energy use. Chandler thinks that institution building is key in the next generation of reform, in order to turn around developments in all countries in the region. In his words, ‘[the] first priority is creating the institutions that all western energy markets take for granted but that are essential to make markets work’ (p. 219).

Chandler mainly focuses on climatic change when discussing the state of the environment in the East. Issues such as increased deforestation under transition are not addressed. Local and regional pollution is only considered in passing, although the energy sector is the biggest contributing sector. Environmental hot spots are commonly located around centres of heavy industry, and health and environmental consequences persist. The handling of hazardous waste, including nuclear waste, poses an increasing problem in a transition environment that is notoriously short of financial resources. Touching on these issues more comprehensively could have benefited the book. Chandler’s arguments are occasionally somewhat anecdotal. He claims, for example, that Russia’s post-communism crisis has been more pronounced than in Romania and Bulgaria. This, he argues, is reflected in the fact that in Russia ‘workers in underwear factories are sometimes paid in bras in lieu of wages’ (p. 14).

Taken as a whole, however, this book gives a unique, comprehensive and very readable overview of the transition process in the formerly communist countries as it relates to energy and the environment.

Fanny Missfeldt, UNEP Collaborating Centre on Energy and Environment, Denmark

Europe


Professor Helen Wallace has been responsible for a very ambitious research programme, the ESRC-funded ‘One Europe or several?’ She was in charge of its inception and management for the main part of the programme’s five-year span, until she left for the European University Institute in Fiesole, Italy, a natural career move for someone who must be considered the UK’s leading scholar of European integration. This edited volume is the first to emerge from the programme, and it has been closely followed by a special number of the Journal of common market studies (Vol. 39, No. 4). The book consists of sixteen chapters, which reflect the diversity of the programme itself. Each chapter is written by a scholar who is either actively involved in an aspect of the research programme or one of its projects, or was involved in the early, collective process of establishing the core research questions and boundaries.

The programme is timely, and the ESRC has rightly stimulated core academic research in this most important and enduring area of public interest. West European integration was instigated and nurtured during the Cold War. The end of the Cold War meant that the status quo had to be re-examined as the dust settled. The emancipation of eastern Europe has forced western Europe to look to its eastern borders, while the Soviet Union, whose relation to the western European integrative project has been a shaping (but significantly under-researched) force, has vanished. The United States, too, must reassess its policies within NATO, and towards the European Union. The past decade has witnessed élites, international organizations, and peoples grappling with this transformation in Europe. The project thus confronts a rich diversity of historical experience, as well as policy challenges, and it has to address still-moving targets.
Europe

A reading of this volume, and the web site (at www.one-Europe.ac.uk), reveals that the project has three principal strands. The first is a causal proposition: Wallace suggests that ‘deep’ western European integration has been shaped by a blend of functionality (that integration could help actors—mainly states—do something that they could not otherwise do alone); by territory; and by affiliation (identity and ideological) factors. The second strand confronts the extent to which pan-Europeanism can or should combine with the polity-in-the-making, which is how many have constructed the EU. The third strand of the project deals with the domestic consequences of the institutionalisation of western Europe. Or, to put it another way, it seeks to observe the extent to which the institutions, which actors created, now shape those actors’ own behaviour. The project is thus discursive as well as analytical. It draws richly upon Europe’s own past (welcome attention is given to Deutsch and Haas, who have often been more quoted than read); is inclusive, in that, for example, the NATO dimension is not ignored; and is multi-layered (perhaps almost to the point of over-complication). The programme does not simply pose one parsimonious research question, and the resulting research projects will not give one ‘answer’.

The book’s chapters are loosely linked around Wallace’s three dimensions of functionality, territoriality and affiliation. Wallace has persuaded her contributors to write with clarity, to allude to the main literature sources, and to challenge as they go. The book also moves along from the endless posing of questions that has typified much of the literature of the 1990s, and most of the chapters have something new to say. Some are rather specialized (O’Donnell, Radosevic), or are best-characterized by their provocative tone (Amin). Others set out a research agenda (Smith, Rainnie and Dunford, Cram). The chapter by William Paterson and Charlie Jeffrey is one of the most authoritative and pertinent in the collection, perhaps due to Paterson’s own close involvement with the initiative, which led to this programme being established.

In another chapter of Interlocking dimensions, Lawrence Freedman explains how the EC’s brief and unfulfilled belief in the ‘power of virtuous example’ (p. 220) to its neighbours, soon became a question of what ‘those within the zone of stability are prepared to do for those without’ (p. 228). Neil Winn and Christopher Lord dip deeply into this latter question in EU foreign policy beyond the nation-state. The volume is an examination of the so-called ‘pillarisation’ of the EU since the Maastricht Treaty, and is constructed around three case-studies of Joint Actions (a mechanism for doing something within the Common Foreign and Security Policy). The fieldwork for the book was largely carried out in 1997, and examines the administration of Mostar, the implementation of the Dayton Agreements and policy towards the Caucasus. The authors display great familiarity with the theoretical literature, and construct each case with care. However, the book is rather technical, and its conclusions are somewhat tentative. While detachment is to be welcomed, particularly in the coverage of such contentious problems as those of former Yugoslavia, the effect is to minimize the complexity of the situations, the traps of wider and uncertain international politics, and the impossibility of many of the EU’s general aspirations for its role in the region.

Anne Deighton, Wolfson College, University of Oxford, UK


Cyprus has been a popular tourist destination and a flashpoint in international politics for several decades. To many people, the troubled Mediterranean island has also been a synonym of ethnic division and a bone of contention between Greece and Turkey. During the Cold War, Cyprus was a place of superpower friction and polemics. Since 1994, when the European Council decided that ‘the next enlargement of the [European] Union will involve Cyprus’, the island has also become a major item on the agenda of EU politics. In fact, the Cyprus problem and the island’s forthcoming accession to the EU have become Siamese twins. They go together everywhere, as the island is getting considerable attention and presenting a challenge to policy-makers in Brussels and other capitals.

Chris Brewin’s book is a timely and welcome addition to the limited but growing literature on Cyprus–EU relations and European concerns in the eastern Mediterranean. It addresses some of
the major issues and challenges that the protracted Cyprus dispute presents to the EU and the ‘process of creating an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe’. The book is a synthesis of information, analysis and assessment that tries to be fair (something not easy to do) to the many issues and actors involved. The author does a reasonable job in trying to shed light and provide insight into the dynamics and complexities of local (Cypriot) divisive ethnopolitics, regional (Greek–Turkish) confrontational politics, and European integration politics and policies.

Although the book focuses primarily on the issues and developments of the 1990s, the author is generous in providing essential background that goes back to the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, and the early stage of its relations with the EEC, especially after the signing of the Association Agreement in 1972. The author also pays special attention to the close relations between the two Cypriot communities and their motherlands (Greece and Turkey) and the implications that cross-boundary ethnic bonds have had on the domestic politics, external relations and European orientation of the island. In this regard, the causes and consequences of the 1974 Greek coup against Makarios and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus get their share of attention. The policy of the EU towards Cyprus is analysed in the context of, and in connection with, Greek–Turkish relations and the search for stability in the eastern Mediterranean. In a brief chapter, the role of other international actors (including the UN, US, Russia, NATO and OSCE) is also examined in the light of the ongoing search for a settlement on Cyprus that will facilitate accession to the EU.

Overall, the book is a rounded presentation of the different positions and views held on the Cyprus conflict and its Mediterranean and European implications. In examining the case of Cyprus, the author inevitably raises broader issues and generates sensitivity on challenges facing the EU such as identity, collective responsibility and the future of European integration.

This is a carefully researched and well-written volume, which readers interested in the divisive past and the promising European future of Cyprus will find very useful. It will also be of great interest to scholars, students and policy-makers agonizing over the future of Greek–Turkish relations and EU enlargement in south-eastern Europe.

Joseph S. Joseph, University of Cyprus, Cyprus


Stephen Saxonberg has added an important, if challenging, contribution to the enduring question of the comparative causes and course of the 1989 revolutions. He employs a series of what he calls ‘partial theories’, neatly summarized in his conclusion, to explain the divergent paths taken specifically by the regimes in Poland, Hungary, East Germany and Czechoslovakia. These theories include political psychology, institutional analysis and especially a neo-Marxian approach. The latter’s class-based analysis makes for reliance on terms such as ‘ruling corporate entity’ for the ruling regimes and the ‘exploited classes’ for their subjects.

The Marxist analysis also gives heavy emphasis to the failure of socialist economic reforms, particularly in view of their inability to adapt to new technology. Within this approach he must, however, reject Marxist historicism because Marxism strictly interpreted would not countenance the emergence of a socio-economic system that was neither capitalist nor fully socialist, and the Soviet and East European regimes were certainly neither. An addendum provides a defence against workers in the post-communist era seemingly not following class interest. He also recognizes that while structures give actors their situational context in actor–structure dialectics, they do not decide the totality of behaviour.

This attention to systemic economic factors would benefit from a discussion of whether these systems were in fact reformable; otherwise the question remains not only of how but when these regimes would fall. The role of the US–Soviet arms race is also minimized. While this is a point that has some evidence moderating its influence on Gorbachev’s reforms, including towards eastern Europe, it might be beneficial to elaborate the view adopted here.
If there is perhaps one particularly contentious part to this book, it is the author’s assessment of the role of Gorbachev. Overall, he contends that the Soviet leader played no active role in creating change in Eastern Europe. A debatable stand itself, Saxonberg’s own reasoning, however, indicates some ambiguity on this central issue. He asserts that Gorbachev ‘continued his passive neutrality’ even in 1989 but also writes that in the circumstances of such change ‘it was not neutral to be neutral’ (p. 137). He also acknowledges by implication that Gorbachev had at least a strong role, if only by example. For instance, he writes ‘Gorbachev’s liberalization policies and passive foreign-policy stance increased expectations among the populace’ in Eastern Europe for change (p. 374). There is much, as Saxonberg appreciates, that remains unknown about Gorbachev’s intentions towards and interventions in eastern Europe.

The essence of this volume is the divergences within societies and regimes, and it offers background accounts of the self-perceived purposes of each regime and the degree of organization and unity among opposition forces and the choices made. Rather than using the more common method of examining the interaction between civil society and the state, he considers the ‘degree of liberalization reached by a society’ (p. 207). Poland and Hungary are seen as relatively similar, but the regimes are deemed to have adopted different strategies. Polish Communists disavowed even their own advisers by rejecting proportional representation, which would have, most likely, been more effective for the Communists than the actual outcome, which was the utter loss of all contestable seats to the opposition. The Hungarians, by contrast, advanced free elections in the expectation, one not entirely realized, that the opposition, lacking comparable well-known personalities to their Polish counterparts, would have fragmented results.

As Saxonberg recounts, Polish and Hungarian Communists were able to achieve a deal with opposition elites in a situation when the broad population was not mobilized. In these regimes, the leadership and opposition had already had some opportunity to become familiar with one another and even, as Saxonberg suggests, had come to trust each other. The East German and Czechoslovak leadership, by contrast, retained the idea that their purpose was to avert reform. Their societies shared the feature of mass movements but the East German movement had less developed leadership and became a near-spontaneous revolution, whereas the Czechoslovak movement had a coherent opposition and generally coordinated anti-regime protests. Unlike the Polish and Hungarian, the East German and Czechoslovak leaderships faced mass protests in 1989. The function of time also played a role—apart from any previous reformist instincts and initiatives, Polish and Hungarian communists had at least months to prepare for a rearrangement of power; their East German and Czechoslovak counterparts had only days. The country-studies are illustrated by a wide and impressive range of literature and many elite interviews; the Czechoslovak case also benefits from an even broader swath that includes student activists.

The fall challenges many notions, and fights to the last page against orthodoxy; Saxonberg explains that his manuscript was written before the 1996 publication of Linz and Stepan’s Problems of democratic transition and consolidation: southern Europe, South America and post-communist Europe. He defends his choice by stating that Linz and Stepan did not account for why the Eastern European regimes differed in their responses and demise.

This brief review should give some indication that for those concerned with regime change in eastern Europe or democratization more generally, there is much to be found in this substantial, enterprising and iconoclastic book.

Rick Fawn, University of St Andrews, UK


For nearly 45 years after the Second World War, the economies of East–Central Europe were largely closed off from the West. The communist states in the region conducted most of their trade with the Soviet Union and with one another. A number of factors—the dependence of the Eastern-bloc countries on Soviet supplies of energy and raw materials, the barriers these countries faced in the West (export controls, sanctions, etc.), the autarkic aspirations of the communist regimes, and, above all, the inability of centrally-planned economies to cope with the demands of the market—ensured that the role of East–Central Europe in the world economy was negligible. This pattern continued even when Romania expanded its trade ties with western countries in the late 1960s and 1970s, and when a few other East–Central European states, especially Poland and Hungary, borrowed heavily from western lenders in the 1970s to pay for imports of industrial and consumer goods. Overall, the East–Central European countries remained economically separated from the West.

The prolonged exclusion of the communist bloc from the international economic system caused surprisingly few, if any, adverse effects for the West, but it did have a highly detrimental impact in East–Central Europe. The communist states increasingly lagged behind the West in living standards, the development of high technology, and the competitiveness of most industries. By the time communism collapsed in East–Central Europe in 1989, the economic gap between the two halves of Europe was enormous.

The two books under review explore the post-1989 economic transformation of East–Central Europe, particularly the efforts of the former communist states to reintegrate their economies into the West. Alan Smith considers how the economic performance of the East–Central European countries (as reflected in their foreign trade) is linked with their prospective entry into the European Union (EU), and Elizabeth De Boer-Ashworth examines the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in the promotion of drastic economic reform in East–Central Europe, and compares it with what she sees as the more benevolent role of the EU. Although the two books are roughly the same length and were released by the same publisher (albeit in different series) for the same retail price, they are not of the same quality. Smith’s book is a valuable contribution to the huge literature on post-communist economic changes, whereas De Boer-Ashworth’s book is convoluted and unconvincing.

Smith, an economist at the University of London, is the author of many previous works on trade relations and economic policies in East–Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. A book he published in the early 1980s, The planned economies of eastern Europe, is still a good text to use in courses on comparative economics, the political economy of communism, and twentieth-century East–Central European history. In his latest book, Smith focuses on the reorientation of East–Central European trade in the 1990s and the changes that will be needed before the former communist states can enter the EU. He contends that membership in the EU will be infeasible for the East–Central European countries unless they take far-reaching steps to be competitive with the more advanced EU members, to eliminate absolute poverty, and to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). In the absence of such steps, prospective new members would be unable to ‘withstand competition within the EU and [to] comply with the requirements of the [EU’s] acquis communautaire’ (p. 188).

Smith analyses a comprehensive data base (COMEXT) on trade performance in ten East–Central European countries and finds that progress has been highly uneven. A few countries, notably Hungary, Slovenia and the Czech Republic, have attained a level nearly adequate for eventual membership in the EU, and a second group of countries—Poland, Estonia and Slovakia—rank closely behind. Trailing well in back of these countries are four other states that aspire to join
Europe

the EU: Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania. Smith notes that Lithuania is well ahead of the three others in this category, and that all four are in a better position vis-à-vis the EU than are certain countries not covered in his study, such as Albania and the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, none of which has any ‘firm expectation’ of ever being admitted into the EU (p. 175).

These disparities suggest that the already large gap between the fast reformers and slow reformers in East–Central Europe will increase as the EU enlarges. Countries like Hungary and Slovenia will gain the benefits of EU membership (free access to EU markets, net transfers from EU funds, and better prospects of attracting FDI) in the relatively near future, whereas countries like Romania and Bulgaria will languish outside the organization, perhaps indefinitely. The costs to these countries of being excluded from EU enlargement ‘will actually increase as they face greater problems in trading with former partners and become even less attractive to potential [foreign] investors’ (p. 190). Smith acknowledges that there is no way to prevent an ever wider gap between the new EU members and the non-members unless there is an ‘acceleration of domestic reforms’ in the countries that lag behind (p. 190). Although he briefly mentions a few steps the EU could take to facilitate reforms in those countries, he concedes that ‘the implementation of these measures will require reconsideration of EU budget priorities and will force the EU to reconsider its priorities’ (p. 191).

In contrast to Smith’s meticulous study, the book by De Boer-Ashworth, a research associate at the University of Limerick in Ireland, adds little to our understanding of post-1989 economic changes in East–Central Europe. Part of the problem is that the book needs a rigorous editing job. A great deal of superfluous information is included in most of the chapters; many passages are choppy or poorly constructed; and grammatical and syntactic errors crop up on every page. Even if the material were presented better, the arguments propounded by De Boer-Ashworth are highly problematic. She sets out to demonstrate that the adoption of sweeping economic reforms in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic was a ‘flawed’ and ‘damaging’ strategy (p. 183) that caused a ‘catastrophe’ (p. 94) in these countries. She repeatedly lambastes Jeffrey Sachs, Leszek Balcerowicz, the IMF, the World Bank and other ‘strong supporters of neo-classical/neoliberal economics’ who supposedly ‘accept human discomfort as a by-product of the transition from a command to a market-driven economy’ (pp. 93, 98). She claims that ‘the populations within Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary have consistently voted against the types of economic policies’ that were adopted (p. 180).

The problem with her portrayal is that the evidence is all to the contrary. Multiple regression analyses of the former communist states have shown that the countries that achieved the best economic performance were the ones that adopted and stuck with drastic reforms. The bolder the reforms, the better the outcome. The countries that chose to avoid meaningful reforms were mired in hardship and decline. The notion that Polish, Czech and Hungarian voters ‘consistently’ rejected free-market reforms is simply inaccurate. Changes of government occurred (as one would expect in any democracy), but the fringe parties that rejected market policies were invariably marginalized. De Boer-Ashworth rightly notes that the growth of income inequality created social tension in some former communist countries, but she conveniently fails to mention that inequality rose least in the countries that did the most to implement sweeping economic reforms. In the countries that eschewed far-reaching reforms, inequality increased precipitously.

It is regrettable that De Boer-Ashworth developed such a misguided set of arguments. Try as she might to explain away the economic success of Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic and to find a deus ex machina in the EU, the effort does not work. Readers seeking to understand the post-communist transformation of these countries and the role of the EU should bypass De Boer-Ashworth’s analysis and turn instead to Smith’s fine book.

Mark Kramer, Harvard University, USA
Book reviews


Without question, international factors have played a significant role in regime change in Eastern Europe. These range from Gorbachev’s programmes, which encouraged political reforms outside Soviet borders to today’s alphabet soup of organizations (EU, NATO, OSCE, PFP, IMF, EBRD, and numerous NGOs) promising to create an environment conducive to democracy, markets and security.

This book attempts to document various foreign influences in the region. Its nineteen chapters are a combination of country-specific contributions and those that assess one actor or issue area (e.g. IMF programs, ethnic conflict, crime, public opinion) across several countries. Theoretically, of course, a major problem is how to disentangle external influences from domestic ones. In the end, the editors are able to put forward some factors (issue area, international position of the state, domestic political context, level of external involvement) that help us assess when and how international factors matter.

If this list sounds ambiguous, that in large measure is a reflection of the complex reality on the ground. The primary contribution of this volume is that it shows how international factors have variable effects, and in so doing it frequently challenges the conventional wisdom that western actors or globalization are unequivocally positive forces for democracy. For example, we learn that ‘émigrés’ or migrants’ exposure to the West does not infuse them with democratic values; that IMF programs may be to blame for economic crises; that the West has often offered little support to would-be democratizers while overlooking egregious deviations from democratic practice in other states (e.g. Russia over Chechnya, former communists in Macedonia). Moreover, not all ‘target states’ in the region have been pushovers, who blindly complied with western dictates. The Czechs failed to implement some key reforms, communists and nationalists have staged a comeback in Romania, and the adoption of a ‘western course’ under Kuchma has not gone hand-in-hand with an improvement of Ukraine’s democratic record. Russia has, of course, (until very recently) backed away from early engagement with the West. In some cases, such as Poland and Hungary, the authors argue that market-oriented policies would have been adopted absent Western pressure, thus raising the question of how much an impact the West has had in these ‘success stories’. Indeed, what comes through in many of the cases is that the West remains a moral example, but that its conscious efforts to promote democratization have had some equivocal results (with some successes), either because outside actors have not been vigilant enough, or because outside interference has raised the hackles of domestic elites.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter is by Karen Smith, who examines the role of conditionality in promoting political change in the region. Although many might think that Eastern Europeans would submit to the carrots and sticks of the West, Smith is far more sceptical. She notes that ‘democracy assistance has been but a drop in the ocean relative to the scale of the task’ (p. 53) and that the use of conditionality has been inconsistent and entails risks of permanently isolating democratic laggards. Furthermore, while real carrots (EU or NATO membership) can make a difference, these can be offered only to those states well on the way to democratic consolidation. Thus, in states most in need of external support (Ukraine, Albania, former Yugoslavia, not to speak of Russia) one might wonder what the West can do.

Despite the breadth of the book, some interesting areas are not covered extensively, especially the role of NGOs in civil society development, a concern that has received a lot of funding as well as some academic attention. Moreover, the question of how globalization or international involvement compromises democracy by limiting the sovereignty of states—thus taking power out of the hands of domestic voters—is often sidestepped. However, the overall quality of the contributions is high, and both country-specialists and those more interested in trends throughout the region will find this volume informative and thought-provoking.

Paul Kubicek, Oakland University, USA
Russia and the former Soviet Republics


This book sets out to explore the relationship between democratization and economic reform in Eastern–Central Europe through a comparative study of the Polish and Czech transitions to market democratic societies. In both countries, successive governments have attempted to instigate strategies of radical economic reform in the context of an embryonic democratic order. Much of the literature and policy debate that Orenstein engages with has been between those favouring rapid change and those preferring a more gradual approach. The two case-studies are well chosen. Poland has adopted a neo-liberal shock therapy approach that aimed to reach a critical mass of reform in order to prevent reversals by pushing through as much reform as possible in the time of extraordinary politics. In contrast, the Czechs have attempted to introduce a more socially focused reform package predicated on a mix of neo-liberal macroeconomic policies allied to a need for greater social cohesion following the Velvet Revolution and subsequent divorce.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of this book is to dispel the myth of a parsimonious shock therapist versus gradualist debate over the correct approach to successful transition. The model of democratic policy alternation Orenstein has constructed rests on three factors: constraints, uncertainties and learning. Through a lucid, well-written engagement with the relevance of these factors in Polish and Czech attempts to build market democracy, the author reveals neither model of transition as particularly accurate. Instead he exposes how the processes of successful change in the region have been dominated not by dogma, but by reform mistakes and a realistic acceptance of the benefits of policy alternation. Orenstein indicates how successful reform in Poland has been achieved despite marked changes in the political complexion of governments and policies, while Czech reforms have proved sluggish despite the relative stability provided by Klaus’s extended period in office. The detailed analysis is clearly illustrated in a thorough study of Polish and Czech strategies for privatization that uncovers the variety of reform strategies attempted by both governments in an effort to construct capitalism. However, where the democratic policy alternation model is less convincing is in situating change in Eastern–Central Europe in a broader international context. The role of international constraints appears to be reduced to the impact of the European Union’s (EU) acquis communautaire. It is also interesting to note that the first mention of globalization comes on the final page of the book. Nonetheless, with accession to the EU edging ever closer for the former states of the Soviet bloc, Out of the red is a timely and accessible attempt to deal with what is undoubtedly a significant topic. As such, it is a worthy contribution to the burgeoning literature on post-communism.

Stuart Shields, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, UK

Russia and the former Soviet republics


The author is one of the most distinguished and engaged commentators on Russian politics. For much of the 1990s he spent considerable periods of time in Moscow, mixing on a daily basis with the makers of the events he here surveys. He built up a considerable archive of taped interviews with leading politicians, on which he draws liberally to write this account. McFaul also participated in a number of surveys of public opinion, often in collaboration with leading western academics, and this data, too, is put to good use in this book. His aim is to examine the nature of the political changes that took place in the 1990s. His approach is that of a political scientist, seeking to test existing theories of transition and democratization (he admits to an ‘eclectic approach’ (p. 15)), and he disclaims any ambition to generate new theories.
Book reviews

The work does indeed interweave a rather traditional political account of the fall of Gorbachev, the rise of Yeltsin and the emergence of Russia as a new state with much of the significant comparative democratization literature. At various points he highlights the inadequacies of that literature when applied to the Russian case, but mostly the two strands complement and enrich each other. The central question he poses is where Russia has arrived after ten years of revolutionary ‘transition’. His conclusion is that it is still too early to tell (and that itself, it might be noted, is no mean achievement), but he tends to the view that an electoral rather than a consolidated democracy has emerged. The book’s title is misleading to the extent that there is almost nothing on Putin, other than a rather negative assessment (pp. 362–3), but it is clear that in the author’s view, events in the 2000s have only reinforced the ‘managed’ elements of Russian democracy.

The work’s main value rests on the account McFaul gives of the last years of Gorbachev’s rule in the late 1980s, and the struggle to reshape a new Russia in the 1990s, when the country was faced by the need simultaneously to establish its borders, define the political arrangements of the new polity, and shift its economy from plan to market. On all three issues, he combines the role of the insider (drawing on his personal memories, interviews and analyses in the memoir literature) and as an outsider, as a western academic with a large scholarly and theoretical apparatus at his service. His analysis is balanced throughout, above all in assessing Gorbachev’s achievements and the reasons for his ultimate political failure. On the latter issue, for example, he notes Nikolai Ryzhkov’s view, as a former Soviet prime minister, that Gorbachev lacked any industrial experience (p. 46, fn. 43) and hence was ready to jeopardize the precarious balances established in the Soviet economy. His analysis of the failure of the so-called ‘first’ Russian republic (1991–3) argues that the system was overwhelmed by the confluence of divisive ‘constitutional’ questions (borders, polity and economy); and only after the events of October 1993 (when the parliamentary forces in the Russian White House were defeated) could a relatively stable system emerge with a more restricted agenda and fewer controversial issues around which the opposition could mobilize.

For a work that stresses the determining role of the policy preferences of individuals in the transition (although stressing that these preferences are shaped by structural factors), the actual personalities of the leaders concerned barely show through the scholarly apparatus. There is remarkably little detail on the actual evolution of policies and the debates that attended them. The role of regional elites and the way that ‘path dependency’ factors shaped the evolution of Russian federalism remains skimpy. Nevertheless, the book’s great achievement is to demonstrate that the conjunctural factors emerging out of the transition process itself were crucial in determining outcomes. McFaul resists all temptation to impose any single factor as the determining variable (for example, an allegedly authoritarian political culture), and instead has produced a highly sophisticated, balanced and informative analysis of the emergence of Russian democracy that leaves open the question of whether it will become a consolidated democracy.

Richard Sakwa, University of Kent at Canterbury, UK


Jerry Hough is probably the profession’s most diligent Sovietologist. Hardly a source escapes his eye. But all too often the conclusions he derives from his research are ‘unusual’. An example is when Professor Hough downplayed the consequences of the August 1991 attempt to oust Mikhail Gorbachev. ‘In the wake of the coup attempt, Boris Yeltsin suffered a major defeat and the Soviet Union is not breaking up. Mikhail Gorbachev achieved the increase in power toward which he had been working for the past year—but in stronger form than he hoped’.

Similar misinterpretations plague the book under review. Professor Hough’s general thesis is that one of the most serious flaws of the economic reform was the ‘neglect of investment’ (p. 8) and the absence of an ‘industrial policy’ (p. 54). But after 70 years of a command military economy, Russia was simply not equipped to deal with both an end to the Cold War and competition in a world market environment. Neither industrial plans nor five-year plans could have avoided
Russia and the former Soviet Republics

enormous economic upheaval. Nor could investment have been applied profitably at the time.
The end of the Cold War meant that the military industrial complex, at least 20 per cent of
Russia’s GDP, became irrelevant overnight.

Professor Hough brushes aside such arguments because he believes that Soviet managers
differed little from their US counterparts and therefore would be equally resourceful. As he puts
it, US factory managers operate ‘in a command economy inside the corporation that is as control-
led as the plant of the Soviet economy’ (pp. 118, 241). He goes on to make the completely
unfounded assertion that ‘American businessmen universally hailed the quality of the Soviet plant
managers and ministerial officials they met’ (p. 118). He overlooks the inability of Soviet and then
Russian managers to deal with questions of price and quality, usually the number one priority for
western factory managers.

The rigour of his research does not prevent him from misrepresenting what happened in
Russia. The oligarch banks were ‘to all intents and purposes, government banks’ (pp. 41, 210) and
usually ‘were each the patrimony of the key figures in the Yeltsin government’. As an example he
cites Oneximbank. Fair enough, but that is not true of the majority of the other oligarch banks.
There are also technical economic mistakes. As an example, he writes that when the government
sold its bonds to Russian banks, this was treated as an anti-inflation measure (p. 217). That is true
when the government sells bonds to individuals and businesses but not when it sells them to
banks, especially when the banks create credit for that purpose.

Other misconceptions include Hough’s assertion that ‘it was a remarkable government
achievement to keep unemployment so low’ (p. 109). He overlooks the meaninglessness of the
statistics. While workers were listed as employed, in fact the factories were essentially closed. He
also says the oil and gas companies were allowed to underpay their taxes as a quid for the quo of
not demanding payment and keeping their employees employed (p. 203). What he neglects to
mention is that most of these companies had the wherewithal to pay their taxes and wages, but
instead they sent the money overseas. As for complaints about high levels of corruption under
Brezhnev, ‘the opposite is true’, ignoring the antics of Brezhnev’s son-in-law and the whole
republic of Uzbekistan (p. 106).

Professor Hough is a contrarian and enjoys a good debate. However, to be taken seriously he
must work from fact, not misconception. He says he is working on a sequel. Let us hope that as he
does, he re-examines some of his premises.

Marshall I. Goldman, Harvard University, USA

Energy and conflict in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Edited by Robert Ebel and Rajan

Crossroads and conflict: security and foreign policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia.
Edited by Gary K. Bertsch, Cassady Craft, Scott A. Jones, and Michael Beck. New

The states of Central Asia and the Caucasus are still poorly known and understood in the West.
Conflicts in places like Nagorno–Karabakh or Chechnya, and claims of vast energy wealth in and
around the Caspian Sea still define this vast region for most observers. These two fine, edited
volumes aim at deepening our understanding of this complex region. Conflicts and energy are of
prime importance, but both of these volumes provide the depth and background needed to form
a more accurate picture of the region, its oil and gas wealth, potential security challenges and what
the West has at stake there.

As the title indicates, the Ebel and Menon volume focuses on the energy–conflict nexus in the
Caspian Basin. Its twelve essays bring together well-known scholars and specialists to provide a
thorough and detailed review of the region and the larger issues affecting that nexus. These essays
focus on the region’s key energy producers (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) and key
outside actors (Russia, China, Iran and Turkey). Each provides a detailed account of the energy
\textit{Book reviews}

issue and interests at stake, though always in the broader context of internal and external political, economic and security trends. The volume also includes important contributions on the lessons of OPEC for the energy producers of the region, the trends and limits of regional cooperation, and the influence of the Afghan civil war.

The overarching aim of this collection, as the editors make plain in their opening essay, is to deflate what they call ‘Caspian mania’ and restore a sense of perspective to western analysis of the strategic stakes in the region. The oil and gas reserves in the region are significant, but do not make it a ‘new Persian Gulf’. The sources of instability and chaos are many, but the authors argue the western strategic stakes there should not be overblown. Better regional and western policy is likely to emerge from replacing inflated and inaccurate notions of the region’s significance with a detailed understanding of the trends shaping the region and the likely sources of opportunity and danger there.

The Bertsch, Craft, Jones and Beck volume focuses primarily on security and foreign policy in the region. Its essays necessarily discuss energy and instability, yet there is surprisingly little overlap with the Ebel and Menon volume in either the major focus of the essays or its contributors. Several essays review security and foreign policy-making or overall security perspectives in key states of the Caspian Basin (especially Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan). A special essay on the United States—a topic omitted from the Ebel–Menon volume—subjects US policies in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to analysis and criticism. Of special note is the volume’s focus on the dangers of proliferation in this region. The authors of these essays rightly note that, while Russia remains of principal concern as a source of ‘loose nucs’, this region has its own potential and disturbing role to play as a supplier or transit corridor for nuclear technology and know-how. Also in contrast to the Ebel–Menon volume, this collection devotes a great deal of space to contributions from voices within the region, providing valuable local perspectives on Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

This collection contains many more gaps in coverage than the tightly focused and more consistent Ebel–Menon volume. Yet its inclusion of regional voices and special essays on western policy and non-proliferation give it advantages the Ebel–Menon volume does not have. Both volumes contain essays of high quality and could serve as classroom texts. Both fulfil their stated intentions of trying to replace superficial impressions about the region with serious research and analysis.

\textit{Sherman W. Garnett, Michigan State University, USA}

\textbf{Middle East and North Africa}


Anthony Shadid’s \textit{Legacy of the prophet} shows that it is a mistake to ignore books published before 11 September 2001. Some of these books provide a perspective on long-term developments that is not overwhelmed by current headlines. Shadid examines the evolving styles and messages of Islamic politics in recent decades. He describes a new generation of Muslims who are defining an alternative to violence and ‘finding a more realistic and potentially more successful future through democratic politics’ (p. 2).

The book begins by defining the situation in which ‘Islamic activists and their leaders are questioning their long-held goals and tactics’ (p. 4). There is the development of a ‘new brand of politics’ that endorses compromise and pluralism as necessary for success’ (p. 7). Throughout the book, Shadid personifies the issues by presenting short personality portraits of individuals that enliven the style of the book as well as illustrate its ideas.

The emergence of the new politics is presented in the context of the Islamist movements and their transformations in Egypt, and this is contrasted to the militant Islam of the terrorists. There is nothing in the aftermath of 11 September to refute Shadid’s observation that bin Laden showed a lack of ideology and the nihilist’s lack of attention to follow-up. One suspects that his evaluation
Middle East and North Africa

of the violent terrorism of the 1990s may also apply to later events: ‘a brief time that was brazen, even heady, in its reckless violence’ but was ‘revealed as inconsequential … as the years passed’ (p. 84).

Shadid presents the important blend of religion and social activism of Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas, and the social and political programs of Islamists in Turkey. Part of the story is told in the description of the failure of old Islamist ideas in Sudan, and the transformation of the old politics in Iran under the leadership of Muhammad Khatami. The content of the new politics is articulated by a diverse group of intellectuals including Abdol-Karim Soroush in Iran, Nasr Hamid Abu Zeid and Hasan Hanafi in Egypt.

Shadid analyses the transformation of political Islam into the new politics of Islam. In this account, the place of the state is important. However, Shadid is sometimes confusing in the discussion of the state in the ‘new politics’. The new generation is said to ‘focus their activism’ on the state (p. 63), but, at the same time, appears to oppose the establishment of an ‘Islamic state’, as advocated by the old political Islam. The new generation argues that Islam ‘does not stipulate any particular political order’ (p. 67). The distinction between the new ‘politics of Islam’ and the old programs advocating an ‘Islamic state’ needs to be more clearly defined.

This book is an excellent presentation of the long-term evolution of contemporary Islamic political thought and action. It is an antidote to the over-emphasis on the militant fringe of Islamic politics and can be useful to both specialists and the general reader.

John O. Voll, Georgetown University, USA


We are told in the introduction, which is authored by both editors, that this book is aimed at doing justice to the oft-neglected ‘forces that struggle against Islamic conformism and state hegemony’ (p. 1). The examples chosen to illustrate ‘these two competing absolutes’ are Iran for Islamic conformism and Algeria for state hegemony’ (p. 5). Paradoxically, whereas those who banned the satellite dish in Algeria are described as militants of the state, those who do so in Iran are called militants of Islam. Such analysis begs for explanation. For is Iran not a state like Algeria? Those who oppose the state in Algeria, the defenders of civil society, are mostly Islamists while those who do so in Iran are mostly liberals. The fact is that in an extremely polarized Muslim region, the tension is not between religion and society, after all religion belongs to society, but between the hegemonic state and society. Nevertheless, the book boasts a collection of good contributions.

In the first section of the book, labelled Part I and dedicated to the nineteenth-century Muslim world, four papers by some of the best experts in the field are presented. The first, by Charles E. Butterworth, addresses, by way of introducing the first part of the book, the problems involved in studying Islam and the Muslim world. The author is highly critical of Mohammed Arkoun and Olivier Roy, whom he cites as examples of mistaken and misguided self-proclaimed specialists in Islam and its political movements. In contrast, the approach adopted by John Esposito and John Voll, who assess the relationship between Islam and democracy, is acknowledged with appreciation.

The second paper in this section is the highly informative, well-constructed, thoroughly researched and enjoyable contribution by Antoine B. Zahlan. Entitled ‘The impact of technology change on the nineteenth-century Arab world’, the paper traces the repeated abortive attempts in nineteenth century Egypt to emulate European industrialization. The author convincingly argues that, contrary to prevailing notions, the cause of failure was not external but internal.

No less interesting, though pertaining to another environment and tackling an entirely different issue, is the paper by Serif Mardin ‘An Islamic political formula in transformation: Islam, identity, and nationalism in the history of the Volga tatars’. Through the example of prominent nineteenth and twentieth century Russian-Asian personalities such as Abdurreshid Ibrahim and Ahmet Zeki Velidi Togan, Mardin sheds light on the constant interplay that existed between the ‘ulma’ (scholars) and the ru’asa’ (leaders).

409
Said Bensaid Alaoui, in his ‘Muslim opposition thinkers in the nineteenth century’, tackles nineteenth century Islamic reform (islah) stemming from the (rather feeble) premise that two divergent tendencies have always existed in Islamic political thought. The first, exemplified by figures such as Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Taymihyah and Al-Afghani, is said to be an ideology of intransigence and consequently of contestation, whereas the second, exemplified by figures such as Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldoun, illustrates acceptance and justification. Seeking to test his proposition by applying it to the nineteenth century, the author suggests, unconvincingly, that Islamic political thought is best understood to reflect a permanent conflict between those two tendencies.

The second part of the book begins with a preface by I. William Zartman, who introduces the other contributors. Zartman proclaims that the Arab state, despite the turmoil it has been through over the past century, is here to remain, though transformed or privatized. This section consists of six papers that seek to address twentieth century political thought. The first paper by As’ad AbuKhalil is entitled ‘Against the taboos of Islam: anti-conformist tendencies in contemporary Arab/Islamic thought’. AbuKhalil begins with the blunder of confusing a Qur’anic verse for a Prophetic tradition, a mistake not to be tolerated from specialists. That aside, the paper is valuable in that it sheds light on what the author calls the three schools of anti-conformists, who share in common the aim of marginalizing Islam ‘to revitalize policy and society in order to move them away from the sway of religion’. Entitled ‘Democratic thought in the Arab world: an alternative to the patron state’, Iliya Harik’s paper, while acknowledging the Islamic democratic discourse, focuses exclusively on the democratic discourse of contemporary Arab nationalist and leftist forces.

Ibrahim Karawan’s paper ‘Political parties between state power and Islamist opposition’ is dedicated to the political parties in the Arab world that occupy a middle ground between Hizb al-Hukuma (the party of the government) and Hizb Allah (the party of God), exemplified by the Islamic movements which he unfairly portrays as adopting ‘exclusive ideologies that threaten to splinter the nation along sectarian lines’. The author chooses to shed light on three models of anti-state and anti-Islamist alternative: Egypt’s Tajammu’ Jordan’s Tajammu’ and Tunisia’s Social Democrats.

Timothy J. Piro’s paper ‘Liberal professionals in the contemporary Arab world’ is dedicated to exploring the significance and role of professionals involved in chambers of commerce, trade unions and think-tanks whom the author considers to be ‘more suited to articulate and aggregate the interests of their constituencies than the traditional institutions of political parties or legislatures’. Case-studies from diverse parts of the Middle East are considered.

Jean Leca, Meriem Verges and Mounia Bennani-Chraibi collaborate to produce ‘Daniel Lerner revisited: the audio-visual media and its reception: two North African cases’. This paper is concerned with the effect of television on opinions and culture in both Algeria and Morocco. Describing President Boumedienne as Tunisian is not the only error in the paper. Although this is not the main focus of the paper, the comparison of youth resorting to Islam in poverty-stricken areas to the depressed and desperate resorting to marijuana and other tranquilizers is indicative of the shallowness of the authors’ analysis of the phenomenon of Islamic revival, which is described as ‘fanaticism [that] can easily be instrumentalized and lead to hostage-taking or assassinating particular groups of people such as psychiatrists, intellectuals, or foreigners’.

The final paper is ‘Islam, the state and democracy: the contradictions’ by I. William Zartman. The paper, which addresses the tension between religion and democracy in the Muslim world, fails to recognize Islamic groups as political actors. As such their struggle against other (secular) political actors in society is misjudged as a conflict between religion and politics. Not only are Mawdudi’s opinions on democracy misrepresented and taken out of context, portraying him as a threat to democracy, but also no attention is paid to the current debate within Islamism (or Islamic fundamentalism) regarding democracy and other related issues.

Azzam Tamimi, Institute of Islamic Political Thought, UK
This important study by a Palestinian Israeli member of the political science faculty of the University of Haifa is a good deal more balanced, while by no means lacking in appropriate candour, than its introduction by Professor Naseer Aruri would lead one to suppose. To judge by the latter, we would be in for a polemic against the Oslo Accords. But more valuably, at a time when the very existence of the Palestinian Authority has been cast into doubt, As’ad Ghanem has given us some guidelines by which to judge its performance. At the heart of the book are the fourth and sixth chapters. In the fourth he proceeds to an impartial exposition of the formal structures of the regime—admirably democratic and also amply documented in sixty pages of appendices—and in the sixth he explains what has actually happened. The gap could scarcely have been wider.

The earlier chapters prepare the reader for this contrast. Ghanem shows how the nature of the Palestine Liberation Organization’s long struggle created a situation in which all significant strands of power, position and perks passed through the hands of Yasser Arafat. When the Authority came to be set up ‘the administrative arrangements that had evolved in the PLO … were reproduced partially and hastily in the West Bank and Gaza’, chiefly by a process of ‘ad hoc decisions by Arafat who did not consult the professional echelons’ (pp. 20–21). As Arafat began, so he continued. The author does not spare the regime as he outlines the sometimes tense and, at the best of times, cold relations between the executive and legislature. The bills passed by the Council are not signed by the president, the budget is not presented, commissions of enquiry are not respected, ministers accused of corruption are not dismissed, awkward members of the Council are not immune from the attentions of Arafat’s eleven security services. In addition, Ghanem develops in some detail in the main text and in the endnotes, the serious allegations of human rights abuse that have been levelled by Palestinian citizens against these numerous and overlapping varieties of police.

To an account whose main narrative is to be applauded there are two caveats to be made. In the first place, while it is obviously true that Arafat’s modus operandi is old-fashioned and open to serious abuse, it seems implausible, considering the amount of time he spent in the air (until his helicopters were smashed) visiting and revisiting foreign capitals, that he could have been effectively in control of all instruments of government. Secondly, Ghanem tends implicitly to refer to groups like Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine as if they were a normal constitutional opposition. But they reject by violence the arrangement by which the Palestine Authority came into existence. Given the nature of the Oslo Accords, the democracy practised under them could not help being a partial one. Given the quite considerable pool of available Palestinian talent, it is a shame that it has not been a more exemplary one.

Keith Kyle


Clement Henry and Robert Springborg note in the preface to their book that it is the cumulative product of seven decades’ worth of experience in the Middle East and North Africa. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the book provides both a wealth of empirical detail, and an impressive overview of the region as a whole. Focusing on the question of how Middle Eastern states have responded to the challenges of declining rents and economic globalization, the authors compare the varied experiences of ‘bunker states’ (Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Sudan and especially Algeria), ‘bully states’ (the Palestinian Authority and especially Egypt), ‘globalizing monarchies’ (Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Jordan), and ‘fragmented democracies’ (Israel, Turkey, Iran and Lebanon). In each case, they outline the extent to which these states have adapted to the
Joel Migdal’s text focuses, by contrast, on questions of state–society relations. Migdal is well known for his comparative analyses of state capabilities in the Third World—as developed especially in *Strong societies and weak states* (1988)—and here the same theme is explored further, albeit this time in relation to a single case, that of Israel. Several of the essays herein have been published previously. Nonetheless, there is clear merit in having them collected within a single volume, thus rendering the various essays all the more accessible to area studies specialists. The collection also allows Migdal to develop his methodological claim that the very transparency of state and society formation processes in Israel make them a peculiarly useful ‘lens’ for analysing states and societies in general. The book includes several essays on ‘state making’ and ‘society making’, plus additional pieces on Israel’s Arab minority, and the impact of the 1967 War. While there is some overlap and repetition especially between the earlier articles, Migdal’s arguments are set out with great clarity, are theoretically reflective and are full of insights about Israeli state and society.

As such, both of these books represent very useful additions to their respective literatures. However, Henry and Springborg’s text is conceptually rather under-developed, and while the same could not be said of Migdal’s, it too raises almost as many questions as it answers. Four issues in particular deserve mention. In the first place, both volumes distinguish centrally between ‘state’ and ‘society’ (or ‘civil society’), depicting these as ontologically separate entities that act upon and against one another. Migdal goes so far as to claim that the power of the state is ‘inversely proportional’ to the power of non-state social actors (p. 29), while Henry and Springborg depict the challenge of globalization in the Middle East largely as one that pits states against their civil societies, and polities against capital. Yet the western European experience, for one, would suggest that states and societies do not exist in a zero-sum relation, where the empowerment of one involves the weakening of the other. Middle Eastern states and their societies have developed in tandem, not in opposition to one another.

If there are problems with the very distinction between ‘state’ and ‘society’, these difficulties become all the more apparent in relation to the content of these two terms. With regard to the ‘state’, in Migdal’s hands this is a rather undifferentiated entity, which varies only in terms of its capabilities and its degree of ‘stateness’. Moreover, by contrast with Max Weber and other Weberian theorists such as Michael Mann, Migdal makes little attempt to distinguish between different forms of power and authority, and his depiction of the Israeli state is thus one that says much about its capabilities, but very little about its form. I doubt whether this is the most analytically useful of strategies. Contrast this approach, for instance, with that of Gershon Shafir’s *Land, labour and the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict* (1989), which explains both the specific form of Israeli social institutions, and by implication their power, as resultant from the early political economy of Zionist–Palestinian relations. The latter, I would suggest, provides a rather more adequate methodological guide to the study of state formation than does Migdal’s approach.

Migdal’s depiction of ‘society’ is similarly limited. In his societies, the main characters are ‘strongmen’ who compete with the state over the allocation of rules. He is thus largely concerned with conflicts between elites, and while he does to a lesser extent discuss inter-ethnic conflicts, his analysis pays little heed to social classes. For their part, Henry and Springborg have equally little to say about class differences, grounding their analysis instead in a bizarre Hegelian dialectic of pro-globalization, anti-globalization and synthesizing elites. They argue in their conclusion that the battle for power between incumbent and counter-elites will be ‘the central feature’ of Middle Eastern political economies in the twenty-first century (p. 229). Yet this is to largely ignore questions of class (or mass-elite) relations.

Finally, missing from both accounts is any serious discussion of the capitalist system within which modern states, societies and economies operate. While Migdal’s work focuses on Third World state–society relations, he makes little attempt to explain these in relation to the world capitalist economy. Henry and Springborg, meanwhile, assume that globalization should be ‘the
starting point’ for analysing the political economy of the region (p. xiii). Capitalism, for them, exists simply as a set of ‘legacies’, which continue to pose ‘political’ obstacles to economic development. Along similarly liberal lines, they argue that ‘the more open and liberal a polity is, the more effective has been its economy in responding to globalization’ (p. xiv). The more pertinent fact, I would suggest, is that both economic and political liberalism are, in general, most established in those states which were economically penetrated most successfully during early periods of state formation (Israel, Turkey, Iran and Lebanon), and that economic and political structures thus need to be explained as the twin products of earlier encounters with and adaptations to capitalism. Globalization does not change this. In these various respects, Simon Bromley’s Rethinking middle east politics (1994) provides a much more theoretically convincing explanation of Middle Eastern state formation and development than either of the volumes reviewed here.

Jan Selby, Lancaster University, UK


Neighbors, not friends is a useful political history of Iran and Iraq and (to a limited extent) of the relations between them since 1991. An introduction, which is preceded by some unusually detailed maps of the countries and their capitals, takes the story rather breathlessly from ‘the beginnings’ until the end of Desert Storm; the ‘Epilog’ (publisher’s decree or author’s choice?) takes the story to the spring of 2001, just before Muhammad Khatami’s second victory in the Iranian elections. Hiro has something of a corner in this field; his considerable oeuvre of 16 non-fiction books includes half a dozen on Iran and/or its conflict with Iraq. He is beholden to nobody, but, like most commentators, is generally (and quite rationally) optimistic about the future of Iran. Of course, he has no such illusions about Iraq.

Hiro is evidently determined to share everything he knows, which sometimes results in his readers being presented with a rather unwieldy mass of detail. Thus, chapter six on the ins and outs of the UNSCOM inspections, the activities of Scott Ritter and Operation Desert Fox, is an example of narrative which can be exhausting as well as exhaustive. Despite the claim on the frontispiece of the paperback edition, the book is long on facts and actually rather short on analysis. It is not clear, for example, where Hiro stands on the Iraqi sanctions argument, that is, the relative responsibility of the policies of the Iraqi regime or of the international community for the sufferings of the Iraqi population.

Perhaps the most important feature of the book is the clear testimony it gives to the utter inadequacy of US policy towards the Middle East in general, and this sub-region in particular over (at least) the last quarter century. Scott Ritter, with his contacts with Israel and his utter insensitivity towards Iraqi amour propre seems a fittingly emblematic figure. The United States’ continuing failure to act decisively towards Iraq, or with any comprehension towards Iran—so neatly exemplified in the President’s facile ‘axis of evil’ slogan—is part of an almost systemic failure to forge policies for the region beyond that of automatic support of any Israeli action, however outrageous. Paraphrasing a comment by an official of the early Clinton administration: ‘We supported the Shah because it seemed the right thing to do at the time, and we were right to do so. We supported Saddam Hussein because it seemed the right thing to do at the time, and we were right to do so.’ Not an enviable track record, one might be forgiven for thinking.

A curious feature of the book (alongside the author’s misspelling of thalweg and his turning Ms Ilahe Sharipour Hicks into a man (p. 271)) is the thinness of the sources quoted and the ‘select-ness’ of the bibliography. When setting out on waters that are scarcely uncharted, one should surely give adequate recognition to the efforts of previous navigators. Thus, whether one agrees with Amatzia Baram’s conclusions or not, it is difficult to write about contemporary Iraq without mentioning his immensely detailed work on family and kinship relations at the top of Iraqi political society. Perhaps Charles Tripp’s recent history of Iraq (2001) appeared too late for Hiro to take on board, but Ali Ansari’s insightful Iran, Islam and democracy: the politics of managing change
(2000) is not mentioned, nor is David McDowall’s indispensable Modern history of the Kurds (1996), nor is there any reference in the introduction to the pioneering work of Hanna Batatu on Iraq or Ervand Abrahamian on Iran.

Finally, Hiro seems to believe in ‘politics-as-explanation’; there is very little discussion of socio-economic issues in either state, and no reference at all to the arts or culture. One would never know, for example, anything of the vibrancy of contemporary Iranian cinema, or the former splendour of Iraqi poetry. On the other hand, the reader certainly gets an enormous amount of information, presented, as has already been mentioned, in an objective and non-partisan manner.

Peter Sluglett, University of Utah, USA


One of the perennial struggles of scholars of Iran has been to elucidate the roots of the Islamic revolution. This was a revolution, after all, of paradoxes and contradictions. An Islamic movement was born in a state that had been undergoing a relentless process of secularization and modernization. An anachronistic mullah languishing in exile displaced an omnipresent monarch in command of a totalitarian state. Scholars ranging from Nikki Keddie to Hamid Algar have assayed the socio-economic, theological and nationalistic roots of one of the most significant turning points in Iran’s history. These past efforts have recently been complemented by a more careful consideration of one the central protagonist of Iran’s revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Vanessa Martin scrupulously charts the intellectual and political journey of Khomeini from his early ascendancy in the clerical pantheon to his domination of Iran’s oppositional politics. The picture that emerges is one of the most untypical of Ayatollahs. Martin meticulously deconstructs the prevailing mythologies surrounding a figure who has often defied objective assessment. In contradistinction to the standard western depiction of Khomeini as a dogmatic mullah whose views were immersed in archaic religious traditions, Martin depicts a cleric immersed in mystical philosophy, attuned to Greek thought and sensitive to the demands of a new generation of Iranians struggling for an identity in post-colonial Third World. Far from occupying himself with theological treaties, Khomeini spent considerable time wrestling with issues of political legitimacy, authenticity and constitutionalism. Along the way, he proved an innovator, a pioneer. It was Khomeini that defied the traditions of Shi‘ite Islam in the 1940s by launching an effort to centralize clerical authority in a single marja, ending the factionalism and decentralization that had long characterized the clerical estate. It was Khomeini and his star pupil Murtaza Mutahhari who formulated an ideology that sought to appeal to the intelligentsia by harmonizing Islamic injunctions with pluralistic precepts. The Ayatollah’s affinity for modern concepts translated into his attachment to modern organization techniques, allowing him to launch and command a revolution from a Parisian suburb. The culmination of Khomeini’s enterprising experimentation was the Islamic Republic’s constitution that sought an uneasy coexistence between divine mandates and elected institutions. Indeed, the tensions and difficulties that have plagued Iran recently stem from the fact that the Grand Ayatollah’s successors have been incapable of managing the Islamic republic’s multiplicity of identities as deftly as he did.

Vanessa Martin’s Creating an Islamic state is an impressive and judicious treatment of an important and, until recently, neglected subject matter. All specialists and general observers of Iran’s fractious politics would be wise to consult this important book.

Ray Takeyh, Washington Institute for Near East Politics, Washington DC, USA
Middle East and North Africa


Iran’s troubled relationship with modernity and the still widely debated capacity of its clerical leadership to lay the foundations of a modern political system, have dominated much of the literature spawned by the Islamic Revolution of 1979. These two books, which make valuable contributions to that literature, are no exception.

Mirsepassi’s Intellectual discourse and the politics of modernization, which is a particularly thought-provoking study, sets out to question the prevailing view of the Islamic revolution in Iran as ‘anti-modern’ or, in any sense, a manifestation of ‘Islamic Fundamentalism’ of the kind much favoured by contemporary Orientalists, notably Samuel Huntington and Bernard Lewis. He argues instead, and is able convincingly to demonstrate, that the Iranian revolution was fundamentally an attempt to accommodate modernity, but that it did so by privileging the authenticity of the ‘local’ over the universalistic precepts inherent in western narratives of modernity. As a predominantly Muslim society Iran turned naturally to its Islamic cultural identity to furnish the elements of an authentic ‘local’ discourse of modernity and to serve as an axis of politicization to resist western power.

However, Mirsepassi emphasizes that the discourse of authenticity alone cannot explain the ‘hegemony of political Islam’ in Iran which, he maintains, was neither historically pre-determined nor an accident. What accounted for the authority of the Islamic movement in his view was its success in ‘localizing’ modernity. The same could not be said for the constitutionalist (Mashruteh) movement of 1906–11, which was doomed to failure because of its ‘concession of inferiority to European ideas’ (p. 61) and its unwillingness to resist the ‘totalizing’ tendencies of western modernity. Undoubtedly, changes in the political context also contributed to the demise of a secular discourse in Iran. The widespread repression that followed the overthrow of Mossadeq’s nationalist government and the restoration of the Pahlavi regime in 1953 dealt a mortal blow to secular and democratic institutions and allowed other political spaces of dissent to emerge. Of these the most significant were mosques and religious seminaries under the control of the Shia religious establishment whose members moved steadily to exploit the crisis of secularism and organize their own brand of populist Shia ideology. For the vast majority of Iranians alienated from the ideals of the Pahlavi state, this ideology represented a powerful source of individual and collective empowerment.

Mass discontent with the Pahlavi state was reflected among Iran’s secular intellectuals, who were increasingly consumed by the idea of fashioning a modernity more in tune with Iranian culture. They included two of Iran’s most illustrious thinkers, Jalal Al-e Ahmad and Ali Shariati, who dominated the country’s intellectual life in the 1960s and 1970s and were crucial to the articulation of a more ‘authentic’ discourse of modernity. Though both gained prominence initially for their involvement in secular projects—in this case communism and nationalism, respectively—they were eventually drawn to espouse a more Islamic-centred discourse that effectively challenged the western-oriented modernity favoured by the Pahlavi regime. Al-e Ahmad’s concept of Gharbzadegi (‘westoxication’) was typical of the emerging discourse, which aimed to reconfigure modernity in line with Iranian cultural traditions. So too were Shariati’s attempts to recover the ‘soul’ of modernity by marrying Marx and Mohammad in the Iranian context. Mirsepassi concludes however that while Al-e Ahmad and Shariati clearly provided a powerful impetus for revolutionary change in Iran, both unwittingly contributed to the rise of the Islamic movement by ‘romanticizing it [and] obscuring the nature of Shi’ism’ (p. 95). This raises the question of whether it is possible for an Islamic-centred discourse of modernity to separate the liberating potential of Islam as ‘culture’ from the hegemonic power of Islam as ‘political ideology’, replete with the very ‘totalizing’ tendencies that intellectuals like Shariati and Al-e Ahmad were committed to oppose.
The ‘totalizing’ influence of an Islamic-centred ideology on Iran’s non-Muslim communities is the focus of Sanasarian’s *Religious minorities in Iran*. It suggests that Iran’s revolutionary ideology, by relying heavily on the Islamic belief in the superiority of Islam over all other religions, has managed to justify the systematic and legally institutionalized discrimination of Iran’s non-Muslim minorities. The two worst affected groups are the Baha’i and Christian converts, unlike the recognized religious minorities (RRM—Armenians, Assyrians, Jews and Zoroastrians), have endured almost constant persecution since 1979 and have enjoyed neither legal protection nor any political rights; they are also barred from religious practice (the most tolerated of all legal rights guaranteed to RRM under Islam).

Sanasarian’s study points to the strange paradox of a clerical regime, which while extremely cognizant of Iran’s plural society, is constrained by its rigid interpretation of Islamic law to implement state policies that systematically exclude non-Muslims from participating as equal citizens and subordinate their rights to those of the Muslim (Shia) majority. By contrast, the Pahlavi state, which was far less tolerant of Iran’s ethnic diversity (the teaching and publication of ethnic languages was banned), appeared to favour a more inclusive definition of citizenship by pursuing a policy of ‘Persianization’ and seeking to mould even its most recalcitrant subjects of whatever religious persuasion into loyal ‘Iranians’.

Sanasarian is careful however not to overstate the differences between the two regimes, and draws attention especially to Mohammad Reza Shah’s active, if covert, connivance with the Shia clerical establishment to endorse the persecution of the Bahais. Their future in Iran continues to be tenuous, and even the relatively bold policies pursued by President Khatami are unlikely in the short-term, to make much difference. Yet, as Sanasarian rightly points out, ‘the Baha’i issue remains the ultimate test for anyone with liberal and reformist claims on governance in Iran’ (p. 159) and, one might add, for Iran’s eligibility to the modern community of nations.

Farzana Shaikh


This book is, in many respects, disappointing. The presentation of the author as a specialist on international terrorism offers the prospect of some illuminating insights into both Osama bin Laden and terrorism. However, much of the book is a catalogue of terrorist acts committed by radical Islamic groups throughout the world, followed by unsubstantiated statements that a particular individual or group had links with Osama bin Laden. A whole chapter is devoted to the opium and heroin trades in Afghanistan but there is scarcely a mention of Osama bin Laden in the chapter, and no real evidence that this trade has financed his activities. In this chapter, the author also states that, in 2001, opium continued to be grown on a large scale in Afghanistan whereas the UN Drug Control Programme had verified that the ban on opium production introduced the previous year had taken effect. This is but one of many examples of inaccuracies or exaggerations, which undermine the credibility of the book, causing it to come across as a sensationalist tract rather than as a solid piece of research.

However, in spite of an apparent wish to present Osama bin Laden as connected in some way with every episode of terrorism committed by radical Islamic groups, Jacquard does appear to conclude that bin Laden is more an inspirational figure than the supreme organizer, albeit an inspirational figure with enormous influence throughout the Islamic world and among Muslims in Europe and North America. Jacquard also notes that terrorist groups tend to prefer to have diverse sources of funding rather than rely on a single donor. Thus, while bin Laden is presented as providing funds to various organizations, the implication is that he may not be the supreme funder.

The book is interesting in noting that, although Osama bin Laden came from one of the foremost commercial families in Saudi Arabia, he did have a strongly religious upbringing. He also had the support of his family and the Saudi leadership for his decisions to join the Afghan *jihad* against the Soviet occupation and help in the recruitment of volunteers from the Islamic
Sub-Saharan Africa

The author notes that bin Laden broke from both his family and the Saudi Government in response to the decision by the Saudi Government to allow the US to station its forces on the sacred ground of the Arabian peninsula. Also of interest is a reference to the ease with which those planning terrorist attacks can evade detection through the use of Internet Cafes and e-mail account providers such as Hotmail. However, Jacquard hardly mentions the Palestinian issue as a root cause of the significance of the August 1998 US air strikes against Afghanistan. This was a key factor in bin Laden’s rise to international prominence. There is also almost no mention of the links between Bin Laden and the radical Islamic parties in Afghanistan.

Peter Marden, Refugee Council, UK

Sub-Saharan Africa


This book asks a simple, but critical, question: why has Africa suffered continuous economic crisis in the last two decades despite receiving huge amounts of foreign aid? Indeed, the author shows that, despite claims to the contrary, the continent has benefited since 1979 from what in effect has been the equivalent of a ‘Marshall Plan’ for Africa (pp. 7–8). How, then, is it possible that Africans today are, with few exceptions, poorer than they were after independence in the sixties and early seventies? There are, of course, a large host of factors, which have brought this state of affairs about. Most of those have to do with financial and development issues such as trade, debt, production, tax revenues, etc. But van de Walle, quite rightly, focuses here on the political causes of this continuous economic deliquescence. His argument is that it is very largely the role of the state, controlled as it is by a small elite operating on the basis of a neo-patrimonial logic, that has made economic growth impossible and has in this way contributed to the continuation of poverty on the continent.

African economies and the politics of permanent crisis, 1979–1999 is a systematic examination of the current economic situation in Africa. Van de Walle outlines the political economy of reform since the seventies, the patterns of reform implementation and the results achieved. He then analyses the decision-making process in post-colonial Africa and the state responses to the ongoing crisis. He highlights in particular the continuation of neo-patrimonialism in politics. He discusses the interrelationship between the economic crisis and the patterns of aid, including structural adjustment requirements. Finally, he studies the extent to which the recent moves towards multiparty politics on the continent have been conducive to more sustained economic development.

The great strength of this volume is the sheer quantity of statistical material that has been analysed. The author has used every conceivable source of data to present a picture of the failure of economic reform on the continent that will make for fairly bleak reading. It will now be difficult to continue to believe, for example, that structural adjustment has had a compellingly positive effect on economic growth, even in ‘star pupils’ like Ghana and Uganda. Equally, this book will provide no succour to those who argue that foreign aid has increased the likelihood that some African countries are now poised on the verge of economic ‘take-off’.

The book’s main weakness, and it is a most significant one, lies in the narrow view taken of political economy. Although the author claims, rightly in my view, that the absence of economic development is primarily due to political factors, he fails to consider that in Africa, the realm of political economy is both more extensive and more complex than he allows for. Van de Walle agrees that power in Africa is exercised along neo-patrimonial lines, but he seems to conceive of this in markedly ‘western’ terms. He sees neo-patrimonial politics as a ‘strategy’, to be adopted or discarded at will, whereas it is in fact a ‘modern’ political system that successfully combines the operation of an apparently western state with the logic of ‘informal’ politics that lies at the heart of political representation and obligation on the continent. Furthermore, he argues that there are
small groups of well-defined political elites who control power and are thus in a position to operate more or less as they please, regardless of their neo-patrimonial responsibilities. Finally, he fails to mention anywhere the role of the ‘informal’ economy, which by all reckoning accounts for the bulk of economic activity on the continent.

The reality, however, is that the exercise of power—and the constraints on political action—are determined by a combination of formal and informal factors, which delineate and impinge upon the political and economic decisions made by the elites. So that it is impossible to understand the behaviour of African leaders, and in particular their inability to implement policies leading to economic development, without taking into account considerations which lie outside the bounds of ‘classical’ political economy. While it is no doubt the case that African elites, do accumulate fantastically large wealth and ostensibly redistribute relatively little of it to their clients, it does not follow that they are necessarily free of their neo-patrimonial obligations. Indeed, both their wealth and their potential for redistribution might well, in most instances, be their two most significant political attributes and the two pillars of their ‘political legitimacy’. If, as seems to be the case, ordinary Africans have very little chance of bettering themselves (or even surviving) outside patrimonial networks, it will likely continue to be the case that the accumulation of wealth by the political elite will remain one of the primary obstacles to the productive use of foreign aid for purposes of sustained economic growth.

Patrick Chabal, King’s College London, UK


The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) got off to a famously poor start. The physical infrastructure for its location in Arusha had to be built from scratch. Mismanagement and incompetence plagued its first two years, leading to a stinging report from the UN’s internal oversight office in early 1997. One of its judges resigned in protest over similar inadequacies. The Rwandan government barely cooperated. Established by a UN Security Council resolution in 1994, its first trial did not start until 1997.

Since then things have improved considerably. In its last report to the UN Security Council (September 2001), the court could report that eight trials had been completed and six were underway. The prosecutor planned to complete all remaining indictments by 2005. If additional judges were provided as requested, the tribunal estimated it could finish its work by 2011. The court would then have tried 184 persons for planning, organizing or executing the genocide. Working alongside the tribunal for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the ICTR has significantly contributed to the jurisprudence of international humanitarian law. Court decisions have served as precedents for the ICTY (in defining rape as a crime against humanity), or as supplements (by unequivocally establishing that the Geneva Conventions apply to internal conflict).

The book by Paul J. Magnarella on this topic is welcome. At a time when institutions that serve the international rule of law are painfully neglected in favour of national responses to terrorism, it is all the more important to document that international criminal tribunals in fact do work—even under adverse circumstances and in the face of enormous crimes such as genocide.

Though slim (only 84 pages deal with legal responses to the genocide, including a brief description of the Rwandan trials), the book gives a useful description of the origins of the ICTR, its early problems and subsequent progress. Two landmark cases are discussed in some detail—the Kambanda case, in which a high-level official for the first time admitted that the killings had been carefully planned, and the Akayesu case, which was the court’s first verdict. Pleading not-guilty, Akayesu was nevertheless found guilty on several counts of genocide. For the first time, moreover, an international court ruled that rape was a crime against humanity.

Magnarella examines another important, but less well-known, contribution by the ICTR. The 1948 Genocide Convention applies to intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious
Asia and Pacific

group, but these boundaries do not readily fit the populations involved in the carnage in Rwanda. The Tutsi and the Hutu are not distinguishable from each other by language, religion or nationality, and racially the two groups have intermingled over time. As a result, the tribunal amplified the criteria to fit a more subtle distinction of ethnicity based on the institutionalization of largely subjective distinctions.

The first part of the book discusses the reasons for the genocide and the international response, but in this regard provides no new insights. Some sections rely heavily on the official, but inadequate, UN version of events. There is also a reference at the outset to the author’s analytical framework, ‘the human materialism paradigm’, which promises to explain human behaviour in the Rwanda disaster by ‘blending infrastructural causality with humanistic teleology’ (p. 1). As the author moves into the historical and legal narrative, however, the paradigm is mercifully left behind.

Astri Suhrke, The Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway

Asia and Pacific


Books on Afghanistan having done well since the terrible events of 11 September, it comes as little surprise that this book has sold more copies since. Eric Margolis, the author, is an experienced journalist with an aptitude for both dialogue and atmosphere. But while his reportage passes muster, his reporting leaves much to be desired. He writes fluently, but his understanding of the region—and factual knowledge—is poor. Hence this book is disappointing, and misleading. It mostly deals with Kashmir, with lesser segments on Afghanistan and Tibet.

On Kashmir he provides at times a useful account of the dispute’s history, but leans heavily towards a Pakistani version. To Margolis, the impediment to a Kashmir solution has been India. While, in many ways, he has a point, he simply misses the resistance of Pakistan to a deal in the 1950s and 1960s—resistance recorded in all the major histories of Kashmir. He claims the solution to the Kashmir issue is a plebiscite.

His perspective is probably coloured by how he sees India and Pakistan. He sees both states as standing on mutually exclusive religions—Hinduism and Islam. This religious determinism, as distinct from explanations of Indo–Pakistani hostility based on competing nationalist ideologies, is remarkably rigid. Margolis takes it further yet. Indian Hindus, he claims, are more prone to sexual dysfunction than Indian Muslims. (And this is based on a casual reference to sex clinics in Indian cities). All of this speculation is used to support Margolis’ argument that Indian Hindus are intimidated by Muslim martial power and (presumed) sexual potency. This heady mix of fears explains, he suggests, why India’s Muslims pose a psychological threat to its Hindus. This casual hypothesizing is sloppy at best, offensively simplistic at worst.

Even so, Margolis has interesting observations to make about the region. His overall view of Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet is rooted in geopolitics. Afghanistan witnesses the struggle between the West and radical Islam in another incarnation of the Great Game. India and China are set, he believes, on a collision course over Asia’s natural resources. He writes powerfully of the absurdity of the Indo-Pak war over the barren heights of Siachen glacier. He does not balk at describing the human rights abuses that have plagued Kashmir during the past thirteen years: many of India’s making. And while it has been said before, Margolis writes well of the wonder that is Kashmir—particularly explaining how the Kashmir Valley must seem to those who dwell on the hot and undistinguished plains below. (Kashmir is, quite simply, ‘heaven’.)

These observations come at a price. There are too many mistaken spellings, both of people and places. For example, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw becomes ‘Maneckshaw’, Farooq Abdullah ‘Faruq’ Abdullah, and the Kashmir town of Baramulla ‘Barmula’. Spelling mistakes aside, more serious errors of fact abound. In Kashmir, Margolis claims the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front began its campaign in 1986; they actually began their armed campaign in July 1988.
Contemporary Pakistani Kashmir was not ‘100 per cent Muslim’ in 1947—over 30,000 Hindus and Sikhs fled to India (just as several hundred thousand Muslims fled to Pakistan from Jammu region, and some thousands were killed, in 1947–8).

Margolis accuses India of long restricting access to Ladakh for foreign journalists, suggesting this might be because of Ladakhi unrest that New Delhi seeks to disguise. (Ladakh was largely closed to foreigners until the late 1970s, but Ladakhis continue to hunt for closer integration with India.) His map shows the Siachen glacier in Pakistani hands; most analysts would acknowledge the glacier remains disputed (and was not demarcated as part of the cease-fire line). And, strangely, he assumes that Hindu–Muslim tensions were sharper in the Kashmir Valley, neglecting the rich history of communal harmony that endured in the Kashmir Valley, while the rest of northern India burned with communal disturbances during the late 1940s.

War at the top of the world is, in essence, a very long opinion piece. Much of it consists of first-person travelogue, with Margolis hurtling along roads at high speed, sharing the intimate camaraderie of Mujahadeen warriors, or suffering the effects of altitude sickness in Lhasa. There is no bibliography, so it is difficult (apart from textual references to the likes of Halford Mackinder) to see what the author has read on the region. It is a great pity that someone who can clearly write offers such a poor account of the region’s history and contemporary problems. It is hoped that this book will not become a reference text for Americans wishing to learn more about the vexed problems of Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet.

Alexander Evans, Centre for Defence Studies, King’s College London, UK


It is often remarked that geography has been particularly unkind to Korea. Locked in the heart of North-East Asia, its fortunes have historically been largely contingent on the perceived interests of various external powers. Notwithstanding the Bush administration’s suspicions of North Korea, which were clear even before the ongoing war on terrorism, for the first time in a long while, the Koreans appear to have some measure of latitude in determining their own fates. It is therefore appropriate to ask: is the Korean question any closer to being resolved?

The title of the book under review points to the possibility that we are in a transition stage on the road to a resolution of this question. According to the editors, the book provides ‘a critical assessment of the key factors and issues that are shaping a newly emerging security regime on and around the peninsula at the beginning of a new millennium’ (p. xvi). Unfortunately, they do not provide a definition of what exactly a security regime is. In this respect, it would have been invaluable if the editors had utilized Jervis’ well known definition of a security regime found in Stephen Krasner’s edited text International regimes. Jervis defines a security regime as, ‘those principles, rules, and norms that permit nations to be restrained in their behaviour in the belief that others will reciprocate’ (p. 173). Yet, if we accept Jervis’ definition, it is hard to see how the editors’ claim concerning the emergence of a security regime can be sustained. Indeed, various authors in this volume advance arguments that cause the reader to doubt the utility of planning on a security regime being established anytime soon. Han S. Park points to the unrelenting legitimacy war between Pyongyang and Seoul (p. 15) while C. Kenneth Quinones highlights the legacy of mutual mistrust (pp. 45–6). There is also the issue of how sincere Pyongyang is about a fundamental reorientation of its strategic posture. Former South Korean Foreign Minister Han Sung Joo contends that North Korea will be extremely reluctant to give up its weapons of mass destruction program (p. 198) or to change the basic orientation of its military policies (p. 202). Echoing Han Sung Joo, L. Gordon Flaké’s analysis of military relations suggests significant grounds for scepticism in declaring a new vista in overall bilateral relations. One senses that from the perspective of these authors, the clear danger is that under the cloak of détente and cooperation, Pyongyang will simply pocket any concessions made by Seoul and possibly emerge as an even greater threat to stability on the Korean Peninsula and beyond.
Asia and Pacific

The foregoing is not to suggest that the case for a security regime is not made. Bruce Cumings (pp. 114–15) and Selig Harrison (pp. 74–6) adopt postures that suggest optimism that a security regime may indeed be possible on the Korean Peninsula. In an essay on US–North Korean Relations and South Korean Security, Cumings argues for a large-scale aid package to North Korea. In examining the future of US Forces in Korea, Harrison contends that US disengagement from South Korea would actually serve US interests.

These issues aside, the editors could have attempted to minimize the not-insignificant degree of overlap in some of the essays. Also, concise introductory and concluding chapters would have brought some coherence to the rather diverse collection of essays.

Nicholas Khoo, Columbia University, USA


Both books under review are most timely and interesting as they deal with how two East Asian countries cope with the forces that have been forcing them—and, for that matter, all the rest—to change: globalization and liberalization. Samuel Kim and Joseph Fewsmith have done an excellent job of documenting, deciphering and analysing the forces affecting the economies, societies and politics of these two countries.

Samuel Kim assembled perhaps the best-possible team of Korea specialists and analysed how the Republic of Korea tackled the national project of bringing a country with the legacy of a hermit kingdom onto a world stage. The book deals with economic reform, workers, the developmental state, chaebol (business conglomerates), women, migrant workers, nationalism, foreign relations, the United Nations and national security. These subjects are analysed within the framework set by the editor.

In the concluding chapter, the editor assesses systematically the performance of the national project. Readers are likely to leave the book with the impression that the analysis and assessment are, on the whole, sober and balanced. To students of theories of International Relations, the book is excellent reading as it discusses how the forces of globalization are permeating each and every part of the world, even though each region is embedded with a particular history and culture, and is constrained by particular circumstances.

Joseph Fewsmith, in China since Tiananmen: the politics of transition, has been very successful in weaving together many threads of ambition, animosities and aspirations, as played out in the increasingly fluid and contentious politics of China since 1989, the year of Tiananmen Square. The basic issue that emanates from the dramatic introduction of capitalism into Chinese society, begun by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, has been how to retain the predominant position of the Chinese Communist Party in running the country, while strengthening and enriching China through the use of capitalist forces. It is inevitable that tension occasionally rises and leads to the reconfiguration of political actors. What Joseph Fewsmith has done is to disentangle those complex threads and weave them again in a form comprehensible to readers who may not necessarily be familiar with Chinese politics. The issues of how reformists pushed the agendas; how neo-conservatives kicked back; how nationalist uproar came about; how idealistic academics in 1989 were co-opted into government later; how top leaders interact with each other, and so forth, are very vividly dealt with through the thorough use of original sources that had not been so comprehensively utilized before. The book is likely to become a most important book on Chinese elite politics, most argumentative and contentious, for years to come, until transition ends in one form or another.

Takashi Inoguchi, University of Tokyo, Japan
Book reviews

Human rights in Chinese foreign relations: defining and defending national interests.
ISBN 0 8122 35975.

My reading of this book coincided with China’s entry into the World Trade Organization, an occasion that has generated a considerable amount of speculation about the direction that Beijing may take in the immediate future. Some of this speculation has been coloured by optimism: many spectators believe (or hope) that by binding China to the procedures, regulations and norms of this international institution, the Chinese government will come under increasing pressure to reform the political system. This commitment to liberal institutionalism regards political change as a prospective consequence of the economic foundations of membership. However, the fundamental problem is that while some members of the international community may be partly driven by the principles of liberal institutionalism, Chinese foreign policy remains motivated by realist calculations of self-interest, security and power politics.

The value of Wan’s book is in demonstrating how realist politics have governed Chinese policy in the realm of human rights. Moreover, it is an assessment of the realist principles that underpin the diplomacy of others (the US, Western Europe, Japan and the United Nations) with China, thus guaranteeing that normative approaches to foreign policy do not privilege national self-interest. The book is also a timely reminder that western, and specifically American, concern with human rights in China is a relatively new phenomenon; human rights only became a major concern following the Tianannmen Square incident of 1989, and then only for a short time. Since then, the human rights issue has been a useful diplomatic tool for western governments, sacrificed on the altar of national interest when required.

Wan highlights the collision of world views that has structured debate: human rights advocates consider the Chinese government intransigent, ruthless and dictatorial in its pursuit of internal cohesion and the continuation of power. Meanwhile, the Chinese government views external pressure on human rights as a violation of sovereignty and ultimately a threat to China’s development. We should be mindful that the Communist Party of China is as determined as ever to preserve its power: Jiang Zemin reiterated this inviolable principle—one of the Four Cardinal Principles—in his address on the 50th anniversary of the party’s founding in July 2001; and the ‘Three Represents’, allowing ‘capitalists’ to become members of the party, has been introduced as a mechanism of survival. The doom and gloom merchants who regularly predict the forthcoming collapse of the Chinese Communist Party will have a long wait, mainly because the Party continues to attract popular support. Beijing routinely portrays external pressure on human rights issues as is viewed in Beijing as yet another attack on the sovereignty of China. As Wan observes, China’s response to pressure on human rights has often been embedded in a nationalist discourse, particularly after the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. Therefore human rights advocates are faced with the dilemma of the ‘instrumentalist’ view: what can western ideals and institutions do to improve the lives of ordinary Chinese? It is this question, above all others, that has determined Chinese response to western-based discourse. Breaking through this cultural barrier is the toughest challenge facing human rights advocates, but one is immediately confronted with an ethical question: should we even try? Is the human rights debate simply one more example of western society trying to ‘civilize’ the orient?

Unlike many analysts of human rights, Wan does not take a stand. He has no visible axe to grind, preferring to provide instead a readable and objective discussion based on sensible academic principles and research. Wan’s basic conclusion is disturbing, but hardly surprising: ‘Western diplomatic pressure has produced little progress on human rights in China’ (p. 15) and, in fact, Europe, Japan and the US have ‘retreated’ from habitually linking their China policy with human rights.

Anyone seeking a normative discussion of human rights and a theoretical treatment of the subject will be disappointed with this book. But readers searching for an empirical-based understanding of human rights diplomacy will find this book indispensable. Its value derives from its careful demonstration of the interplay of the core features of modern international relations: the
Asia and Pacific

interaction of ideas and realpolitik; the influence, importance, and sometimes impotence of non-state actors. Power remains fundamental; without factoring power into the equation, it is impossible to appreciate why western governments have not been as insistent on human rights as they might have been; why the Chinese have rejected the human rights discourse, but have compromised when it has been in their interests to do so; and, finally, why human rights policy has only been effective when reinforced by realist calculations of self-interest and power-maximization. In analysing the importance of an ideal within a realist framework, supported by extensive empirical discussion, this is an important book and will become essential reading for anyone wishing to understand why human rights advocacy has failed in International Relations.

Gary D. Raumsley, University of Nottingham, UK


When Megawati Sukarnoputri became Indonesia’s fifth president in July 2001, many saw it as her ‘just desert’, compensation for the ruthless way her father, Sukarno, had been eased out of office 35 years earlier. The precise circumstances of that ouster and the assumption of power by General Suharto remain something of a mystery. During Suharto’s 32-year rule, the official version was that Sukarno lost power because he failed to prevent a coup attempt by the Indonesian Communist Party, to which he was close. An alternative view of history has long maintained that the 1965 coup, far from being a failed Communist coup, was in fact a successful putsch by generals intent on seizing power from the left-leaning ideologue.

Roland Challis’s book, published the very month that Megawati came to power, throws some new light on this old mystery. He sets out to prove that senior military officers were assisted in their putsch by Britain and the United States, who were worried that Sukarno was taking Indonesia into the communist camp. The anti-Sukarno thesis derives from the oft-quoted sentiment attributed to President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan that it was desirable to ‘liquidate’ Sukarno.

The implications for the West were evident as Indonesia is a prime source of many essential commodities, including oil, tin, rubber, nickel and copper. Another US president, Richard Nixon, once described Indonesia as ‘the richest prize in South-East Asia’. Britain had additional reason to distrust the Indonesian leader as he was interfering with attempts to grant independence to its South East Asian colonies by engaging its forces in the so-called ‘Confrontation’ on the island of Borneo. This was part of a campaign against ‘neo-colonialism’.

Digging into British archives, Challis has uncovered new material, notably about the British propaganda operation mounted from Singapore, to paint Sukarno and the PKI (the Indonesian Communist Party) in a bad light. He shows how, during the crucial period when power was being transferred, information from the British Embassy in Jakarta was ‘fed’ to hungry journalists in Singapore frustrated at the Indonesian authorities’ refusal to grant visas and how that information was used by the media. Challis was the BBC’s South-East Asia Correspondent at that time so had a good vantage point; he admits to being unwittingly used by the British propagandists.

There is some intriguing information about British naval activity in the region at the time, described by one unnamed source as ‘anti-communist piracy’. Also how Sukarno’s Japanese-born wife, Dewi, may herself have inadvertently hastened her husband’s downfall by talking freely with her friend, Freda Gilchrist, wife of the British Ambassador in Jakarta. Challis also presents evidence that Sukarno was putting out feelers to Britain to settle the confrontation dispute.

However, there is no proof that Britain, Australia or the United States conspired with the shadowy Council of Generals to oust Sukarno and bring General Suharto to power, nor indeed of a CIA role in earlier regional rebellions against Sukarno. These and other unproven assertions need further investigation in the Indonesian archives if the Suharto-era ‘official’ version of events is to be refuted.
Book reviews

One of Challis’s claims—that the anti-communist pogrom that followed Suharto’s assumption of power was assisted by a CIA-supplied list of PKI members—was confirmed shortly after the book came out, when the US unwittingly published more of its archives from that period than had been intended. There was a frantic effort in Washington to retrieve certain documents, but they had already been reproduced on the Web, confirming Challis’s account.

The strength of this book is that the author, an eyewitness to history, has matched information gleaned at the time with later research in the archives and conversations with retired diplomats. By contrast, the latter part of the book, which attempts to appraise the Suharto presidency, is disappointing because it lacks the vantage points of the earlier part.

Nicholas Nugent

North America


Communication does not merely transmit and receive messages. Information is not merely held. Nor do information and communication only constitute assets to be secured or markets and domains to be won. Digitalization of information and communication is helping to revolutionise power relations throughout every aspect of life. Digitalized information has thus become a generic principle of formation and organisation, in politics and military affairs as well as in business, whose power effects have become a central focus of strategic thought. The United States, as ever, leads the transformation and continues to formulate its key conceptual as well as material features.

These two books by Washington insiders are therefore especially important contributions to the literature on the strategic effects of the information revolution. They exemplify the characteristic ways in which US policy analysts have been strategizing the power of digitalized information, seeking ways to exploit its political, economic and military potential. The two fields examined here, intelligence and foreign policy, also show how deeply the information revolution has penetrated into the traditional heart of statecraft—secrets and diplomacy—not only transforming their policy agendas, but also their very modes of operation.

Dizard’s account of digital diplomacy, for example, details how US foreign policy was directed at securing global networks of information and communication designed to serve the geo-economic as well as the geo-strategic interests of the US as it became a global imperial power. Treverton’s account of national intelligence more widely strategizes the power effects of the information revolution and champions a broad strategic shift from closed systems of intelligence to distributed systems of information. Each provides a history of policy development as well as an analytic of the informational forces driving their respective areas of concern. While both focus on the organizational as well as policy changes required for successful adaptation to the challenges and opportunities of the information age, each is nonetheless also alert to the many ways in which the information revolution more generally problematizes political identity and undermines the key distinctions that have provided liberal democracies with their definitive political bearings: specifically the trio, inside/outside; public/private; civil/military. Given their shared policy preoccupations, however, neither author trespasses into the wider political theorizing called for by these developments; though Treverton explicitly notes the need and is clearly tempted by its challenge. Each book has something useful to offer to any policy insider wrestling with the institutional and policy changes driven by the information revolution, and both should figure prominently on any relevant academic reading list. Treverton’s book is quite prescient also in anticipating terrorist attack and his work is especially pertinent now in the wake of 11 September, especially for those concerned with information and intelligence-based responses to future terrorist threats.
North America

Dizard’s *Digital diplomacy: US foreign policy in the information age* is more historically based than Treverton’s work. His account of how the American diplomatic community has, ‘generally lagged in adapting its policies and operations to electronic realities’ (p. 165) would be typical of almost any foreign service. The book nonetheless demonstrates how the State Department has consistently worked to shape global communication networks in the interests of the US. Thus the book is less about how you do diplomacy in the information age—in the ways that Treverton’s work is an investigation of how to do intelligence—and more a matter of what US diplomacy has to do in order to serve US interests in respect of the global expansion of information and communication networks, more especially now in their digitalization. Dizard casts his analysis in terms of the significance of ‘soft power’ and when he generalizes he does so in terms favoured by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, for whom information power becomes an additional means of continuing to secure US global hegemony.

Treverton’s *Reshaping national intelligence for an information age* champions the strategic information consensus of the 1990s and applies it to the intelligence field. We have moved from the industrial age to the information age, from a small number of privileged agencies preoccupied with collecting secrets to multiple open sources of information shifting the priority instead to interpretation, processing and analysis. Just as the nature of the business has changed, so also has the way in which the business is to be organized and thus Treverton argues for a complementary shift from the stovepipe organization of intelligence in the industrial age to distributed networks for the information age. What is also very evident from Treverton’s analysis is that the information revolution coincided with the geo-strategic revolution precipitated by the collapse of the Soviet Union, and that it is the combination of the two that demands the re-shaping of national intelligence for which he calls: ‘the world of intelligence has been upended by both politics and technology’ (p. 3). If the information age has produced increasing reliance upon vulnerable critical (inter)national infrastructures, the new geo-strategic environment has generated asymmetric threats which, witness 11 September, exploit these very conduits of network societies to effect asymmetric attack. While information age laws of connectivity demand the information-sharing of distributed networks to capitalize on the productivity of information, military operations in the new strategic environment now also increasingly demand distributed information networks that build non-governmental, as well as many other governmental actors, into their information loops. Here, too, we find an illustration of the blurring of boundaries which the information and geo-strategic revolutions effect: ‘the NGO label is a remnant of the old order’ (p. 53). Treverton is an eloquent and enthusiastic proponent of change. It would therefore be easy to appeal to the natural conservatism of bureaucratic organizations, the culture of secrecy that still pervades the intelligence field, and the latent doubts about sharing information even with trusted allies, to argue that there will be no radical change. But it is not a question of whether or not the world is changing. It has. The question is what is to be done. Treverton argues for intelligent policy rather than intelligence policy. It is hard to disagree with him.

Michael Dillon, University of Lancaster, UK


The extent to which public opinion influences the decisions of foreign policy-makers has been a major source of debate in the United States, particularly since the Vietnam War. In this highly readable, important contribution to the literature, Richard Sobel focuses on how public opinion has affected US decisions to intervene abroad since Vietnam. He argues that while public opinion has not set US policy, it has constrained the range of options available to policy-makers. In case-studies of the Vietnam War, the Nicaraguan contra-funding debate, the Persian Gulf War, and the Bosnia crisis, Sobel contends that the attitudes of the American public set the parameters within which interventions could take place, but that policy-makers had relative discretion over the
choice of policy options within those limits. The higher the public’s support for an intervention, the greater the freedom with which policy-makers could act.

In each of his four-case studies, Sobel shows how public opinion influenced the decisions of ‘the top three constitutional policymakers’: the president, the secretary of state, and the secretary of defence (p. 25). In the case of Nicaragua, he also considers the public’s influence on congressional leaders. He analyses the extent and content of these policy-makers’ references to the American public and to opinion polls in their public statements, memos, interviews and memoirs. He uses this method to gauge the policy-makers’ sensitivity to public opinion and the extent to which they were constrained by it. This rather unscientific approach may not convince purists, and Sobel admits it is not flawless. It does reveal, however, that policy-makers in each of the cases analysed did consistently acknowledge the constraining nature of public opinion and that they would have pursued alternative policies had greater support been perceived.

Sobel’s book is a useful study that provides interesting, relatively in-depth case studies, which do indicate that public opinion has constraining effects on policy-making. However, this book will not end the debate. The extent to which the correlation exists between public attitudes and policy-making decisions is not definitively answered here and perhaps cannot be. Clearly public opinion is not the only influence on US foreign policy, and it is rarely the most powerful. Sobel’s book gives us further evidence that public opinion is a significant factor, but many questions remain about how extensively it is considered by policy-makers, how it interacts with other constraining factors on policy-making, and how far it is, in fact, the policy-makers themselves who shape public opinion rather than the other way round.

Trevor B. McCrisken, University of Oxford, UK

Latin America


The volume under review is an attempt to revisit the pressing issue of civil–military relations in the context of Latin American societies. The changed international and domestic scenarios, and the perfunctory treatment of the subject by the traditional scholarship, in the editor’s view, provide the rationale for the current venture. The success of the civilian authorities in controlling the military has varied within the region. However, the apparent subordination of the military to the democratic regimes does not imply the total eclipse of its role. The subtle challenges emanating from the military establishment do have an impact on the capability of democratic regimes to deliver on issues such as market-oriented reforms.

While extending the scope of available literature in the field, the editor presents his ‘new analytical perspectives’ in terms of the strategic action, institutional and the subjective approaches: ‘The integration of the three perspectives thus permits us simultaneously to explore different dimensions of the same civil–military relationship (p. 32).’ The book engages with some of the lesser known and under-analysed aspects of the subject. J. Samuel Fitch delves into the military journals in the region to resurrect their overall orientation towards civilian democracies. Ernesto Lopez puts forward his thesis of the subjective and objective civilian control of the military, while Deborah H. Norden anchors her examination of the specificities of the military bureaucracy and military movement in Hugo Chavez’s failed coup, and subsequent rise to presidency in Venezuela. David R. Mares discusses the problems related to the civilian control of the military in an environment characterised by regional integration, and wonders whether economic integration facilitates the democratic control of the military.

Other contributions include Wendy Hunter on the civil–military relations in Brazil, Harold A. Trinkunas and Felipe Agüero on the nexus between regime changes and strategic choices, and David Pion-Berlin on existing incongruity between the defence ministry and the military in...
Argentina. Brian Loveman traces the historical antecedents of the present day civil–military relations in the overall context of Latin America.

Naturally, in an anthology like this there are bound to be individual variations. On the whole, the book appears to be a valuable collection, which will certainly benefit the students of Latin American civil–military relations. However, readers are well advised to be careful about the content of the term military, which seems to be more accommodative of the army rather than other branches of the military.

Aparajita Gangopadhyay, Goa University, India