

Book Reviews

The State of Democratic Theory by Ian Shapiro. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003. Pp.xi + 183; index; bibliography. £12.95 (hardback). ISBN 0-691-11547-8.

The author of this book is charged with a task that may 'seem oxymoronic' (p.ix). It is to give a dispassionate overview of current thinking in democratic theory and offer a distinctive contribution to the same field. He additionally attempts to integrate the normative and explanatory literature in studies of democracy. Shapiro aims to assess democratic theory 'in light of the actual operation of democratic politics', to focus on both what we should expect from democracy and how we might get it (p.2).

The first three chapters are devoted to normative argument. Shapiro discusses the notion of the common good, suggesting that we have more to learn from Machiavelli's *Discourses* than Rousseau's *The Social Contract*. Democracy is best seen as 'a means of managing power relations so as to minimize domination' (p. 3). This leads to a 'thin' theory of the common good, that is, an interest we share in avoiding being dominated. Domination in turn results from the 'illegitimate exercise of power' (p.4). This immediately raises the question of what distinguishes a legitimate use of power, and the answer has to be pieced together from the arguments Shapiro makes. It rests on a combination of accountability (where those wielding power are unaccountable government should intervene), acting to sustain democracy (courts have legitimacy to the extent that they do this) and justified authority (a school teacher demanding homework from a pupil is not engaging in domination, one demanding sexual favours is).

This rejection of traditional notions of the common good leads to a refreshingly sceptical look at the merits of deliberative democratic theory. 'Deliberation theorists tend to confuse problems associated with the unequal power contexts in which deliberation occurs with a deliberative deficit, mistaking the doughnut for the hole' (p.10). Shapiro also discusses problems of inclusion and exclusion, the costs of deliberation and barriers to agreement, and the disturbing tendency of some deliberative democrats to substitute substantive outcomes based on a hypothetical deliberative ideal for anything that non-ideal flesh and blood deliberators might come up with (pp.34, 76).

Shapiro then develops his own preferred model, a 'supplemented' Schumpeterianism that can preserve us from domination. The crucial element here is competition, supplemented with democracy-reinforcing judicial review. On this view the competitive element is crucial, and collusion and monopoly

are to be avoided. 'It is a measure of the degree to which the consensus model has eroded the competitive one in the public mind that people generally do not recognize bipartisan agreement for the collusion in the restraint of democracy that it actually is' (p.149).

If non-domination is what we should aim for, how do we get it and keep it? Here Shapiro discusses the empirical work on democratic transitions and stability. He reviews the connections between democracy and class structure, levels of wealth, the presence of identity politics, claims of group rights and the prospects for electoral engineering. The best we can do is design institutions that will tend to channel our aspirations into democracy-enhancing rather than democracy-threatening forms.

The discussion of democracy and distribution strikes as something of an aside from the main argument but is of interest nonetheless. The central question here is: why is there no recognizable correlation between extension of the franchise to poorer socio-economic groups and demands for downward income redistribution? (p.104). Indeed it may be, counter-intuitively, that the greater the disparity of wealth between richest and poorest, the less demand there is for redistribution. Shapiro discusses a number of possible explanations for this, such as the immobilizing effect of poverty, the changing geopolitical scene after the cold war, and the power of ideology.

Shapiro successfully pulls off the trick of writing a book that is both an accessible introduction to democratic theory and a genuine contribution to the ongoing debate in that field. The normative and empirical elements are not integrated as closely as Shapiro leads one to expect, and a more systematic engagement with social choice theory would be useful. Nonetheless, he provides both as comprehensive an overview as can be expected in a book of this length, and an interesting, original argument as to the appropriate form and function of democratic politics.

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Democratization Through the Looking-Glass edited by Peter Burnell. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2003. Pp.x +256; index; bibliography. £45.00 (hardback). ISBN 0-7190-6234-8.

This book seeks to show how our understanding of democratization is enriched by studying it through the lens of multidisciplinary and from a comparative analysis of different areas. While the area format is a tried and trusted one, the multidisciplinary approach raises expectations of the political scientist gaining insights from other social scientists. Peter Burnell suggests that the contributions will help in six overlapping ways: to address some of

the gaps in political science literature, understand the varied forms that democratization takes, provide explanations of democratization, anticipate the consequences of democratization, assess the strategies for sustaining and deepening it, and speculate on the future.

We are soon reminded of the limits of multidisciplinary. Of the seven contributors from disciplines outside politics, three are located in the government/politics departments of academic institutions. Plying one's trade as an anthropologist or sociologist is obviously not the same as belonging to a clearly delineated profession like dentistry or quantity surveying, with common qualifications and skills unavailable to the outsider. While members of each discipline may claim to enjoy particular insights, many of the tools of analysis in the social sciences are common property. Do we need to be told by an economist that there are links between democracy and economic growth, by an international political economy (IPE) expert that democracy is linked to the rise of the nation state, by a sociologist that we should search for links between formal political institutions and the wider society, or by a lawyer that most judicial decisions need to be insulated from populist pressure? Few recent works by political scientists would neglect these matters. Yet at the very least, most of the contributors offer useful personal observations that emphasize the range of influences affecting the growth, nature and limitations of democracy. Jeremy Gould (anthropology), Geoffrey Wood (sociology) and Shirin Rai (gender studies) pursue the (often inadequate) links between formal democratization and the actual scope for effective participation. Peter Calvert (history) offers a critical analysis of three models of democratic development, and Philip Cerny (IPE) expounds on his forebodings about a reversion to 'medievalism'. None of this is new, but the inclusion of these varied observations in one volume helps to emphasize the multi-faceted nature of democracy.

The area studies join a more competitive market, but together they highlight the fact that such democratization as has been achieved has been moulded and constrained by a variety of forces that are often hostile or indifferent to democracy. Eastern Europe has faced a torrent of global pressures, Africa cannot escape poverty, East Asia has limited differentiation between state, society and business, the EU has yet to gain public legitimacy, and South Asia has to deal with ethnic, religious and local pressures. None of this is to brand particular areas as unsuitable for democracy, but it suggests that a more distinctive indigenous stamp will be imposed than was anticipated by the proponents of the end of history. George Philip's chapter on Latin America is the pick of the bunch, with a succinct discussion of the concept of consolidation.

The quality of Francisco Gonzalez and Desmond King's chapter on the United States can be gauged from their assertions that America 'has served

as the principal military enforcer of democracy against totalitarianism' and been a 'defender of the West against extremist ideologies'. There are few references to growing inequality, declining political trust, Christian fundamentalism, corporate power, corruption or the process by which Bush was 'elected'. It is disappointing not only that such a blinkered piece should have been included, but that there is no serious evaluation of Western democracy in the book. No area has a monopoly of democratic ideas or behaviour, but institutions such as parliaments, parties, organized pressure groups and independent judiciaries have their origins largely in the West. Are these sufficiently weatherproof to be adapted elsewhere, or are they anachronisms from the era of mass politics? A greater focus on their original heartlands might have thrown more light on their potential in newer democracies.

A reader looking for original revelations about democratization might be disappointed in this book, but in drawing a range of perspectives together it should stimulate thinking on the subject. Most of the book is written in a readable style, and the contributors are modest enough to acknowledge that there are many more questions to which we still seek answers.

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Democratization. A Comparative Analysis of 170 Countries by Tatu Vanhanen. London: Routledge, 2003. Pp.302; index; bibliography. £65.00 (hardback). ISBN 0-415-31860-2.

In *Democratization*, Tatu Vanhanen re-introduces his evolutionary theory of resource distribution and democratization, which is based on Darwin's theory of evolution, and offers the latest update of his earlier data. He presents slightly modified measures of democracy and resource distribution and new data for 1999–2001 for 170 countries. The empirical analysis is similar to that in previous publications, using mainly correlation analysis, but with an additional chapter using regression analysis. The last substantive chapter provides additional discussion of single countries that do not show the predicted relationship between resource distribution and democracy.

The overall aim is to provide a universal explanation for democracy and to test this explanation with simple quantitative measures. Vanhanen's theory of democratization is based on the assumption that all members of one species share all important characteristics of life since they evolved in a continual and universal struggle for existence. Therefore, he contends that there must be a universal explanation for democratization. His universal and sufficient explanation of democratization is the distribution of resources. People compete for power to obtain scarce resources. The degree of resource distribution

shapes the distribution of power, where power is defined as the ability to apply sanctions, and resources are necessary to do this. Vanhanen argues, 'Democratization takes place under conditions in which power resources have become so widely distributed that no group is any longer able to suppress its competitors or to maintain its hegemony' (p.20).

Vanhanen attempts to explain his theory more clearly than in his previous books so as to address previous criticisms and misunderstandings. However, several reservations remain. It is unclear how Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection is linked to the theory that explains the relationship between the distribution of power resources and democratization. One might argue that since power resources are needed to successfully compete for limited sources, those with more resources will become yet more powerful, which would suggest a concentration of power over time, resulting in an autocracy.

To measure democratization, Vanhanen modifies his earlier Index of Democratization (ID), which consists of two dimensions – competition and participation. The aim is to provide a better measure than other indicators by avoiding subjective statements. Competition is measured as the percentage of votes won by the largest party subtracted from 100. Participation is operationalized as the number of voters as a percentage of the total population. The two measures are combined into one indicator by multiplying the two values and then dividing the result by 100. The difference from his earlier measure of democratization is that he now adds the number of referendums to the participation score. By counting voters as a percentage of the total population, rather than as a percentage of the electorate, the participation measure is biased against countries with young populations, such as developing countries. To fix this bias, Vanhanen uses an upper cut-off point of 70 per cent for the participation score, but it is unclear how this would address the problem. He argues that problems with this measure are diminished since it forms only part of the democratization index. However, competition has its own problems since it is biased against two-party systems. In order to address this bias, an upper limit of 70 per cent is also applied to the competition score. But it is difficult to see how applying upper limits and multiplying the two indicators the biases become less problematic.

Referendums are now included in the participation measure to account for this type of popular participation and can have a comparatively large effect on the final ID. For example, six local referendums in the UK in 2001 increase the country's turnout figure by 6 percentage points, although only a fraction of the total population had the opportunity to benefit from this channel of political participation. However, the inclusion does substantially increase the rather low democratization scores of Switzerland and the United States, which

have been the subject of previous criticism of Vanhanen's democracy measure.

To measure the distribution of power resources, Vanhanen creates an index of five measures, including measures of student population, literates, family farms, degree of decentralization of mainly non-agricultural economic power resources and real GDP per capita. The Index of Power Resources (IPR), created from these, requires extensive and non-obvious data transformation, which obscures the link between the theoretical concept and the actual measure used in the analysis. The theoretical justification for combining them into one index is not entirely convincing, and since some of the variables are very weakly correlated, they might not measure the same underlying concept. Although Vanhanen's aim is to provide subjective measures, some explanatory variables resemble more 'soft' than 'hard' data. For example, the measure of family farms is based on definitions that are different for each country and even vary within one country over time and the data rely mainly on estimates.

The author tests two hypotheses. The first hypothesis states that there is a positive correlation between resource distribution (measured with the IPR) and democratization. The second hypothesis is that countries are expected to cross the threshold to democracy at the same level of resource distribution. He uses basic correlations and mainly bivariate regression analyses to test these hypotheses. However, these techniques only tell us something about the association between one independent variable and the dependent variable. This leads me to my main concern, namely the use of the term 'democratization' in the title and throughout the book. The theory does not tell us anything about how countries *move* towards democracy, but rather that we should expect to see a democracy when some resources are widely distributed. Similarly, what is measured and investigated with vague analytical tools is not *democratization* but the link between democracy and a combination of various other factors. The Index of Democratization does not capture any *changes* of political regimes, but some static indicators of democracy as a regime type.

Since the early literature on causes of democracy, scholars have now realized that it is important to carefully distinguish between the concepts of democracy and democratization. Factors that might make a political regime move towards a democratic regime are not necessarily the same as those that account for maintaining a democracy; some factors have already been shown to have rather different effects on these two distinct concepts. Therefore, the title of the book – *Democratization* – is quite misleading when it actually looks at democracy and not democratic transitions.

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Political Transition: Politics and Cultures edited by Paul Gready. London and Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2003. Pp.301; index. £41.11 (hardback); £15.99 (paperback). ISBN 0-7453-2042-2 and 2041-4.

Political Transition focuses on memory, identity, space/place and voice, all of which, it is argued, are in some way central to the vocabularies, politics and cultures of political transitions. Transition, as Gready outlines in the introduction to the volume, is understood as implying a change in political regime and culture towards greater democratization, post repression, post colonialism and post war. Transitions are seen as contested and intrinsically incomplete processes, characterized by continuity as well as change, in which patterns from the past are often reconfigured rather than radically altered in the present (p.2).

The different contributions in this volume concentrate on the regions of Europe, Latin America and Southern Africa, chosen to enable comparative analysis. The collection not only aims to juxtapose different country and regional experiences and historical eras of transition, but is also multi-disciplinary, with individual chapters drawing from a range of approaches (anthropology, cultural studies, ethnography).

Political Transition is divided into four parts, each incorporating four or five chapters. Part I deals with the Politics of Memory. While it is acknowledged that this is an over-used and under-theorized concept, the aim of this collection is to develop a more comprehensive definition, which stretches beyond the confines of transitional justice initiatives. This section includes chapters on post-colonial memory in Zimbabwe, memories of the repressive dictatorships in the southern cone of South America, the Maya in Guatemala and the Roma Holocaust. All these illustrate that 'in part the contest over memory is one over whether there should be memory at all, the desirability of memory or at least certain kinds of highly politicised memory, and whose memory should prevail' (p.15).

Part II concentrates on Identities. It examines the sites and strategies of identity construction during political transition and argues that memory and forgetting are implicated in the identity formation at all levels and vice versa. It contains contributions on East German identity after following the fall of the Berlin wall, on the construction and contestation of Protestant/Unionist victim identities and 'victimhood' in the Irish peace process and in the context of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Regarding the latter, it is argued that the emergence of the victims of the TRC was the resultant of a complex interaction between the three 'vectors' of 'objectification' (institutionalized techniques for the identification of victims), an often institutionally inconsistent

'taxonomy' of human right violations, and 'release' (the possibility of escape) (pp.149–50).

Part III focuses on Re-making Space. It includes chapters such as that on the Rostock district in former East Germany, where a case is presented of a couple changing address after a conflict with the authorities over their housing situation, an act which, it is argued, should be interpreted as a 'geographic form of negotiation' (p.187). Another contribution reports on a working-class neighbourhood in Madrid, which emphasizes how 'the local inflects upon the national' and how subaltern groups are 'insinuated inside both the ideological and physical space of dominant groups' (p.200). These chapters are taken to stress the significance of remaking public space and to illustrate that 'oppression and resistance, authoritarianism and political transition, war and peace, have a spatial as well as a temporal dynamic' and that 'transitions involve intersections between a variety of real and symbolic spaces' (p.19).

The contributions in Part IV deal with Testimony and Voices, analyzing various platforms for voice such as the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia or the online forum created by the Chilean newspaper *La Tercera* in the aftermath of the arrest of General Pinochet in London in 1998. Two chapters contain first-person testimonies, one from a witness to the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and one from an Irish Republican imprisoned in England.

The contributions to *Political Transition* are situated within a paradigm which approaches political transition from a discursive perspective: 'voice and testimony are political, words and narratives inform action, demand action, create the space for action, are action' (p.12). Whether or not this volume is successful within the parameters of that paradigm is hard to judge. However, readers acquainted with more conventional approaches to political transitions might hesitate to accept the perspective adopted here, where transitions are primarily conceived as rhetorical devices or political strategies as well as layered and often fractured political and cultural realities (p.2). They may also have reservations about the substantive nature of the empirical evidence, which is not particularly well grounded and often based merely on the case of single individuals. It is moreover difficult to see the comparative merit (underlined in the introduction) of a collection of essays embracing a postmodernist perspective, which by nature tends towards epistemological scepticism. Finally, the volume lacks a conclusion, which makes it difficult to appreciate the added value of the assembled essays.

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Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism edited by Daniele Conversi. London: Routledge, 2002. Pp.302. £70.00 (hardback); £19.99 (paperback). ISBN 0-415-26373-5 and 33273-7.

The proliferation of nationalist disputes contributed in no small way to the bloody character of the last century. But the clarity of social science thinking about nationalism remained blurred for at least a century into the age of nationalism. This was in no small measure due to the domination of the social sciences in the West by academics from Britain and the United States who dismissed ethnic politics because it appeared to pose no threat to their own well-ordered societies. On the other hand, Marxists both in the West and in the Soviet Union and its satellites insisted the class struggle and proletarian internationalism had a more powerful hold over people's emotions than state-building efforts driven by the national principle.

Walker Connor may not have developed his own explanatory model for the origins and enduring appeal of nationalist ideas and emotions but, in no small way, he has rescued the subject from terminological confusion and attempted to place it on a secure methodological foundation.

This *Festschrift* is, accordingly, a fitting tribute from scholars influenced, to differing degrees, by Connor's work. The editor, Daniele Conversi, a theorist of nationalism who has produced distinctive work on its importance in Spain and the former Yugoslavia, provides a stimulating opening chapter in which he recalls Connor's academic achievement.

The tendency of both society and political practitioners to conflate nation and state elicited wilting assaults from Connor in articles that first appeared in the 1970s. He showed that nation-building was more often a disguise for state-building and that nation-destroying among minority groups was often part of the ideological agenda. Connor defined the nation as a self-differentiating ethnic group and he further believed that ethnicity was so bound up with nationalism to justify using the term *ethnonationalism* to describe such a phenomenon. He argued that the nation was a phenomenon with mass appeal that emerged in late modernity with the establishment of compulsory education and conscript armies. He parts company with Ernest Gellner, who saw industrialization as a catalyst for nation-formation, which has given rise in turn to energetic debate (Conversi arguing that industrialization was perhaps the seminal factor behind the rise of anti-state nationalism in Spain).

Connor refuted the work of highly influential post-1945 scholars such as Gabriel Almond and Karl Deutsch that the increasing contact occasioned by modernization in the spheres of transport, education, consumerism, tourism and so on would break down ethnic particularisms and lead to the gradual onset of uniform societies. Such a transformation appeared to be at the heart

of the Soviet experiment and Connor was an isolated voice in the 1970s when he argued that Marxism–Leninism had failed to solve the national question and that national sentiment was being reproduced at the societal level in many different corners of the Marxist world. He also argued that the appeal of ethnonationalism was not confined to a particular class or dependent on a specific set of economic variables, and drew on the psychology of collective identity and homelands to account for the emotion and passions often to be found in the expression of nationalist sentiment.

Chapters by Anthony Smith, Daniel Horowitz and Joshua Fishman deal with the non-rational features of nationalism which Connor has been criticized for popularizing. Smith comes to his defence but disputes his assertion that nationalism was largely absent from the world before late modernity.

Connor's perspectives are fruitfully applied by Brendan O'Leary, who builds on his work on how federations were deployed as a system of control in Marxist states and goes on to argue that the same might be the case in liberal democracies, drawing on Britain and the EU for his examples. John Coakley extends Connor's argument that ethnic strife cannot be predicated on tangible elements, religion being chief among them. He argues that in twentieth-century Europe most ethnic conflicts did not have a significant religious composition. He suggests that in societies like Bosnia and Northern Ireland, where religion was all too often advanced as a primary cause of conflict, its role was little more than that of maintaining an ethnonationalist boundary.

In a stimulating conclusion, Conversi reviews the state of the area study of nationalism, anticipating some underlying trends. He warns in particular about essentialism, as well as historical and cultural determinism, where there is a tendency to describe conflicts as historically pre-ordained and based on widespread feelings uniting an ethnic group, or perhaps gripping a 'civilization'. In other works, Conversi has shown how such shallow viewpoints, when held by policy makers, can lead to disaster, as in former Yugoslavia where the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization stood aside for four years because they believed 'ancient ethnic hatreds' needed to be allowed to work themselves out. Possible new directions for research are suggested, when Conversi calls for the need for greater rigour in the field of globalization studies in order to test the validity of Connor's original hypothesis that 'international contacts are bound to create more clashes than encounters or further separation rather than fusion'.

In sum, this is a stimulating collection on the contemporary relevance of nationalism that is bound to appeal to students grappling with a still elusive and evolving concept.

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The Quiet Revolution: Decentralization and the Rise of Political Participation in Latin American Cities by Tim Campbell. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003. Pp.viii + 208; index; bibliography. £20.50 (hardback). ISBN 0-8229-5796-5.

After years of overspending and inflation, cash-starved municipalities received new sources of income from decentralization. Consequently, shifts in political control, intergovernmental coordination, public policy and implementation of programmes occurred in spite of an international emphasis on fiscal stability. In fact, decentralization did not proceed according to the plans and recommendations of international organizations. For example, the World Bank recommended that 'finances should follow function'; however, in many cases, the money flowed before local responsibilities were clearly delineated, allowing local officials to respond to popular demands. Campbell discusses a new form of the 'contract of governance' marked by innovation, wide participation and increased accountability. Moreover, local officials understood environmental issues such as survival, infant mortality, traffic and pollution holistically in terms of local economic development and poverty, not in terms of the international perspective of global environmental concerns.

Campbell bases his study on an analysis of government and policy documents and interviews with local, international and non-governmental organization representatives. *The Quiet Revolution* extends a 1991 World Bank Technical Department of Latin America study. The book is organized into four parts: the historical and policy framework in which these processes developed; the different strategies of Latin American decentralization; political, environmental and economic aspects of decentralization; and an emergent operating style of effective and participatory local government. Specifically, the experiences of Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Brazil and Venezuela are explored.

This suggestive book argues that international institutions may impede processes of decentralization and democratization. Campbell calls these dual processes the 'quiet revolution' because the reforms came about due to a collaborative process between local officials and newly energized constituents.

Although *The Quiet Revolution* does not follow a rigorous research design, Campbell succeeds in advocating international assistance to, a loosening of controls on and a strengthening of grass-roots ties to local government.

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Democracy after Communism edited by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002. Pp.xxiv + 278; index. £14.00 (paperback). ISBN 0-8018-7076-3.

Democracy after Communism is the latest collection of articles first published in the *Journal of Democracy*. Like these, it is intended primarily as an accessible student reader. The collection is divided into three parts, the first examining the distinctness of post-communist democratization, the second and third covering the contrasting experiences of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (FSU).

Valerie Bunce suggests that the impact and duration of communist rule created novel social structures, simultaneous economic, political and (sometimes) state transformations, and patterns of regime exit that do not fit the modes of transition identified by Latin Americanists. She does, however, accept that comparison of East and South may be valid for studying common problems such as institutional design or as way of challenging to existing theory. Ghia Nodia, by contrast, argues that liberal democracy's status as a universal reference point does enable broad comparison. The most revealing contrast, he suggests, is that between 'organic' classic democratization in western Europe and North America – where social and value change preceded regime change – and the 'ideological' transitions of post-communist states, where socio-economic change is less a cause than a *consequence* of democratization.

Successfully combining simultaneous democratization and economic transformation in such circumstances, Leszek Balcerowicz argues, require politicians to take advantage of the early period of 'extraordinary politics', when the government's political capital is high and public resistance to reform low. For, as Aleksander Smolar notes, despite the use of 'civil society' as a rallying cry by dissident oppositions during communist rule, post-communist democracies are usually characterized by the relative weakness of civil society. The survival of the former regime elite is another prominent feature of the region's politics. However, John Higley, Judith Kullberg and Jan Pakulski argue, *moderate* elite continuity is generally an indicator of consensus and inclusion conducive to democratic consolidation. Only *strong* elite continuity is linked with authoritarian backsliding. Charles H. Fairbanks examines the relative absence of the military as an actor in post-communist politics, which he sees as one of communism's few benevolent legacies. In the weak states and ethnic mini-states at the periphery of the FSU, however, ethnic or political militias *are* important political actors and as such merit greater scholarly attention.

Despite the public alienation from politics in eastern Europe and the palpable loss of interest in the region and its 'revolutions of 1989' among Western writers, noted respectively by Richard Rose and Aleksander Smolar, eastern Europe is on the whole a success story. Its democratic systems,

although marked by corruption and a weak rule of law, are stable and, because of EU enlargement, are locked into a steady convergence course with western Europe. As Jacques Rupnik observes, such success is attributable to a mixture of radical early reform, favourable geo-political context (weak Russia, democratic Germany, expanding EU with tough democratic conditionalities), the relative ethnic homogeneity of most states in the region and, perhaps, the cultural legacy of the Habsburg Empire.

As the final section makes clear, Russia offers a more uncertain picture. Its contributors depict Russia as a partial democracy, where genuine pluralism, freedom of speech and electoral competition contend with an overweening, if inefficient, bureaucratic state, ruthless clientelistic machine politics and the inclination of political elites towards state 'management' of party politics, civil society and the media. Archie Brown terms Putin's Russia a 'flawed and skewed, pluralistic system, not a democracy', Lila Shevtsova uses the term, 'bureaucratic semi-authoritarianism', while Gregorii Yavlinsky calls the arrangements, an 'artificial formal, sham democracy'. Nevertheless, as M. Steven Fish notes, in re-centralizing the state, reining in the power of regional bosses and oligarchs and strengthening the legal system, Putin may be laying the foundation of deeper democratization in the longer term.

As Nodia suggests, the identification of democracy with the West makes it easier for new states that perceive themselves as 'Western' to reconcile state-building with democratization. This in part explains the difficulties of democratization in post-Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus discussed (in an all too brief essay) by Fairbanks, although, as Nadia Diuk's essay on Ukraine makes clear, problems of weak states and rapacious vested interests are common across the FSU.

In sum, *Democracy after Communism* is an uneven, but generally high quality, collection, which more than fulfils its stated purpose: to be an accessible student reader. More seasoned researchers will, understandably, find little new, although the essays of Nodia and Fairbanks stand out for their scope and sharpness.

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The Road to the European Union: Volume 1, The Czech and Slovak Republics edited by Jacques Rupnik and Jan Zielonka. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003. Pp.269; chronology; bibliography; index. £50.00 (hardback); £18.99 (paperback). ISBN 0-7190-6596-8 and 6597-6.

The book's title awakes immediate excitement in anyone interested in the EU's eastern enlargement: at long last, an in-depth work on the effects of

the accession process in one (in this case, actually two) EU candidate states. Unfortunately, the product disappoints slightly. This is a somewhat unevenly edited volume of case studies about particular EU-related issues in the Czech and Slovak Republics and it does not, taken in its entirety, do much to deepen our understanding of the dynamics of enlargement.

The first difficulty is that Jan Zielonka's introduction – although in its own right a good piece of writing with some interesting, though brief, original insights on the domestic political repercussions of enlargement – fails to alert us to an important fact about the book. This is that many of the contributions that follow are updated versions of journal articles, or European University Institute working papers, that have previously been available to the academic community. There can be no objection in principle to publishing collections of high-quality working papers in book form. But it is slightly problematic in the field of EU eastern enlargement as the general dearth of literature on the subject inevitably means that many scholars with a particular interest in the field will already have accessed many of the contributions. The value of the book must therefore be assessed in terms of its usefulness for a more general readership. Additionally, in a field where dynamic developments are taking place, the fact that some of the chapters were originally written two or three years ago severely affects the book's contemporary relevance.

Both of these problem areas impact on the value of individual chapters. Some of the contributions are more suitable for introducing a broad readership to the complexities of the Czech and Slovak Republics' paths to EU membership than others. Rupnik's opening chapter, on the implications of the Czecho–Slovak divorce for EU enlargement, falls awkwardly between two stools, since it is rather confusing and disjointed for a reader with limited knowledge of the Czechoslovak past, while providing little that is new for the specialist audience. Its emphasis on the different political cultures of the Czech and Slovak Republics also fails to explain why the two states' EU accession paths converged so rapidly after 1998. In contrast, Malová and Rybář's chapter on the EU's policies towards Slovakia presents an admirably clear introduction both to the EU's measures of conditionality and to Slovakia's political problems. It is less prone to obsolescence than the two chapters on democratization in Slovakia and in the Czech Republic respectively, both of which have been updated in conclusions that fit uneasily with the thrust of the arguments in the body of the chapters.

The problem of dating is also notable in the chapters on political discourse and public perceptions of EU accession. Bugge's very well-researched chapter on 'Czech Perceptions of EU Membership: Havel vs Klaus' seems slightly irrelevant in an era where the latter has assumed the former's office of president, and is asserting himself in the more recent debate among member states on the merits of a European constitution. Perron's chapter based on interviews

with local political elites in three Czech cities conducted in 1997 and 1998 has an unfortunate speculative beginning positing that a 'social contract is needed if people are to vote for EU integration in a referendum' (p.199). That is unhelpful for a book published in the year when EU accession was overwhelmingly approved in referendums in all eight post-communist states chosen to join in the first wave of EU eastern enlargement. Nonetheless, some of its insights into provincial attitudes are of more lasting interest, and it has value as an in-depth case study.

A final reservation relates to the balance of the book. The last two of its 12 chapters look at aspects of Czech–German relations – a subject which is not uninteresting, but which scarcely deserves to occupy almost one-fifth of the pages in a book about the road of the Czech *and* Slovak Republics' path to the European Union. It is notable that of the chapters dealing with only one of the two states that are the subject of the book, only a quarter write about Slovakia. This is odd, given Slovakia's particularly difficult road to the European Union. Furthermore, several of the chapters that deal with both have a slight Czech bias, and where non-Slovak authors write about the Slovak Republic, mistakes tend to slip in.

In the end, the book was worth publishing because it does bring together in one volume some useful material on EU enlargement, although the work it contains is no longer on the cutting edge of research on the dynamics of the new Europe. Arguably, even the decision to include the Czech Republic and Slovakia in a single volume is symptomatic of a backward-looking agenda that harks back to a now non-existent world where there was a Czechoslovakia. The book does not always address the contemporary reality of an EU where two sovereign central European states are conducting their own relationships with neighbours. For more than a decade, these have diverged to the point where the two countries are no longer a natural pair.

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The Road to the European Union: Volume 2, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania edited by Vello Pettai and Jan Zielonka. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003. Pp.x + 293; index; bibliography. £50.00 (hardback); £18.99 (paperback). ISBN 0-7190-6560-7 and 6561-5.

The remarkable journey of transition of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, from being Soviet republics to fully independent states, is the backcloth to this edited work. The book does not attempt to provide a comprehensive history of the three states; however, much of the detailed background is provided, as required, in the individual chapters. In doing so the text provides an analysis

of the social, political and economic challenges that these states faced in the 1990s and up to the point of EU membership.

Until the early 1990s, comparatively little was known about the three states. By May 2004, their emergence will be fully complete, as they become part of the enlarged European Union (EU) of 25 member states. As a bloc of three states, with a combined population of only 7.5 million, their impact upon the EU's decision-making process is always likely to be limited, and yet they will each be entitled (for now) to nominate a commissioner. They will naturally join with Finland, Sweden and Poland in being very concerned about the Northern Dimension of EU policy.

The 11 contributions within the text are all of a high standard and cover the legacy of their former membership of the Soviet Union, the capacity of these states to manage their affairs within Europe, aspects of trade relations with the EU and monetary and exchange rate policies.

One contribution that illustrates very well the remarkable progress that the three states have made is that by Ikka Korhonen, in a discussion of monetary and exchange rate policies. From being part of the Soviet Union's rouble area, the three states were able to create their own currencies. They all suffered significant problems associated with squeezing out inflation and refocusing their economies away from Russia. They have now achieved a remarkable degree of internal and external stability and the levels of national debt are very low. Whilst all the currencies are strongly linked to the euro, Korhonen suggests that entry into the euro should be some way off. This is because there is a need for time to adjust the economies to the full impact of being part of a single currency again.

Nida M. Gelazis highlights the major problem of citizenship and national minorities in the Baltic states. A major aspect of EU enlargement is a concern about human rights. The legacy of the former Soviet Union was that the Russian language was forced upon all the republics and migration was encouraged to create multi-ethnic societies. At the dawn of independence the proportion of ethnic Lithuanians in that country was around 80 per cent, in Latvia ethnic Latvians amounted to 55 per cent of the population, while Estonia 61 per cent of the people living there were ethnic Estonians. The Russian minorities face enormous problems of exclusion if they do not make efforts to adapt to their new situation. The challenge for these states will be to ensure that the minorities that dwell within their borders do not remain stateless. Surely they must also be able to enjoy fully the benefits of citizenship of the EU.

In terms of the external dimension, George W. Breslauer discusses relations with Russia in the context of East–West relations. This chapter provides an interesting insight into the tensions created by independence. He highlights the weakness of Russia both as a state and an international actor, and speculates how the relatively stable equilibrium of Russian policies towards the Baltic states could be

disrupted. There are dangers that arise from internal frustrations and also the real prospect of concerns being raised about the Russian minorities. Finally, the problem of Kaliningrad may still be a point of tension.

Anyone interested in the enlargement of the EU and its consequences should not hesitate to purchase this interesting set of readings. They manage to give a real insight into the progress these countries have made and the problems they face.

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Constructing Ethnopolitics in the Soviet Union: Samizdat, Deprivation and the Rise of Ethnic Nationalism, by Dina Zisserman-Brodsky. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Pp.xi + 294. Appendix; notes; bibliography; index. £35.00 (hardback). ISBN 1-4039-6191-3.

The author's aim is to show how nationalist politics in the various Soviet republics evolved against a background that was paradoxical in two respects. First, the Soviet regime encouraged national awareness as an instrument, but subordinated it to anti-national goals and hedged it about with supra-national institutions, such as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Army and Gosplan. Second, the modernization process that stimulated nationalism was what Zisserman-Brodsky calls 'asymmetrical'. Parts of it – industrialization, urbanization and the introduction of universal primary education – were developed at the expense of others. The nationalities perceived that asymmetry as 'relative deprivation': deprivation of economic, cultural, environmental and other benefits. They had no confidence in the existing system's ability to rectify it. 'The modernisation process constitutes a systemic structure, and a prolonged misbalance between its components leads to a collapse of the whole system' (p.36).

This imbalance helps to explain the uncertain and winding path of nationalism in the USSR. In the early stages most national groups adopted a generally socialist orientation, assuming that if building socialism could be rescued from the Stalinists then national self-determination would be the result. Disappointment during the Khrushchev and early Brezhnev years then caused most of them to change tack and place their hopes in Westernization of the political system, in the assumption that a Western-style democracy would permit nations to decide their own future.

Zisserman-Brodsky charts the evolution of the major demands of each nationality as they were propelled by that sense of deprivation. They took very different forms: the Armenian movement focused on the status of Nagorny

Karabakh, the Crimean Tatar one on the right of return to their homeland, the Ukrainian one on self-determination either within or outside the USSR, the Baltic one on secession from the USSR. At this stage, however, they were all, in her word, 'polycentric', that is, they assumed that many nations, in principle equal, would co-exist in the USSR or emerge from it.

Russian nationalists were different: they viewed the entire USSR as their homeland and most of them regarded Western politics as inappropriate. They believed that a law-abiding authoritarian state that gave priority to Russian economic and cultural institutions would be the best solution for most, if not all, the Soviet nationalities. Their nationalism was 'ethnocentric', that is, it was predicated on the idea of a state-bearing ethnos.

When the republican nationalities finally won their independence, most of them switched abruptly to an 'ethnocentric' position, denying to the minority ethnic groups in their own territory the self-determination they had themselves long been demanding. As Zisserman-Brodsky explains: 'After the first barriers of censorship had been removed, the Soviet populace to their great surprise revealed that accursed and persecuted by the Soviet authorities nationalism spoke in rather the same language that they used to be addressed by their communist bosses' (p. 202).

Let us pause here. Did you understand that sentence? It took me some time. Unfortunately it is not untypical of the style in which this book is written. I do not allow PhD candidates to submit theses composed in English as bad as this and Palgrave Macmillan should be more careful about the way they edit their texts. The book has other defects too. It is the first scholarly work to draw on *samizdat* materials from all the nationalist movements in order to assess their similarities and differences. But unfortunately the author quotes mechanically from each document without telling us anything about its overall aim or about the author's origin or social position. She makes no distinction between documents widely known through underground circulation or re-broadcast over Western radio stations and those that had virtually no audience. She also assumes without really demonstrating it that *samizdat* brought to the surface feelings widely shared by the various ethnic populations, even though she herself admits that that most of its readers belonged to a post-Second World War generation, lived in large cities and had some post-secondary education (p.188).

This study contains much useful raw material and a serviceable appendix of information on each national movement. As a whole it has the makings of an interpretation, but the text badly needed additional work to fashion it into a convincing whole.

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Minority Ethnic Mobilization in the Russian Federation by Dmitry P. Gorenburg. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Pp.xiii + 297; index; bibliography. £50.00 (hardback). ISBN 0-52181-807-9.

This is a fascinating book which is a 'must read' for anyone interested in ethnic mobilization and nationalism in Russia and also, I suggest, for scholars interested in these subjects more generally.

Its central focus is an examination of non-Russian ethnic mobilization in four of Russia's republics – Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Chuvashia and Khakassia – from 1987, when *perestroika* had begun to create the enabling conditions for popular mobilization, through to 1994 by which time nationalist movements had signally declined in popularity and influence. These four republics are strategically chosen because they are institutionally, culturally and economically distinct and can therefore serve as critical cases for the comparison of different theoretical approaches to the explanation of ethnic mobilization.

Gorenburg's own theoretical approach is historical institutionalism, or institutional path dependency by another name. His fundamental aim is to explore 'the role of state institutions in the wave of nationalism' that swept through and helped to dismember the USSR during the *perestroika* period (p.18). However, his take on this is unusual. As he is at pains to point out, the main problem with existing institutional explanations is that 'they, like other explanations of ethnic mobilization, limit themselves to explaining the reasons for the emergence of ethnic mobilization in particular circumstances' (p.5). Moreover, because they are not particularly interested in the *process* through which ethnic mobilization becomes a political force, they focus almost exclusively on the role of elites, and especially political elites, as the key explanatory variable which determines the timing and location of such mobilizations. That is, they tend to adopt the 'ethnic entrepreneur' approach to nationalist mobilization (p.2).

Gorenburg takes issue with this general focus on causality, the *why* of ethnic mobilization and the consequent preoccupation with elite behaviour, and proposes instead to examine the *how* of ethnic mobilization, in particular the micro processes that lead to the creation and development of nationalist movements. This does not mean that the role of elites is ignored, but it is set in the context of a much broader explanation of ethnic mobilization that examines how ethno-nationalist movements emerge on the political scene as a result of government-sponsored liberalization, how they use institutionally provided resources to create organizational structures, how they frame their demands to resonate with their target audiences and how those demands are themselves shaped by the institutional and political opportunity structures that prevail at the time, and how they recruit their

supporters and how and why a significant proportion of the population joins the movement (p.5).

The result is a fascinating and enlightening analysis of the Soviet institutional legacy – which in the case of federal structures and relations was, of course, extremely complex – and the fundamental ways in which it shaped non-Russian ethnic mobilization in the crucial years of transformation from the end of the USSR to the emergence of the Russian Federation as an independent state. Gorenburg provides convincing evidence to show that ‘Soviet ethnic institutions . . . both provided nationalist movements with the resources to become a potent political force and created mentalities that moderated these movements’ demands’ (p.117). For example, he shows why borders have not been an issue for the most part – the lack of irredentist demands at the level of the Russian autonomous republics has actually been quite extraordinary, given the historical potential.

Gorenburg also does a good job of demonstrating why his sort of institutional approach is more illuminating in its focus on micro-processes of ethnic mobilization than economic, instrumental or primordialist approaches. The latter tend to concentrate on macro-level issues such as the nature of ethnicity or the types of factors that influence ethnic politicization (p.268), and ignore both the role of the rank-and-file or the population more generally as active agents, and the extent to which mass mobilization is actually structured by the form of state institutions.

This is an excellent book. It is probably a bit too sophisticated for the average undergraduate but it deserves to be on everybody else’s shelves.

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The Political Economy of Cambodia’s Transition, 1991–2001 by Caroline Hughes. London: Routledge/Curzon, 2003. Pp.259; index. £65.00 (hardback). ISBN 0-7007-1737-4.

This is an excellent and incisive study of Cambodia that provides an invaluable lead into the study of the key aspects of the country’s recent political economy. The book should be regarded as essential reading for anyone seeking to understand contemporary Cambodia. In addition, the study has a much wider application as a case study of centre relations, exogeneously sponsored democratization, the role of non-governmental organizations in that process, and economic reform in weak, underdeveloped states. The author provides detailed insight into processes that are widely commented on and debated, but all too often in the absence of effective grounding.

Each of the chapters, which cover economy and state–society relations, economic reform and state making, state and party, international intervention, multiparty politics, non-governmental organizations and civil society and urban protest movements, is worthy of detailed comment. Particularly impressive is the manner in which the various strands of Cambodian development are interconnected, thoroughly grounded and connected to broader debates. This is well illustrated in the examination of the way in which high levels of foreign involvement in reform and democratization have set in motion processes that are inimical to the development of democracy, while promoting local autonomy and inequality.

The Cambodia situation is presented as one of the post-cold war examples of the adoption of a democratic ‘form’ in response to external pressure and the need to access aid, without significant local pressure or the establishment of the necessary institutionalization of the participatory process. The contradiction of international resources being directed at a ruling group, who are then freed from dependence on extracting surplus through the local administrations and the need to establish popular support, is explored in convincing detail.

In Cambodia the centre has allowed the local administration and other subsections of the state, notably the military, to establish a wide range of economic activities that do not provide significant financial benefit to the central state. They have done this in return for providing sufficient support to produce the election results necessary to legitimize the regime and ensure continued international financial support. Much of the increasingly diversified economic activity that has developed involves close connections between subsections of the state and emergent local entrepreneurs, some with (not always legitimate) links with foreign capital. Critical in these developments has been access to resources and the ability to control and, in many cases, expropriate them. This is particularly evident with land: the 1989 reform that was supposed to give ownership to the occupiers has resulted in widespread dispossession and concentration of ownership. Overall, a wide range of state assets have been expropriated, sold, or both, a process that may well accord with donor views on privatization, but which has been disastrous for the livelihoods of many Cambodians.

Criticisms of the book are few and mainly relate to areas where more might have been said, for example with respect to the long-term weakness of the Cambodian state and failures of the socialist transition during the 1980s and its implication for subsequent reform. While I fully accept the view that the opposition of the local administrations was a critical factor in the lack of success, and that this did reflect the legacy of centripetal forces in the Cambodian state, it is worth stressing that for the Vietnamese occupying forces and advisers, a high degree of local autonomy may not initially have been seen as a problem, given that it was a significant feature of the

Vietnamese system. Indeed, the following description of Cambodian local autonomy cited by Hughes from G. Curtis's book *Cambodia Reborn? The Transition to Development and Democracy* (1998) could well have been written of Vietnam: 'considerable autonomy, including financial autonomy (within budgets received from the centre). This autonomy extends to control over a number of industrial enterprises, as well as the actual implication of national-level priorities and programmes' (Hughes, p.23).

My only (very minor) disappointment is that the final chapter does not make more of the broader implications of the study for the debates over the processes of democratization and economic transition. Given constraints on length, however, this is perhaps unfair and I would be unhappy to sacrifice any of the excellent material in the other chapters.

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