

Book Reviews

Women, Europe and the New Languages of Politics by Hilary Footitt. London: Continuum, 2002. Pp.x+193; index. £65.00 (hardback) £17.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 8264 5296 5 and 5297 3.

Feminist critiques of democratic thought and practice share the view that democratic formations within the western world have not fulfilled the aspirations of those who have, over time, campaigned for equalities in participation and representation. Seeking to place gender at the heart of democratic thought and practice, feminist political research has centred on questions relating to gender and citizenship, the locations of participation in the public sphere and implications for women, and the challenge of gender difference in the interpretative schema surrounding democratic practice. While these are themes that frame the feminist research programme, there is significant debate around the issues involved.

Hilary Footitt makes a significant contribution to this debate with her investigation of women's participation within one particular political forum, the European Parliament. Footitt seeks to challenge claims that feminist research has shifted away from a distinctly political project concerned with collective action geared towards emancipation. Her specific aim is to conduct a hermeneutic exercise to locate a women's language, a distinctive 'discursive framework of politics' (p.6) that points to the ways in which women articulate their positionality within the political sphere. Rather than assuming an a priori collective 'woman', Footitt follows Iris Marion Young in adopting what Young refers to as a 'pragmatic' approach. This approach entails assuming, as a deliberate research strategy, a particular grouping around a specific problem being investigated. The grouping is not assumed to possess universal or even essential features, but rather is a heuristic device enabling investigation.

Women representatives within the European Parliament, according to Footitt's research, portray a distinct language of politics that is both revealing of gender difference and potentially transformative of practices within democratic institutions. Both claims, as the reader will immediately recognize, are highly significant and contentious and hence are subject to scrutiny on methodological, epistemological, and ontological grounds. The immediate difficulty for Footitt is that while on the one hand she wishes to move away from essentialist categories, stressing instead the constructions in language that emerge in women's articulations of their role in political institutions, on the other hand, there is a repeated claim that her subject category, women parliamentarians, speak a different language. Such distinctiveness emerges in their framing of the job, and in particular in the construction of their roles as 'interpreters', 'ambassadors', and 'communicators'. Then they emerge as problem solvers, then again as possessing a different 'grammar' of citizenship wherein the citizen is accrued a personal identity in place of an abstraction traditionally constructed by liberal democratic and civic republican discourses. Above all else, we see women parliamentarians projecting an image of Europe that is based on diversity and plurality rather than a set of established rules and procedures.

There is much here that is reminiscent of Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice*. Footitt herself acknowledges this, but then moves on to assert her own difference. Crucial to Footitt's asserted distinctiveness is the differentiation she claims between a women's 'voice' and women's 'languages'. For Footitt, the latter are transferable

goods that may be learnt by others and are hence not essentialist features. Gilligan has however, in response to her critics, placed emphasis on the narration of moral agency in place of an essentialising difference between women and men. Despite assertions to the contrary, it becomes manifestly clear that Footitt shares with Gilligan what emerges as a standpoint feminist position on women's discourses relating to all aspects of social and political life. Her work is then subject to critiques of standpoint feminism that concentrate primarily on the methodological and ontological questions that Footitt sees as having preoccupied feminist thought at the expense of an expressly political agenda.

Such questions are, however, at the heart of feminist re-conceptions of democratic thought and practice and cannot be as easily dismissed. This said, Footitt's research provides some insight into a realm of politics that is challenging of traditional state-centred approaches and should hence be necessary reading for political scientists as well as politicians. Of particular value are the set of revelations that emerge in the analysis of discourses within the European Parliament on matters relating to citizenship, difference, inclusion and exclusion, and the ever-evolving European identity. The book is therefore of interest to feminists interested in democratic thought as well as to those engaged with the challenges that Europe's shifting political terrain provides.

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Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule by Shanti Kalathil and Taylor C. Boas. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003. Pp.202; glossary, notes. \$18.95 (paperback) ISBN 0 87003 194 5.

Shanti Kalathil and Taylor C. Boas' volume analyses, assesses and explains the impact of the Internet on several specifically chosen authoritarian states including China, Cuba, Singapore, Vietnam, Burma, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Its purpose is to consider the links between technological advances and the potential democratization of dictatorial regimes in the 'information age'. In particular, the book notes that political leaders such as President George W. Bush have espoused the belief that the information revolution will be an inherent force for democratic reform. The authors' concern is to test this conventional wisdom against the evidence within the aforementioned non-democratic states. To develop their study, they state that their aim is to analyse the usage of the Internet among a broad range of political, economic and social actors. It is also their intention that their investigation will inform United States policy regarding the Internet. This, they hope, will equip politicians with the knowledge to consider how the Internet may be most profitably employed to enhance the interests of both citizens in the US and within the authoritarian states under review.

While Kalathil and Boas contend that the Internet has disrupted the status quo in many authoritarian states, they maintain that its ripple-like effects do not travel in a straight line of cause and effect. Instead, they argue that the Internet presents both challenges and opportunities to these countries as such governments are responsible for the distribution of the networks' lines and hardware, the state directed investment programmes in e-commerce, and the establishment of centralized information policies to shape Internet usage amongst the population. Moreover, as wired states may

increase state capacity so that effective e-government occurs, for instance in the case of Singapore, many reforms to bureaucratic and institutional structures can take place, thereby increasing the efficiency and perceived legitimacy of a dominant regime. In addition, the dissemination of governmental on-line services has enabled several authoritarian countries to make use of the Internet for propaganda purposes by placing state-run newspapers on-line and by allowing the regimes to fine tune their ideological messages through chat rooms and bulletin boards. Finally, the authors critically examine the claims made by politicians and activists that the Internet may be developed as a tool to disseminate oppositional ideas. Although they suggest that Internet censorship (for example the blocking of content) is problematic, they make a greater claim concerning the limited effects of Internet activism within authoritarian states by considering the qualifications of access for oppositional parties and the restriction of alternative actors or dissidents from 'safe' networks.

The authors contend that the evidence suggests that the Internet has not proven to be the outstanding threat to authoritarian states. However, they are not wholly dismissive of the Internet, seeing it as an important, but not on its own sufficient, medium for successful oppositional activism. They are aware of transnational activist campaigns such as Free Burma, through which the cause of Burmese oppression has become a global concern. In addition, the Internet may provide the 'space' for on-line diasporas in which a heightened international discourse of political ideologies may 'interact' with the views of domestic dissidents.

This volume contains a series of in depth reviews of the effects of the Internet in each chosen state system. In addition, it develops its analysis of the Internet's impact on authoritarian regimes in a clear and logical manner, and its conclusions concerning the limited impact of democratic reform are appropriate. Moreover, the authors provide a critical approach to the links between technological change and democratic reform. To this end, they correctly maintain that conditional factors concerning the nature of the authoritarian regime and rates of access to the populace are as much key determinants as the rate of Internet development itself.

The book acts as necessary corrective to those advocates of technological determinism, while maintaining a clear view on the potential of the Internet to advance democratic opportunities on a national and international scale. With regard to the book's loftier ambitions concerning the usage of scholarly research to inform US political thinking concerning the Internet, it is to be hoped in this age of international tension that the authors' objective findings will be appropriately taken up. However, in future, it may prove to be more prescient were the authors to shift their attention away from 'authoritarian' regimes under review to consider the impact of the Internet on the increasingly centralized state structure which has emerged in the US political regime in the wake of 9/11.

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Click on Democracy: The Internet's Power to Change Political Apathy into Civic Action edited by Steve Davis, Larry Elin and Grant Reeher. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002. Pp.xviii+295; notes, index. \$27.50 (hardback) ISBN 0 813340 05 5.

Democracy and the Internet: Allies and Adversaries? by Leslie David Simon, Javier Corrales and Donald R. Wolfensberger. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2002. Pp.109; index. \$11.95 (paperback). ISBN 1 930365 09 8.

These two books are examples of a growing trend among scholars to analyse the phenomenon of the Internet and assess its impact on American and other forms of democracy. The fascination and frustration of many social scientists regarding the new technologies and how they are changing, for example, the American political landscape is attracting research funds and grants and leading to debate about the relationship between the World Wide Web and voting, information consumption, political participation, campaigning and many other political experiences, especially within the American political context. Perhaps the main use of the two books is in their optimistic message that the Internet can be a useful tool to enhance democracy and democratization in both post-industrial and transition countries.

Click on Democracy is the result of a joint research effort between scholars and schools affiliated with Syracuse University, while *Democracy and the Internet*, also a collection of articles, was written in cooperation between the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, DC and the Stennis Congressional Center. The two books share a number of similarities. Both originated as a result of the presidential and congressional elections in the United States in 2000, when the Internet played a major role. Second, they are both cautious in their optimism as far the power of the Internet and its ability to transform politics is concerned. In sum, both studies focus on the premise of institutional change in American democracy as a result of the 'information revolution'.

Click on Democracy is an anthology of case studies of political and social activists using the Internet for certain political goals. It promotes the link between the Internet and the discovery, grooming and cultivation of what the editors call 'social capital', that is, the human potential and individual resources found among people using different web sites to promote many political meanings. They do a good job acquainting the reader with the works of many communication theorists and their different theses. They also introduce many concepts and elaborate on them, including: civic engagement, civil society, cyber politics, and cyber communities. The editors are cognizant that, while there are many flaws in American democracy for which the Internet is not a panacea, it can still play a role finding a remedy to some of its extant problems.

Click on Democracy hails the Internet for creating among the 90 million American youth born after 1976 what it calls the 'Internet generation'. This is seen as a positive sign because the Internet equips users with the research function that allows people to seek out information. This is in contrast to the 'television generation', allegedly more passive, which only received information. The book also dwells on the connectivity of the Internet and its capability to establish webs of contacts through the medium of communications. Yet, the authors affirm, the Internet is not a new paradigm in politics. Often, they suggest, Internet users trade rather narrow views, exchanging 'similar opinions, biases, and interests in a virtual but static universe that, at its worst, reinforces all of their prior prejudices. As a result people on line further wall themselves off from perspectives that they would otherwise run into accidentally while at work, while socializing, or while reading or watching the news ... Our online

associations are just as likely as not to increase the odds of accidental exposure to different thoughts and people, since some of the typical physical clues are missing when we are online. We might talk online to people we would cross the street to avoid' (*Click on Democracy*, pp.250–51).

Democracy and the Internet adopts a more universal approach to the study of the Internet. It not only examines the impact of the Internet on the collapse of communism and the demise of the Soviet Empire, but also discusses how authoritarian governments more generally seek to impede the spread of the Internet into their societies, seeing it as a key way to undermine their undemocratic rule. The authors cite many examples from Asia and the Middle East where the Internet is censored. They also discuss the situation in Central and Latin America, providing examples of the growth of Internet use and the amount and quality of information disseminated via the Web.

The authors are particularly interested in the impact of the Internet on American politics and society. The book discusses how the Internet was the product of the American defence community, while also examining the role in its development of a number of scientists and entrepreneurs who were members of America's counter-culture. It also examines how the Internet helped the US Congress function while the House of Representatives and the Senate were shut down in late 2001 after the anthrax scare. September 11 prompted Congress to look into the possibility of cyber terror attacks and how the Internet could aid terrorism. As a result, Congress promulgated rules that protected voting by its members from any on-line statements. For instance, Congress prohibited its members from using their laptops to surf the Internet while on Capitol Hill floor.

In conclusion, the two books are ambitious efforts to understand an exceedingly complex phenomenon with profound social impacts. While they advocate an egalitarian approach to the Internet – by making computer ownership and its use a universal project to be supported by the United States government – they skip discussion of provision of Internet services to the America public. (The Internet cannot be an open superhighway for people living in the United States unless the number of Internet providers expands from its current base of a few big telephone companies and other media conglomerates.) Finally, the two books miss the chance of a more sophisticated discussion of the definition of majority rule in America. They acknowledge the anti-majoritarian attitude of the Founding Fathers and how the American system of government is structured to further that goal. The ability of the Internet to form ad hoc majorities is perhaps the biggest challenge to both the vision and reality of American democracy.

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Media Democracy: How the Media Colonize Politics by Thomas Meyer with Lew Hinchman. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002. pp.xvii+166; index. £14.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 7456 2844 3.

The President of the United States, in full airman's uniform, strides across the deck of the aircraft carrier, after winging his way as putative co-pilot from the mainland. He is there to welcome home sailors returning from the Persian Gulf – but also, unofficially, to kick off his re-election bid. Later, it transpires that the carrier, allegedly still far out at sea, was only 100 miles off the US coast, and that its return to port had been delayed

to accommodate the presidential photo opportunity. Some grumbling is heard about the obvious stage-management of the proceedings. But *Time* magazine puts it on its cover anyway.

Such is the age of 'media democracy' that Thomas Meyer addresses in his concise and insightful new book. Meyer is chair of politics at the University of Dortmund, and his book is geared more to a European readership than a North American one – although regular reference is made to the debased character of US politics in the media age. Non-German readers, like this one, will be especially interested by the wide range of examples drawn from Germany, a country whose media have received relatively little attention in English.

The crux of Meyer's argument is not particularly original. We live in an epoch in which 'the key actors of the political system always reckon with the effects of the preferred reading structures of media products on the large majority of the audience, and stage-manage their own performance in accordance with it' (p.x). (By 'reading', the author means 'viewing' as well, since most of his work focuses on the impact of television, 'the formative medium of our time ... [and] a pace-setter, magnet and spur for all the other types' [p.31].) Meyer 'concludes that we are today witnessing a profound functional transformation of democracy in media societies', notably 'the almost unconditional surrender of politics – at least in all visible, publicly accessible aspects of communication – to the logic of the media system' (pp.xii, 57).

It is in the exposition of the theme that the value of this short book lies. Meyer examines the specific implications of the new 'mediacracy' for the traditional functioning of 'political organizations and institutions – including parliaments' and political parties (p.58). Among the features of the mediacracy are an exponential growth in public-relations staff and spin doctors; dependence on stage-managed media 'events'; 'trial balloons' to test possible platforms against the media response, and to tinker with the elements that the media reject; and the growing dependence on poll results, 'themselves often just reflections of the most recent polls' (p.63). In the mediacracy, traditional party structures, with their functions of interest-aggregation and articulation, wither in the face of new generations of charismatic, media-friendly leaders. Parties must seek out such figures and subordinate themselves to them, or risk marginalization. 'In this way media charisma becomes an independent and frequently dominant resource' (p.63). But in the process, parties are forced 'out to the fringes of events', and this 'has caused parliament to go into eclipse as well' (pp.101, 115).

Meyer is also very good on the subject of 'Media time and political time' (section heading, p.40), analyzing how the more leisurely and extended temporal framework of traditional politics has been undermined by the 'uncompromising presentism' (p.46) that characterizes modern, and especially televisual, mass media. 'When the extremely short time-frame of the media's production schedule ends up dominating the public arena of politics, the result is a devaluing of those structures and organizations that are wedded by their very nature to the long time-horizon of the political process' (p.40).

The author resists the easy lure of blanket culture-condemnation, however, rejecting the critiques of Neil Postman and others. He recognizes the element of media stage-management as not just pervasive, but potentially positive – or 'appropriate', as he prefers – so long as it is respectful of the separate and independent dynamic of politics, rather than seeking to trivialize it out of existence. 'It is certainly true that the media stage is a sham political reality', Meyer writes. 'But the problem consists in the sham, not the staging ... The decisive question, then, concerns how media-system actors themselves use the leeway afforded them when they effect a synthesis of aesthetics and facts' (pp.129, 132).

A powerful aspect of *Media Democracy* is Meyer's obvious passion for liberal democracy. The issues he grapples with are far from abstract to him; this lends his writing a welcome immediacy and even urgency. This is nowhere more evident than in the book's conclusion, where Meyer stresses the importance of a revitalized civil society to monitoring media performance and enforcing standards of 'appropriateness'. Only in this way, he suggests, will the media be able to serve their designated (and standardly self-proclaimed) role as informants and forums for wide-ranging public discussion, debate, and negotiation. The task of 'democratizing the rules of media selection and presentation ... may be the single greatest challenge that democratic politics will face in the future' (p.142).

The book is incisively written. Its brevity adds to its appeal as an undergraduate text. Perhaps ironically, it is well-suited to the limited attention-spans that prevail in the 'mediacracy'. The only real failing of *Media Democracy* is the cursory treatment it accords to media beyond print and television. The internet, for example, enters the account very late (p.114), and is granted only five pages of study, none of it especially interesting or revealing. Meyer acknowledges the democratic potential of the technology, cautions against excessive celebration, and concludes that time will tell. One wishes he had instead integrated the new medium into his earlier chapters, addressing its possible influence on the shape of party politics and relations between party elites and grassroots, as well as its role in unveiling 'inappropriate' stage-management (as Meyer defines it). Certainly one cannot understand the successful candidacy of a professional wrestler – Jesse Ventura – in Minnesota, to which Meyer devotes a few pages of discussion (pp.77–80), without appreciating Ventura's net-fuelled campaigning strategy. The absence of any mention of radio also seems odd, since this is by far the most significant medium in less-developed democratic societies, and even in the First World may offer the potential for more genuine debate and audience interactivity.

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Violent Politics: Strategies of Internal Conflict by Michael Addison. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002. Pp.xvi+244; index. £45 (hardback). ISBN 0 333 73085 2.

This is a timely book about an important subject. At present the western democracies, the United States and the United Kingdom especially, are confronted by challenges posed by a number of terrorist organizations whose agents, often organized in clandestine cells, have located themselves within the countries to be targeted for violent attack. What should be done to counter the threat(s) and defeat those seeking to do harm to civilian populations? Some observers have emphasized the importance of waging the struggle against terrorist violence within the bounds of normal legal processes: no special measures or special courts required. Protection of civil liberty and due process of law are foremost considerations. At the other end of the spectrum, there are some, at least, who regard the post 9/11 threat as sufficiently grave as to warrant the use of brutal repressive measures employed by Latin American regimes to defeat their revolutionary challengers during the 1970s. The debate over the appropriate measures to be used continues both in the US and UK.

This volume offers readers following the various arguments some considerable insight. The author begins by making a fundamental distinction between conventional and violent politics and notes that, like it or not, the latter is a common if not natural

form of expression around the world. From this perspective, the writer goes on to conduct what amounts to a conventional literature review of works seeking to explain (ch.2) the sources of violent politics and the alternative strategies employed recently by its practitioners.

It is following this commentary that the writer turns his attention to the conflict in Northern Ireland. He uses this protracted conflict as a springboard to launch a discussion of the fundamental problems confronting constitutional governments attempting to cope with challengers more committed to the use of an Armalite than the ballot box. Based on the writer's summary of the Northern Irish experience, he points out the exceptional difficulty of the authorities being able to obtain convictions in conventional courtroom proceedings against individuals who kill and maim for political rather than personal motives. The evidence he assembles suggests that even the introduction of the idea of a 'political' crime rarely makes it any easier to bring the guilty to justice. Another option is a 'war in the shadows', the government regards the challenge posed by terrorists as an extra-legal problem which compels the use of special measures not bound or limited by conventional legal standards. The author mentions the Spanish government's surreptitious attacks against Basque terrorists during the 1980s as an example, although an abundance of others might be brought to bear. A better option, at least for democracies, is to view violent politics, once it has passed a certain threshold, as an internal war. The enactment of emergency measures or the declaration of martial law, the writer continues, does not mean an end to the rule of law. Rather it means, or can be made to mean, that international humanitarian law or the rules of war (as defined by the Geneva Convention) may be applied to the situation. This means, among other things, that the indiscriminate killing of civilians or the torture of captives constitute war crimes; it follows those perpetrating such crimes should be punished for their deeds. If the rules of war are not applied, the author concludes, the result will be a 'dirty war' waged by both challengers and authorities with no restraints on either side.

If states fail to act against 'violent politicians', the author concludes, they tacitly accept the latter's behaviour as an apparently legitimate form of political expression and by so doing undermine their own legitimacy. In effect, they do the terrorists' work for them. So action is required. The normal criminal justice process is inadequate and so the best alternative requires the application of rules originally devised for international conflicts to internal wars.

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Human Rights. An Interdisciplinary Approach by Michael Freeman. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002. Pp.ix+201; index, bibliography. £45 (hardback) £14.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 7456 2355 7 and 2356 5.

One of Polity's useful 'Key Concepts' series (the others include volumes on fundamentalism, concepts of the self, power and nationalism), this is a succinct and accessible treatment. Michael Freeman is a political theorist rooted in the western tradition and the strength of his approach lies in its critical examination of the evolution of the idea of human rights and its application to the real world. It emphasises the need to be interdisciplinary, drawing attention to cultural, religious, gender and economic factors. However, it concentrates on the philosophical underpinnings of human rights, and the political context in which rights discourse

takes place, rather than engaging in detailed empirical analysis of human rights problems.

The need for the protection of human rights has increased with the exponential growth in the capacity of both state and non-state actors to inflict immense suffering on people. Freeman cites one calculation that governments alone may have murdered at least 169 million people in the first 50 years after 1945. While the statistics maybe debated, what is clear is that the rise of human rights as a theme in international relations and domestic politics has not caused states and other organizations to desist from the gross abuse of even the most basic of rights – the right to life.

To begin with it should be recalled that the very notion of universal human rights is a relatively novel one. A hundred years ago few people in Europe or North America accepted the idea that women and non-white people deserved the same rights and respect as adult white males (even the latter had yet to win equal political rights in the majority of countries). The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) marked an important watershed but the fact that it was one that emerged primarily out of the western philosophical and moral tradition has given rise to problems. While of the eight states that abstained in the UN General Assembly vote on the UDHR (six communist states, apartheid South Africa and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), only Saudi Arabia now survives under the same political regime, controversy over how universal rights can be persists.

Freeman is strongly critical of cultural relativist arguments, correctly pointing out how such relativism can be biased against the weak within a particular cultural group, as well as serve to undermine the basis for criticizing imperialistic cultures. Yet the fact that he largely limits the scope of his analysis to the western philosophical provenance of human rights is unfortunate. The argument would have been enhanced by drawing upon examinations of how ideas of rights have found expression in other cultural traditions and, indeed, crossed from one to the other.

When it comes to politics and the relationship between democracy and human rights, Freeman succeeds in bringing out the contradictions that bedevil the crude equation of human rights with political democracy and free market economics. Majoritarian democracy threaten the rights of minorities while markets were never intended to promote universal economic and social rights and might well erode the capacity of people to freely exercise their rights. Globalization has served to highlight these contradictions.

However, Freeman's *tour d' horizon* pulls its punches when it comes to addressing the role of power in shaping the discourse and practice of human rights. While he acknowledges that in the international arena the dominance of the western agenda reflects the balance of power, he does not tackle the strategic calculations that largely determine political and military interventions ostensibly undertaken on the grounds of human rights. Instead, he favours 'the principle of limited sacrifice' (namely, states will sometimes include human rights in foreign policy but only pay a limited price for implementing them). In fact, rather than paying a price, the theme of human rights has far more often been exploited by powerful states to gain strategic advantage and serve their economic interests.

The book ends by calling on human rights activists to take social science seriously. Well written and stimulating in places, it should certainly serve as a useful introduction to the politics of human rights for them (and others). One of a growing number of such course texts, it would complement studies that take a more empirical approach.

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An Introduction to Global Citizenship by Nigel Dower. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003. Pp.xv+184; index and bibliography. £45.00 (hardback); £12.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 7486 1469 9 and 1470 2.

'Everyone with an active commitment to a more just and sustainable world should read this' (Oxfam Development Education Programme). I would echo the sentiments of this endorsement, but would hope that it will reach an audience much wider than those already actively committed – indeed that it will be widely read by undergraduates in the social sciences and beyond. Nigel Dower has produced an admirable piece of engaged scholarship in which his own philosophical position is clearly stated. His writing, throughout, is persuasive but never polemical; it is also lucid and deceptively simple, given the difficult and challenging arguments that are expounded.

The book aims to introduce debates around notions of global citizenship to first year undergraduates (and perhaps sixth formers) and to promote practices associated with an ethically informed, active global citizenship. It is clearly and effectively organized and is divided into three parts. Part I provides the framework for the arguments that follow. Part II deals with issue areas and institutions associated with a potential global citizenship and Part III discusses theoretical issues. While each of the chapters is quite brief, Dower succeeds in introducing numerous debates and issues in a thought-provoking manner. Included also are an excellent glossary and two appendices – the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and The Earth Charter.

Part I begins with a concise introduction, clearly establishing the author's aims and objectives. This is followed, in ch.2, by discussion of perspectives on global problems and establishment of the antecedents of, and contemporary debates about, 'the need for a global ethic'. Here, and throughout the volume, Dower's background in philosophy is apparent. He sets out in clear and simple terms the development of cosmopolitan thought, as a prelude to introduction of competing approaches, both historical and contemporary, to constructing a global ethic. The final chapter of Part I addresses the concept of citizenship directly. Following introduction of the legal and political bases of citizenship, and the competing conceptions of citizenship in political theory, Dower examines the applications of citizenship, as traditionally conceived, to the concept of global citizenship. This is achieved through critical engagement with concepts of globalization and their implications for state citizenship, followed by examination of the notions of global civil society and global governance.

Part II, 'Examples and areas of interest', provides a more empirical focus, although discussion of the normative and theoretical issues raised in Part I (and revisited in Part III) continues throughout. This part focuses on four issue areas – human rights, peace and security, world poverty and global environmental issues (linked through the concepts of sustainable development and generational equity) and the United Nations and global governance. Chapter 4, on human rights, provides explicit links with the earlier (Part I) discussion of rights and responsibilities as a facet of citizenship, while ch.7, on the United Nations and global governance, leads into the concluding discussion. Each of these four chapters provides examples of global citizenship in action, including brief outlines of the aims and activities of selected organizations. Included, also, is discussion of the ethics of different forms of action.

Part III, dealing with theoretical issues, is more demanding. Returning to the themes introduced in Part I – the idea of a global ethic and the concept of global citizenship – it engages directly with criticisms of these ideas. In ch.8 the claims of relativism and communitarianism are considered, as are realism in international relations theory and the dangers associated with cultural imperialism. The chapter

concludes with examination of the 'Nussbaum debate' concerning the relationship between cosmopolitanism and patriotism. Ch.9 returns to the concept of global citizenship, addressing charges that citizenship cannot exist in the absence of a defined polity and self-aware polis. The concluding section deals with the implications of 11 September and its aftermath for global citizenship. Undoubtedly this final part will prove challenging to the target audience, in that Dower himself appears to be wrestling with these ideas, not least in the section dealing with the 'global war against terrorism'.

Apart from a concern that some readers may not persist with the final part, I have few criticisms of this excellent volume. Personally, I dislike the summaries of key points at the start of each chapter, and the questions at the end. This latter might be replaced, in later editions, by suggestions for further reading and web addresses of organizations discussed.

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New Directions in Global Political Governance: The G-8 and the International Order in the Twenty-First Century edited by J. Kirton and J. Takase. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002. Pp.xxv+368; bibliography; index. £45.00 (hardback). ISBN 0 7546 1833 1.

As economic and political activity is increasingly globalized, there has been a growth in the number and import of institutions of global governance. Consequently, analyses of these structures have become a growth industry among international relations theorists. This edited volume keys in on the role of the G8 in global governance in general, and the events and results of the 2000 summit on the Japanese island of Okinawa in particular. Given its variable agenda and periodic meetings, the G8 often gets slighted in the literature on global governance, particularly in regard to its security potential, compared to more institutionalized inter-governmental organisations like the UN and EU. As such this book is a useful addition to the literature.

The first section provides an overview of the G8 system, a review and analysis of the Okinawa summit, and an exploration of the role of such high level summits in global governance. The second section highlights the implications of having the summit at Okinawa – where the bulk of America's military presence in Japan is stationed – for Japanese domestic and foreign policy. The role of the G8 in security is explored next, concentrating on the issues of nuclear proliferation and an expanded conception of human security. Finally, the place of the G8 in broader patterns of global institutional governance is assessed. No longer merely a body for economic policy coordination, the G8 now plays a more direct role in global security issues, as indicated by the use of the 1999 Cologne summit to coordinate action (and get Russian cooperation) during the Kosovo conflict. Of greater significance in an era of American hegemony, Gina Stephens in her chapter maintains that the US increasingly responds to policy initiatives from other G8 countries. Rather than being one of unipolarity, the G8 system operates more like the nineteenth-century European concert system among relatively equal great powers, albeit with democratic guiding principles.

This volume is an addition to the Ashgate series on 'The G8 and Global Governance', which connects broader global issues to the events of the annual G8 summit. Collectively, the book does a good job at providing a concise yet complete recap of the discussions and pronouncements of Okinawa, including documentary appendices with the major summit communiqués. The chapters which focus

specifically on Okinawa are the less intriguing parts of the book, however. Besides a few general pronouncements about programs for alleviating poverty and spreading information technology, not much happened at the 2000 summit. The violence of both the Genoa summit and 11 September the following year, moreover, largely pushed Okinawa to the footnotes of history. The authors can hardly be faulted for failing to breathe life into descriptions of a rather mundane event, but these parts of the book are only likely to be of interest to those specializing in G8 research. The same is true for Part II on Japanese domestic and foreign policy.

This book is at its best in the chapters contemplating the role of the G8 in the greater web of global governance, particularly the contributions by editors Kirton and Takase. Unlike the bureaucratized United Nations, the informal structure of the G8 allows it to address a range of issues at the highest level. Such flexibility also allows it to bring new voices to the table, as it did with Russia after the fall of communism. It may thus hold greater potential for sustainable multilateralism, particularly if new actors like China and India can be integrated into the discussion, than the UN system. John Kirton even goes so far as to envision the G8 supplanting the UN as the dominant institution of global peace and security (p.192). Perhaps this is a bit premature, but it does highlight the potential for a genuine transformation of global governance. *New Directions in Global Political Governance* offers a good collection of essays to help one contemplate the potential and implication of such changes.

TERRENCE CASEY

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The Contours of American Politics: An Introduction by Jon Roper. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002. Pp.viii+224; index, bibliography. £50.00 (hardback) £15.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 7456 2060 4 and 2061 2.

American Politics and Society Today edited by Robert Singh. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002. Pp.xiii+240; index, bibliography. £50.00 (hardback) £14.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 7456 2526 7 and 2527 4.

Jon Roper's book is an absolute delight combining a complex mixture of American culture, politics and history. Skilfully using the metaphor of Huckleberry Finn's eventful journey down the Mississippi River, Roper draws on a wide variety of resources to examine contemporary American political culture and identity. He provides a thought-provoking awareness of the historical landscape of American politics, interweaving the past with the present to examine a wide range of topics including race, class, gender, culture, the influence of the media, the institutions of government, and foreign policy.

Central to the book is the belief that contemporary debates in domestic and foreign policy do not take place in a vacuum, but are often shaped by America's historical experience and cultural tensions. For Roper there is a continuity that connects contemporary American thought to its origins and subsequent history. This may not be an original idea, but what is refreshing about Roper's approach is the method he adopts. He is as happy quoting Thomas Jefferson as he is Bruce Springsteen, as comfortable discussing the impact of Vietnam as he is the relevance of *Star Wars*. This is one of the strengths of the book, breaking out of the strait-jacket of most academic texts on American politics.

A good example is Roper's discussion of American foreign policy that ambitiously traces events from George Washington through to America's response to Al Qaeda. On the way Roper quotes from sources as diverse as Ronald Reagan, the poet Robert Frost, Sydney Greenstreet in *Casablanca*, Gore Vidal, Louis Hartz and George W. Bush. The fact that this chapter, and the rest of the book, gels so well, criss-crossing the disciplines is a testament to the author's abilities.

In short, this is a useful book for both students encountering American politics for the first time and those seeking a deeper understanding of what makes American politics such controversial and fascinating terrain. It is a thoroughly enjoyable text that that will reward the reader many times.

Singh's collection offers a more traditional approach to American politics. Encompassing the work of ten academics, all the usual suspects are present: race, the role of the media, the Supreme Court, the presidency and Congress, the 2000 election debacle, women in politics, and the politics of power sharing.

What separates this out from similar books available is the calibre of the essays present. Marc Stear offers an interesting post-mortem on the 'Third Way'. Singh himself argues that the 2000 presidential election was more lost by Gore than won by Bush. Furthermore, he suggests that the election highlighted further the continuing regional, cultural, and ideological divides that exists in America. For him, there is no Republican realignment, but rather a reinforcing of the fundamental fault-lines within a deeply divided America.

Addressing the continuing controversy of race in American politics, Paul Frymer argues that the institutional structure of American government has profoundly negative effects on specific groups in America, notably African Americans. For Frymer the future of African American politics needs to be strengthened by a credible candidacy from within the Democratic primaries. Robert Mason provides a critique of American television that examines the inability of the media to perform its central functions within the western world's largest democracy, most dramatically displayed on 7 November 2000. He persuasively argues that these weaknesses are unlikely to change.

Paul Martin explores the politics of the Supreme Court, demonstrating that the conservative revolution many expected has not occurred, resulting in a Court with strongly conflicting political tendencies. He makes an interesting case for the 'counter revolution that wasn't'. Nigel Bowles provides a thoughtful approach to presidential power and the relationship between the president and Congress. Adopting a 'trifocal' model, he argues that the political relationship between both ends of the avenue is shaped by three factors: the constitutional authority granted to the president and Congress; the configuration of parties, electoral cycles and coalition dynamics; and 'power politics'. However, Bowles is astutely aware of the dangers of generalizations and rightly warns the reader that particular successes or failures for a president may be case specific.

Abigail Halcli reinforces the themes of earlier chapter in the book, noting that the institutional structure of American government has restricted the participation and representation of women in American politics and their influence over policy outcomes.

The final two chapters at first appear to be at odds with the rest of the collection, yet add considerably to the strengths of the book. The first by Desmond King and Julian Murphet addresses the relationship between American identity and multiculturalism through jazz and hip-hop. Their study leads them to conclude that 'multiculturalism' remains a method of avoiding the political grievances of urban

African Americans; ethnic or racial identities are standardized for mainstream society in America. The second essay is an enjoyable analysis of the controversial cartoons *The Simpsons* and *South Park*. Challenging the view that both of these cartoons are subversive, Singh argues they reinforce long-standing American values. Arguably they do both.

Perhaps not appropriate as a core text, this is a useful book for students at all levels who want to explore the intricacies of American politics further.

ANDREW MORAN

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Constitutionalism and Dictatorship: Pinochet, the Junta, and the 1980 Constitution by Robert Barros. Cambridge Studies in the Theory of Democracy, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002. Pp.349; index and bibliography. £50.00/\$65.00 (hardback) £17.95/\$25.00 (paperback). ISBN 0 521 79218 5 and 79658 X.

While many democratization processes have involved the drafting of a new, mutually agreeable charter, the Chilean military regime imposed a constitution midway through its tenure that dictated the progression of the transition and continues to shape Chilean politics. Robert Barros challenges existing interpretations of this process and in so doing he questions our conceptualization of authoritarianism itself. He argues that the other members of the military junta placed considerable restrictions on Pinochet's attempts to consolidate power and, in turn, the development of a new constitution during the regime resulted in a limitation to the junta's powers. He concludes that the regime cannot accurately be described as personalistic, and that a dictator's capacity to dictate and alter laws has been overstated. Barros argues that mechanisms – like the Supreme Court, for instance – did exist to provide 'relative' limits to the power and authority of the regime.

Based on research that benefits from diligence and a bit of good luck (in stumbling upon a previously inaccessible collection of minutes of the junta's meetings), Barros sheds new light on the deliberations and internal machinations of the junta, and its interaction with Pinochet. These provide some interesting nuggets. When contemplating trials for Allende government officials, Pinochet recognized that although they bore 'moral responsibility' for events, there was scant legal ground for considering their acts criminal, or for prosecution (p.157). This contributed to the widespread use of exile.

Despite such snapshots, Barros' unprecedented access to hundreds of volumes of minutes provides little for political junkies to sink their teeth into. They will not find much about relations with civilian ministers, nor significant clues to the personal influences or political rivalries within the junta, although the cited minutes do give a fresh impression of the external pressures the regime faced in its early years. The account of a diplomat having to explain to the generals that foreign concern about human rights was based on religious and moral principles – and did not represent an international communist plot – is both humorous and illuminating, as is the fact that the junta kept a wary eye on the United Nations and its condemnations of Chile. Junta member José Toribio Merino also emerges as particularly sensitive to international criticism and critical of the human rights situation.

Barros' discussion of the question of trials is indicative of a weakness in his argument. He puts forward the regime's inability to hold trials as an example of the

limitations it faced. Yet the regime's response – opting for extra-legal forms of control such as exile – suggests complete disregard for legal limitations. If one chooses to break the law because the law is inconvenient, and has the power to avoid reprisals under the law, is one demonstrating restraint?

The limitations argument is not altogether convincing, until, that is, the final chapter, in which Pinochet hands over the presidential sash to a democratically elected president. Much discussion has ensued over why Pinochet accepted this democratic fate, and Barros' two principal arguments combine nicely to provide some answers.

The book, then, addresses some important questions. It shows that the desire to construct a new institutional structure was founded in normative arguments about the constituent nature of the regime. Above and beyond the quest for legitimacy, civilian and military members of the government recognized that the coup had effectively left Chile without a constitutional order.

Embarking upon a remedial process required profound reflection about the meaning and purpose of political institutions, democracy and historical considerations. The ensuing document 'did structure a democracy, albeit with protections and exclusions, however objectionable and controversial' (p.174). Yet the new constitution's main objective was the entrenchment of the regime's powers in preparation for a period of confrontation and the document did not immediately 'set in motion a transition nor inaugurated a liberalization' (p.168). This is the underlying tension in what Barros calls a 'dual constitution'.

This duality implies a level of imperfection that leads one to ask: if several other Latin American transitions required new constitutional arrangements, why is Chile an exception? Here developments within the democratic opposition and the nature of the democratic transition are at least as relevant as the power dynamics within the military regime. While right-leaning legal and academic experts debated the makeup of a new constitution, many members of the left were undergoing a process of political learning abroad. They, too, identified and criticized the institutional fault lines along which the coup had occurred. A detailed analysis of these deliberations is beyond the scope of the book, but addressing the way in which the political gap between the two sides was narrowed is a key to understanding why the constitution, with all its imperfections, has endured.

ROBERT FUNK

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Emerging Market Democracies: East Asia and Latin America edited by Laurence Whitehead. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pp.ix+226. £14.00 (paperback). ISBN 0 8018 7219 7.

Academic works on what one might call 'the political economy of development', other than purely historical accounts, are notoriously difficult to get right. They tend to require a combination of different calculations, all of which are to some degree speculative. Political authorities are often unpredictable and electorates' democratic preferences unfathomable. Markets tend to operate in strange ways as well. To put the latter point a bit differently, anybody who really understands the workings of a market is likely to end up very rich. Unfortunately, though, academic political economists are not generally known for personal financial success. In addition to the unpredictability of markets themselves, our globalized world is also at the mercy of dramatic events such as the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001. Today,

moreover, we have to factor in the diplomacy and political economy of war. Human error is another key factor in economic policymaking. For example the Mexican authorities severely bungled the 'tequila' devaluation at the end of 1994 and, in so doing, nearly brought down the entire international financial system. So, indeed, did a group of Nobel-prize winning economists whose bond market calculations came severely unstuck in 1998. The resulting crisis helped persuade the US Federal Reserve to cut its interest rates and this, in turn, impacted on the economies of the emerging market democracies. None of this hubbub of events makes macro-level political economy any easier.

This book came out of a conference held in Chile on 'State Market and Democracy in East Asia in Latin America' in October 1999. It has been capably edited by Laurence Whitehead, who has also written an extremely good concluding chapter. However the work as a whole does not really live up to the promise of its title and some of it already looks dated. The conference may well have been a good idea in itself, but the decision to publish must have been finely balanced. There is no really convincing unifying argument, and the volume is therefore composed of a set of rather separate individual contributions. Where contributors have tried to make explicit comparisons between East Asia and Latin America, they sometimes get their assessments seriously wrong. For example there is the assertion by Fukuyama and Marwah that 'Latin America did a much better job of weathering the financial crises of 1997-98' (than East Asia did). In fact, it just took longer for the crisis to unfold across Latin America. Fukuyama and Marwah's view of Latin America looks very dated today. Whitehead's initial chapter, though more cautiously written, also claims that Latin American countries 'are relatively well-placed to legitimize their place in a liberal international order.' With the benefit of hindsight, that also looks optimistic.

In fact Latin America's experience with free markets and democracy has not convincingly succeeded except where they have both been supplemented with major institutional change, as is the case of Mexico with its membership of the North American Free Trade Agreement. People do tend to compare –as rival models– the state capitalism and relatively precarious democratization of East Asia and the purer market liberalism combined with stronger democratization of much of Latin America. Some very negative developments in Latin America since 1999, including but not only the Argentine debt default, have very decidedly shifted the balance between the two.

Several contributions leave aside any broad trans-continental comparative theme to look at issues within regions such as state-business relations, covered in respect of East Asia by Cheng and Chu and in respect of Latin America by Silva. These contributions do on the whole work well. The discussion is informative and convincing. This reviewer very much enjoyed Silva's chapter, with its account of the way in which state-business relationships changed in Pinochet's Chile after the 1982 crisis and the way in which they have evolved in Mexico more recently. However Stallings' discussion of capital mobility and political crisis is so agnostic that one wonders what the author is really trying to say. Haggard's chapter, on the politics of the Asian financial crisis, raises interesting points. It is to a significant degree about political institutions. There is no opposite-number chapter on political institutions and Latin American financial crises, which is a pity. Whitehead's concluding chapter is written with appropriate caution, and emphasises the hazards that are ever-present in the current global order.

GEORGE PHILIP

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Entangled Evolutions: Media and Democratization in Eastern Europe by Peter Gross. Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pp.xii+226; index. £37.00 (hardback) £18.50 (paperback). ISBN 0 8018 6852 1 and 6850 5.

Peter Gross's monologue focuses on how the relations between the media, civil society and political cultures have dramatically altered in Eastern European states in the post-Communism era. In particular, the book notes that the democratization of the media is a key component in the social, economic and political fabric of the new societies. However, Gross suggests that the course of change has been more complex than many liberal theorists had envisaged. Indeed, he comments that through his long-term analysis of Eastern European media systems that his own expectations concerning their role in transforming societal institutions and power relations have changed. Instead of idealising a process of democratization that is neither certain, rapid or predictable, he seeks to show how post-communist political cultures are emerging from a hybrid series of democratic and pluralist reforms alongside the residuals of communist and pre-communist mentalities.

To operationalize this thesis, Gross divides his study into: (i) an investigation of the reformed media systems and (ii) the changes to journalistic practices which have accompanied them. He notes that the media systems reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the unconsolidated nature of the democratic reform in Eastern European societies. This has meant that the media has been invariably been over-politicized and partisan, and has lacked a proper development of professional journalistic codes and ethics. However, despite these shortcomings, Gross suggests that we should be careful in assessing their real worth in the light of over-inflated predictions delivered by normative versions of democratic reform. Instead, he argues that Eastern European media systems contribute to opinion-forming and agenda-setting functions in their respective states and what they lack in professionalism they have made up in their contribution to a process of transformation in which there have been some very special needs. Thus in the Czech Republic he contends that the overtly partisan and oppositional media forced the government to establish a dialogue with the public, which is a necessary pre-condition for democratization: 'Even as their overpoliticization and partisanship alienated some audiences, the media also brought to the fore new issues, new parties, new leaders, and potential leaders, new ideas and possibilities, and contributed to the creation of varied new nongovernmental groups, which is to say, civil society' (p.165).

However, Gross believes that in spite of this initial usefulness that there are considerable dangers to an Eastern European media which may stagnate and become subject to political extremism. He suggests that proper reforms will not be achieved by the imposition of Leftist or 'Third Way' concepts, which maintain that there should be a 'democratization of the media as well as democratization through the media'. Instead, he points to the need for the Eastern European media to professionalize its standards through stronger regulation and practices of accountability. In sum, he argues that the region's media need to become professional information gatekeepers rather remaining the current assortment of propagandists, polemicists, activists and cultural partisans.

Gross has written an interesting account of the processes that are underpinning the changes affecting the Eastern European media systems. The book provides solid detail which includes interviews with participatory journalists and politicians, alongside a wide degree of sociological and political data. The author also provides a lucid and logically thought out thesis in which normative perspectives concerning the

democratization of the media are compared and contrasted to those reforms which have been necessary to change the political institutions and cultures of civil society within the region. Gross's analysis is particularly strong in addressing the respective strengths and weaknesses of the over-politicized and partisan media he describes, and in providing a re-think of the purpose of the media in societies undergoing such seismic transformations.

With regard to his contention that the future development of these media systems will only be positively realised through the professional reforms he proposes, it is this reviewer's opinion that the limited nature of his proposals could prove to be problematic. Gross need only to look to his own society to see that professional and regulatory codes can be eroded, and that profound changes to the political, economic and societal worth of the media need to be restated through a clarification of the democratic principles which are meant to underpin them. In Eastern Europe, with the extreme likelihood of global media marketization, it would seem prescient to firmly establish and legitimise the concepts of the public sphere through the mechanisms of democratic reform rather than rely on the imposition of a limited set of legal and regulatory instruments.

MARK WHEELER

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Nationalism and Democratisation: Politics of Slovakia and Slovenia by Erika Harris. Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2002. Pp.viii+237; references, index. \$79.95 (hardback). ISBN 0 7546 1890 0.

Many observers of modern politics, including thinkers as diverse as Sun Yat-sen and Vladimir Lenin, have noted that nationalism is almost impossible for a contemporary society to avoid. This is true even if nationalism is merely a constructed and temporary phenomenon. The validity of this opinion is still being borne out repeatedly, from postcommunist eastern Europe to post-Indonesian East Timor. It is almost as if, for whatever set of increasingly well-studied reasons (including the oft-ignored power of example), nationalism is a rite of passage or a virus that changing societies simply have to endure. The salient virtue of the book at hand is to unpack the idea of what this reviewer would call 'necessary nationalism'. By comparing and contrasting two well-chosen examples, Slovenia and Slovakia, Harris gives a concrete assessment of the interplay between democracy and nationalism in the postcommunist era.

More specifically, one can conceptualize this work as a demonstration of two propositions: (1) the ways in which ethnic nationalism hinders the democratization process and (2) the tendency of slow or unsuccessful democratization processes to inflame ethnic nationalist sentiments. This combination of theses is not quite the 'chicken-versus-egg' situation that it might seem to be, since Harris examines the historical roots of both Slovene and Slovak nationalism and illuminates the role of international and economic issues in rekindling them after 1991.

Specialists will certainly find debatable some of the assertions and generalizations in Harris' case studies, and she could have enriched her comparison of the two by exploring even more of the similarities between the Slovak and Slovene situations, such as their 'junior partner' status in Slavic-speaking political amalgamations. But it is reasonable for Harris to proceed from the assertion that 'national emancipation in Slovenia did not start in the name of 'the nation', but in the name of democracy' (p.66), while in the Slovak case, the opposite is true. Slovakia's course of development after

the Velvet Revolution was made more difficult by insufficient economic development, a grave episode of fascism during the Second World War, the presence of the large Hungarian minority, and the rapidity of the breakup of Czechoslovak state in the early 1990s.

This reviewer remains unconvinced by Harris' assertion that the old dichotomy of civic and ethnic nationalism is out of date. There is also an unresolved tension in her use of the concepts of old and new nationalism, since neither Slovak nor Slovene national identity is new. But the author does remind the reader, convincingly, of the great emotional appeal, tenacity, and power of mobilization that nationalism wields right up to today.

All books have typographic errors, but this book has an inordinate number, mostly in punctuation. Of greater concern is the large number of awkward and unclear passages, the drag of which weighs down Harris' argument by unduly taxing the reader. On the other hand, the book is admirably free of jargon, even while retaining its firm grounding in a wide variety of theoretical materials. The author also deserves commendation for giving general readers a meaningful orientation to the main topics at issue by means of her thumbnail sketches of various analytical tools and quick recapitulations of other scholars' conclusions.

To return to a thought from the beginning of this review, Sun Yat-sen and Lenin both moved beyond nationalism to stress the importance of internationalism in their evolving societies. Harris, at the conclusion of her book, hints at a similar development in contemporary eastern Europe. Almost from the starting gun in 1989, the allure of accession to the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization has grabbed headlines and conditioned reflexes in Eastern Europe. More thorough analysis of this phenomenon would have added robustness to this book's contribution to the theoretical study of nationalism. As it stands, Harris' well-researched and thought-provoking work is a creditable addition to the growing corpus of transition studies. Her analysis of historical and contemporary factors sheds considerable light on why Slovenia's transition has thus far been more successful than Slovakia's. Purchase of this volume is recommended for research libraries.

JOHN K. COX

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The State and Politics in Japan by Ian Neary. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002. Pp.xxv+236; index. £50.00/\$59.95 (hardback) £15.99/\$26.95 (paperback) ISBN 0 7456 2133 1 and 2134 1.

It is often difficult to convince undergraduate students of the continued significance of Japanese politics when the state and economy appear to be in serious decline with apparently little hope of recovery. But as Neary points out in his Introduction, as the problems facing Japanese society increase (for example, an ageing society and a faltering reform programme), Japanese politics is 'getting interesting, at last' (p.3).

Neary's main aim – achieved with ease – is to 'outline the basic structure of Japanese politics and give a broad indication of where it is going' (p.219). In so doing, he provides the reader with an overview of the actors, structures and arenas of Japanese politics, focusing in particular on foreign policy and defence, industry, social welfare and human rights. In Part I, the author provides the historical background, covering the Meiji restoration, the development of Japanese government in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, right through to the nature and consequences

of the Occupation period. Part II then turns to the actors in Japan's government, with one chapter each on the conservative and socialist parties, followed by an outline of the changes to party politics in the 1990s. Part III addresses the structures of the Japanese political system, taking in the bureaucracy, parliament, and local government. Part IV considers the four policy areas listed above, with the aim of showing 'the system in action' (p.3).

The historical chapters in Part I are concise and well-written, providing a very clear exposition of the dominant trends in Japanese political thought and practice from the late 1800s onwards. In particular, Neary traces the respective fortunes of the liberals, socialists, conservatives, and nationalists through their various incarnations in the first half of the twentieth century. In addition, he skillfully brings in the international context of political developments in Japan in addition to Japan's changing role in the world as a consequence of domestic developments. Comparisons with other liberal democratic systems are offered in passing throughout the book, acting as a useful reference for those wishing to place Japanese politics in a more comparative context. The chapters dealing with political parties in Part II are rich with detail of the origins and developments of the two main parties and their respective allies.

Neary neatly describes the Liberal Democratic Party's longevity as the dominant force in Japanese politics, and the Japan Social Democratic Party's role as the permanent opposition, but also finds space to cover other opposition parties which made the up the 'one plus several' party system (p.80). In Ch.6 we are presented with a very succinct summary of the many changes which took place in Japanese politics between 1992 and 2000, once again with reference to the international context within which these fundamental shifts took place. Part III highlights the various changes that have taken place in the structure of Japanese politics since the 1990s, from reform of the electoral system, through central government re-structuring, down to changes in the way local government is administered, reinforcing the notion that Japanese politics is indeed worthy of continued, or renewed, study.

Parts I, II and III of the book provide a clear and highly accessible exposition of the state of Japanese politics since the late 1880s, but it is perhaps the final section of the book, with its focus on key policy areas, which set this text apart from others produced in recent years. In the chapter on Japan's foreign and defence policy, Neary sets out the reasons for Japan's low-key role on international politics since the end of the Second World War and argues that despite attempts by some in the 1980s and 1990s (notably Nakasone and Ozawa) to raise Japan's profile, the country looks set to be more of a middle power than a superpower. The chapter on industrial policy considers the explanations of Japan's rapid economic growth, providing a very clear summary of the main debates about the contribution of the Japanese state to Japan's economic 'miracle'. In addition, Neary considers more recent trends in Japan's industrial policy as the country struggles to cope with economic crisis. Other problems facing the Japanese government, such as the problem of the 'ageing society' and the low birth rate, are dealt with in the chapter on social welfare policy, while the final chapter considers Japan's patchy record vis-à-vis its human rights policy. In all these chapters Neary manages to provide the historical context for each topic, while also bringing the story up to date, with a brief indication of where policy might be heading. In so doing he offers the reader a comprehensive account of some of the most pressing issues facing the Japanese government today.

The conclusion draws together the various themes mentioned throughout the book, notably the strength of the Japanese state and the 'patterns of authority' it has managed

to maintain over all aspects of Japanese society since the end of the Second World War. The reforms of the late 1990s and their potential for change (since their full effects are yet to be felt) are reconsidered in the final pages, with the concluding thought that Japan is entering a period of uncertainty.

As Neary promises in the Introduction, each chapter is designed to 'stand alone' enabling students or the general reader to dip in and out depending on the topic of the week. But to do this risks missing the multiple and recurring themes which Neary manages to wind into each chapter. The result is an excellent textbook highlighting both the changes and continuities of Japanese politics since the Meiji restoration. It will certainly be at the top of my recommended reading list for 'Japanese Politics 101'.

CAROLINE ROSE
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Democracy and National Identity in Thailand by Michael Kelly Connors. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. Pp.ix+271; index, bibliography. £60.00 (hardback). ISBN 0 415 27230 0.

This fascinating book addresses a major issue that continues to interest political scientists: the relation of the state and the people. Connors uses the topic of 'democracy education' to chart a transition in Thailand from seeing politics in terms of the 'people problem' to the politics of the 'state problem'. Turning around the assumption of most development and modernization literature, which sees 'democracy' as the guiding normative goal, Connors explores how democracy is used as a tool in projects of political control. Democracy thus changes from being an ethos of self-realization into a technique of governance.

Using primary sources from government agencies, the book charts how the Thai state has tried to solve the people problem. Elites in the bureaucracy, Connors tells us, had a very Orientalist view of their subjects as a lazy, irrational, and largely undifferentiated mass. Throughout the twentieth century, the Thai state thus used democratic education campaigns to solve this 'people problem', by seeking to transform this unstable mob into a disciplined citizenry. The state, for example, did not merely fight communist insurgency in the jungles. Rather than limiting itself to the negative power of violence against the communist threat, it employed the productive power of democratic education campaigns to mobilize citizens into the Thai nation. Democracy thus is used to limit legitimate identity to a centralized conception of Thai-ness, rather than the other possibilities: class, gender, region, and so on.

To argue this point, *Democracy and National Identity in Thailand* uses a sophisticated conceptual scheme that combines Gramscian hegemony and Foucauldian governmentality to address the complexities of nationalism, democracy and citizenship. Connors productively views the word 'subject' in its contradictory meanings: a free responsible subject, as well as a subjected being who submits to higher authority. Thus, he deploys the neologism 'democrasubjection' to describe the modern politics of statist democracy: 'Democrasubjection, or "people in democratic subjection", refers to the potentially oppressive dimension of democracy, the never-succeeding project of subjecting people to new institutional and ideological forms of power in the construction of democratic subjects' (p.21).

In the first part of the book (chs 3–6), Connors charts how statist democratic construction was a key goal for various regimes since Thailand's 1932 revolution

against absolute monarchy. Though they differed on many social, political and economic issues, the democratization policy of these regimes was strikingly similar. Yet Connors persuasively argues that the objective and upshot of these public policy programmes was not the achievement of democracy. Rather it was a never-ending postponement of an idealized democracy as an unachievable utopian goal.

In a way, democracy as the unachievable desire is a sign of the second issue that Connors addresses: the state problem. While the bureaucrats defined nationalism and security in terms of the people problem, the rise of the bourgeoisie after the 1960s challenged state hegemony. The new middle class in Thailand gained power through different (i.e. economic) channels, and therefore challenged the state, which was increasingly seen as corrupt and ineffective. Thus rather than state policy being the solution for the people problem, these new political players sought to solve the 'state problem'. Extra-bureaucratic politics emerged in the 1980s, and became an important issue with the 1991 coup, coming into its own with the 1997 economic crisis – which quickly became a political crisis.

In chs 7–9, Connors provides a detailed analysis of responses to this 'state problem': constitutional reforms, NGO activism, and communitarianism. Whereas in the earlier chapters, he uses government documents to chart out the democrasubjection project, in these chapters Connors analyses the interventions of liberal and radical public intellectuals and their extra-bureaucratic organizations.

What is fascinating about these popular responses to the conservative and corrupt state apparatus is that they often reproduce the state's elite and anti-democratic assumptions and plans. Solving the state problem thus still involved solving the people problem. The so-called 'People's Constitution' of 1997 which was written to cure the government's pervasive corruption actually severely limits participation in political life, because it requires that members of parliament have at least an undergraduate degree. The key promoters of Buddhist communitarianism (Prawet Wasi) and liberal civil society (Anek Laothammathas), both turn out to share the state's elitist view that masses needed to be disciplined through education to make them more 'rational.' Democrasubjection thus continues even among the radical alternatives.

'Democracy and National Identity in Thailand' is a book that is rich in both detail and analysis. Connors has assembled an impressive array of evidence from primary sources, and he argues his points with eloquence. The book is useful for those who are interested in a critical reading of democracy, as well as those who are interested in Southeast Asian politics.

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Iran's Unresolved Revolution by Mark Downes. London: Ashgate, 2002. Pp.xviii+199. £45.00 (hardback). ISBN 0 754 63188 5.

Mark Downes contributes an innovative approach to the rich field of scholarship on Iranian politics. He concludes that recent reforms are a product of the Iranian Revolution, requiring a study of revolutionary theory in order to understand Iranian politics in the post-1979 era. The conventional thought that revolutions are limited episodes marking the institutional collapse of political order and its replacement with new political institutions is inadequate. Instead, revolutions are fluid and even evolutionary in their efforts for greater liberties and empowerment of the population. Downes argues that the ability of the *ulema* to establish the Islamic Republic after

1979 is not by definition revolutionary. The manner in which the mixture of republican ideals and Shi'ism influences the polity, constitutes the revolution to this day. Consequently, instituting an alternative form of authoritarian government left Iran's revolution unfinished.

The conceptualization of the Iranian Revolution as an Islamic takeover of the political system would seemingly have merit here. However, Downes avoids the pitfalls of observers who simplify the politicalization of Islam as a form of fundamentalism or extremism, by delving into the complexities and historical causes that led to the Revolution. An informative account of the Islamic institutions in Iran makes up the first part of the book. The gradual evolution of political Islam not only offered alternative values and institutions to those of the Pahlavi Dynasty, but now serves to undermine the legitimacy of the Islamic Republic. Downes' extensive fieldwork, which includes interviews and actual accounts of noted opposition leaders and conservatives, such as Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi, lends credibility to the idea that there are in fact liberalizing forces shaping Iranian politics.

Chapter three meticulously differentiates between revolutionary theories in an effort to find an appropriate approach to Iranian politics. Downes own revolutionary theory 'mixes Marx's ideas on societal evolution with Aristotle's ideas on political systems, viewing society in motion from one political system where power is maintained in the hands of a few to a political system of pluralism and electoral participation as its guiding principles' (p.68). One of the major problems of current theory is the inability to specify when revolutions occur. In ch.4 Downes constructs a model for measuring the propensity for social political unrest by incorporating the idea of binary opposition. At what point a revolution is complete is determined by where society stands vis-à-vis the state in the struggle for power. A revolution is successful 'when the population is content with the extent of their empowerment' (p.80). In the final chapters, Downes moves beyond causal assessments of the Revolution and applies the binary system model to Iran's current political system. The conclusion evaluates current policies in the context of mounting social unrest and the call for greater reforms. However, in an attempt to articulate Iranian foreign policy perspective, analysis deteriorates into the author's own commentary on US objectives in the region.

The work's primary weakness is its inability to produce tangible measurements of the various facets of Iran's revolution. Variables are seemingly arbitrarily applied and Iran's current position on the binary system scale is hardly substantiated and is at best argumentative. Downes is adamant in his assessment that Khatami's election in 1997 was the beginning of the final stage of the Revolution. The question remains, however, where on the binary system scale will Iran finally realize its revolutionary objectives? More conclusive results regarding binary opposition could have been made through a comparative analysis of various revolutions, such as those in China or Russia. Instead we are left with a general idea where revolutions occur and are eventually concluded. Obviously, this goes beyond the scope of the study. Hopefully, though, the model can be used in the future to produce quantitative analysis of revolutions. If we accept Downes' theory, then we have to believe that the struggle for freedom was sidetracked by the war with Iraq and betrayed by Ayatollah Khomeini, leaving Iran in a continuous state of revolution. This is truly an impressive piece of scholarship that directly links revolutionary theory to theories of democracy, allowing for optimism about Iran's current path of development.

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Democracy Challenged. The Rise of Semi-Authoritarianism by Marina Ottaway. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Pp.ix+288; bibliography, index. \$44.00 (hardback) \$21.95 (paperback) ISBN 0 87003 196 1 and 195 3.

Islam and Democracy. The Failure of Dialogue in Algeria by Frédéric Volpi. London and Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2003. Pp.viii+268; references, index. \$79.95 (hardback), \$22.50 (paperback). ISBN 0 7453 1977 7 and 1976 9.

The main premise and argument of Ottaway's book is that while democracy promotion tools used by the government of the United States can be effective in encouraging non-democratic regimes to democratize, what happens after the democratic opening is more problematic. She claims that post-third wave post-authoritarian governments are often adept at developing and maintaining political regimes of the kind she characterizes as 'semi-authoritarian'. She presents her argument in three separate sections: 'Varieties of Semi-Authoritarianism', 'Why Semi-Authoritarianism?', and 'Intervening in Semi-Authoritarian States'. The core of the book is a focus upon five semi-authoritarian governments: in Egypt, Azerbaijan, Venezuela, Senegal, and Croatia.

Ottaway does not fall into the trap of trying to argue that the governing regimes in each of these countries have that much in common – except for a shared understanding that their best interests are fulfilled by a tight political control that significantly restricts the political freedoms enjoyed by their citizens. She also makes the crucial point that this is very much about 'horses for courses': that is, that the precise *plan d'action* adopted by such governments relates to what they regard as feasible in relation to their country's political traditions, culture and history. However, she does not investigate what to my mind is an equally crucial dimension: to what extent does the US government desire political stability or democratization/democracy in such countries? It seems clear for example in the case of Egypt that the Bush administration is quite prepared for President Mubarak's government to control strictly the political process as a necessary price to pay for keeping the Islamists at bay. On the other hand, its clear displeasure at the ability of President Chávez to hold on to power in Venezuela despite a US-backed coup attempt in 2002 suggests that the issue of the quality of democracy is only one dimension to take into account when assessing US policy vis-à-vis semi-authoritarian governments.

Ottaway does not examine the case of Algeria, but Frédéric Volpi shows in his book that Islamism has been used in that country as a vehicle to challenge the entrenched rule of the country's semi-authoritarian rulers. These are traditionally men (never, it seems, women) whose political worldview does not extend beyond a concern with staying in power. This can be well illustrated by what has occurred in Algeria over the last decade.

In December 1991 Algeria held legislative elections which most independent observers then characterized as amongst the freest ever held in the Arab Middle East. The following January, however, Algeria's armed forces seized power to prevent a probable electoral victory by an Islamic fundamentalist party, the FIS (Front Islamique du Salut/Islamic Salvation Front). A common assumption was that if the FIS achieved power it would summarily close down Algeria's newly refreshed democratic institutions and political system. For example, in the issue dated 2 January 1992, *The Economist*, a respected London-based weekly news magazine, posed a question on many people's lips: 'What is the point of an experiment in democracy if the first

people it delivers to power are intent on dismantling it?' The answer might well be this: Whatever the electoral outcome and democratic implications, if it is the popular will, it must be respected. But leaders of Algeria's army had their own ideas: The FIS was summarily banned and thousands of Islamist activists and supporters were thrown into prison without trial. A civil war then ensued between the state and various armed Islamist groups, which over the next decade cost an estimated 120,000 lives.

Volpi's short book has its origins in his PhD thesis. The author shows, via a meticulous and persuasive argument, that despite western fears, the struggle of groups such as the FIS is directed primarily against their own rulers rather than against the West per se. Based on an extended period of field work and featuring interviews with a number of significant personnel, Volpi presents an account which goes far beyond the stereotypical views normally expressed when the words, 'Islamic fundamentalism' and 'democracy', are juxtaposed. He also shows how there has been much collusion between Algeria's semi-authoritarian rulers and some western governments, especially that of France which, despite much rhetoric, seem really only to want to develop democracy in foreign countries when it suits their own interests.

A key problem, Volpi suggests – and this is one that Ottaway also discusses – is that semi-authoritarian regimes, such as those in Algeria, always lack politically effective, cohesive civil societies. On the other hand, as Volpi shows, Algeria's rulers have been challenged for over a decade by the Islamists to reform what many see as a corrupt and rotten political system, one that is widely regarded in Algeria as both unrepresentative and illegitimate. The roots of such opposition can be seen in a pervading sense of anomie among certain sections of the population, especially in the burgeoning numbers of the young, the under- and unemployed, and the religiously-orientated. Demands surface from across the political spectrum, from the nationalist and secularist left, at one extreme, to the broad Islamist movement, at the other.

In sum, Volpi has written an intelligent and well-argued account of the political struggle between secular and religious forces in Algeria which, despite its geographical proximity to Europe, is not widely reported or analysed. This book deserves to be widely read. Ottaway's book is also very useful and erudite, but would in the opinion of this reviewer benefit from an explicit focus on the role and value of some semi-authoritarian regimes for US – and by extension other western governments' – foreign policy goals.

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Understanding Third World Politics. Theories of Political Change and Development by B.C. Smith. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003. Pp.xi+319; bibliography, index. £17.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 333 98654 7.

This second edition of *Understanding Third World Politics*, first published in 1996, has been significantly updated to take account of the many changes in the development architecture at the beginning of the twenty first century. In particular there is a strong focus on the potential for, and merits of, democracy in Third World states.

The book's purpose is to provide an extensive and detailed journey through relevant theories of change and development that can best help us to understand the nature of politics in the Third World. In addition the book also provides a wide range of empirical examples from developing countries.

The book begins with an examination of the analytical category of the Third

World. It asks a number of questions including: what indicators are used to determine membership of this group?; is it still a valid concept?; how does our use of the term influence our approach to the study of Third World politics? Such questions need regular re-examination in the context of changing hierarchies within and between states. This is followed by a chronological review of a number of key development theories. Although one might have wished for more nuanced detail, there is sufficient analysis to gain a flavour of the theories which can easily be followed by more detailed reading elsewhere. The theories covered include modernisation and political development, neo-colonialism and dependency.

The later chapters explore, in some detail, a number of recurring questions about change and development in the Third World. Smith consequently devotes much attention to the prognosis for Third World politics, including chapters on the role and place of democracy, military intervention, nationalism and secession, instability and revolution. Given the currently large number of failed, non-democratic, civil war-racked states, it would be unwise to assume that Westminster-style democracy is immediately achievable – if the appropriate magic wands are waved. Thus, in this section, the role and character of the state and its institutions is central, as is that of the interest groups which compete for influence and power.

Finally the book offers an analysis of the prospects for democracy in the Third World. It asks some important questions, often ignored by northern policy makers. Is democracy the most preferred political system for a country pursuing economic and social development? Or is democracy too conservative a system to bring about the necessary social and economic reforms? How can we explain the correlation between authoritarian states and political stability and economic growth? Similarly one might ask about the correlation between politically stable democracies which regularly underperform in the economic growth stakes. These are significant, and often unanswered, questions for the age of neo-liberalism. The level of causality between these variables is of course key to any answer.

For Smith a developmental state is the key. Authoritarianism is not required. He concedes that the democratic developmental state requires certain institutions and structures which are rarely found in developing countries but concludes that it should be able to secure economic progress as well as political freedoms. Nevertheless democratic stability will only pertain if economic growth is used for social progress. Smith provides a final word of caution at the end for Third World governments seeking to attract foreign investment at any (human and environmental) cost. World Trade Organization take heed – is my response.

Overall, the book is meticulously researched, with many up-to-date statistics. It provides readers with a solid overview of, and introduction to, the literature and the theories which help to explain the complexity which is the contemporary Third World. Smith is to be commended for both his depth of analysis and the breadth of knowledge which he brings to the subject. The book will certainly appeal to a wide spectrum of readers including undergraduates and anyone with a general interest in finding out what is happening in the other two-thirds of the world.

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