

Book Reviews

Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World. Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism. Edited by Daniele Conversi. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. Pp. xvi + 302. £ 19.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 415 26373 5.

This book addresses core issues concerning ethnic groups, federations, homelands and their psychology, identity, language, nation-building, nation-state, nationalism, patriotism, primordial debate, race, religion and state formation. Primarily, it pays tribute to the seminal work carried out by Walker Connor, a scholar of far-reaching influence for his pioneering studies on nationalism, both state and stateless.

Connor has been a pre-eminent academic in the task of tackling systematically the lack of a suitable terminology in the study of nationalism: 'In this Alice-in-Wonderland world in which nation usually means state, in which nation-state usually means multi-national state, in which nationalism usually means loyalty to the state, and in which ethnicity, primordialism, pluralism, tribalism, regionalism, communalism, parochialism, and subnationalism usually mean loyalty to the nation, it should come as no surprise that the nature of nationalism remains essentially unproved'. This quote is a good illustration of his acute sense of conceptual accuracy and corresponds to one of his most celebrated articles: 'A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group' (Connor, 1978, 1994).

Walker Connor has combated the terminological confusion and the lack of theoretical distinction which has for long pervaded scholarly discussions. The ambiguity, poly-semantic and vagueness which has permeated social science terminology has often reached unsatisfactory levels of mystification. Exercises of reification such as the substitution of the concept of nationalism for that of 'nationalist movement', for instance, clearly underscore the impropriety of utilizing different words for signifying same things. Furthermore, the misuse by academics of terms such as 'Americans' or 'England', for example, when referring to US citizens or the United Kingdom, is a poor reflection of the terminological accuracy that is presupposed to professionals of the maieutics.

One of the main obstacles for the understanding of ethnicity – particularly in reference to plural and compound states – has been the failed attempt by social scientists to formulate explaining theories of a general nature. Such a task is not conceivable if it is not associated to the development of a general theory of the cultural, psychological and social systems. Lacking this theory, the most reasonable route appears to be the plausible construction of partial explanations subject to bodies of observation and phenomena which can be verified by means of factual contrast. This has generally been the approach taken by most North American political scientists.

Following Daniele Conversi's introduction, chapter 2 offers one of Connor's most substantial accomplishments in conceptual clarification. Among other notions, it stresses how the term ethnonationalism should be used to encompass both the loyalty to a nation deprived of its own state and the loyalty to an ethnic group embodied in a specific state, particularly where the latter is conceived as a 'nation-state'. Let us remind ourselves that nationalism can refer simultaneously to both state and stateless nations so that the distinction between the two is often blurred. However, the emotional sense of belonging to ancestry, continuity and lineage is shared by both those who hold power and those deprived of it.

Walker Connor conceptualizes the nation as a 'self-differentiating ethnic group', a definition which implies two further consequences. On the one hand, it claims a linkage between the ethnic and the national dimensions; on the other, it emphasizes that self-awareness carries a stress on perception and on the psychological realm. The nation is a self-defining category which in many cases cannot be categorized externally. The subjective experience of self-awareness brings the nation into being. It follows that the nation-state, the most characteristic modernist construction, can be regarded as an ethnic state. Ethnicity and nationalism are relational constructs which make difficult the abstraction and gradation of their manifestations outside the 'real' existence of social groups.

As pointed out by Anthony D. Smith in the third chapter, most forms of nationalism have manifested ethnically, something which Connor underlines by stating that all nationalism is ethnically predicated. Therefore, when the term nationalism is used to refer to a civic identity, a confusion is produced by making patriotism and nationalism synonymous.

A theme cutting across many of the chapters compiled in the book is that concerning the primordialist/modernist axis or, in other words, the deterministic/functional division made among the diverse interpretations of scholars of nationalism regarding the processes of state formation and nation-building. If it would be problematic not to accept the existence of 'proto-nations' prior the Modern Age, and that collective identity of a diverse territorial nature played an important role in the shaping of contemporary nationalism, it would also be awkward to regard the nationalist phenomena as a 'natural' product of history beyond the paramount impact of the modern processes of social, economic and political changes (bureaucratization, colonization, industrialization and urbanization, to name a few).

The other two chapters included in Part 1 deal with themes around Connor's central emphasis on emotions and his concept of the modern character of nationalism. The contribution by Donald Horowitz seeks to identify primordialist ideas in some of the founding theories of ethnicity and nationalism. Joshua Fishman reinstates the importance of the affective, non-rational bond in the analysis of ethnicity. He argues that primordialism tends to become a self-view, whereas constructivism is generally a 'view of the other'.

Three distinctive cases are included in Part 2 of the volume. William Douglas enquires whether race and ethnicity could really be separable, using the case of the Basque Country. He also explores Arana's ideas as founder of Basque nationalism and his re-interpretation of history. Beyond the unity provided by language, mythology and religion, the Basque Country is to be regarded as a modern political creation. Let us remember that at the time of their individual incorporation into the Castillian Crown (Gipuzkoa, 1200; Araba, 1332; and Biscay, 1379), the 'Spanish' Basque Provinces were eager to keep their own *fueros* or local statutes. The chapter by John Stone concerns the end of apartheid in South Africa and shares Connor's view about the problems of forecasting outcomes in ethnic conflicts with the 'traditional' categories and instruments available in the social sciences. Dealing with the case of Canada, John Edwards argues that all nationalisms are to a certain extent ethnic, although they tend to present themselves in the more fashionable 'civic' costume. He consequently questions, as Connor does, the possibility of a purely 'civic' (non-ethnic) attachment to state institutions.

Part 3 of the book includes three contributions with apply Connorian perspectives. Brendan O'Leary advances that a stable democratic federation must have a *Staatsvolk*, a national or ethnic people, who are demographically and electorally dominant – though not necessarily an absolute majority of the population – and who are to be

the co-founders of the federation. Where there is no *Staatsvolk*, or where the *Staatsvolk*'s position is precarious, a stable federation requires (at least some) consociational rather than majoritarian institutions if it is to survive. These claims are meant to be consistent with liberal nationalism, national federalism and national cultural homogeneity. William Safran addresses the issue of third-party intercessions as mechanisms for conflict resolution. However, he underlines the difficulties in articulating universal, non-partisan conducts as the fair means for inter-ethnic fairness and impartiality. Concerning the arena of international relations, Safran also points out how political elites usually disregard, or even support more or less explicitly, other states' oppression of their minorities. John Coakley's chapter concentrates on a core value of nationalism: religion. He contends that in Europe most religious conflicts were not ethnic in nature, whereas most contemporary ethnic conflicts do not have a significant religious dimension. Europe's religious wars should be dated back to an age that would be conventionally regarded as pre-national.

In Part 4, Robert Kaiser deals with the geopolitical element of Connor's work and, particularly, with the significance of national homelands and geographical territory for ethnic groups. Thomas Spira revisits the terminological puzzle and argues that the twin concepts of ethnicity and nationality are intimately linked in both research and practice. In the concluding chapter, the editor, Daniele Conversi, provides a general assessment and identifies three stumbling blocks in the form of underlying approaches: essentialism, cultural determinism and historical determinism. The volume concludes with an exhaustive bibliography of Connor's work.

This book constitutes not only a most deserved tribute to the seminal work of Walker Connor. It is also an excellent collection of chapters to be read with profit by anyone interested in the general theme of territorial politics, and particularly in relation to the fields of nationalism and ethnicity.

REFERENCES

- Walker Connor, 1978, 'A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group. . .', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, October 1978, pp.377-400.
 Walker Connor, 1994, *Ethnonationalism. The Quest for Understanding*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp.111-12.

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Political Topographies of the African State: Territorial Authority and Institutional Choice. By Catherine Boone. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Pp. xiii + 407. £50.00 (hardback), £19.99 (paperback). ISBN 0 521 827577 1 and 0 521 532647 1.

This important book utilizes a well-aimed political economy approach to address crucial themes for development and state building in present-day Africa. It effectively delineates the interconnections between the state and local level politics cum rural social organization in a tense postcolonial period initially characterized by state-led developmentalism. Catherine Boone, who has made solid contributions to the literature on the politics of the West African sub-continent, takes the reader on a delightful journey to understanding the implications of regional variation in rural African political

processes for the (de)concentration of state power. Indeed, the unevenness prevalent in power-sharing patterns in the African countryside mirrors effectively a concatenation of factors which include the hegemony of the state and rural actors, the institutional dimensions of economic goals, and the consolidation of centre – periphery politics.

Working within a timeframe that begins in the late 1940s – a period which constituted the early independence years – and ebbs into the 1980s, the author shares insights on far-reaching historical determinants including, among others, nationalist struggles, centre – periphery relations, rulership and local authority, peasantry and communal organization, and rural economics. A sizeable chunk of the volume is committed to debunking state-centred institutional theorizations with over-generalist assumptions anchored upon views that regard state autonomy as insuperable. Boone expertly structures her arguments to reveal two important facts. Firstly, modern African states have been to a large extent built upon pre-colonial agrarian structures, and secondly, ‘endogenous’ – rather than ‘exogenous’ – factors determine significantly political variations in (rural) Africa. Case studies are drawn from major West African rural zones: the Groundnut Basin and Casamance region of Senegal, the Senegal River Valley, southern and northern Cote d’Ivoire – specifically the Korhogo region, and the Asante region of Ghana.

Political Topographies of the African State comprises six chapters. Three of these are devoted chiefly to case studies, the analyses being derivative of the author’s field studies in the countries concerned. Chapter 1 is a brief introduction to key themes and issues raised in the book. It also provides a richly tailored overview of the theoretical base of the study: the theory of institutional choice, which emphasizes those implicit variables that inform the institutional choices of rulers in Africa. Chapter 2 is titled ‘Mapping Political Topography in Africa’. Here, the author further expounds on the institutional choice model, arguing for the need ‘to go beyond institutional logic to develop better accounts of institutional origins and change’ (p.12), grounding analyses thoroughly in local level macrosociological dimensions. The chapter also explains the importance of communal structure and communal hierarchy in the exhibited patterns of social organizational structures in Africa, as well as cross-regional variations in bargaining power among ‘rural notables’ in the control of peasants.

Dwelling on the ‘Uneven Institutional Topography within One State’, Chapter 3 queries into the regional variation in institutional choices in Senegal’s Groundnut Basin and Lower Casamance area. It describes how, on the one hand, the Groundnut Basin, which was the core export-producing region and is ‘modern Senegal’s center of gravity’ (p.46), was administered indirectly by the means of power-sharing between the state and the Maraboutic elite as well as the Wolof aristocracy. On the other hand, in Lower Casamance, the focus was on the centralization of power rather than the ‘development of localized and independent partisan organizations’ (p.116). Chapter 4 is captioned ‘Taxing Rich Peasants: Regime Ideology as Strategy’. It considers the export-producing regions of southern Cote d’Ivoire and southwestern Ghana (both renowned for two ‘luxury’ crops: coffee and cocoa respectively) and the dynamics of taxation and governance that occurred there. Boone deconstructs the idea of ideological bases as *raisons d’être* for the move against rural power arrangements in Nkrumah’s Ghana and Houphouët-Boigny’s Cote d’Ivoire. Rather, she opines, the explanation lies in the desire of the two regimes ‘to achieve forms of rural political demobilization that would make it possible to tax peasants indirectly, via state control of exports’ (p.237). The imperative therefore is the reduction of the political clout of the richer peasantry.

Titled ‘The Geopolitics of Late Development’, Chapter 5 gives consideration to the political dynamics of change in institutional strategies. The cases in view are the

Senegal River Valley and the Korhogo region where rulers restructured earlier ingrained institutional strategies in the bid to continue exerting control over the regions. In the Korhogo region, what was put in place was a restrictive kind of powersharing as opposed to previous usurpationist arrangements, and this was not unconnected with the feebleness of rural hierarchy in the area. With respect to the Senegal River Valley, the state also devised power-sharing mechanisms to involve rural aristocrats, whose power in the area was already being rendered impotent as a result of the crisis brought about by the Sahelian drought of the early 1970s. Finally, in the concluding chapter the author summarizes her viewpoints and stresses the role of rural societies in state-formation, centre – periphery bargaining, the crisis of the local state, and the inertness of developmentalism in rural Africa.

All said, it should be noted that the book cannot and does not lay claim to being a complete survey of the issues, although it certainly does provide superb pointers in the right direction. Another word of caution: Boone's analysis, though forceful and original, nevertheless drifts in some aspects into the very determinism and generalization she appears wary of. Notwithstanding, these caveats do not diminish in any way the overall strength of the book. Firstly, it coalesces a wealth of diverse material, the end product of which is a well-argued, distinctive and accessible reading of a fascinating topic. Secondly, the book displays a sophisticated and well-defined agenda and provides a rigorously analytic distillation valuable as a framework for further research. Lastly, the spatial perspective and the use of excellent cartographic illustrations bring out the unmistakably geographical nature of the study. A must for those with interests bordering on regional systems.

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The Politics and Government of Switzerland. By Clive H. Church. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. Pp. xiv + 285. £ 50.00 (hardback). ISBN 0 333 69277 2.

Clive Church's long-awaited work aims to fill a gap in the textbook literature. Incorporating developments in Switzerland until the end of April 2003, it provides a simply-structured four-part analysis of the country's formal political system and how it is embedded in wider social and economic processes.

The book begins by sketching the historical, socio-economic and legal context, offering a very positive assessment of the 1999 revised Constitution. Part 2 discusses the main political institutions and groupings, with a strong focus on trade union politics and political parties, and provides a particularly clear discussion of Switzerland's curious executive and the judiciary. Part 3 consists of a comprehensive outline of critical policy processes, including direct democracy and the co-operative federal framework which distinguishes the Swiss system. The sections on the electoral system and the role of expert consultation in policy formation are particularly informative. The final section provides a tightly-structured summary of policy responses to the key economic, socio-cultural, defence and foreign policy issues that have recently constituted the 'stuff of politics' (p.187) in Switzerland. The book concludes by exploring the country's relations with the European Union, providing a belated explanation of a historical dynamic which necessarily features earlier in the text. The annexes provide a

useful if somewhat eclectic array of voting results, political terms, information on federal institutions and a guide for further reading.

This wide-ranging work will increase the visibility of this distinctive small country and its politics among Anglophone political science students. It provides a strong framework for the discussion of how the interplay of internal and external forces is redefining Switzerland's international position, domestic policy and political identity. However, the objective to provide an accessible interpretation of Swiss politics for 'British undergraduates' (p.5) at times short-changes the work's wider English language readership. Binary comparisons with the British parliamentary system (pp.103–12), for example, are unhelpful for those readers who are equally unfamiliar with the British system.

The descriptive narrative is highly readable, although its continuous flow – with headings as marker points rather than structuring sections – makes it difficult to dip into the work as a reference text. The text is remarkably concise, but it needed at times to be anchored more firmly in the specifics, as names of cantons and organizations are not always provided at appropriate points. The French, German and Italian terms for the major political bodies would have assisted readers who intend further research. The text is only very lightly referenced, and almost never by date and page number, as would be the usual academic convention. This may indicate editorial pressures but will frustrate many readers, who have to search through the thematic bibliography to find suggestions of the original sources. The book also suffers from a number of typesetting errors.

On the whole, the work is unevenly pitched. It frequently assumes background knowledge of everyday life and current events in Switzerland. At the same time, the content is set at a relatively elementary level, such as explaining the purpose of elections. The discussion could have been taken further at points. The comments on the 'highly unusual tongues' (p.28) constituting Swiss-German, for example, would have benefited from a more sophisticated analysis of the politically-weighted choices made between *Schwyzerdütsch* and High German in the public sphere and in certain political institutions.

The book's overly-defensive attempts to redress assumed misunderstandings, and its conflicting objectives to present the country as both 'normal' and 'interesting', mean that chapters tend to conclude rather weakly ('generally outcomes have been patchy', p.196). Those readers who find Swiss politics anything but 'boring' (p.1) might have hoped that this work would address the challenges currently facing the country's political structures with more sustained critique. Readers looking for an overview of the current academic debate on Swiss political theory will also be disappointed. However, Clive Church's work provides a detailed introduction to the rich complexity of the Swiss political system, and convincingly argues that this unusual country and its politics deserve a closer look.

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The People's Peace Process in Northern Ireland. By Colin J. Irwin. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. Pp. xxvii + 326. £57.50 (hardback). ISBN 0 333 96248 6.

This book charts the methodology and findings of the Queen's University of Belfast's 'Peace Building and Public Policy in Northern Ireland' project, which involved the

production of eight public opinion polls between 1996 and 2001. These polls were unusual as they attempted to involve all the political parties in the Northern Ireland peace process in their composition. It was the politicians who formulated the questions, so that they could then identify areas of common ground between their different parties, once the results of the polls were published in the *Belfast Telegraph*. As Colin Irwin, the principal investigator and author of the book, explains in his introduction, these polls were designed to have a direct effect on the Northern Ireland peace process, not simply to be read in isolation. Indeed, the main purpose of the book is to explain how the survey work was conducted so that others can then 'apply the benefits of this experience to their own peace building activities', as Irwin stated in his cover note.

The book's division into two parts is essentially logical: in the first five chapters, Irwin provides the analytical context for the 'peace polls', while the next eight deal with the results of each of the surveys. However, occasionally, the details of the structure seem less than cohesive – there is a sense that the book has a slightly verbose aspect to it, and that the 300 pages could have been cut by around a third. For example, the introductory chapter provides a useful overview of the history of the conflict in Northern Ireland, but it could probably have been merged with chapter 1, while chapters 2, 3 and 4 all concern methodology and could have been abridged and structured better. Charting the thinking that lay behind the statistical methodology in this level of detail is not the most interesting way to start the book, and much of this information could have been included in the appendix. It is only on page 103 that one feels one is finally getting to the important information.

These Northern Ireland polls built on similar work Irwin had previously carried out in the Nunavut area of Canada, the area inhabited by the Inuit people, but it is difficult to place this book in the context of similar literature, as its approach is ground-breaking. Indeed, Stormont Talks chairman, Senator George Mitchell, states in his commendation of the book that 'the unique approach he [Irwin] developed of running public opinion polls in co-operation with party negotiators contributed significantly to the successful outcome of our efforts'. Mitchell's review also gives some indication of the importance placed on these polls by the main actors in the peace process, and naturally, we are left with some interesting insights into what the people of Northern Ireland think about both general political issues (e.g. the parades question, reforms made to the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the early release of prisoners, the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons) and also specific issues which were topical at the time, such as 'Should your party stay in the Talks?', 'Do you support the proposed North-South bodies?', etc.

Included in the latter chapters are the series of articles Irwin wrote for the *Belfast Telegraph*, which appeared alongside the poll results. These articles are enjoyable to read and enable the statistics to be placed into some sort of time perspective. Indeed, the effectiveness of the independent 'outsider' status of Irwin is constantly striking – the tone of the book is utterly optimistic and scrupulously neutral and fair. However, there are times when the juxtaposition of Irwin's often frank newspaper columns with the generally considered tone of his prose in the book is problematic. Perhaps the most memorable example of this is when the author launches a sustained attack on the Northern Ireland Office and the then Secretary of State, Mo Mowlam, for regarding him as a 'loose canon'. This piece is clearly written from the heart ('I am tightly lashed down to the deck of my own small vessel of which I am master', p.212), but the reader then tends to hear that 'subjective' voice coming through the more 'objective' sections as well. This unusual mixture of academic and non-academic language provides a rather incongruous mix of social science statistical analysis and

newspaper-style opinion. There are also points when the tone is overly simplistic – Irwin’s fundamental contention that the extensive use of these types of polls could help to resolve the conflict in Northern Ireland is somewhat assertive. At one point, he argues that if one multiplies the eight polls by the 1000 people interviewed, then multiply that again by the 100-plus options in each poll, that equals nearly one million answers, which is one for every voter in Northern Ireland. This was ‘truly “the people’s peace process”’, he concludes (p.134). There is no question that the role played by the polls was constructive and valuable, but one occasionally feels Irwin overstates the impact they had, or could have had.

The book should appeal to a range of readers in the fields of social anthropology, sociology, conflict studies, political science, and should be included as a textbook for any course on Northern Irish politics. As far as a wider audience is concerned, anyone with a general interest in the political situation in Northern Ireland would also find useful information in the book. However, here there is the perennial problem of trying to make list upon list of detailed questions and answers hold the reader’s attention, and again, this goes back to the problem of style – it is vital that such an immense catalogue of figures is presented in an efficient and tight way, and this is not always the case here. Nevertheless, *The People’s Peace Process in Northern Ireland* provides an in-depth timeline of the thoughts of ordinary voters on the main political developments in the Province over five years, and is an extremely worthy and thought-provoking piece of work.

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Multi-level Governance. Edited by Ian Bache and Matthew Flinders. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. xv + 237. £ 40.00 (hardback). ISBN 0 19 925925 9.

Underpinning the concepts of ‘multilevel governance’ (MLG) and ‘governance’ is the view that, rather than being a central state monopoly, authority is increasingly shared between actors at different territorial levels. Bache and Flinders assert, however, that though useful, the concepts are often inadequately defined and like all concepts that become widely applied, ‘they can become devoid of meaning’ (p.197). The book examines alternative perspectives on MLG in different academic and policy fields and investigates the implications of MLG for the nation state and democratic accountability. Following an overview of the development and identification of key questions around the study of MLG, it is structured in three parts. The first focuses on theoretical issues, Part 2 examines MLG at different territorial scales and Part 3 analyses the impact of MLG in different policy-making areas.

Part 1 begins with a contribution from Gary Marks and Liesbet Hooghe, who maintain that one of the main benefits of MLG is its scale flexibility. They illustrate this by exploring the virtues of two types of MLG, both of which depart from the traditional, centralized state model but diffuse authority in contrasting ways with divergent outcomes. James Rosenau offers a cautious perspective on the capacity of MLG to act as a steering mechanism and asserts that because of its connotations with hierarchy MLG can ‘be misleading and imprisoning’ (p.39). He prefers the concept of ‘spheres of authority’, comprising formal and informal rule systems that may be widely dispersed and not necessarily linked together through layered hierarchies. Hooghe and Marks’ Type 2 model would seem to accommodate Rosenau’s critique by allowing

for numerous jurisdictions to network in a relatively flexible and non-tiered system. However, this illustrates the range of views on the value of the MLG concept and the need for clarity in terminology. Bob Jessop contends that neither 'state-centric' or 'simple governance' models are sufficient to take account of the resilience of the sovereign state and its capacity to pursue national interests by rescaling its activities. States are able to draw on their democratic legitimacy to impose 'metagovernance', whereby governance is encouraged, but 'in the shadow of hierarchy' (p.65). In a similar vein, Guy Peters and Jon Pierre admonish those who believe that the 'previously state centric and constitutional perspective has been almost completely replaced by an image of government in which institutions are largely irrelevant' (p.75). They also argue that though MLG may have considerable problem-solving capacity, its reliance on informal negotiations and the absence of distinct legal frameworks may conflict with principles of democratic accountability. This is the key issue to emerge in several chapters.

Part 2 begins with Bache and Flinders examining MLG in the UK context, specifically as a possible counterpoint to the Westminster Model. They observe that recent constitutional reforms have given an added resonance to the multilevel dimension of governance but, though this is creating tensions, central government is finding new mechanisms to exert its power. Stephen George examines critiques of MLG as applied to the EU, including claims that it is merely an amalgam of existing theories, has descriptive but not theoretical qualities, overstates the autonomy and influence of subnational actors and ignores the international level of interactions. He concedes that MLG does bring together existing theories but asserts that that is its real merit. In the context of the intergovernmental/supranational debate, MLG shifts the emphasis away from a state-centred perspective and acknowledges the role that other actors play in EU policy-making. Second, he contends that MLG represents a theory about the nature of the EU in which state executives no longer dominate, but share and contest policy making with other actors. Third, he reminds us that MLG offers a useful framework for exploring how far central government power is being eroded. Nonetheless, certain weaknesses remain. MLG studies of the EU have tended to exclude non-subnational government actors, too much stress has been given to subnational participation rather than influence over EU policies, and more attention should be given to the EU's gatekeeper role in the international arena. Stephen Welch and Caroline Kennedy-Pipe consider the relevance of MLG to developments in international relations. They conclude that given the current threat of international terrorism, it is an inopportune time to be suggesting the eclipse of the nation state. Moreover, they confirm that governance in the field of IR is conceptually under-specified. Governments increasingly work in international forums, which might be regarded as evidence of the transfer of sovereignty, but some states have a predominant influence and all retain the capacity to resist international pressures. In addition, though there is a 'pecking order' of supranational bodies, whether this possesses the hierarchic features associated with government is questionable.

In Part 3, Jenny Fairbrass and Andrew Jordan explore EU policies for bio-diversity and land use planning in the UK. MLG offers a compelling description of what happens to decisions once they escape the domain of intergovernmental bargaining, but they are cautious about presenting MLG as a fully-fledged EU theory. Though a useful framework for examining the EU's 'low politics' and for identifying some of its important attributes, the theory has yet to explain them. Ian Bache's chapter on EU regional policy covers familiar ground. He also affirms that MLG provides a useful way of explaining the implementation process. Evidence of MLG is also likely to be greatest

where EU and domestic preferences coincide, the implication being that to comprehend the impact of Europeanization an understanding of domestic institutional political and administrative structures is also required. Jonathan Perraton and Peter Wells explore the relevance of MLG for understanding economic policy-making over the post-war period. They observe three trends: the ceding of policy-making power to supranational bodies, the creation of subnational organizations responsible for leading on regional development and the creation of public-private partnerships. Each can be viewed as examples of MLG, but the authors are cautious about generalizing: 'it is easy to find hierarchical relationships in a myriad of economic policy domains, but also because MLG downplays explanations centred on the relationship between states and markets' (p.194).

In the final chapter, Bache and Flinders synthesize the chapter findings under each of the questions set out in their first chapter. Their overall finding is that the erosion of central power should not be assumed. MLG also offers an analytical framework that can be used in different ways, but how far MLG can be applied as a predictive tool is unclear. They are cautious about 'overstretching' the use of the concept and acknowledge that its theoretical content remains weak. Returning to the 'high' and 'low' politics debate, they stress that if MLG is to become a fully developed theory it must 'generate clearer expectations in relation to the influence of subnational and non-state actors as well as highlighting their mobilization and participation' (p.204). They also conclude that though governance and MLG may offer the promise of greater efficiency and effectiveness they may reduce legitimacy and transparency, and disadvantage weaker actors. This points to the need for the creation of a political architecture with new forms of accountability.

As this outline indicates, the book is ambitious in its scope. The analytical framework is lucid and the contributors shadow the core question fairly closely with in-depth analysis. Two questions that might have been examined more explicitly is whether MLG is particularly associated with the EU model and how far 'governance' has developed in different EU states. The volume represents an important contribution to the literature dealing with governance in general and would be of benefit not only to students of MLG. To get the most from the book, however, requires some previous knowledge of MLG. Though not an easy read, this reflects the complexity of the issues rather than any failing on the part of the authors. This book is likely to be of value to researchers and to graduate students in the field of EU and domestic politics for some years to come.

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