

Taking everything into consideration, this book represents a significant contribution in the field of international politics. It provides the readers both significant theoretical contributions and critical understanding of different schools of thought in order to create a personal theory about the concept of political.

**Theo van de Klundert** *Capitalism and Democracy: A Fragile Alliance* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2013)

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Theo van de Klundert is a Dutch economist and Professor Emeritus at Tilburg University in The Netherlands. *Capitalism and Democracy: A Fragile Alliance*, was originally written in Dutch and translated into English in order to reach the larger Anglophone audience. This book is the result of Klundert's sixty years of study in the field of economics. The focus of the book revolves around the central question of whether it is possible to combine capitalism and democracy. The book is divided into two parts. The first part emphasizes the importance of technological progress as a main engine for economic growth. The second part highlights what has been described as "the diffusion of capitalism across countries". In this work, the author also sets out to ascertain whether or not such diffusion gives rise to regional varieties of capitalism.

In the first chapter Klundert discusses the genesis of capitalism. In the book, *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi (1944) makes reference to the social and political upheavals that took place in England during the rise of the market economy. According to Polanyi, setting political rulers at a distance is a pre-requisite to establishing a self-regulating economic environment. Polanyi's theory states that it is precisely this distance that ensures the property rights of merchants and entrepreneurs. Chapter two is devoted to an overview of the field of international political economy. Klundert analyzes formal models of political economies. This analysis stems from a theory which states that technological change is the driving force of accumulation and growth in the capitalist system. The third chapter explains precisely how the neoclassical theory was conceived as an exogenous factor in the technological growth theory. Klundert also acknowledges the new literature which offers alternate explanations to technological change, such as learning-by-doing and investment in research and development. Chapter four explores the plausibility of third world nations catching up to the GDP of their first world counterparts. In this chapter Klundert reviews the research of Syrquin (1988) who categorizes the "catching-up" phenomena in three stages. The first stage emphasizes primary production while the second and third phase emphasize both industrialization and de-industrialization respectively. Chapter four segues into the

second part of the book, beginning with chapter five, which explores the historical developments of capitalization in Europe and the United States. Chapter six chronicles the history of capitalism and distinguishes the history of the development of capitalism in the United States from the history and development of capitalism in the United Kingdom. Chapter seven, aptly entitled *The World Community at Large*, challenges the hypothesis which presumes that globalization is necessarily complemented by a “convergence of welfare” in poor countries, as has typically been the relationship with rich countries. The author contests this theory by exhibiting twentieth century evidence which points to the contrary. Such evidence is exemplified by the cases of the EU and contemporary China. In this chapter Klundert also distinguishes the major differences between African, Asian, and Latin American economies. The final chapter entitled, *Democracy at Bay* discusses the importance of international economic relations as expressed by institutions such as the WTO, IMF, World Bank and EU. This chapter explores whether such “supranational institutions can be controlled in a satisfactorily democratic way” (p. 179).

The major strengths of this work can be found within its chapter by chapter organization as well as the contents of the final chapter. At the conclusion of each chapter the reader is offered a review section entitled *Evaluation*. The final chapter functions as the evaluation section for the entire book. Only in Chapter eight does the author’s stance emerge as distinguished from the scholarly opinion of the academics he copiously refers to throughout the book. Chapter eight not only seeks to settle the underlying questions the book initially set out to explore but it also examines these questions in the light of contemporary events such as China’s export surplus and the 2008 global financial crisis. Within chapter eight the flexibility of the authors position is made apparent when he lays out his predications for China “we have seen that China will equal the US in 2012, as far as the size of GDP is concerned...and [it] may be expected to exhibit fast growth in the years to come” (p. 180). Overall, Klundert’s work is a researched book with an organized layout. These two qualities make it an exceptional reference work for senior scholars who are studying and conducting research in the field of international political economy.

Like many scholarly works, the book mainly speaks to the most senior members or the author’s peer group. As a result, its more complex themes will likely pose a challenge for the interdisciplinary researcher. It seems that the author’s intent was to provide a vast set of reference points in the first seven chapters before concluding by addressing the author’s main thesis. As mentioned earlier, this poses a problem for either the novice or the interdisciplinary scholar, both of who would be in great need for a primer before approaching this work.

A simple way to overcome the above mentioned challenges is to read the book out of sequence. An interdisciplinary researcher or novice in the field of economics may

seek to gain a better theoretical grasp of the content matter before moving forward. This can be accomplished by beginning with chapter eight. Just as chapter eight provides an excellent theoretical context, chapter seven provides an excellent historical context and should be subsequently read. The remaining chapters can then be read in sequence from chapter one to chapter six. Ultimately, senior scholars and researchers in the field of economics would likely find this work most useful as an essential part of their reference collection.

**Bibliography:**

- Polanyi, Karl (1975). *The Great Transformation. The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, New York: Octagon Books.
- Syrquin, Moshe (1988) 'Patterns of structural change' in Hollins Chenery and T.N. Srinivasan (eds), *Handbook of Development Economics*, Vol. 1, Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 205-268

**Fabio Zucca, *The International Relations of Local Authorities. From Institutional Twinning to the Committee of the Region: Fifty Years of European Integration History* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012)**

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At a moment when the European Union is having an identity crisis, it is pertinent to remember the motivations, and the efforts of the men who dedicated their lives to its creation and who established the means and the organizations necessary to involve the citizens in the bottom-up part of this process. This book focuses on the role played by local authorities, the first to use the establishment of twinning – the development of cultural, political and economical bonds between two cities or villages belonging to different nations – as a parameter of real international policy and to view it as an essential phase of the establishment of a united Europe.

The author conducted a deep archival research to show how the legitimisation of local authorities within the European institutions has been a “long march”. His book clearly considers all the different historical steps in this process, from the creation of the *Union internationale des villes* (UIV) in 1913 to the new phase of EU cohesion policies started in 2013. Zucca also shows a special regard for the men who made this integration possible: Gasser, Milhaud, Schiavi, De Jager, Bareth, Chaban-Delmas and other. In the context of the activities implemented by local authorities, the establishment and development of twinning between important European cities appears as a prime case of their effectiveness and importance. At the beginning, these relations started as means for the reconstruction of Europe, but they soon became an instrument for sensitising citizens to and involving citizens in the