

Book reviews

International Relations theory

The vulnerable in international society. By Ian Clark. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2013. 190pp. Index. Pb.: £19.99. ISBN 978 0 19964 609 8.

The vulnerable in international society is the latest in a series of books by Ian Clark exploring different aspects of international society, following *Legitimacy in international society* (OUP, 2005) and *Hegemony in international society* (OUP, 2011). The two earlier books—along with his co-authored *Special responsibilities: global problems and American power* (with Mlada Bukovansky, Robyn Eckersley, Christian Reus-Smit and Nicholas Wheeler; CUP, 2012)—are largely concerned with the ways in which international society reproduces itself and manages Great Power relations; *The vulnerable in international society* shifts the focus towards the other end of the food chain, towards those who are without power. The thesis is that the vulnerable are not simply ill served by international society, by definition insufficiently protected by it, but in a wider sense actually created by international society—the risks they face may sometimes be ‘natural’, but equally they may actually be a by-product of the way in which international society works. Just as international society confers legitimacy on its members, so it may also create vulnerability. The vulnerable are a socially crafted category and international society is involved in that crafting process, as well as being involved in measures taken to cope with the consequences of this process.

This is a complex thesis, which is illustrated via four substantial case-studies focusing on political violence, climate change, migration and global health issues. These case-studies present a historical review of the issues in question, with special emphasis in each case being placed on the formative moments when the relationship between international society and the vulnerable is laid bare. Thus, in the case of political violence, the attempt is made to formalize conventional notions of protection for the innocent via the concept of non-combatant immunity as set out in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols of 1977; but, so it is argued, the protection for the vulnerable that these are intended to provide is subverted by the wider understandings of the legitimacy of political violence embedded in international society’s adoption of just war categories such as ‘proportionality’ and ‘double effect’. International society—treated here as possessing the qualities of an agent—is simultaneously creating the disease and the antidote. In each of the other case-studies, where the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change of 1992, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the foundation of the World Health Organization in 1948 are taken as formative moments, the nature of vulnerability is different and accordingly the operation of international society also varies, but the core point remains. International society does not simply respond to vulnerability, it is engaged with the vulnerable at multiple levels—creative as well as responsive. The chapters that frame these four case-studies are entitled, respectively, ‘What have the vulnerable ever done for international society?’ and ‘What can

international society do for the vulnerable?’ and the normative thrust signalled by the latter title is central to the book as a whole. In the final paragraph of the book Clark identifies international society as both the hero and the villain of the story that he has told; it is clear that he wants to make the case that once the role of international society in creating vulnerability is recognized, then the consequences of this act of creation can be addressed and international society’s claim to be a morally acceptable way of organizing the world can be vindicated.

As with the other books in this informal series, the scholarship on display is irreproachable, and the commonsense way in which Clark deploys his arguments is reassuring. This time, though, I’m not altogether convinced that the argument is set up in the right way. To me, the key question is whether the category of the ‘vulnerable’ actually can carry the weight it is here asked to. By definition, the vulnerable are those who international society fails to protect, but do they have anything else in common? If, for example, it is the case that the vulnerable are actually usually the poor and powerless, then perhaps it is their poverty and lack of power, rather than their vulnerability, that should be the focus for international society? If, on the other hand, the vulnerable are not always poor and/or powerless—as might be the case, for example, with victims of political violence—do they then have enough in common with those who are poor and powerless to make the category of vulnerability meaningful? Perhaps, in short, we are looking at different kinds of problems here, and putting them all under the rubric of vulnerability obscures as much as it clarifies. I suspect that this may be the case—but even if it is, there is still so much of value here that *The vulnerable in international society* remains a book that can, without hesitation, be recommended to International Relations theorists and to those who are engaged with the four problem at its heart.

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Liberty abroad: J. S. Mill on International Relations. By Georgios Varouxakis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2013. 256pp. Index. £60.00. ISBN 978 0 52167 549 9. Available as e-book.

The volume belongs to the Cambridge University Press ‘ideas in context’ series, dedicated to the analysis (and exposure) of how ideas develop in concrete political and historical contexts, and it is a sterling contribution to the series. Mill is often hauled in to support one side or the other in the debates concerning intervention, human rights and the Responsibility to Protect, but Varouxakis restores to us an original Mill: tentative, principled, sometimes on the ‘wrong side’, and even changeable. He also restores to us a sense of the wonderful world of Victorian public debate, where public intellectuals actually existed, where letters to *The Times* were eagerly awaited, and where governments actually trembled to know what Mill and co. thought about Russia’s renunciation of provisions of the 1856 peace treaty or the second French revolution which initiated the Second Republic.

Varouxakis does not—indeed he refuses—to present us with a comprehensive ‘Mill on International Relations’. On the contrary, he avers that there is not one, that Mill did not develop a comprehensive view of what a liberal international politics should look like, and that the most important liberal philosopher of the age was ultimately uncertain on several central questions pertinent to such a view. This is not only because Mill was a public thinker whose ideas flew out in relation to concrete issues that confronted the British government (and, Mill makes clear, the British public) at specific times, but also because, Varouxakis quietly implies, liberal precepts can point in more than one direction. What we become clear about are Mill’s foundation principles: for example, with regard to the sanctity of treaties, would the same conditions apply now as when the treaty was signed?

Already hinted at in a previous article ('John Stuart Mill on intervention and non-intervention', *Millennium* 26: 1, 1997), the principles are here clearly drawn out. Varouxakis identifies three different and distinguishable situations of potential intervention, and draws out Mill's three different criteria for action. First, humanitarian intervention would be justified 'in a protracted civil war... when the victorious side cannot hope to keep down the vanquished but by severities repugnant to humanity and injurious to the permanent welfare of the country'. Among 'members of an equal community of nations', by contrast, an 'aggressive war for an idea' is not permissible, since it is unjustifiable to 'force our ideas on other people'. In the 'really difficult dilemma' of helping others in a struggle to establish free institutions, Mill makes the distinction between 'native government' and 'foreign rule'; in the former case, forbidden, since a people must learn to free itself; in the second permissible when the locals are 'defending and making good use of free institutions' against a foreign power attempting to put them down, although in each case in accord with a strictly utilitarian calculus as to consequential benefit.

The really interesting case in the present context of Russia and Ukraine is Mill's treatment of a fourth situation: the dissolution of empire and, notably, other's involvement in it. Varouxakis supports the common view, generally sourced to *Representative government* (1861), that Mill did not oppose the separation of colonies from empires in cases when the colonies expressed a 'deliberate wish' to separate, but he also points out, first, Mill's personal injunction to 'do nothing to encourage that wish' and moreover that the former colony 'must be at the charge of any wars of their own provoking' and that it would not be helpful if others entered into the quarrels. Varouxakis makes it quite clear that Mill of the East India Company was not against empires of 'settler colonies', as long as the 'natives' were given equal access to the fruits of 'civilisation'; and that he turned from defence of such empires only when access proved persistently unforthcoming.

It is in the case of war, and justified war, that context becomes particularly relevant. Mill was not only not against wars in general: he saw positive aspects in war, not least in allowing wars to hurt the entire population (in economic terms), since this would lead to a shortening of war and bring home to a populace the seriousness of declarations of war. He even lifted the utility criterion in the case of *jus ad bellum*, judging it preferable that a people fight to the death rather than accept slavery under a foreign despot. While not always, it was possible for a war to be a matter of justice, as he saw the American Civil War becoming ('the slaveholder's conspiracy crushed', p. 155) and he recommended that wars for justice should be lengthened rather than curtailed, to avoid any premature compromises in justice. But, as Varouxakis points out, all of this must be seen in the context of a time well before the total wars of the twentieth century, and when total war could not even be imagined.

If clear in the case of war, the relevance of context is not always so evident with regard to other questions. For example, Mill's enthusiasm for the second French revolution, and his willingness to break accords on account of it, is attributed to Britain's constitutional situation at the time, but the issues are not specified, nor are Mill's engagements with them. This is equally the case with regard to maritime law. Context cannot only mean other interlocutors; it must also mean the great political questions of the day and their relevance, as well as the subject's particular engagement with them. Varouxakis sometimes gets carried away with the debate, and while that is often revealing of the issues, it is not always. This is, however, only a slight cavil; the book is splendid and will only disappoint political philosophers looking to ground liberalism in an ideal philosophy.

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Wronged by empire: post-imperial ideology and foreign policy in India and China.
By Manjari Chatterjee Miller. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. 2013. 168pp.
Index. £27.18. ISBN 978 0 80478 652 2.

This engaging book presents an ingenious argument. The foreign policies of India and China, Manjari Chatterjee Miller argues, are motivated at root by a Post-Imperial Ideology (PII) that underpins their obvious concern to maintain their territorial sovereignty and improve their status in world politics. This ideology is a product of the collective trauma inflicted on these nations by colonialism and is sustained by the careful tending of the memory of that experience. It shapes not only the ways in which India and China frame their approaches to international relations, but also their behaviour.

Chatterjee Miller sets out this argument with enviable clarity. She argues that 'extractive colonialism' (as opposed to settler colonialism), involving 'external political dominance, economic exploitation, denial of rights, and suppression of cultural and ethnic pride' (p. 9), traumatized India and China, as well as other societies, disrupting their social fabric and transforming their views of others. Before and after decolonization, nationalist elites played on collective memories of that experience, conceiving self-determination as only the beginning of a process of gaining 'restitution for those past ills' (p. 24). After independence, Chatterjee Miller maintains, they constructed an ideology intended to achieve that objective, an ideology, as she puts it, 'composed of the dominant goal of victimhood driving the subordinate goals of territorial sovereignty and status' (p. 25). They willingly embraced the role of victims—the role of 'have-not powers', to use E. H. Carr's famous term—to demand redress for their grievances.

Chatterjee Miller provides supporting evidence for this hypothesis in two ways. The first is impressive, if perhaps a little over-elaborate, betraying her earlier experience as a doctoral student at Harvard: a statistical content analysis of every single word of every single speech delivered during United Nations General Debates from 1993 to 2007 (2,545 speeches in all). From this mammoth effort, she deduces that an emphasis on victimhood is a marked feature of the 'public discourse' of formerly colonized states (p. 35).

The second way in which Chatterjee Miller aims to demonstrate her argument is more traditional. She presents three case-studies: one on the Sino-Indian negotiations over their common border in 1960, the next on Indian conceptions of 'nuclear apartheid' and the last on Sino-Japanese hostility. For the earliest case, she is aided by the release of a treasure trove of official documents in the papers of the diplomat P. N. Haksar, which reveal more of Jawaharlal Nehru's thinking about the border dispute, and which show how Sino-Indian victimhood and memory seemingly prevented the conclusion of a settlement. For the last two, she is more dependent on publicly available sources in English and Mandarin.

Each of the cases is explored in considerable detail, and Chatterjee Miller takes pains to examine the alternative realist, liberal or constructivist explanations for the behaviour of India and China. But in each, she finds that the influence of PII explains that behaviour best, whether it is the stubborn refusal to agree the Sino-Indian border, India's decision to carry out its nuclear tests in 1998, or China's opposition to Japan's bid for a seat on the UN Security Council.

This is, in short, a provocative book and one that demands the attention of scholars of both Indian and Chinese foreign policy, even if many of them will not agree with its argument or its conclusions. Some will think that Chatterjee Miller has a point, but overplays her hand: it is plausible to suggest that trauma, memory and victimhood shape the world-views of post-colonial elites, but should we then conclude that they completely

displace other influences? It is surely also plausible that perceptions of material interests and beliefs about the efficacy of certain strategies or tactics shape the calculations of elites just as much, if not more, than a sense of victimhood. Moreover, it is at least possible that those elites no longer see themselves or their societies as victims, but continue to present themselves as such because it helps them to get what they want in international affairs. It may also be that playing the victim, in forums like the UN, is simply a ritual, essentially empty but difficult to abandon, or even a bad habit, hard to break. Working out which of these explanations accounts for the behaviour is difficult, but surely not impossible.

The big question that Chatterjee Miller leaves partly unanswered is: will India and China continue to play the victim as they rise? Her analysis suggests they will, but as she concludes, it will take some decades to find out.

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Interpreting international politics. By Cecelia Lynch. Abingdon: Routledge. 2013. 114pp. Index. Pb.: £17.99. ISBN 978 0 41589 691 7. Available as e-book.

During the majority of the twentieth century, the study of International Relations (IR) was under the epistemological and ontological influence of the behaviouralist/positivist methodological tradition, which studies social and political phenomena based on the premise of an objective and quantifiable world that exists outside the inner world of the researcher on the one hand and the historical context of the given event on the other. *Interpreting international politics* introduces the field of IR from the perspective of a different philosophy of science, based on an interpretivist approach which ‘focuses on the meaning of human experience—the variations in possible meanings for given events, how meaning is made through knowledge construction, how power and ethics constitute meaning, the implications of meaning for political and social phenomena’ (p. 2). Thus, the primary purpose of the book is to introduce the significant interpretative concerns in the study of international relations by reviewing the existing interpretative studies in subfields such as international security, international political economy, international law and organizations, as well as evaluating recent interpretative approaches to the discipline through the lens of race and religion.

In the first chapter, Cecelia Lynch starts by introducing interpretative concepts, goals, and processes in international relations critical to the nomothetic theorizing defined as ‘the commitment to finding objective, law-like explanations for phenomena that can be generalized to an entire class of agents’ (p. 25). Interpretative research in IR ‘denaturalize[s] dominant explanations, exposing them not as truth but as narratives that are discursively constructed, assigned particular meanings, and reproduced from partial or limited evidence and with particular stakes or purposes in mind, and to provide evidence that indicates the possibility or plausibility of other articulations and meanings of the phenomena in question’ (p. 14). After central interpretative concepts such as reflexivity, hermeneutic circle and intersubjectivity are discussed in the first chapter, Lynch continues by covering each subfield of IR in the next chapters.

In the subfield of international security (chapter two), the main interpretative critique from various schools of thought such as feminist and critical security studies revolves around fixed and taken-for-granted approaches to the concept of security. The author successfully demonstrates the contributions of interpretative research in ‘deconstructing, challenging, and reinterpreting what security means and what its ethical and material implications are, for both scholarship and governmental decision-making’ (p. 28). When it comes to international

political economy (chapter three), interpretative work is in one way or another inspired by Marxist analyses of power relations in the global economy, especially through the critique of liberal and neo-liberal dynamics. Thus, Lynch argues that hegemonic forms of power ought to be denaturalized and deconstructed in international economic relations through interpretive research. For interpretative scholars, similar concerns exist in the field of international law and organization (chapter four). Lynch states that ‘interpretivists in international law and organization reconceptualized world order, including legal processes, as social constructions, thereby challenging neorealist assumptions about international structure’ (p. 82). The book also introduces recent debates in IR from the perspectives of race, religion and alternative histories that ‘begs the question of non-Eurocentric conceptualization of world politics’ (p. 85). Overall, in all these subfields of IR, interpretative scholars challenge totalizing, generalizing and homogenizing tendencies in positivist/neo-positivist research. Instead, as Cecelia Lynch argues, interpretative research seeks to localize and contextualize social and political phenomena in IR.

My main criticism of the book is its lack of clarity on the interpretive research, other than deconstructing and denaturalizing the existing meta-narratives of neo-realism (especially in security studies) and (neo-)liberalism (especially in IPE). For instance, while the book successfully contrasts interpretivism with neo-realist and liberal IR paradigms, it fails to demonstrate how interpretivism differs from constructivism and how an interpretivist research agenda contradicts or overlaps with constructivist research in IR. Moreover, the potential policy implications of interpretative IR research for governments, international organizations and global NGOs has not been well covered, even though these institutions have been largely influenced by the ‘traditional’ research in IR that the book critiques.

To sum up, *Interpreting international politics* is a short, easy-to-read and informative introduction to the field of IR from the perspective of a philosophy of social science that is critical of positivist assumptions such as objectivity, fact/value dichotomy and generalizability. This book is published as part of the Routledge Series on Interpretive Methods (edited by Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea); future studies in this series are likely to educate further and inform graduate students, junior scholars and senior researchers alike.

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International organization, law and ethics

The Routledge companion to alternative organization. Edited by Martin Parker, George Cheney, Valérie Fournier and Chris Land. Abingdon: Routledge. 2014. 386pp. Index. £125.00. ISBN 978 0 415 78226 5. Available as e-book.

The book takes as its starting-point the observation that despite the recent economic and financial crises, global capitalism is still considered the only game in town. The authors aim to displace the ‘myth’ that there is no alternative to capitalism, to demonstrate that there are in fact other options, and to explore the diversity of these organizational possibilities. The point of departure is a critical analysis of contemporary global capitalism. The diagnosis and criticism of the currently dominant system are rightly considered necessary ingredients for thinking constructively about organizing alternative institutional arrangements. Based on this initial diagnosis–criticism and a perspective on the key principles to be employed in imagining organizational forms diverging from capitalism (all contained in the three chapters of part one), the rest of the volume is dedicated to discussing specific aspects of the theme.

The 20 chapters (covering a wealth of topics from self-management, fair trade and gift economies to communes, bioregional economies and voluntary simplicity) are grouped around three major questions. Part two explores problems of work and labour in the light of alternative forms of organization: how shall we work and make a living? Part three looks at the question of what we shall buy and sell, exploring the issues of exchange and consumption. Part four discusses the problems of resources to be mobilized in reimagining and reorganizing social order: how shall we deal with the people and things that are to be organized in such efforts?

Overall, this is a very interesting book. The approach is explicitly geared to diverge from mainstream thinking and in this respect the volume is successful in offering a broad and challenging perspective. If the goal was to provoke our imagination and entice us to think about capitalism and its alternatives, the book is a success. The problem is that, at the same time, it is not very effective in showing us how we should think in a more systematic manner about the alternatives it deals with.

For instance, one of the major problems with the book's approach is that its opening analysis and assessment of capitalism are insufficiently anchored in the one hundred years or so of social science research dedicated to its processes, forms, stages and institutions. A good diagnostic assessment of the present and past would help calibrate the alternatives we want for the future: the capitalist experiment was an immense historical laboratory from which one may learn about modern institutions and modern complex economies based on extended division of labour and sophisticated technological processes. Unfortunately, neither the voluminous economic history literature discussing facets and stages of the evolution of capitalism globally, nor the comparative economic systems literature offering a major resource for assessing systemic performance, nor even the institutionalism literature on the governance apparatus of capitalist systems (and thus crucial for understanding institutional design issues), is featured in any significant way in the volume.

When it comes to the 20 chapters discussing directly and specifically various alternatives, the results are uneven. Ideally, a systematic discussion about alternative economic systems or alternative institutional arrangements should have three major building blocks: first, a normative theory or ideal theory, focusing on the pivotal values and principles guiding the system (justice, freedom, equality, etc.), and on the logic linking them. Second, based on the ideal theory, comes the institutional design, the suggested specific institutional arrangements including the constraints and incentives within which social actors are supposed to behave. Third is the feasibility assessment: given an institutional design and specific circumstance of time and space, what are the conditions under which this institutional design would be functional? Are those conditions met for the specific design suggested? The heterogeneity of the book lies in the rather undisciplined way each author deals (or neglects to deal) with these tasks.

In this respect, chapter three outlines the key normative principles 'that tie together the rest of the book', thus offering the ideal theory assumed to cover all cases featured. The three principles are autonomy, solidarity and responsibility. The book wishes to encourage 'forms of organizing which respect personal autonomy, but within a framework of cooperation and which are attentive to the sort of futures that they will produce' (p. 32). It is a good point, but it is underspecified. The relationships between the key principles, the relations with other normative principles, as well as the trade-offs between them need to be better articulated to make for a working benchmark 'ideal theory'.

With regard to the other two aspects—the institutional design and the feasibility issue—each chapter deals with them in different ways more or less convincingly. The major

difference in the persuasiveness of each chapter is how the feasibility issue is dealt with. Some chapters engage with the issue; others are more in tune with the preface of the book. There, following the gloomy note that ‘alternatives become a survival imperative for all of us’, we are encouraged to take heart from the fact that ‘alternatives are the dominant system in peasant and tribal societies’ or that in parts of the industrialized world facing economic and financial collapse such as Greece, Italy or Spain, ‘there are emerging systems’ in which ‘unemployed youth are returning to the land creating new economies based on cooperation and exchange’ (p. xxii). To sum up, the volume is an interesting challenge to free our institutional imagination to thinking about capitalism and its alternatives and a good example of some of the promising directions as well as dead ends we may take in doing so.

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Conflict, security and defence

The gamble of war: is it possible to justify preventive war? By Ariel Colonomos. New York: Palgrave. 2013. 277pp. Index. £55.00. ISBN 978 1 13701 894 6. Available as e-book.

In the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Bush administration’s subsequent shift towards a proactive rather than reactive defence posture, much ink was spilled on the question of where one should draw the bounds of legitimate pre-emptive defence. Ethicists, lawyers and International Relations scholars locked horns over what should qualify as an imminent threat, and how the necessity of defence should be understood in a security environment defined by nuclear terrorism. Preventive war was invoked frequently in the course of these debates, but rarely in a substantive manner. In exchanges tainted by rancour and disagreement, the view that preventive war reflects an over-extension of the right to defensive war, and is therefore wrong, commanded a wide consensus. Published ten years after the invasion of Iraq, Ariel Colonomos’s *The gamble of war* dares to challenge this orthodoxy by asking if it is possible to justify preventive war.

This is the first book-length treatment of preventive war since the events of 2001 raised its profile. While there has been a raft of literature devoted to pre-emption, and also to the broader category of anticipatory war, there has been no text dedicated to preventive war in its own right. This book fills that breach. Carefully crafted and meticulously researched, it adopts two observations as its starting-point. First, the decision to resort to war is always a gamble of sorts, for both the attacker and the defender. The would-be belligerents must speculate whether the hazards posed by the recourse to force outweigh the risks of restraint. Second, this observation is especially resonant with respect to preventive war—a war waged to forestall a threat that has not yet materialized. Building on these observations, Colonomos examines the practice of preventive war with an eye on both its *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* dimensions. This is a welcome departure from the preoccupation with *jus ad bellum* that dominates the extant literature.

The *jus ad bellum* dimension of the book comprises an investigation of the philosophical arguments for and against preventive war (chapters one and two). To this end, the author first engages with a range of canonical texts often associated with the classic just war tradition: the works of Francisco Suarez, Giovanni da Legnano and Hugo Grotius feature prominently. Going beyond this, he then examines how these arguments played out in the context of a series of recent historical cases that bear on the United States. Where the *jus in bello* is concerned, Colonomos asks whether it is possible to conduct a preventive war in a just manner. This leads him to a series of interesting discussions on, among other things,

temperance, targeted killings and the advent of precision-guided munitions (chapters three, four and five). Underlying this focus is a more general concern with how *jus in bello* norms are institutionalized and primed, and how they are implicated in what Andrew Linklater (following Norbert Elias) calls civilizing and de-civilizing processes.

All of this sets the stage for Colonomos's principal argument, which is that the notion of a wager or gamble offers a useful prism through which to interrogate the recourse to preventive war (chapters six and seven). This angle emphasizes the epistemic uncertainties that the strategist encounters when called upon in any given case to determine whether preventive war is an appropriate course of action. Drawing on both Machiavelli and Clausewitz, it also highlights the role played by luck in moral life, and the patterns of continuity and change that animate the evolution of warfare from the medieval period right through to the age of unmanned aerial vehicles. In charting this unique path, Colonomos reveals fascinating overlaps between the domains of military strategy and ethicists that will be of interest to many scholars.

This, then, is a brave and original book that reflects brio as well as learning and insight. Even if the prose is unnecessarily complex in certain passages, and the central line of argument is occasionally obscured by philosophical ornamentation, there is no doubting the seriousness of this book. Theoretically sophisticated, empirically rich and thought-provoking, this is a fine piece of work that scholars interested in the ethics of war and military strategy would do well to consult.

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NATO in Afghanistan: fighting together, fighting alone. David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saideman. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 2014. 280pp. Index. £24.95. ISBN 978 069115938 6. Available as e-book.

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan was widely seen as a test of NATO's ability to coordinate complex missions outside the European theatre and thus its relevance to the modern security environment. Despite the importance of the mission, however, the Alliance saw varying degrees of commitment from its members, most commonly expressed as caveats, or restrictions on what their forces could do in theatre. *NATO in Afghanistan* tackles the issue of allied contributions to NATO missions in Afghanistan and Libya, attempting to identify the sources of caveats and assess their significance in multilateral military operations.

Auerswald and Saideman combine two theoretical approaches—principal-agent theory and the role of domestic institutions in shaping foreign policy—to explain the existence and extent of allied caveats. They argue that while NATO and national governments both act as principals to troops deployed in theatre (i.e. agents), the alliance structures and practices privilege the relationship not between the troops and NATO commanders, but between the troops and national governments. This relationship is in turn shaped by a given state's domestic institutional structure, which determines who gets to set the terms of engagement and to what degree their preferences can be expressed. Presidential and single-party majority systems tend to give more power to an individual, be that a president or a prime minister, and allow for the leader's personal preferences to shape the principal-agent contract. Coalition governments, on the other hand, need to consider the preferences of multiple stakeholders. This translates into different mission goals, different degrees of restriction on the troops' actions, and varying methods of oversight employed. Coalition governments, the book argues, are more likely to employ extensive caveats in order to

secure support for the mission, particularly if they comprise ideologically different parties. In presidential or single-party systems, the leader is more likely to shape the mission by selecting an agent (i.e. a military commander) who shares similar goals and preferences. The type of government institutions also influences the method of oversight adopted (more active in coalition governments) and the kinds of incentives used to control the agent's behaviour.

The analysis is timely, comprehensive in scope (it covers, in varying degrees of detail, 15 case-studies) and is based on an enviably broad range of interviews and written sources. The framework advanced by Saideman and Auerswald offers important insights into the workings of NATO and the significance of domestic institutions. Its major strength lies in showing how individual and collective preferences are managed, negotiated and expressed in various institutional settings. However, all theoretical frameworks have their limitations, and this one is no exception. Its main weaknesses seem to result from applying strict categories to domestic systems and drawing cause-and-effect lines directly from the principal identified to troops in theatre. For example, having classified the United States as a presidential system, the book leaves Congress out of its calculations entirely, thus neglecting the indirect influence the legislature can have on enabling or restraining presidents (pp. 86–103 and 203–4). Arguably, the post-9/11 tendency to support the presidency enabled George W. Bush and Donald Rumsfeld to run the Iraq and Afghanistan wars as they saw fit, at least initially; a much smaller degree of acquiescence in 2011 limited Barack Obama's freedom of manoeuvre in Libya and contributed to his preference for a limited deployment. Even more importantly, by drawing a straight causal line between the principal's intent and the outcome for troops on the ground, the book leaves out crucial intervening factors: departmental priorities, procedures and resources, which either influence the translation of the principal's intent into actual policy or, more significantly, shape that intent in the first place through providing a menu of available options.

The need for a fuller acknowledgement of the influence of government departments is best illustrated by the British case. Saideman and Auerswald note that inter-departmental tug for resources was a likely factor in limiting the availability of equipment for Task Force Helmand. However, instead of engaging with the significance of departmental influences, they conclude that shortage of capabilities could not have occurred without the prime minister's acquiescence and thus has been used 'as an indirect restriction on deployed British troops' (p. 118). This is overreach: while lack of resources was a *de facto* limitation on the troops' freedom of action, the existence of shortages in and of itself is not a sufficient reason to conclude that this was done by design. In neglecting the importance of bureaucratic factors, the authors implicitly assume that in single-party majority governments the principal's intent is always realized, and leave out issues such as changes in MOD accounting, which indirectly led to the diminished availability of equipment (particularly helicopters and trained crews).

Overall, however, the excellent analysis of NATO structures and practices, and a convincing assessment of the difficulties that privileging national chains of command could cause for NATO-wide initiatives such as Smart Defence, make the book a welcome addition to the literature on alliances in war. While some of its practical suggestions—such as changing the rules on Article V missions and having dissenting members leave the alliance—are unlikely to be enthusiastically received, the diagnosis of issues that might arise in future multilateral interventions is valuable to both practitioners and academic readers.

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Just war: authority, tradition, and practice. Edited by Anthony F. Lang Jr, Cian O'Driscoll and John Williams. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press. 2013. 328pp. Index. £21.00. ISBN 978 1 58901 996 6.

In the eighteenth century Vattel advised that we should assume, although regrettable, that there is just cause on all sides of a conflict, as it is almost impossible to adjudicate between each claiming to have justice on its side. The emphasis thereafter shifted significantly from *jus ad bellum* to questions of *jus in bello*. The concepts of civilization and civilized conduct in the western tradition have assumed the gradual elimination of force from our relations with each other within the body politic, and in relations between bodies politic. This is what Bluntschli meant when he noted that 'the law of war civilizes just and unjust wars alike'. While force may be a legitimate instrument of policy, resort to its use has required justification, and the regulation of its conduct has been subject to intense scrutiny. Documents relating to *jus in bello* in the post-1945 period have increasingly referred to armed conflict instead of war in acknowledgement that constraints apply irrespective of whether a war has been formally declared. Intervention by the West in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, despite the disastrous consequences, has given rise to the idea of just war as the lingua franca of modern international relations rhetoric. A veritable flood of books and articles on the concept has appeared in recent years. No one, not even Boko Haram in Nigeria, is likely to claim that their cause is unjust, so we may legitimately ask: what is the point of all this theorizing?

What is distinctive about the book under review? First, it is the result of President Obama's call in 2009 to explore new ways of thinking about just war, commensurate with the changing character of the battle grounds of the twenty-first century. These include, at the top of NATO's concerns, non-state perpetrators of violence, drone warfare and internet cyber-warfare, which is almost completely outside the control of sovereign states, added to which are the resurgence of piracy and the privatization of security. The book explores an aspect of just war theory and practice which is imperative to the changing modern theatre of warfare, but which has been largely neglected. A principal criterion in the declaration of just war is the question of proper authority, yet the nature of modern conflict and the changing character of combatants, often unrelated to states in the traditional sense, make clarification of the concept all the more imperative: particularly, by what authority war may be waged, and how, if at all, the authority of the just war tradition acts as a source of moral guidance. These issues are explored against the backdrop of theoretical and practical authority, that is, epistemic authority, and with a particular attention to the veracity of argument, discursive engagement, the legitimacy of decision-makers and the practices of traditional authority. In this respect, authority can no longer be assumed to be co-extensive with sovereignty.

The book offers a plurality of approaches surrounding the difficult issue of the authority of tradition, which are divided into the practice of authority, the authority of practice and the triumph of just war. If there is one point that surfaces more prominently than any other it is the rejection of the authority of tradition as a set of rules to be applied. It is implicitly the rejection of regularian action, and an acknowledgement of the indeterminacy of rules. Judgement—that is practical judgement—comprising both theoretical and practical knowledge, is at the heart of understanding the tradition as a practice with which to engage and explore, and not to invoke and apply. As Hegel said long ago, it is not their origins that confer the authority on current institutions, but the confidence, veracity and legitimacy of practice over time. Chris Brown's contribution offers us insight into this practically

based account of just war. For those alarmed at the ease with which the largely discredited idea of just cause has re-entered modern debate, Nicholas Rengger offers an antidote; his argument, sketched here, and elaborated in his new book (*Just war and international order*, CUP, 2013), is that far from constraining resort to war, just war discourse has encouraged a type of association, teleocracy, particularly conducive to encouraging it.

This book, although at times dense, repays careful study and has the explicit aim, admirable in itself, 'to reclaim the just war tradition for *international political theory*' (p. 303).

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Counterinsurgency in crisis: Britain and the challenges of modern warfare. By **David H. Ucko and Robert Egnell**. New York: Columbia University Press. 2013. 248pp. Index. Pb.: £18.00. ISBN 13 978 0 23116 426 9. Available as e-book.

Counter-insurgency theory is largely written either by or for the military. In the past the great works of counter-insurgency were written by practitioners. Arguably, academia has had an increasing influence on counter-insurgency as military personnel have taken academic qualifications and academics have interested themselves in counter-insurgency, even going into the field. David H. Ucko and Robert Egnell exist between academia and the military. Ucko is associate professor at the US National Defense University and Egnell is a captain in the Swedish Army reserves. *Counterinsurgency in crisis* is in the mainstream of counter-insurgency theorizing in its acknowledgement of the importance of politics in defeating insurgency, coupled with a strong distaste for the messy realities of democratic policy-making.

Counterinsurgency in crisis is a spirited defence of counter-insurgency. Ucko and Egnell argue that the 'real' lessons of Britain's historical campaigns have not been learnt and this helps to explain why the British performance in Iraq and Afghanistan was not more successful. They argue that the British 'forgot' how to do counter-insurgency by the time of the Iraq invasion (2003) and had to learn on the job 'operational adaptation', which had been the pattern in previous insurgencies in Malaya and Northern Ireland. This led to a 'soft', 'hearts and minds' approach that had an 'exaggerated focus' on the more 'benign' aspects of counter-insurgency. This 'resulted in a mistaken belief in a winning formula based on kindness, charity, and accommodation' (p. 43). What was lost 'were critical insights into how co-option can be fused with coercion so as to meet strategic objectives' (p. 43). Once the 'real' lessons had been relearned success followed, with the 'Charge of the Knights' in Iraq (2008) and Operation Moshtarak II in Afghanistan (2010). There is some criticism of the military leadership (p. 107, on Afghanistan) but the principal villains of the piece are the politicians who are unable to deliver political and national will or the resources to achieve victory (pp. 3, 4, 49–50, 61–2, 69, 91, 99, 147). The 'Charge of the Knights' is 'a promising vignette of what can be achieved when they [British soldiers] are provided adequate resources and political latitude' (p. 69).

This argument is debatable. First, there is no acknowledgement that it is possible to interpret the history of British counter-insurgency in radically different ways in order to learn sharply contrasting lessons. The success of the counter-insurgency campaign in Northern Ireland is attributed by 'many' 'sources', which are not specified, to 'the army's sophisticated gathering and use of intelligence, its effective conduct of patrols and covert operations, and its application as part of a broader political strategy' (p. 29). It might suit the military to believe this, but it is a highly contested interpretation.

Second, did the British really ‘forget’ how to do counter-insurgency by 2003? The British Army’s operation in Northern Ireland did not end until 2007 and shaped its view of best practice (pp. 23–4). Arguably, during the 1990s counter-insurgency manifested itself in new doctrine on peacekeeping. Third, Ucko and Egnell support a more coercive approach to counter-insurgency, but this is based on a historical evaluation that the British approach ‘was neither exceedingly brutal nor exceedingly benign’ (p. 32). Yet there is no proper engagement with the outstanding work of David French, David Anderson, Caroline Elkins and Huw Bennett on the use of coercion by the British Army in the postwar period. Fourth, during the war in Afghanistan the military leadership was constantly declaring that victory was just around the corner if they were just given the time and resources. In Afghanistan in 2010 the US General Petraeus, a key champion of the British approach to counter-insurgency, abandoned it for counterterrorism in a desperate attempt to try and achieve a quick victory.

Classical counter-insurgency doctrine has emphasized the importance of politics and ‘political will’ in defeating insurgents but it tends to be uncomfortable and ill-equipped to deal with the messy realities of democratic politics and coalition policy-making (pp. 8, 15–16, 73). *Counterinsurgency in crisis* concludes: ‘perhaps the chief lesson from these recent experiences is that when foreign intervention is contemplated, the ensuing operations should be engaged with on their own terms and not artificially simplified to fit domestic or other political agendas’ (p. 166). This argument seems to suggest, unrealistically, that military operations can be insulated from politics. This is in tension with their earlier point that ‘military performance and government decision making are inextricably intertwined and can rarely be neatly separated for analytical purposes’ (p. 16).

The ‘military-academic complex’ does have a tendency to produce writing about counter-insurgency that overemphasizes military aspects and pays insufficient attention to the politics of war (p. 34). This results in simplistic and abstract theories that encourage the resort to counter-insurgency as a humane and effective form of war, but consistently fail to provide a realistic guide to the messy realities of fighting those conflicts.

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Arguments that count: physics, computing, and missile defense, 1949–2012. By **Rebecca Slayton**. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2013. 272pp. Index. £24.95. ISBN 978 0 26201 944 6. Available as e-book.

We live in an age when military thinking and practice are increasingly being driven, shaped and undergirded by progressively complex technological and scientific innovations, and when national security is becoming more and more based on computers, networks and information dominance. There is perhaps no better example of this than ballistic missile defence (BMD)—the overarching name given to military programmes and systems designed to shoot down ballistic missiles while they are travelling at high speeds in the atmosphere or through space. Such systems therefore require a variety of high-tech mechanisms, software and components in order to locate, track and coordinate attempts to shoot down enemy missiles before they hit their intended target. In some cases this information must be processed within minutes of the launch, and the missile would often have to contend with electronic and physical countermeasures during its flight to the target. That said, and while BMD has been one of the most divisive political issues in international politics for several generations (especially in the United States), this debate has tended to focus on political, ideological, economic and, to a lesser extent, engineering dynamics.

Very little thought has been given to the processing power, technology and software that are needed to operate such systems, or to the substantial challenges involved in building and operating such complex computerized networks. It is for this reason that Rebecca Slayton's book is an important addition to the literature on BMD, and also a significant and original contribution to how we think about and conceptualize the role and efficacy of advanced military systems.

Building reliable radar, satellites and other sensors capable of detecting and tracking a missile after it is launched, as well as designing and building interceptor missiles and targeting apparatus to shoot down the enemy missile once in flight, are considerable technological and engineering challenges. In fact, it is far from clear that these so-called 'hardware' challenges have been fully mastered more than 60 years after they were first explored. However, it is arguably the 'software' required to link these components, and to communicate reliably, efficiently and quickly, and above all work in a crisis, that presents by far the greater challenge. What is more, as the book points out, these challenges have often been glossed over or even ignored during the history of BMD development. It is this second set of software-related dynamics that sit at the heart of Slayton's analysis—and make this book a different and insightful addition to the already voluminous BMD literature. As the book shows, the software and computing challenges associated with missile defence are considerable, and range from writing compatible computer code, linking key physical and logical components, dealing with countermeasures, through to preventing information overload. Many of these computer and software challenges have not gone away, and even today producing the necessary software remains a stumbling block in deploying credible BMD systems.

On a deeper level, Slayton's largely historical overview of the evolution of computing as a component of US thinking on ballistic missile defence thinking shows how software issues have been repeatedly ignored by policy-makers. Instead, the technical debates on missile defence between the 1950s and the 1980s were primarily based on analyses of hardware—and therefore focused chiefly on the challenges presented by engineering and physics (e.g. radar and missiles were prioritized over computers, software and interoperability). Indeed, one could argue that even today, as we enter the latest incarnation of the US missile defence programme, many of the software issues are being overlooked in favour of easier to understand physical aspects of BMD. Slayton hints that this tendency to avoid computational problems and their focus on engineering reflects a certain American cultural trait that favours technological solutions to military problems, and a faith in American ingenuity to make high-tech programmes work. The book, therefore, is a call for more focus and attention on informational rather than physical challenges, and also a call for greater attention to how and why certain arguments get marginalized or prioritized in national security debates. Fundamentally, Slayton's ability to bridge the gap between the computer science and political science literatures provides a much broader contribution to our thinking about how weapons systems and debates over national security are intrinsically socialized, and are therefore unpredictable and, in her words, 'arbitrarily complex'.

Perhaps no other military programme in the history of warfare has been the source of so much heated debate, disagreement and analysis as BMD. But what makes Rebecca Slayton's latest addition to this burgeoning and bifurcated literature particularly notable and important is the focus and attention drawn to a crucial—but nevertheless often under-analysed—aspect of the missile defence challenge, namely the centrality of computer software, processing and linking components together. Moreover, as we move into an ever-more networked and information-based cyber world, the computational and software

aspects of national security seem destined to grow in importance, and we must be careful to take heed of wider implications of the warnings contained in this book.

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The discourse trap and the US military: from the war on terror to the surge. Jeffrey H. Michaels. New York: Palgrave. 2013. 264pp. Index. £55.00. ISBN 978 0 23037 204 7. Available as e-book.

Michaels concludes this brilliant analysis of the relationship between discourse and US military decision-making with a prescient anecdote. In July 2009 Richard Holbrooke was meeting with General Stanley McChrystal as they contemplated options in Afghanistan. During the meeting Holbrooke phoned Vietnam historian Stanley Karnow and passed the phone to McChrystal. Karnow was asked if there were lessons from the Vietnam War that could be applied to Afghanistan. Karnow replied: 'we learned that we shouldn't have been there in the first place.' Michaels concludes that the anecdote is interesting for three reasons. First, it was assumed that Vietnam as analogy could provide lessons for Afghanistan. Second, Karnow was implicitly arguing against what McChrystal was likely to advocate, to increase troops in Afghanistan. Finally, McChrystal's reaction to Karnow was essentially to dismiss his warning because the strategic interests in Afghanistan were assumed to be beyond question (p. 167). In each of these reactions there is a slight elision and evasion of the opportunities to think and to react in a broad-minded way. The past, and particularly the lessons from the past, have limited the form of thinking and therefore the options open to the protagonists.

We are all familiar with George Santayana's aphorism that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. Conversely, another George, this time Orwell, famously warned in fictional form that those who control the past control the future. So on the one hand, while we look to the past for guidance to avoid, in our context, the proverbial quagmire, on the other hand, the importance of writing the past, controlling the discourse, provides a salutary warning. There have been many studies written on analogy and the lessons of history. Jeffrey Record's and Ernest May's are among the most prominent for US foreign policy. Just over a decade ago another short study appeared not on the lessons of history, but on the 'history of the lessons'. Mikkel Rasmussen argued that there was no fixity to historical lessons; history did not demonstrate this or that. Instead it was important to understand the evolution of how the 'lesson' was used by different protagonists, at different times, and for different purposes. The intersection of the kind of trap that history and historical analogy create, coupled with the self-serving use to which these arguments are deployed, serves as a basis for this study.

While Obama made it clear that Afghanistan was not Vietnam precisely because, in his borrowed words, 'you never step into the same river twice', he too became a victim of the discourse trap. Michaels's study moves on from the literature on history and analogy to examine the constraining elements of language and discourse on the military decisions after 9/11. He argues, directly, that discourse takes on a life of its own, 'forcing political and military leaders and their associated institutions to fall victim to a "discourse trap"' (p. 1). The use and repetition of language, labels and words not only create a momentum of their own, but possibly also a self-fulfilling prophecy. To revert to the anecdote above: once Afghanistan is defined and understood as strategic, it is strategic. Iraq might have been the infamous 'dumb' war of 2003, but after all the engagement, the strategic investment, not just by the US and other western forces but also by Al-Qaeda, it might have been the

centre of gravity by the time US forces left across 2009–2011. Michaels demonstrates that despite very different circumstances, South Vietnam was defined as democratic and therefore deemed worth ‘saving’ in the Cold War context. The political costs of withdrawing were considered too high given the words that had defined the situation.

Michaels conducts four studies in depth. These range from the discourses on the ‘global war on terrorism’ and ‘Shock and Awe’ to the characterization of the irregular opposition in Iraq and ‘the Surge’. The process and choice of words in the naming are vitally important. Michaels adopts Clausewitz to argue that above all the commander must establish the kind of war that he is fighting. In Michaels’s words, ‘the names given to a conflict can impact the conflict itself’ (p. 8). In each case the process of naming and the use of language had ‘the unintended consequence of constraining or misdirecting action’ (p. 11). Frequently the kinds of words and characteristics used are necessary to maintain political support at home or to solidify cohesion in a multilateral coalition. If indeed discourse does provide a trap, from within which strategists must operate, the effects of the trap, Michaels argues, might prevent not only the state, but also its military, from making the most astute or optimum operational choices; therefore the discourse might represent a form of Clausewitzian ‘friction’ (p. 16).

The cases that Michaels studies are closely argued and analysed. He demonstrates a measured and considered approach to each. Moreover, the combination of theoretical sophistication with a detailed empirical knowledge of the cases is impressive. The outstanding study among the collection relates to the Surge. Not only does he trace the discourse set against the countervailing ‘drawdown’ dialogue, but he conclusively demonstrates that the positive attributes of the Iraqi surge had negative and unintended consequences for the surge as applied in Afghanistan. The word and its associations with success in Iraq and political success in the United States were reduced to a ‘snapshot’, a sign for success. The wider applicability of the surge within the context of Afghanistan would remain a problem precisely because the narrative associated with Iraq had been institutionalized in the years between 2007 and 2010. There were those in the United States who did caution against its use in Afghanistan, yet the discourse and its political valence created a conducive trap.

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Political economy, economics and development

The dollar trap. By **Eswar Prasad.** Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 2014. 432pp. Index. £24.95. ISBN 978 0 69116 112 9. Available as e-book.

Between 5 March and 12 March 2014, securities held in custody for foreign official and international accounts at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York decreased by \$106 billion, the largest weekly decrease on record. Although Federal Reserve officials declined to comment on the drop in custodial holdings, it is widely suspected that Russia had transferred its holdings of United States treasuries to an offshore custodian, where they would be better protected from possible future US sanctions. In light of the tensions developing between the US and Russia over Ukraine, such a move would make sense. The fact that Russia, whose President argues that the US ‘monopoly of the dollar’ allows Americans to live ‘like parasites off the global economy’, holds large quantities of US government debt seems to make less sense. In *The dollar trap*, Eswar Prasad, former head of the IMF’s China division, explains why Russia and other emerging economies lend large sums of money to the US government at very low interest rates, and why this seemingly paradoxical arrangement is unlikely to change any time soon.

Prasad argues that countries accumulate large quantities of foreign currency reserves for two reasons. The first is a desire to lower the international value of the domestic currency; the second is to ensure that they have access to foreign currency assets if the domestic economy runs into trouble. The recent financial crisis demonstrated how quickly reserves can be depleted, and many emerging economies have responded by increasing their holdings. Prasad argues that holding foreign exchange reserves imposes costs on emerging economies but suggests that these costs are insufficient to dissuade countries because of the short-term benefits of having a weaker currency and the long-term benefits of having access to foreign currency reserves in a crisis.

Once a country has decided to hold large quantities of reserves, it must decide how it will invest those reserves. Prasad argues that there are good reasons why countries allocate 60 per cent of their foreign currency reserves to dollar-denominated assets. He suggests that foreign investors need not worry about the the US allowing domestic inflation to eat away at the real value of its outstanding debt because much of the debt is held by politically important constituents domestically. He also contends that any attempt by the US to default to specific creditors would be difficult to achieve because of the size of the US treasury market and the high volume of trading. It is also illegal for the US government to discriminate against different types of borrowers, and the strength of US institutions assures investors that legal protections will be applied uniformly and consistently.

The dollar's dominance of foreign exchange reserves also owes much to a lack of good alternatives. Prasad argues that none of the dollar's potential replacements is likely to supplant the dollar in its role as the dominant reserve currency in the near term, even if the dollar's use in transactions and as a unit of account declines. He dismisses gold as an alternative reserve asset because the pace of growth in its supply is insufficient to keep up with rising demand for reserves, and he points out that many other alternatives to the dollar, such as digital currencies, are as dependent on investor faith as fiat currencies. Euro-denominated assets will continue to represent a significant portion of reserves, but the eurozone sovereign debt crisis has revealed that there are fewer euro-denominated assets that meet reserve managers' requirements for safety, so the euro is not in a position to compete with the dollar for primacy.

China's renminbi seems the most credible challenger to the dollar's international status because of the size and rate of growth of the Chinese economy. Prasad acknowledges that trade will increasingly be settled in renminbi and that an increasing number of countries will allocate a small portion of their reserves to renminbi-denominated assets, but he argues that the renminbi is unlikely to displace the dollar as the dominant reserve currency in the next decade. China would need to open its capital account and allow its currency to float freely before the renminbi could pose a serious challenge to the dollar, but even these changes would likely be insufficient to convince foreign reserve managers that their investments are truly safe in China. For China to qualify as a safe haven, its leaders would need to reform both political and legal institutions in the country, and Prasad points to evidence that China's current leaders would oppose such reforms.

Prasad argues convincingly that the dollar will remain the world's dominant reserve currency for the foreseeable future. Those interested in understanding why this is the case would do well to read this book.

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Austerity: the history of a dangerous idea. By Mark Blyth. New York: Oxford University Press. 2013. 288pp. Index. Pb.: £14.99. ISBN 978 0 199 82830 2. Available as e-book.

Austerity doesn't work. If we have learned anything over the past six years, it should be that by cutting government budgets, we hobble the economy's ability to recover from a bad recession. Those who suffer most are the poor and disadvantaged who depend on government to make it into the middle class. Well-crafted pro-growth policies involving some degree of stimulus make much more sense because we all move up together. This is the message of Mark Blyth's well-argued examination of both the recently widespread, miserly miscalculations and the sad history of a very bad idea. The book ought to be required reading in all academic economic policy programmes, and should be distributed to heads of government, cabinets and central bankers throughout the developed world.

Blyth believes that austerity programmes usually target the wrong problem. Most of the developed world's financial crises are not related to sovereign debt, but fuelled by private over-borrowing, especially by banks. Such obligations then get shifted to the government as a way to save those institutions. The global financial crisis of 2008 and the subsequent recession were actually caused by bad decisions of the financial industry. The austerity programmes in the PIIGS countries (Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain) were intended to restore stability to the eurozone, but actually increased debt and lowered economic growth in all of them. The larger problem is that those who are most affected by austerity programmes are 'at the bottom of the income distribution' (p. 8), since the rich do not depend as much on government programmes. Because everyone cuts spending while trying to restore growth, economies everywhere struggle. The only way to grow is through exports, but exporting becomes impossible if all countries are paying down debt. In the end, focus on debt becomes a morality play, "good austerity" and "bad spending" (p. 12), when in fact it is mostly driven by the business cycle.

America's 2008 financial calamity, Blyth contends, was primarily caused by the growth of the 'repo' market, or the short-term swapping of assets, as a source of corporate funding. As banks began packaging their debts, derivatives amplified the degree of risk. Almost no one at the banks saw the crisis approaching because the risk and forecasting models that they used dismissed potential problems. The neo-liberal 'instruction sheet', i.e. conventional wisdom, could not see crisis arising from anything other than moral hazard or external shocks (p. 43). As the crisis exploded, the government decided that most of the big investment banks were too big to fail, and the resulting bailout greatly expanded US deficits. News media reports linked America's 2011 sovereign bond downgrade to supposed effects that debt was having on securities markets, but stock sell-offs were actually caused by broader concern over a weak economy.

Europe's crisis was more complicated. Almost none of the eurozone countries, aside from Greece, engaged in profligate spending. At the heart of Europe's problems were its banks, but these were generally well in hand by 2009. Sovereign debt emerged as a major issue principally because of the Greek meltdown, which Blyth believes could have been handled easily early on, but was allowed to fester. Each of the other PIIGS faced divergent problems: Spanish and Irish real estate bubbles, along with Portuguese and Italian demographic collapse and long-term fiscal messes. German policy-makers felt that fiscal and balance sheet prudence had to be enforced and, in 'the greatest bait-and-switch operation in modern history', PIIGS' private sector debt was rebranded as public debt (p. 73).

Blyth next presents an intriguing history of austerity. It is largely a story of two European strains of economic thought. The first is 'ordoliberalism,' i.e. the importance of clear rules,

especially rules for budgetary sobriety, as the foundation for modern economic growth—and the bedrock of Germany's postwar policy instruction sheet (p. 135). The second is the Austrian School, which fingered government intervention as the principal factor crippling market economies. As developed by Friedrich Hayek and Joseph Schumpeter, this approach found fertile ground in America as the ascendant Keynesianism began to be challenged in the 1970s. Blyth shows that in almost every historical case where austerity has been tried, it has been a dismal failure, in many cases making political economic conditions much worse than they would have been. For instance, austere policies of the 1920s poisoned relations between Japanese politicians and the military, leading to the militarization of government and Japan's aggressive foreign policy in the run-up to the Second World War. Even for the recently much touted REBLL alliance (Romania, Estonia, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Latvia), the record was mixed at best: cutbacks helped lay conditions for growth, but at the cost of much worse recessions.

This is an unusual book, in that it leaves little to attack. Some authors might have put the history section up front, but Blyth is smart to focus on current issues first. Delving into the sad history merely underlines how misguided the recent policies have been. Blyth might have strengthened his book by discussion of austerity-like policies beyond the US and Europe. Japan's tight budgets since the late 1990s, while not strictly an austerity programme, underscored its dolorous 'lost decade'. Indonesia's IMF-imposed slashing of subsidies during the Asian financial crisis probably delayed recovery of that dynamic economy for five years or more, and several Latin American countries suffered such mandated fiscal carnage several times in the 1970s and 1980s. The book may also be a bit too dismissive of popular concern about America's public debt; this issue has a long bipartisan history, and widespread fear of deficits' economic effects dates back at least to Dwight Eisenhower's warnings about the militarization of the budget. Blyth's work is valuable for anyone seeking to understand the relationship between public frugality and economic growth. Let us hope that the next generation of European and American policy-makers take a look as well.

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Development aid confronts politics: the almost revolution. By **Thomas Carothers and Diane de Gramont.** Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2013. 360pp. Index. Pb.: £13.99. ISBN 978 0 870 03400 8.

Over the past two decades, virtually all donors have moved towards a greater inclusion of explicitly political goals as part of their aid relationships with a wide range of recipient countries. In *Development aid confronts politics: the almost revolution*, Thomas Carothers and Diane de Gramont provide a comprehensive account of how this came about after decades during which politics was mostly treated as a dirty word in the aid world. And, having done so, they offer a sharp analytic take on the successes and enduring shortcomings of the evolving political aid agenda, and how it might move forward (or perhaps even how a retreat might be avoided).

In the first half of the book, the authors do an excellent job of tracing the slow and often meandering process that led to the current situation, starting in the 1960s when development and economic aid was initially framed by western governments in mostly apolitical, technocratic terms, going through the emerging 'basic human needs' agenda of the 1970s, and then the shift in focus to neo-liberal, market-oriented reforms in the 1980s. In the 1990s, a combination of frustration over the effectiveness of aid in delivering on its promises and a newly propitious international context after the end of the Cold War finally opened

the door to politics. But, as Carothers and de Gramont make clear, even as new political goals increasingly came to be seen as desirable in themselves, in addition to being seen as facilitators of traditional socio-economic goals, these were still relatively technocratic and narrowly conceived in terms of good governance and state capacity-building. They explain how the limits of this approach soon became apparent too, leading to a push towards more politically smart methods as well as early attempts at greater integration and mainstreaming of political goals in other sectors.

Looking back on this long process, which was resisted at every turn by many aid ‘traditionalists’, it could have been more accurate to say it was politics—in the shape of the realities in recipient countries that posed obstacles to development and outside efforts to help it—that confronted an aid community that would have otherwise been happy to continue along an apolitical path. This highly informative narrative, detailed and yet accessible, should be required reading for all those interested in development aid, not just those interested in how to assist progress towards democracy and human rights.

Today, Carothers and de Gramont estimate, donor countries spend up to \$10 billion per year, through bilateral and multilateral channels, on aid that promotes political goals. Furthermore, they have also gradually come to accept the need to pursue all their goals, not only the political ones, through methods that factor in the political dimensions of development and entrenched power structures in recipient countries. Yet, the authors note, ‘donors’ widespread adoption across the last decade of the goal of fostering democratic governance represents a convenient halfway house on the path to a potentially more fully political posture’ (p. 91). Hence the ‘almost revolution’ and the feeling that one would be justified in placing the emphasis on the first word of that phrase rather than the second.

Certainly, there is still resistance to the idea of engaging even more fully with political dynamics, structures and actors in recipient countries. The authors give a fair hearing to objections raised, before putting forward convincing counter-arguments. Still, they point out, while the importance of politics and democratic governance for development is backed by a growing body of evidence, ‘neither the initial head of steam nor the subsequent research favoring the good governance outlook has proved strong enough to overcome widespread doubt about this orthodoxy within major aid organizations’ (p. 221). One question comes to mind here: will engaging more with politics, which potentially leads to a deeper level of social engineering than traditional aid, and increases complexity make policy-makers and, more importantly, publics in donor countries more aid-realist or more aid-sceptic?

While Carothers has written extensively elsewhere about the international politics dimension of democracy promotion, this is not at the forefront here, although the book does make clear the importance of the global context for the ebb and flow of political aid. Reviewing it in these pages, it is worth pointing out two issues at least that the book raises and which deserve further investigation.

First, one of the oldest debates regarding the inclusion of democracy among foreign policy goals is about how much it clashes with other ones. While this will probably never be fully resolved, there is also, as Carothers and de Gramont show, a less often mentioned potential conflict that could prove just as problematic for donors. This is the extent to which democracy can be in competition not only with foreign policy goals but also often with other developmental goals—a particular conundrum when democratic donors deal with countries with authoritarian rulers who are apparently committed to a genuine developmental agenda (e.g. Ethiopia, Rwanda, Vietnam).

Second, as a result of the historical context in which it emerged, it is today more or less taken for granted that political aid means democracy aid as undertaken by western states.

Yet it can just as well, in theory and in practice, be used for the pursuit of non-democratic or illiberal goals by non-democratic or illiberal countries. This goes beyond conditions-free aid provided by such countries (see the debate about China's presence in Africa) to include aid used to bolster or foster specifically non-democratic norms and institutions (as shown by Russian policies towards its neighbours). This question needs more attention in the context of a world where such states seem to be on the rise economically and politically. It is one that is also related to evidence of a turn away from the relatively new international norm of openness to democracy assistance and back to the old one of unqualified sovereignty, something that Carothers and Saskia Brechenmacher have addressed elsewhere recently (see *Closing space: democracy and human rights support under fire*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2014).

This impressive study of a subject of enduring importance in international affairs should leave readers convinced that the uneasy encounter between development aid and politics is as much about the politics between countries—and not just between donor and recipient—as about the politics inside the country targeted.

Nicolas Bouchet, Chatham House, UK

Energy, environment and global health

The future is not what it used to be: climate change and energy security. By Jörg Friedrichs. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2013. 224pp. Index. £18.95. ISBN 978 0 26201 924 8.

Jorge Friedrichs's *The future is not what it used to be: climate change and energy security* is an interesting, challenging and timely but, in the end, frustrating work for those interested in international energy and climate change policy and the relationships between the two.

Friedrichs begins with a focus on the twin problems of anthropogenic climate change and energy scarcity, and specifically the declining access to conventional oil. The roles of these challenges as potentially critical 'choke' points in the carrying capacity of the global biosphere are outlined in considerable depth, although the full range of linkages between the two is not as well developed as it might be. Notwithstanding Friedrichs's criticism of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) for downplaying the impacts of climate change on social and political systems, the consequences of climate change in the absence of effective mitigation measures are relatively well defined. The energy scarcity question is potentially more complex. Friedrichs offers detailed criticisms of the International Energy Agency's scenarios for avoiding what the IPCC has termed 'dangerous' climate change (>2°C), but may be overly pessimistic about our future options. This is particularly the case in light of the rapid pace of technological development and adoption with respect to low-impact renewable energy technologies, 'smart' energy grids and energy storage. At the same time, the move towards 'unconventional' or 'extreme' oil, which is not only more environmentally and socially damaging, but also much more expensive to exploit than conventional oil, is significantly altering the cost propositions of different energy pathways.

Rather than pursuing the policy implications of these themes further, Friedrichs moves in the direction of history and philosophy. He explores a series of historical and contemporary case-studies in the social and political impacts of energy scarcity and climate change. In the case of climate change, Friedrichs draws on examples from the ancient Near East and medieval Norse settlements in Iceland and Greenland. The consequences of energy scarcity are explored through the cases of pre-Second World War Japan, and more recent events

in North Korea and Cuba. Societies with a higher willingness and capacity to adapt, with the implication of higher societal resilience, like the Norse settlements in Iceland and post-Soviet Union Cuba, come through these events with far better human and environmental outcomes than those without such attributes.

Friedrichs moves on to an exploration of climate change and energy scarcity in the context of transitions from normal, abnormal and post-normal science. The energy scarcity debate is defined by 'normal' science, where there is strong resistance to challenges to long-held perspectives and assumptions, while mainstream climate change science represents a move in the direction of 'post-normal' science, incorporating extended peer communities and progressive interests. Climate change deniers represent manifestations of 'abnormal' science.

Friedrichs ultimately offers two responses to the twin threats of climate change and energy scarcity to the global life-support system, humanity's ability to employ energy to shape the environment, and our core civilizational values and human 'goodness'. He first proposes a focus on building up the positive resilience of legal, political and economic subsystems, and on enhancing their ability to adapt to changing circumstances. More broadly he suggests the adoption of what he terms 'ontological secularization': a recognition that climate change and fuel depletion are the source of the 'ontological insecurity' that leads societies to want to avoid dealing with these problems; 'ontological secularization' implies a declaration that emergency measures are needed to prevent the loss of our self-identity and to preserve the constancy of the environments in which we are able to act.

Friedrichs's explanation of the practical implications of 'ontological secularization', beyond such declarations, is less clear. He proposes societal debates around a range of potential responses to climate change and fuel scarcity, from aggressive nuclear programmes, wartime-scale mobilizations around renewable energy, and low-growth strategies to communally based 'lifeboats'. But he makes no real suggestions as to how a preferred path among these options might be identified, or how a lasting political consensus might be constructed around such a path. *The future is not what it used to be* stands as an interesting but ultimately unsatisfying work for these reasons.

Mark Winfield, York University, Canada

The politics and institutions of global energy governance. Thijs van de Graaf. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2013. 190pp. Index. £58.00. ISBN 978 1 13732 072 8. Available as e-book.

This book describes and analyses mainly international institutions which govern one or more aspects of trade and investment where 'governance is justified by some international public good over and above removing market failures and impediments'.

Simply improving markets does not necessarily deal with the undoubted strategic interests that reflect the role of energy in enabling modern economies to exist and resource-rich economies to define acceptable terms for the development of their resources. In particular, Thijs van de Graaf regards the failure of markets to deal with the threat of climate change as providing the biggest challenge for governments and governance.

Van de Graaf briefly surveys the current energy outlook and finds a mish-mash of institutions created to deal with historic problems, without any coordination between them. Rather than some new international energy organization, he proposes the G20 as being the best available option to form a 'steering committee to prioritize and guide reform in existing institutions and to cut back those that have outgrown their original purpose'.

The author deliberately focuses on the International Energy Agency (IEA), created in 1974 to coordinate consuming countries' responses to oil supply disruptions. To limit the work, the analysis does not cover the various organizations dealing with nuclear safety or nuclear energy. He carries out a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of the IEA. He finds that the obstacles to formal reform are very high, although in practice there are attempts to overcome these weaknesses: narrow membership (excluding non-OECD countries); and the emphasis on supply, especially of oil, at the expense of attention to the more complicated policy areas of renewable energy and energy efficiency. IEA spokesmen would argue that the latter topics receive a great deal of attention in the IEA's 'soft' activities dealing with forecasts and analysis, and in the IEA reviews of internal energy policies of its member countries and some important non-member countries. They are not reflected in 'hard' obligations, such as those dealing with oil supply emergencies. However, 'governance' implies 'hard' rules and penalties, and procedures for settling disputes.

The analysis is focused on the conventional supply-side issues, on climate change, and on the possibility of new institutions such as the International Renewables Energy Agency, founded in 2009, and the International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation. These are newcomers, whose relations with existing organizations like the IEA need to be determined—there is no SWOT analysis for these newcomers.

This book is likely to be of interest primarily to academic readers: it discusses the need to look at the 'regime complex'—clustering analysis around different activities and institutions which overlap problems. It discusses in mainly theoretical terms the processes which generate new institutions, and the interests of powerful countries able to shape those processes. These interests may determine the balance of advantage between incurring the costs and difficulties of setting up new institutions, and the struggle necessary to reform the institutions which exist already and to develop effective links between them.

The book's focus on the IEA and principally on oil-related issues is a weakness in relation to the author's objective of looking at the broad field of interlocking and related issues in energy regimes. In suggesting future research he recommends attention to water, and to the capacity of UN organizations to pick up some of the important energy issues. This leaves three areas lacking attention: first, regimes based on the law of the sea and operating through successful organizations like the International Maritime Organization; second regional regimes, of which the European Union is the most obvious example. It is seeking aggressively to extend its energy market regime, the Emissions Trading Scheme, and environmental standards. These reach not only across the EU but to partner and associated countries, and by example beyond (in China automotive emission standards follow European models). Third, although the World Trade Organization and the General Agreement on Trade in Services have an important role in removing national obstacles to trade, investment and technology transfer, these activities are mainly carried out by the private sector. Their involvement in governance is represented by business councils attached to the IEA and the International Energy Forum, and by voluntary organizations such as the World Business Council For Sustainable Development. Governance is not entirely about governments.

John Mitchell, Chatham House, UK

International history

The new Cambridge history of American foreign relations, vol. 4: challenges to American primacy, 1945 to the present. By Warren I. Cohen. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2013. 391pp. Index. £35.00. ISBN 978 0 521 76362 2.

The history of American foreign relations since 1945, as Warren Cohen tells it, is a story in two acts. In the first, the United States contains the Soviet Union, strives to uphold a liberal world order, and succumbs to recurrent imperial temptations. In the second, the United States chases the chimera of a post-Cold War strategy, struggles to master the complexities of a world both unipolar and multipolar, and tumbles into an imperial misadventure in Iraq, which brings America's repute to a historical low ebb.

When Cambridge University Press published *The Cambridge history of American foreign relations* under Warren Cohen's editorship in 1993, the first act of this historical arc had just concluded, and the second was just beginning. The measure of Cohen's achievement in *The new Cambridge history of American foreign relations*, published in 2013, is that his two acts now combine to comprise an overarching whole, a narrative in which the Cold War prefigures and defines a distinctive post-Cold War era and in which post-Cold War frustrations illuminate anew the prior Cold War phase. Wrought in elegant, often elegiac, prose and synoptic of vast realms of scholarship and research, Cohen's *Challenges to American primacy* is a landmark accomplishment and a field-defining text. Few, if any, other authors provide such comprehensive and dexterous coverage of United States foreign relations in the post-1945 era. For students, teachers and professionals, this revised edition ought to reaffirm the stature of Cohen's original text as a classic in the field.

Foremost among Cohen's strengths is his judiciousness. In a field that has seen much interpretative wrangling, Cohen stays above the fray, but he does not fail to assimilate the insights that more pugilistic chroniclers have yielded. He concurs, to some extent, with the revisionist historians of the Cold War, who argue that beliefs about the economic imperatives of conquering overseas markets animated Washington's bid to build an international order in its own self-image at the end of the Second World War. Yet Cohen also concurs with post-revisionists who see Soviet-American estrangement as the consequence of mutual security fears, rather than the result of imperialistic designs. The origins of the Cold War, Cohen tells his readers, were complex and, as such, cannot be reduced to monocausal explanations or to morality tales about culpability.

Balanced as he is, Cohen does not pull his punches. His chapter on the Vietnam War, which he calls a 'textbook example of great-power arrogance and self-deception', is hard-hitting (p. 141). Yet Cohen resists, in the end, reducing the Cold War to a story of equivalence. The estrangement between the superpowers, he concludes, owed much to the nature of the Soviet Union: 'a powerful and vicious dictatorship, a ruthless totalitarian state' (p. 249). For all the failures of American policy—and Cohen documents many—Washington's steadfast containment of Soviet power left the world 'a better place than it would have been without American resistance to Joseph Stalin's vision'.

When it comes to the failures, oversights and omissions of American foreign policy in the Cold War and beyond, Cohen offers much for readers to ponder. He highlights the influence of domestic politics on foreign policy—in the early Cold War, during the Vietnam era, and in the 1990s when a 'nativist' Congress stymied global leadership (p. 297). The volatility of democratic politics, Cohen tells us, makes the United States a paradoxical superpower: strong on the outside, weak on the inside. Indeed, none of the American

decision-makers who populate Cohen's long and sinuous history really emerges as a transformational figure, far less a masterful one. Instead, it is Mikhail Gorbachev who transcends the assumptions and the habits of the Cold War, initiating the transition from Cohen's first act to his second. Ronald Reagan's role, in contrast, was to muster 'the good sense to allow Gorbachev to succeed' (p. 228).

Cohen's verdict on the Cold War's end thus corroborates the Soviet-centrism of his historical synthesis. Tellingly, Cohen titled the first edition of this book *America in the age of Soviet power* (Cambridge, 1993). Twenty years later, he still views the Cold War as the 'central thread in the tapestry' of post-1945 international politics, as the meta-historical framework in which postwar US foreign relations should be situated. Cohen thereby reflects the assumptions of Cold War-era US policy-makers, who (with the possible exception of the Carter administration, which receives short shrift here) saw containing the Soviet Union as the defining challenge of their times.

Still, Warren Cohen is far too good a historian to see the Cold War as a sufficient container for comprehending world history as distinct from the history of US foreign relations. While the superpowers fixated on their mutual competition, 'much of the world', he writes, 'went about its business with minimal regard for the antics of the United States, the Soviet Union, and their respective allies' (p. 99). Acknowledging the real complexity of world politics, this is a point that relates not only to the past but also to the future. Figuring out how to comprehend, define and narrate America's role and its interests in a complex world that singular threats and bipolar rigidities do not define (if they ever did) will presumably be the challenge for policy-makers as Cohen's post-Cold War act comes to an inchoate end and a third act in America's superpower career takes protean shape.

Daniel J. Sargent, University of California, Berkeley, USA

The Holocaust, fascism, and memory: essays in the history of ideas. By Dan Stone. London: Palgrave. 250pp. Index. £60.00. ISBN 978 1 13702 952 2. Available as e-book.

Ideas do matter and have tremendous consequences. History and memory are inseparable, yet very different from each other. These are some of the main topics explored by Dan Stone in this illuminating contribution to confronting the thorniest moral, political and intellectual debates of our times. Stone is clearly a follower of the late Tony Judt's interpretative approach to the twentieth century's quandaries. Like Judt, he sees the liberal world (institutions, values and ideas) assailed by various utopian radicalisms ready to jettison the legacies of rationalism, humanism and all that is associated with the Enlightenment. Fascism is one of those mortal enemies of liberal democracies and this makes so acutely important the understanding of the polymorphic nature of anti-fascism. Stone opposes post-Cold War attempts to homogenize anti-fascism as simply a Stalinist ruse. The Stalinists exploited anti-fascism, no doubt, but there was much more to it than mere communist propaganda. Agreeing with Judt, Stone insists that 'although textual, intellectual, cultural or economic contexts are important, the political context in which texts are written is the most compelling way to situate them' (p. 6). This is a sobering methodological principle and its results in this book are worthwhile.

Stone deals with morally and politically urgent issues. The first part of his book focuses on various interpretations of the Holocaust and examines the most seminal contributions to scrutinizing a catastrophe that still defies representation and makes conceptualization a tantalizing task. The essay on Saul Friedlander's formidable books on the Holocaust and his provocative discussion of 'redemptive anti-Semitism' as the crux of the Nazi world-view

is particularly impressive. No less significant and innovative is Stone's analysis of Raphael Lemkin's vision of the Holocaust. Inspired by Hannah Arendt, Stone writes a perceptive essay on the need to redefine the very notion of the human condition in the aftermath of the anthropological breakdown symbolized by the extermination camps. I would argue that, whereas the references to Auschwitz as the epitome of such horrendous destructiveness are entirely justified, even mandatory, one would benefit from an inclusion of the Gulag in the effort to fathom the experiences of radical evil.

Stone writes about the Nazi politics of racial annihilation, but I think his stance applies as well to the Stalinist, Maoist, Khmer Rouge, etc. attempts to 'purify' humanity in accordance with the imperatives of ideological hubris. It was not economics that dictated genocidal practices, but rather a set of firmly held beliefs in the need to eliminate the presumably polluting elements: 'One does not need to think of ideology in terms of a monolithic propaganda machine bearing down on the subjects and soldiers of the Third Reich, as in a typical 1950s' understanding of totalitarianism. Rather, the workings of fantasy, of the desire to murder the Jews or even the belief that the world would be a better place without them, with no accompanying feeling of enjoyment, purification or ecstatic participation in the community's destiny, are all essential for understanding the background to the decision to murder the Jews (and not some other dispossessed group) and these precede any problem of military supplies and occupation economics.' (p. 53). In other words, exterminism is first and foremost the expression of an ideological certainty that by getting rid of the dehumanized groups (treated as vermin, 'cockroaches', despicable insects, superfluous, dispensable populace, etc.), humanity could achieve a higher level of unity and happiness.

The second part deals with the dialectics of fascism and anti-fascism in Britain. Stone focuses on three remarkably insightful intellectuals who took the measure of the times and identified the main danger. One was the German émigré Franz Borkenau, a disenchanting communist whose writings remain among the most penetrating regarding the totalitarian movements of the twentieth century. Stone quotes from George Orwell's review of Borkenau's book *The totalitarian enemy* (AMS Press, 1940): 'We cannot struggle against Fascism unless we are willing to understand it, a thing that both left-wingers and right-wingers have conspicuously failed to—basically, of course, because they dared not'. A second anti-fascist thinker evoked by Stone is Aurel Kolnai, a Hungarian émigré with close links to Victor Gollancz's Left Book Club. In his book *The war against the West* (Viking Press, 1938), Kolnai rejected any form of democratic triumphalism when he wrote bitterly about the rampant illusions that a compromise could be reached with the totalitarian dictators: 'We ... are hugging the complacent belief that the essence of democracy is compromise ... We only forget that there is a marked difference between compromise within a democracy, which presupposes the common ground of democracy accepted by all the various competing groups of the people, and compromise with the convinced and uncompromising mortal enemies of democracy' (p. 73). Such a lucid warning ought to be read by those who think that compromise with expansionist dictators can be the solution to their obnoxiously dangerous behaviour. The third author included in this timely discussion is Sebastian Haffner, the distinguished German historian and journalist.

The essays grouped in the third part address contemporary memory battles, the rise of populist, ethnocentric and primordialist narratives in post-Cold War Europe, and the agonizing difficulties of coming to terms with traumatic pasts. The resurrection of old xenophobic ghosts has often resulted in vindictive discourses of national self-aggrandizing to the detriment of dialogue, trust and tolerance. Stone's lucid, historically compelling and

morally intelligent book is a welcome contribution to understanding the post-communist intellectual and political landscape.

Vladimir Tismaneanu, University of Maryland (College Park), USA

Europe

Britain in global politics, volume 1: from Gladstone to Churchill. Edited by Christopher Baxter, Michael L. Dockrill and Keith Hamilton. Basingstoke: Palgrave. 2013. 312pp. Index. £60.00. ISBN 978 0 23036 044 0. Available as e-book.

Britain in global politics, volume 2: from Churchill to Blair. Edited by John W. Young, Effie G. H. Pedaliu and Michael D. Kandiah. Basingstoke: Palgrave. 2013. 280pp. Index. £55.00. ISBN 978 0 23036 039 6. Available as e-book.

These two volumes are dedicated to Professor Saki Ruth Dockrill (1952–2009). Each begins with a moving, but celebratory, tribute to her personality, work and influence by a former senior colleague at the Department of War Studies at King's College London: Brian Holden Reid (volume one) and Lawrence Freedman (volume two). It is clear from both introductions that she was a scholar of outstanding ability as well as a supportive colleague and committed teacher. As a former external examiner at the department, I never had the pleasure of meeting Professor Dockrill but I can confirm Professor Freedman's description of the department of War Studies (vol. 2, p. ix) 'as a sort of extended family'. Together the two books constitute a fitting commemoration of one who has influenced so many, and so positively.

Most of the chapters in the two volumes reflect Dockrill's research themes, rather than being a systematic attempt by the editors to survey British foreign policy from Gladstone to Blair. These themes are addressed centrally or in passing, with the intention of enhancing the aims of her work. Some other chapters consider the making of history in both senses of that term: the vetting by the Foreign Office of diplomatic and political memoirs between the wars, the utility of 'witness seminars' for understanding the official or political 'mind' and the value of historical thinking for those charged with the task of 'horizon scanning'—not in the manner in which Harold Macmillan used to describe his more expansive foreign policy speeches but in the manner of systematic political projection. The practical value of historical knowledge in the business of looking to the future, as Peter Hennessy deftly puts it (quoting the philosopher Bryan Magee), is that it helps us to avoid the danger of being 'provincial in time' (vol. 2, p. 234). And that felicitous phrase applies marvellously to Dockrill herself, certainly cosmopolitan in her life and far from parochial in her intellectual interests. Moreover, readers of these two books will be able to make the connection between Hennessy's argument for the practical significance of history and the chapters which address particular historical subjects.

History never repeats itself, as Mark Twain once said, it only stutters. What may appear to be the replication of events invariably turns out to be something different. However, the 'historian's lens', as B. J. C McKercher calls it (vol. 1, p. 154), allows a distinctive perspective which avoids the opposite fallacies of presentism and insensitivity to enduring problems, that cult of neophilia which often informs the 24-hour news cycle. It was a point once made rather playfully by Michael Oakeshott who claimed, to the profound irritation of his Marxist colleagues at the London School of Economics, that the further one got from the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 the more that event suggested a modification of Russian

circumstances. And the further one gets from the breakup of the Soviet Union, the continuities of behaviour, if not ideology, seem even more remarkable. Something of that sort is brilliantly captured, for example, in T. G. Otte's chapter on Cold Wars before the Cold War. Though he concentrates specifically on Anglo-Russian relations, he challenges persuasively the 'restrictive use of the term 'cold war' as having specific application only to the latter part of the twentieth century' (vol. 1, p. 17). And as the crisis in Ukraine unfolds as this review is written, the familiar policy commitment to contain the potential spread of Russian power and influence reveals itself too in modified form.

Martin Thomas's examination of 'air policing' to combat colonial revolt has very obvious parallels with the current debate on the use of military drones in Afghanistan. Thus, in familiar language only slightly modified today, 'colonial military aircraft remind us of the dangers consequent on security force adoption of new technologies of political control without the existence of legal restraints or established societal norms to limit their usage' (vol. 1, p. 92). And then there is luck or the lack of it, as Joe Maiolo explores in his splendid re-evaluation of Neville Chamberlain's wartime strategy. Military chance destroyed Chamberlain's historical reputation just as, over 40 years later in the Falklands War, chance was to enhance Margaret Thatcher's. The historian's lens in Maiolo's case permits us to understand events more thoroughly than actors could have done at the time, but he persuasively argues that the 'counterfactual' invites us to look more favourably on Chamberlain's Phoney War strategy. Certainly, he provides a more complex portrait of the times than those familiar television documentary accounts which retail the story of inevitable catastrophe (vol. 1, p. 236).

The two chapters which address the UK's relationship with the European Community/ Union make interesting reading as the prospect of renegotiation and an in/out referendum move centre stage (yet again). Effie Pedaliu concludes her study of the Heath government's strategy by observing: 'The Community was seen as an engine to drive forward Britain's economic prosperity and also its continuation as a relevant power in international affairs' (vol. 2, p. 173). Though the character of the debate has changed substantially, that view remains the index of policy wisdom for pro-Europeans. And in their review of the evidence from witness seminars at the Institute of Contemporary British History, Michael Kandiah and Gillian Staerk conclude that European policy caused the deepest disputes among policy-making elites. Here they identify the key tension that the Heath strategy sought to overcome. Relations with Europe 'called into question and challenged what they believed was Britain's wider, and proper, international role' (vol. 2, p. 194). History may not repeat itself, but it is certainly full of familiar echoes.

Hennessy's concluding chapter argues that (to use an expression of Fernand Braudel) historians with their knowledge of the archives may sense better than others those 'thin wisps of tomorrow' (vol. 2, p. 234) which tantalize civil servants and politicians. It is an appropriate final testament for a scholar of Dockrill's rigour and inspiration.

Arthur Aughey, University of Ulster, UK

Transitional justice in post-communist Romania: the politics of memory. By **Lavinia Stan.** New York: Cambridge University Press. 2013. 312pp. Index. Pb.: £23.00. ISBN 978 1 10742 925 3. Available as e-book.

One of the main characteristics of totalitarian regimes is their mnemophobia: the continuous onslaught on memory and the encouragement of state-sponsored amnesia. They execrate and obliterate memory (individual and collective). In the same vein, they try to

control historical narratives in order to foster official myths and self-serving ideological claims. Retrieving and rescuing memory is therefore a premise for a genuine break with the traumatic past, as demonstrated, for instance, by David Satter in his book *It was a long time ago, and it never happened anyway: Russia and the communist past* (reviewed in *International Affairs* 88: 4). Political scientist Lavinia Stan has written extensively on the dilemmas of decommunization and transitional justice in general. Now, in this poignantly significant book, she examines, in minute detail, the main moments and methods in Romania's attempts to master its own dictatorial pasts. I use the plural because this challenge involves coming to terms not only with the communist period, but also with the Romanian Holocaust, i.e., the responsibility of the Romanian state in the deportation and extermination of Jews in Romanian-controlled territories during the Second World War. As Stan emphasizes, there is also a third challenge: confronting the troubling imbroglio of the Romanian Revolution, the only one in 1989 that involved mass carnage and provoked over one thousand victims.

The book deals comprehensively and in an admirably rigorous manner with such issues as: the relationship between memory, democracy and justice in post-communist societies; the role of court trials (including the highly problematic trial of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu in the aftermath of their ouster from power which resulted in the couple's execution on Christmas Day 1989); the failed attempts to initiate lustration laws (from the times of the anti-communist president Emil Constantinescu, in the late 1990s, to those of the current one, Traian Basescu, whose mandate will come to an end in December 2014); restitution of property; rewriting history textbooks; the unofficial projects, including many civil society initiatives, meant to rescue memories of repression; the debates regarding timing and sequencing of this reckoning with the dictatorial experiences of the past; and the Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania (created in March 2006 and responsible for writing the 'Final Report' which served as a scholarly rationale for President Basescu's condemnation of the communist dictatorship as illegitimate and criminal, in December 2006).

One of the main results of such commissions is the declassification of important archival resources. In the case of Romania, the National Archives did become increasingly democratic and old access hindrances and taboos were abolished. Furthermore, as Stan notices, a huge amount of the Securitate (secret police) archives were declassified and sent to the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives. This is not to say that decommunization bears only on public access to archival materials. Much more is at stake, and Lavinia Stan examines thoroughly the need to overcome partisan limitations in the effort to blend the moral and scholarly perspectives in a persuasive strategy meant to generate a community of democratic memory. I share her conviction that in the absence of such a strategy, Romanian democracy (and other ones as well) remains vulnerable to onslaughts from new or not so new illiberal, populist attacks. Altogether, Lavinia Stan's book is a *tour de force* in documenting and assessing both the achievements and the delays, and even failure, in Romania's efforts to right the wrongs of the past.

Vladimir Tismaneanu, *University of Maryland (College Park), USA*

Europe's deadlock: how the euro crisis could be solved—and why it won't happen.
By David Marsh. New Haven, CT: Yale. 2013. 120pp. Pb.: £7.99. ISBN 978 0 30020 120 8.

In this book David Marsh, a leading writer on Europe's often difficult path to economic and monetary integration, presents a sobering analysis of the eurozone and its prospects.

Book reviews

Distilling and updating many of his arguments from previous works such as *The euro: the battle for the new global currency* (Yale University Press, 2011), Marsh outlines what he considers to be the underlying weaknesses of the current eurozone arrangement and suggests a number of provocative solutions to the protracted crisis. Marsh contends that 'Behind the euro's manifold contradictions lie disparate and divisive forces that make clear-cut outcomes unlikely. We should prepare for neither resounding success nor catastrophic failure, but instead for a further drawn-out phase of standoff, slowdown and stalemate' (p. 3).

The book does an excellent job in neatly presenting the background to the euro's emergence and the factors which contributed to the start of the eurozone crisis in 2008. Turning then to the effects of the crisis, Marsh outlines the pressures exerted on eurozone member states—on the debtor countries and growing pressure on Germany to shoulder increasing responsibility for managing the crisis. Marsh's writing displays a palpable sense of urgency to convince his readers of the limitations of papering over the cracks of the fundamental faultlines which have characterized much of the eurozone's crisis management response to date. In addition, Marsh is clear that the European Union's future success is at stake. Failure to address the eurozone crisis will contribute to Europe's long-term economic decline.

With this in mind, Marsh closes his treatise with a ten-point plan to get the EU back on track and limit further protraction of the current crisis. Marsh's recommendations hark back to concerns raised in the early 1990s around the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, that in the absence of strong central political and economic institutions, the eurozone risked a lack of cohesion which would undo it in the face of asymmetric economic shocks. Marsh calls for stronger central institutions, coupled with a greater profile for national governments in the governance process to connect citizens to the euro's fate. Marsh also calls for reform of the European Central Bank, a range of efforts to raise central budgets to underpin the euro, a more rigorous accession process to the euro, more efforts to support weaker eurozone members and more explicit burden-sharing measures to ensure cohesion.

David Marsh's policy recommendations highlight the major challenges facing political leaders in eurozone member states. Agreements taken under massive pressure late at night during crisis management negotiations in Brussels have cost the careers of many heads of government since the crisis broke and stirred many voters to elect Eurosceptic candidates in the European Parliament election of 2014. Herein lies the conundrum which Marsh recognizes in his excellent book: how to match up economic imperatives to reform the eurozone system whilst maintaining democratic support for the reform process. Failure to reform the Eurozone to make it fit for the challenges ahead will speed the rise of emerging powerful players in the global economy, reduce the EU's global status and ensure its citizens will be faced with potentially more difficult economic conditions. On the other hand, steps to reinforce the governance of the eurozone could strengthen Eurosceptic voices within EU member states, if reform measures do not have democratic legitimacy.

David Marsh has produced a both excellent and accessible analysis of the eurozone crisis and delivered a provocative challenge to Europe's political and economic leaders. It is required reading for those wanting to understand what is at stake and makes clear the daunting task facing eurozone leaders to find a way forward for European economic integration.

Alister Miskimmon, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

The struggle for EU legitimacy. Public contestation, 1950–2005. Claudia Schrag Sternberg. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 2013. 296pp. £60.00 ISBN 978 1 137 32783 3. Available as e-book.

Claudia Schrag Sternberg has written an engaging, refreshing and convincing analysis of contestation over European Union legitimacy. Her analysis goes much further than assessing whether a ‘balance’ between ‘input’ and ‘output’ legitimacy has been, or can ever be, struck successfully. By analysing early narratives of European integration, the ‘People’s Europe’ initiatives, debates about EU democracy and the Maastricht and constitutional treaty debates, Schrag Sternberg accounts for the ideational construction of the EU and EU legitimacy since 1950. She concludes that in order to enhance its legitimacy, the EU needs to be repoliticized.

To advance her argument Schrag Sternberg focuses on two important countries—France and Germany—often seen as the ‘motor’ of European integration. Like Perry Anderson (*The new old world*, Verso, 2009), she deliberately avoids the United Kingdom where Euroscepticism is too easily written off as exceptionalism. Like Cecile Leconte (*Understanding Euroscepticism*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), Schrag Sternberg questions the existence of the so-called ‘permissive consensus’ prior to 1992, seeing instead a successful strategy of depoliticization, and in this regard her book might be profitably read alongside Colin Hay’s *Why we hate politics* (Polity, 2007). She finds public contestation in core states over the legitimacy of particular forms of European integration from the earliest days, supporting Startin and Usherwood’s conclusion that not only is Euroscepticism a ‘persistent and embedded’ phenomenon, but also Vasilopoulou’s argument that its antecedents are observable from the earliest days of integration (*Journal of Common Market Studies*, Special Edition, 2013).

This book is not one for the quantitatively inclined. This is partly as a result of the interpretative method the author adopts: for Schrag Sternberg, legitimacy is a ‘Sisyphean aspiration’ and a political problem that can never be resolved permanently (p. 225); it does not have an end point at which all external criteria will have been met. The great value of her interpretative method is that it engages with political narratives in the way that citizens do, which is a crucial point for her discussion of ‘input’ legitimacy. Her—somewhat understated—aim is exploratory rather than explanatory, leading to genealogical conclusions as a result of a ‘discursive history’ of the contestation over the legitimacy of European integration. Discourses, which she understands as ‘ways of representing the world’, are therefore, in her view, key to shaping how citizens relate to the EU.

Schrag Sternberg’s methodological aim is to bridge the gap between normative and empirical accounts of EU legitimacy, and to work in the space between them, something she does very successfully. The author also states that she is only interested in the content of the actors’ discursive statements, tactics, and strategies, rather than the actors themselves. But power is a part of discourse analysis—some actors are more equal than others—so this dimension could have been strengthened.

As a result of her analysis, Schrag Sternberg adopts a normative position calling for more open contestation within the EU. In this regard, she is like Simon Hix, although with a lesser focus on institutional reform. Instead, the book fits more alongside some of Marc Stears’s work on revitalizing democracy. This is the reason why Schrag Sternberg calls for a new discursive environment rather than institutional or constitutional reform, within which, she hopes, the EU could be criticized without endangering the European project as a whole (pp. 227, 230).

The analysis ends in 2005, but could easily be extended. The awarding of the Nobel Prize for Peace to the European Union in 2012 was widely seen as a fillip in difficult times.

But following Schrag Sternberg's analysis, such an award might prove counterproductive. The discourse around European integration ending war on the continent has always had the consequence—unintended or otherwise—of depoliticizing debate around integration and thereby putting it beyond the type of public contestation that Schrag Sternberg sees as important. Furthermore, in a paradoxical way, Euroscepticism may turn out to be just what the EU needs. For the critique of European integration will need to be countered by supporters of further—or more focused—integration. Schrag Sternberg admits as much in her conclusion, arguing that the eurozone crisis may make the EU a better forum for the public contestation of competing visions of the common interest.

Normatively, this book is a rallying cry for normality. Empirically, it demonstrates the existence of structuring tensions which have shaped discourses around the shifting sources of EU legitimacy since its founding days. Methodologically, it shows how interpretative analysis can illuminate such a subjective phenomenon as legitimacy.

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Russia and Eurasia

Russia 2025. Scenarios for the Russian future. Edited by Maria Lipman and Nikolay Petrov. London: Palgrave. 2013. 290pp. Index. £60.00. ISBN 978 1 13733 690 3.

The public protests in 2011 and 2012 provoked much debate in the Russia-watching community about the possibility for change in Russia. Some suggested that the demonstrations showed that, once again, Russia was at 'a crossroads' in its development, even that they indicated the beginning of the end for President Putin. Others argued that Putin's decision to run for the presidency meant that he intended to remain in charge for another two terms until 2024.

This volume captures the essence of these debates. Maria Lipman and Nikolai Petrov, two Russian commentators widely respected in the West, have gathered a number of prominent analysts from the American, British and Russian academic and think-tank community to reflect on how Russia might evolve over the next decade. The result is a follow-up to a much larger edition published in 2011 by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace entitled *Russia in 2020: scenarios for the future*.

The 13 rather short chapters that form the core of the book explore a range of scenarios addressing domestic, economic and political issues and international affairs. Particularly interesting is the chapter by Natalia Zubarevich, in which she explores the social differentiation of Russia's regions, and the potential effects of economic modernization and political protest across the country. Similarly, the chapter by Mikhail Denisenko on the Russian demographic situation reflects on, for instance, the long legacy of Soviet family planning policies, and the impact that the dramatic drop in numbers of potential mothers from 2012 will have on Russia's population to 2025. Vladimir Gel'man and Nikolai Petrov also offer interesting reflections on the domestic political situation.

At the same time, however, the volume suffers from a number of important problems, some of which are noted by the contributors themselves. If one of the strengths of Richard Sakwa's interesting chapter is his discussion of the difficulties and potential pitfalls of the scenario approach, this only serves to emphasize the limited engagement with the methodological difficulties of the scenario approach in the rest of the volume. Indeed, there is little, if any, explicit engagement with what is quite an extensive literature on scenarios, both in the wider business and social science worlds, and specifically with regard to Russian futures.

Such an engagement might have given the volume both a more effective structure and the methodological tools to enable it to avoid some of the traps that others have fallen into.

This leads to the main problem, which lies in the volume's roots in the protests of late 2011 and early 2012 that the editors argue resulted in increasingly evident instability in Russia (p. 10). If some might dispute the actual extent of the instability, there is little substantively wrong with this premise on its own terms, or the claim that the protest demonstrations demand a look ahead over the coming decade, or even the emphasis placed on the unsustainability of the current regime. The result, however, is that throughout the volume, as framed explicitly in the introduction, there is a tension between the alternatives of evolution and revolution, both leading more or less inevitably to the end of the current regime, one way or another (pp. 8–16). This poses two problems. If it points accurately to the difficulties faced by the authorities and the rise of protests as a result of socio-economic or political problems, the volume does not take the opportunity offered by the scenario method to explore in detail the variety of possibilities of how such protests may emerge, who might lead them and with what substantive results. If nationalism is a possibility, as the editors note, what about the possible rise of the political left? Instead, there are broader observations that 'one can safely predict that public discontent will be triggered in the future by socio-economic and/or political developments' (pp. 12–13), and that the 'time factor will play an important role in determining whether the development will follow an accelerated evolutionary scenario or whether we're in for a revolution with an unpredictable outcome' (p. 16).

Second, the scenario method—difficult and even flawed as it may be—demands a more open-ended approach that attempts to envisage a range of possible outcomes, and 'thinking the unthinkable', even if this goes against the desires of the authors or what appear to be logical developments from the current situation. A serious flaw in the volume, therefore, is that it does not develop in any sophisticated way the possible scenario that the current regime might remain in power, and even the possibility of it being able to successfully regenerate itself, and how it might go about this. Given the efforts being made to do so, illustrated for instance by the development of the All Russian National Front, this is an important gap, perhaps emphasized by the substantial and renewed increase in Vladimir Putin's popularity during the ongoing Ukraine crisis.

How Russia is evolving, and how the current regime will cope over the long-term both with popular frustration and government ineffectiveness are important questions for Russia-watchers. This volume offers some insight into the nature of the problems currently faced, but not the range of possible scenarios over the next decade.

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Middle East and North Africa

Toppling Qaddafi: Libya and the limits of liberal intervention. Christopher Chivvis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2013. 249pp. Index. £20.00. ISBN 978 1 10761 386 7. Available as e-book.

The Syria dilemma. Edited by Nader Hashemi and Danny Postel. Boston: Boston Review Books. 2013. 285pp. Pb.: £8.00. ISBN 978 0 26202 683 3. Available as e-book.

As policy-makers repeatedly ponder the quagmire of a possible western humanitarian intervention in Syria, their thoughts naturally drift to the most relevant recent example of liberal interventionism: Libya. Although the circumstances surrounding the 'Libya case'

and the 'Syria case' are highly dissimilar, there are many relevant comparisons and interactions between the Libya intervention in 2011 and the subsequent (non-)decision leading to Syria non-intervention. Both decisions were decisively impacted by the long shadows of Iraq and Afghanistan; domestic considerations inside France, Britain and the US overshadowed policy-makers' abilities to act upon their states' genuine strategic interests; and the decisions of Russia, the Arab League and the UN determined the policy options available to the western powers, showcasing the increased importance in the post-Bush years of non-western diplomatic support for western-led interventions in Arab lands.

Two recent books look at western, predominantly American, policy towards Libya and Syria as 'test cases' within the evolving doctrine of western liberal interventionism, attempting to diagnose the discourse and decision-making matrix that impacted policy formation. *Toppling Qaddafi: Libya and the limits of liberal intervention* by Christopher Chivvis and *The Syria dilemma* edited by Nader Hashemi and Danny Postel benefit from many of the same strengths and suffer similar weaknesses. Both are eminently readable: *The Syria dilemma* because it is largely a collection of opinion pieces written by famous columnists (e.g. Fared Zakaria, Anne-Marie Slaughter, Vali Nasr, etc.) and impassioned advocates (mainly diaspora Syrians writing for non-specialist westerners); *Toppling Qaddafi* because Chivvis is an accomplished and prolific analyst, noted for his flowing prose and compelling argumentation. *Toppling Qaddafi* is an example of contemporary think-tank scholarship at its 'best'—internet news clippings interspersed with interviews of government officials seeking to illustrate a germane policy point. However, both books lack significant novel scholarship or even an interesting deployment of existing secondary sources. Punditry and think-tank reports deserve their place in moulding policy formation. They are also uniquely suited to informing and engaging the lay-person, government official and scholar alike. Yet repackaging such fascinating ephemera into book form has its risks; as Ecclesiastes warns, 'everything in its season'.

The books are worth consulting as 'period-pieces' that succinctly capture the range of debates, perceptions and prejudices inside American policy-making circles in 2011–2012 concerning Syria, Libya and the formulation of a 'doctrine of Liberal Interventionism à la Samantha Power'. Chivvis is a hard-nosed realist, who sees liberal interventions as compatible with US strategic interests. He studies the 'Libya case' to see what worked and what didn't. Postel and Hashemi are obsessed by Syria as a western 'dilemma' and spend no time showcasing how the Syrian civil war has affected Syrians and broader regional dynamics. They have selected a wide range of opinions on the question of intervention, but even the 'Arab' viewpoints are directed at the general American reader and do not contextualize events in Syria. These two books are not about Libya or Syria *per se* and, hence, contain precious little information about the situation on the ground.

Chivvis's work captures the DC mindset which sees the role of the US in the Libya intervention as paramount. In reality, while the American role was undoubtedly crucial as the Europeans lacked the capacity to intervene without US technical support, the diplomatic push for intervention as well as the political and military goals of the action and the failures of the reconstruction were led from Number 10, the Élysée Palace, and Doha. Despite being America-centric, it is the best account to date of the insular attitude towards Libya which prevails inside the Beltway, but unfortunately Chivvis seeks to understand the 'Libyan case' as yet another 'American intervention' rather than focusing on the multi-dimensional aspects, whereby the complexity of the uprisings on the ground and competition between Doha and Paris were far more important than American decision-making for forging the post-Gaddafi reality.

The Syria dilemma demonstrates that the Syrian civil war is a globalized conflict and that any desirable solution for the Syrian people and the world requires a global hegemon or a hegemonic coalition to impose it. Barring that, the struggle to unseat Assad will continue to play out as a proxy civil war—where outside interference does more harm than good. The introductory chapter by Hashemi and Postel loosely sets the stage for the different contributions, but does not attempt to draw any larger conclusions. In this way the whole book is akin to reading a greatest hits list of American op-eds about Syria: many viewpoints are aired, many epithets are hurled, yet no conclusions are reached. At its worst, Michael Ignatieff's facile comparison between Bosnia and Syria is spurious in its attempts to link the aspirations of the people in the two countries and the substate institutions provided by sectarian networks. At its best, Kenneth Roth and Marc Lynch argue for pragmatic policy options that merit serious consideration.

Over the past decade, the discipline of political science has opened its gate to all comers with a paradigm to analyse, a theory to test, or a viewpoint to air. *Toppling Qaddafi* and *The Syria dilemma* illustrate that neither a test case nor myriad viewpoints can substitute for extensive primary research combined with old-fashioned area studies expertise.

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Party politics and the prospects for democracy in North Africa. By Lise Storm. Boulder, CO, and London: Lynne Rienner. 2014. 244pp. £43.50. ISBN 978 1 58826 958 4.

In *Party politics and the prospects for democracy in North Africa*, the author examines 'how the constellation of party systems, as well as the character of the relevant political parties, impact on the prospects for democracy in the Maghreb' (p. 10, emphasis in original). She argues that the prospects for democracy in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia are determined by the structure of the political system, the nature of the political party system and the character of political parties. Noting that there has been little systematic analysis of political parties in the Arab world, Lise Storm attempts to chart a middle ground between scholars specializing in political parties and North African area specialists, setting out a theoretical framework designed to satisfy the former without being too rigid and formulaic for the latter. In so doing, she embarks upon a challenging task, but with considerable experience in the region, including published scholarship on Morocco, she is well equipped to achieve her goal.

An adherent to the body of literature on democratic transition known as transitology, Storm argues in the introduction that significant political change is generally negotiated at the elite level, normally via some form of pact or agreement but occasionally through revolution. In chapter two which includes a concise review of the theoretical literature on political parties and democracy, she notes that the prospects for a transition to democracy in any country, including the three under discussion, and the likelihood that democracy will survive 'are both closely linked to the existence of political parties and the level of institutionalization of the party system in which they operate' (p. 15). This leads her to conclude that any analysis of the level of party system institutionalization reached in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia prior to the Arab Spring centres on the regularity of party competition, the establishment of stable roots in society and political system legitimacy because all three indicators impact on the potential for existing or new political parties to become democratic vehicles.

The remainder of the book is structured by country, as opposed to theme, with two chapters each on Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. The format for the two chapters on each separate country is the same, with the first chapter taking what Storm refers to as the *longue*

durée, a consistent theme throughout the book in which the author argues it is necessary to understand party politics prior to the Arab Spring in order to understand contemporary political dynamics in North Africa. The second chapter in each case then examines the prospects for democracy in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, respectively.

In Morocco, Storm concludes 'that the first post-Arab Spring legislative elections allude to further party system institutionalization' (p. 76). Acknowledging that her conclusion is controversial, she bases it on electoral volatility indicators, the effective number of parties, the size of new entries into the party system, and the rate of abstentions at the legislative elections. In Tunisia, both the political system and the party system have changed considerably following the Arab Spring. The political system has become more democratic and the party system has grown considerably. That said, the components within the party system have not changed fundamentally, leading Storm to conclude that the kind of democracy that appears to be consolidating in Tunisia is a very hollow one in which the political parties are not really responsible to the electorate. In Algeria, the Arab Spring did not usher in political change, in part due to the muted nature of protester demands and in part due to the petrodollars available to the incumbent regime. New political parties were formed, but most of them were simply offshoots of existing ones, and very few of them were successful. Most tellingly, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was re-elected to a fourth term in April 2014, months after this book went to print. Storm concludes that the Arab Spring, in terms of meaningful political change, failed and is finished in both Algeria and Morocco. In the Tunisian case, she argues it is too soon to tell, but the approval of a new and relatively progressive constitution in January 2014, again after her book went to print, is reason for future optimism.

Lise Storm has authored an engaging, informative and highly accessible book. Based on research commenced well before the Arab Spring, a real strength of her book is the perspective it provides for her discussion of contemporary events in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia during and after the Arab Spring. Of interest to diplomats and scholars, it also offers undergraduates an excellent introduction to political systems and party politics in the Maghreb.

Ronald Bruce St John

Sub-Saharan Africa

A poisonous thorn in our hearts: Sudan and South Sudan's bitter and incomplete divorce. By James Copnall. London: Hurst. 2013. 272pp. Index. Pb.: £19.99. ISBN 978 1 84904 330 4.

This latest addition to an array of books that document the Sudans' recent history brings an accessible yet informative style to a complex, interwoven tale of two countries. Based around the secession of South Sudan from Sudan in 2011, *A poisonous thorn in our hearts* recounts events leading up to and following the split, which have left both countries struggling to survive. James Copnall, the author and BBC reporter in the Sudans from 2009 to 2012, merges fact with humanity, giving a face and a voice to the often harsh realities of this region. In so doing, this book provides a comprehensive introduction to this challenging and evolving context, and could well become the core text clutched by the newly arriving humanitarian to the field.

Divided into seven chapters, the book broadly covers what you would expect to find in such a factual account: people, politics, economics, security, external and internal relations, and development. The difference with this book, however, is the personal detail that has

also been included: characters, in the form of interviewees, are introduced early in the book and reappear throughout; small details about the towns and cities included give them life in a way that is lost in more academic accounts. In Khartoum, for example, Copnall describes the statue on the road outside the new Ministry of Defence buildings. Erected to celebrate Sudan's victories, the statue is of a hand cast in a celebratory V; however, as Copnall points out, when you drive from the wrong direction it 'looks very much like a British insult' (p. 48). Such details give the people and the places some humour and colour in what could otherwise be a somewhat dry and depressing account of two poorly governed states. This anecdotal detail does not, however, detract from the obviously significant and thorough research that underpins the book. It also proves to be an excellent source of empirical data through the many interviews, from the highest echelons of Sudanese and South Sudanese political society down, that inform the reader.

The combination of the breadth of topics it covers and its accessible writing style makes *A poisonous thorn in our hearts* the perfect introduction to the Sudans for those who don't have much background knowledge. However, its ambitious scope does come with some sacrifice to the level of analysis that it is able to fit into its 260 pages. Some big topics, such as the building of a common South Sudanese identity (p. 38), are given but a cursory mention, and at other times conclusions are drawn that are simplified and overgeneralized, such as the assertion that 'most mothers' will survive childbirth if given access to medical facilities (p. 130). Medical facilities would no doubt help, but this issue is influenced by a range of factors. There is of course a need to limit the breadth and depth of detail included to keep the book to a manageable size, and a simpler account serves to accommodate a wider audience within its readership. As a result, however, its appeal for those wanting a more in-depth appraisal of the relationship between the two countries is diminished. Nonetheless, Copnall does manage to keep a balance in his account of the two countries, being equally scathing of the leadership of both but not unduly so.

The book is very timely in its publication, so much so that a great deal has changed since it went to print. Copnall has addressed this with an afterword that briefly recounts and contemplates the unrest in Sudan that broke out in September 2013, and the acute violence that broke out in South Sudan at the end of 2013 and beginning of 2014, which is still ongoing. If things carry on as they are, this may indeed act as the genesis of a sequel that continues to document the sorry tale of these two dysfunctional states.

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Liberation movements in power: party and state in southern Africa. By Roger Southall. Woodbridge, UK: James Currey; Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. 2013. 384pp. Index. £45.00. ISBN 978 1 84701 066 7.

The central thesis of this impressive study of three southern African national liberation movements (NLMs) and their track record in power is that whereas once they were seen as the solution to oppressive white minority governments, now they are identified as 'the problem'. This has strong echoes of hopes and expectations of 'the state' as the post-independence driver of development in the 1960s, which then were transformed into a profound sense of 'Afro-pessimism' and the 'crisis of the African state' literature by the 1990s. Southall is a highly respected and authoritative analyst; and certainly his clear-eyed assessment produces a damning indictment of NLMs' flawed political and militaristic cultures formed in exile, later political hubris in power, growing corruption, and the emergence of a rentier class, manipulations of history and cadre deployment, leading to a sense of

betrayal of the hopes and dreams of each country post-independence. He carefully tracks the paradoxical and contradictory tendencies within ZANU-PF (Zimbabwe African National Union—Patriotic Front) in Zimbabwe, SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) in Namibia and the ANC (African National Congress) in South Africa, drawing out similarities while never losing sight of the important differences, individual contexts and dynamics of each country's racial structure and inherited political economy, and the path since transitions to black majority rule.

Newcomers to the region might find the thematic organization of the book somewhat challenging. The comparative analysis is organized in separate chapters on settler colonialism in southern Africa; the evolution of the NLMs; the use of armed struggle, violence and warfare in southern Africa; contradictions of victory; elections, the state and institutions; society, political economies and attempts at reform; the waning of ideological conviction; and the party machine. However, those familiar with the recent history of southern Africa, as well as specialists, will find this a more rewarding approach than a straightforward country-specific presentation of the material. There is a wealth of detailed information in this book on the challenges of radical nationalism and negotiated transitions to power; paradoxical claims of identity ('people' versus constructs of 'nation') and the problems of a perennial sense of entitlement; the limitations of economic sovereignty and debates on how to achieve economic or human development, and dangerous deficits of delivery.

While it is understandable that Southall selected Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, a wider framework comparing and contrasting the trajectories of national liberation movements in neighbouring Mozambique and Angola would have improved this book further. Similarly, I was left wondering what the lasting conditioning factors of the wider Cold War struggle were, and the extent to which these have played out in subtle but important ways for NLMs in power. (This is beyond debates about 'National Democratic Revolution'.) The resilience of white minority governments, aided and abetted to a greater or lesser degree by external alignments, and the use of warfare to resist accelerated political transition radicalized these national liberation movements, which themselves called on outside assistance. Those external supporters in 'the anti-imperialist' struggle provided education and training, as well as military and logistical support—not human capacity building in terms of administrative skills to run a modern industrialized economy, obliging an accommodation with white capital and skills. Southall points out that the 'exile condition', its associated opaque and undemocratic political cultures and leadership traits, and highly constructed 'history of unity and solidarity'—masking internal dissent, and ruthless suppression—have left a lasting impact. The abrupt shift from political cultures of violence to the terrain of democratic institutions has been indifferently achieved, with Zimbabwe as the poster child of aborted democracy since 2000. Not minimizing the potentially toxic legacies of apartheid and 'petty apartheid', each NLM inherited 'strong states', and the economies they inherited were the most diversified and administratively capable in sub-Saharan Africa. In the developmental literature, therefore, Zimbabwe's and South Africa/South West Africa's 'take off' point was immeasurably better than their African northern neighbours' at independence in the 1960s. The relative strength of their inheritance and apparent failings to build upon this—in Zimbabwe's extreme case of revolutionary transformation—are a familiar refrain among disappointed liberals. But as Southall underlines, these NLM governments were confronted by the challenges of limited education provision; land alienation; social dislocation and reintegration; mass male youth unemployment; problems of criminality embedded in party structures and practices; compromised state security forces, and the need for fusion with liberation military and intelligence systems; and domestic political

constituencies in which defying the law carried a moral badge of honour. This sets the internal NLM structural tensions and spectrum of attitudes on appropriate policy prescriptions firmly in context. Southall acknowledges both absolute and relative gains in socio-economic transformation in each country, while recognizing critical limitations.

What is the 'take home' message from this? That the transformation of global politics since the 1980s, accelerating in the 1990s, faced these NLMs with a more complex international environment which inevitably prescribed the agenda for state-societal transformation; that the initial conditions inherited from settler colonialism proved more long lasting and problematic than originally imagined. Southall reminds us of the conditioning factors of geography and history, but without excusing in any way each NLM's own limitations, policy choices and failings after independence—not least of which is the manipulations of struggle 'history'. I urge scholars and supporters of each country to read this important book, and to engage with its debates of common threads and crucial divergence.

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South Asia

Magnificent delusions: Pakistan, the United States, and an epic history of misunderstanding. By **Hussain Haqqani**. New York: Public Affairs. 2013. 413pp. Index. £19.99. ISBN 978 1 61039 317 1. Available as e-book.

No exit from Pakistan: America's tortured relationship with Islamabad. By **Daniel Markey**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2013. 253pp. Index. Pb.: £18.99. ISBN 978 1 10762 359 0. Available as e-book.

The warrior state: Pakistan in the contemporary world. By **T. V. Paul**. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2014. 288pp. Index. £16.88. ISBN 978 0 19932 223 7. Available as e-book.

'The world needs us more than we need the world': this is a dictum that some now believe guides the conduct of Pakistan's governing classes. If so, it will come as a surprise to many accustomed to regarding Pakistan as the proverbial 'basket case' still heavily dependent on international aid for its survival. How, then, do we account for this counter-intuitive pronouncement and what justifies the perception that the international community has no choice but to keep Pakistan afloat, even as the country pursues its frequently ill-conceived agendas?

These questions lie at the heart of all three books under review. Each adopts a distinct approach and each offers a different explanation for enduring international concern about Pakistan. All agree, however, that, in contrast to some struggling African countries, humanitarian considerations can safely be ruled out. Instead, what is seen to drive the relationship between Pakistan and the global community, notably its most powerful actor—the United States—is cold-blooded calculation with international aid intended to gain leverage over Pakistan as a western ally or to rent the country's prime geostrategic location and in recent years to secure Pakistan's cooperation to guard against terrorist threats to western interests.

Such pragmatic arrangements between Pakistan and its mainly western benefactors are not new. Asked by the American journalist, Margaret Bourke-White, in August 1947 to comment on Pakistan's relations with the United States, the country's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, drily observed: 'America needs Pakistan more than Pakistan needs America' (p. 8). The grounds for this extraordinary claim lay in Jinnah's estimation of Pakistan as 'the pivot of the world' (p.8–9) and a bulwark against the advance of Russia, the West's chief

adversary. Pakistani officials appeared to share these expectations, believing that 'surely America will give us loans to keep Russia from walking in' (p. 9).

These historical precedents are instructive and it is one of the strengths of Hussain Haqqani's polished analysis of US–Pakistani relations, *Magnificent delusions*, that it is well grounded in historical research, albeit much of it restricted to US archives. But what he lacks in Pakistani source material, Haqqani makes up for in vivid eye-witness accounts of the increasingly troubled relationship between Pakistan and America. Nevertheless, readers expecting any fresh revelations about his controversial tenure as Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, which ended with a slew of court cases charging Haqqani with acting against the interests of his country, will be disappointed. Neither the so-called 'Memogate affair' (which accused Haqqani of conniving with US officials to rein in Pakistan's military) nor the so-called 'Raymond Davis scandal' (which implicated Haqqani in helping extend a US spy network in Pakistan) receives detailed attention. On the other hand, anyone looking to understand the roots of Pakistan's dysfunctional relationship with its chief benefactor, the United States, will be handsomely rewarded.

Haqqani's fluid narration of US–Pakistan relations is built around one central premise: the fantasy of shared interests. From the outset the potential for mutual misunderstanding was vast. America and Pakistan were, in fact, the unlikeliest of allies—the one heralding the cause of democracy, the other fatally drawn to autocracy. But US Cold War imperatives and Pakistan's frantic quest for external support to counter the threat from India trumped any residual worries about fundamentally diverging interests.

For more than five decades, stretching from the 1950s to the present day, both sides cheated, lied and tricked their way through a relationship that was held together by the unrealistic expectation that US largess would transform Pakistan from an inveterate foe of India into a loyal ally of America. Events since 9/11 have made matters worse. The problem has been particularly acute in Afghanistan where differences between Pakistan and the United States turned ugly amid mutual recriminations of double-dealing and dishonesty. But these have only confirmed the untenable nature of this relationship. Haqqani is lucid about its prospects: 'To think that the United States would indefinitely provide economic and military assistance [to Pakistan] in return for partial support of US objectives is delusional. America must also overcome the fantasy that aid always translates into leverage' (p. 350).

Unfortunately these words are unlikely to cut much ice. As T. V. Paul succinctly demonstrates in *The warrior state*, foreign aid from major powers, including the United States, can always be relied on to pour into Pakistan. No matter how inefficient successive governments—Pakistan has one of the weakest tax regimes in the world—and no matter how damaging the consequences of foreign aid to Pakistan—much of it has been diverted to war rather than welfare—there seems to be no dearth of external benefactors ready to assist Pakistan. The question, then, is why—despite these entrenched flaws—does Pakistan still enjoy its status as one of the largest recipients of foreign aid.

The answer lies in what Paul labels as Pakistan's 'geo-strategic curse'—a condition he compares to the 'resource curse' that afflicts some oil-rich Gulf states. Lacking natural resources, Pakistan has been led instead to exploit its sensitive geostrategic location on the periphery of south central Asia, a site long known for the intersection of foreign interests. With a string of eager takers, led by the United States but also China, it was not long before Pakistan emerged as a classic rentier state living off the proceeds from external powers in pursuit of their particular geostrategic goals. The flow of 'easy money' proved to be intoxicating for Pakistan's ruling elites for whom the main problem was to make sure it

lasted. Help came in the form of Pakistan's 'warrior state', built on the foundations of the country's enduring conflict with India. Informed by 'a Hobbesian world-view with a religious coloration' (p. 24), it was judged to pose a mortal danger to the international community. Fear became the dominant discourse and the spectre of state failure, propelled by visions of jihadist violence and apocalyptic nuclear war, soon assumed centre stage. The notion that 'Pakistan was too important to fail' served as the abiding refrain, whistled by elites in Pakistan and echoed in western capitals.

Indeed, Daniel Markey's new book, *No exit from Pakistan*, serves as an illustration of the power of fear to shape western, especially US, policy towards Pakistan. While Markey is keen to avoid scaremongering, and seeks to distance himself from the popular image of Pakistan as a seething cauldron of angry jihadists waiting to train their guns against the West, he eventually succumbs to this view. His concern to offer a more multifaceted portrait of the 'many faces of Pakistan' (p. 29) inexorably gives way to a single narrative of fear, involving a fearsome Pakistan and a fearful America both locked in a hellish space with no exit.

A former US Secretary of State, George Shultz, is said once to have observed that hope is not a policy; nor is fear. To be fair, Markey acknowledges that 'fear is not a particularly firm foundation for partnership between nations' (p. 199). Yet it is fear that surfaces as the chief impetus for his preferred strategy of 'defensive insulation' against Pakistan, which would allow the United States 'to protect itself from Pakistan's terrorists, nuclear weapons and other possible dangers by erecting ... barriers around the Pakistani state' (p. 206).

Fear is not, of course, the only factor at play in this stern reformulation of US policy on Pakistan. Equally important is the tinge of American exasperation with Pakistan that runs through Markey's analysis. Although he labours hard to be even-handed by factoring in America's many misdemeanours in its treatment of Pakistan over the years, it is Pakistan's ungratefulness as a beneficiary of US largess that casts the longer shadow. Thus Pakistan's aid addiction is robustly, and rightly, condemned, although some readers may feel that those who peddle aid ought not to be absolved of all responsibility. That is why the real test of Markey's proposed strategy to ring-fence Pakistan may come to rest as much on Pakistan's supposed vulnerability to coercion as on America's political will to resist the temptation of subcontracting regional players such as Pakistan to extend US strategic objectives. So far there is little sign of either.

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East Asia and Pacific

Contestation and adaptation: the politics of national identity in China. By Enze Han. New York: Oxford University Press. 2013. 224pp. Index. £47.99. ISBN 978 0 19 993629 8.

As part of its establishment of governing institutions in the 1950s, the Communist Party of China engaged ethnographers in a project to classify, or categorize, various 'ethnic groups' in the new People's Republic of China (PRC). The consequences of this have informed an important facet of identity in China ever since, with every citizen officially belonging to one of the 56 categories—one of which is the majority Han—which emerged from the 1950s project, created based on a mixture of the application of Soviet criteria for 'nationality' categorization and legacy notions from within China itself.

This has created fertile ground for studies of identity and its politics, particularly among scholars outside China (Chinese ethnography, or anthropology, lay dormant until the 1980s

reform era). Most of these studies focus on particular ethnic groups, with related studies around the politically more controversial issue of Tibet and the Uyghur populations in Xinjiang, north-west China.

The focus of Enze Han's *Contestation and adaptation* is not on one group, but on the relationship between domestic factors and international interactions in political mobilization across a number of ethnic groups in China. Han's thesis is that 'international factors play a significant role in shaping whether and how an ethnic group is going to mobilize politically to contest its national identity' (p. 5). In particular, he argues that contestation is more likely if group members see their kin in other countries enjoying better conditions, and the group within China enjoys substantial external support.

In the case of both Tibetans and Uyghurs, Han argues, both of these factors are present, which helps explain why these groups have been engaged in significant contestation of a national 'Chinese' identity. In the other three cases he considers—Mongols, Koreans and the Dai people of south-west China's Yunnan province—at most only one of the two factors is present; this explains why these groups have largely adapted or assimilated.

In these cases, Han sets out some interesting material. The Korean, or Joseonjok, case is complicated somewhat by the continued division of the Korean peninsula. But the better conditions in South Korea which Koreans in north-east China see have prompted them to migrate to benefit from these opportunities, either to South Korea (including as brides) or to other parts of China where their Chinese and Korean language skills create job opportunities with the growing number of Korean companies which have entered the Chinese market since the PRC and the Republic of Korea established diplomatic ties in 1992. Taken together with the lack of any Korean external support for ethnic Koreans in China to seek greater cultural or political autonomy (though Han doesn't cover recent history debates between Korean and Chinese scholars), this means that their response has been one of assimilation rather than identity contestation.

Han also outlines interesting compromises made by both Dai communities and the Chinese party-state, for example a balance between state and monastery education since the 1980s. Education has been a regular site of identity contestation—in particular given the difficulty of reconciling space for cultural and ethnic reproduction in non-Han languages—with the economic dominance of Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese), including increasingly in many ethnic regions of the country; this dilemma means Han Chinese tend to have a 'market' advantage.

Han is not breaking new ground in showing that both Uyghurs and Tibetans have some external support for their contestation of Chinese identity and see their external kin as enjoying better conditions, though his chapters offer well-balanced accounts of the main issues in both cases. Perhaps inevitably given the focus on identity contestation, Han underplays other issues, such as those around territory and political authority, which are drivers of unrest in both cases.

In turn this raises the question of how comparable the Tibetan and Uyghur cases are to those of other ethnic groups in China. Granted, they sit alongside the other 'ethnic minority' categories as official Chinese identities, but their historical and cultural differences and international histories mean that even the Communist Party has separate policy mechanisms for dealing with Tibet and Xinjiang. It seems that the recent debates within the People's Republic over ethnic policy have been driven to a large extent by a sense among some Chinese academics that ethnic policy has not worked in Tibet and Xinjiang.

Han acknowledges this in relation to Tibet, and his aim is not to provide comprehensive analysis of each of the five cases. However, by bringing them together in a comparative

and international framework, this book constitutes a useful and stimulating addition to the literature.

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North Korea in transition: politics, economy, and society. Edited by **Kyung-ae Park and Scott Snyder.** Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. 2013. 328pp. Pb.: £21.95. ISBN 978 1 44221 811 6.

North Korea is a well-known enigma in world politics. One of the world's most closed societies, it blends communist ideology with local tradition and hereditary rule. Notorious for its ruthless authoritarianism and its nuclear ambitions, the government in Pyongyang regularly triggers diplomatic crises. The resulting view is one of a 'hermit kingdom' about which next to nothing is known and whose leaders behave so irrationally that they can only be contained through counter-threats, constant vigilance and a massive military presence in the region.

North Korea in transition is part of a scholarly trend that counters this prevailing view. The volume demonstrates that we know a lot more about North Korea than commonly assumed. In a succinct and compelling introduction, the editors—Kyung-ae Park and Scott Snyder—identify the mid-1990s as a turning point. Years of famine forced North Korean citizens across the border to China in search of food. The consequences were far-reaching: new information sources started to filter through the tightly sealed borders and structural adjustment followed. The state had no choice but to give up its monopoly over the production and distribution of food. A quasi-market economy emerged in a society where there was meant to be no market.

A dozen fascinating chapters engage the nature and consequences of these transformations. They deal with ideology, party leadership and institutions; with the military and decision-making procedures; with various aspects of the economy, from aid to trade; with inter-Korean relations; with the role of China and the influence of the international community; or with how the recent protest movement known as the Arab Spring might have consequences for regime stability in North Korea. These chapters are far too diverse to summarize here, which is why I focus on a couple of particularly interesting contributions.

Provocative and insightful as always, Bruce Cummings exposes what he believes is a remarkable level of ignorance about North Korea, particularly by US security experts. He also scolds two fellow contributors to this volume, Nicholas Eberstadt and Victor Cha, for having wrongly but consistently predicted the collapse of North Korea for over 20 years. Despite regular statements that the regime is 'teetering on the brink of collapse' (Paul Wolfowitz, US Assistant Secretary of Defense in 2003, p. 69) the government in Pyongyang has demonstrated a remarkable level of stability, even after the deaths of Kim-Il Sung and Kim Jong-Il. For Cummings, the key to understanding this pattern lies in appreciating the culturally unique quest for dignity resulting from the Korean struggle against colonialism.

The chapter by Andrei Lankov examines the emergence of a new merchant and entrepreneurial class. In a fascinating analysis of testimonies from defectors he portrays a picture of North Korea that is far more diverse than previously assumed. Woo Young-Lee and Jungmin Seo push this theme one step further and investigate how South Korean cultural products, from 'K-pop' to soap operas and films, have spread to North Korea. The availability of such 'subversive' cultural products remains limited, but their potential to have a significant impact on social change cannot be overestimated. Once the North Korean regime loses the hearts and minds of its population no amount of repression can hold back change.

I recommend this book for anyone interested in how North Korea is a far more complex and diverse place than prevailing media portrayals have it. The chapters are informative and insightful. At the same time I was left wondering by a puzzling silence about one particular issue: the role of gender. Both South and North Korea are highly gendered societies. Surely any kind of critical engagement with continuity and change in North Korea would have to take on this key aspect of socio-political life. The fact that there is only one woman—the co-editor Kyung-ae Park—among the 16 contributors to this volume is perhaps indicative of these deeply entrenched cultural norms. May the respective challenges be addressed by future critical engagements with domestic and international politics in divided Korea.

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North America

The Kennan diaries. Edited by Frank Costigliola. New York: W. W. Norton. 2014. 768pp. Index. £28.00. ISBN 978 0 39307 327 0. Available as e-book.

In his thoughtful introduction to the diaries of George F. Kennan, editor Frank Costigliola tells us that Kennan tended to neglect his diary when professionally satisfied and commit time to it when not. So in a volume amounting to 680 pages, just five pages are devoted to 1946, the year he wrote the Long Telegram, while 1947, the year Kennan wrote 'Article X' for *Foreign Affairs* (July, 1947), contains no diary entry, just a single poem. Five pages of diary text are devoted to 1948, suggesting trouble on the horizon. And then 27 pages of diary entries of a generally unhappy but combative quality are devoted to 1949. Through certain bravura sections, Kennan's diaries join the reminiscences of Mark Twain and Tennessee Williams in giving despondency a good literary name.

But only up to a point. The elemental force that one confronts when reading Kennan's diaries is his unhappiness. Kennan's solipsism in the first 50 pages is particularly wearisome, suggesting that even the cleverest individuals should postpone keeping a diary until they have cleared first-wave ennui. But, of course, Kennan did not clear any of the subsequent waves, failing to locate a niche that consistently nourished and sustained him from 1948, with his two good years in Washington behind him. Whether it was moving to the Russian interior or the west coast of Scotland, Kennan returns frequently in the diary to the theme of escape. A permanent position at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton (with no teaching obligations) was evidently hard for him to bear. Yet what depressed Kennan most was not Princeton, of course, but America. As he wrote in 1968, 'I ought in the interests of my disposition, to avoid as far as possible all confrontation with American life. This means: the absolute minimum of travel (and even that, as far as possible, with closed eyes) but also avoidance of the media: radio, TV, newspapers' (p. 455). The diaries ask some hard questions of John Lewis Gaddis's decision to subtitle his Pulitzer-prize winning biography of Kennan: *An American life* (Penguin, 2011).

Reading nearly 700 pages of Kennan's unvarnished thoughts is a fairly depressing experience. A nominal Democrat, Kennan's views on race, society and politics were those of a reactionary. 'When I see what a mess the modern Italians make of their own country,' Kennan wrote in 1984, 'I am less surprised by what the Italian contractors do in New Jersey' (p. 554). This is Kennan's racism at its lightest—it gets much worse, unfortunately, particularly where Latinos, Jews and African-Americans are concerned. Musing a few months later on US overpopulation, Kennan located a solution redolent of Huxley's *Brave new world*: 'Men having spawned more than 2 children will be compulsively sterilized' (p. 554).

Put together, Kennan's diaries serve at times to reduce him to parody. Much of the material amounts to sentiments he can't utter publicly for propriety's sake, after all. Kennan often appears less like a foiled prophet and more like Charles Coughlin with a broader literary range. Some of Kennan's iconoclasm is amusing, such as his proposal that a new union be formed between the sensible states of the United States (the north-east plus the northern mid-west, but not California, which he abhorred), Canada and the United Kingdom with a new capital city 'near Windsor or Ottawa' (p. 367). Then some of it is deeply troubling, such as his ugly diatribes against miscegenation. One need not be Pollyanna to find it challenging to read hundreds of pages so bereft of optimism.

But then there are the redeeming qualities, including the keenness of Kennan's powers of observation, particularly of tragedy. In March 1949, Kennan visited Hamburg, a city he had loved and whose devastation affected him deeply: 'If the Western world was really going to make valid the pretense of a higher departure point ... then it had to learn to fight its wars morally as well as militarily, or not fight them at all' (p. 216). The diary contains many more insightful and far-sighted observations possessed of wisdom and moral clarity. Yet his gifts as a stylist often served against him, encouraging undue confidence that his counsel would hold sway. It pained him that his beautifully crafted memoranda went unheeded by his superiors. But Kennan vested too much faith in the persuasive quality of his prose; it was the message, not the manner of its presentation, which was the problem. Throughout the diary, Kennan's prescient warnings about American foreign policy overextension feel fresh and relevant, but it is no challenge to comprehend why he was ignored.

Most people will come to the diaries having read Kennan's 'Article X', *American diplomacy* (University of Chicago Press, 1951) and his two volumes of memoirs. But those with no acquaintance with these works might wonder what the fuss is about. Kennan understood this himself, observing on 22 May 1986 that his diary entries are 'too plaintive and too repetitious to be of much interest to others ... there was too much about *peoples*, too little about individual people' (p. 568). Kennan's self-penned review is insightful. For scholars of twentieth-century US foreign policy, the diaries are clearly an important resource. But it will be a pity if readers with no prior exposure to Kennan turn first to this volume. For they may read no further.

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The empire trap: the rise and fall of U.S. intervention to protect American property overseas, 1893-2013. By Noel Maurer. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 2013. 568pp. Index. £27.95. ISBN 978 0 691 15582 1. Available as e-book.

Noel Maurer's recent monograph on the history of US government support for Americans investing overseas is an important and illuminating study of a relatively unexplored issue. Meticulously researched, convincingly argued and clearly written, it is the rare book which manages to make substantial academic contributions across a number of fields—including international political economy, economic history and American politics—while simultaneously approaching its subject-matter in a jargon-free, compelling prose which makes it accessible to non-experts.

Maurer's central argument is that throughout the twentieth century the US government was incapable of resisting political pressures from private investors to defend their property rights abroad. This was despite the fact that such interventions could be costly—financially, politically and strategically—and frequently ran against the stated desires of American presidents to avoid overseas entanglements. The 'trap' Maurer describes is that

every time the US intervened to protect an investor, other investors (and would-be investors) came to expect similar favourable treatment in the future, and it became even more difficult for the government to resist investor pressure for intervention the next time a dispute emerged.

The book identifies two distinct imperial periods. The first began in the 1890s and lasted until the Great Depression. Maurer demonstrates how US administrations of this era repeatedly intervened in Latin American countries at the behest of American investors, often directly taking over a state's finances through fiscal receiverships. The second American empire emerged in the late 1930s. This time, however, the tools of intervention were significantly different: in place of military interventions and fiscal receiverships, the US employed a broader array of carrots and sticks to protect investors, including the offer (or denial) of economic aid and preferential trade benefits, as well as covert military and intelligence missions. Maurer argues that this second empire trap persisted into the 1980s, until the rise of political risk insurance (PRI) and investor–state arbitration granted investors independent mechanisms for protecting overseas assets.

Perhaps the book's greatest contribution is the careful and detailed empirical evidence demonstrating that American investors, supported by government interventions, were almost always fully compensated following expropriations. Drawing on government archives, corporate data and an expansive array of other primary and secondary sources, Maurer reveals that in nearly every natural resources investment dispute brought to the State Department's attention between 1900 and 1987 the investor ultimately received full, market-value compensation. This finding upends much received wisdom on the historical costs of expropriation and therefore the riskiness of foreign investment during the twentieth century.

There are, however, two aspects of the book which would benefit from further analysis. The first is a word of caution for readers attracted by the title: Maurer isn't particularly interested in engaging with 'empire' as a concept, and elides any discussion of definitions or theories of empire. While an extended conceptual study of empire may be beyond the scope of the book—the question of whether the interventions described in the book constitute an 'empire' or not is only peripheral to Maurer's main arguments—given the normative implications of the term, there are risks of using it so repeatedly and prominently without providing a definition.

The second shortcoming is more substantive and comes towards the end of the book, when Maurer turns his attention to the contemporary period. Maurer argues that the emergence of PRI and (especially) investor–state arbitration has had 'revolutionary' (p. 387) effects in investor protection. Yet his claims here rest mostly on assertions and assumptions: he presents scant empirical evidence that the government backed these institutions with the intention of depoliticizing investment disputes, or that the institutions have had this effect. The claim that the modern investment treaty regime has in practice depoliticized disputes is central to Maurer's argument that the empire trap has been superseded, yet not enough evidence is provided to evaluate it properly. Indeed, anecdotally it appears that when American investors run into trouble overseas, one of their first calls is still to their embassy; given how well investors were served by government interventions historically, it is not obvious they would consider costly and time-consuming arbitration 'as attractive as asking Washington for support' (p. 23), as Maurer asserts. Nor, as numerous Wikileaks cables have revealed, has the US government abandoned diplomatic pressure in support of American investors. Without further evidence of the extent to which investment protection today is in fact depoliticized, it is difficult to appraise Maurer's cautionary closing note

that challenges to the current legal regime may lead to a resurgence of politicized disputes in the future.

In sum, *The empire trap* stands as an engaging and ground-breaking analysis of the history of American efforts to protect overseas investors through the Cold War era, yet leaves unanswered important questions about the origins and effects of the contemporary regime for protecting investment.

Geoffrey Gertz, University of Oxford, UK

What changed when everything changed: 9/11 and the making of national identity. By Joseph Margulies. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press. 2013. 392pp. Index. £20.00. ISBN 978 0 30017 655 1. Available as e-book.

Perhaps the single most surprising reaction within the United States to the terror attacks of 9/11 was the lack of a reaction. Muslim men were not rounded up and put in camps, as all too many Japanese citizens were after Pearl Harbor. Although a few religious demagogues blamed the attacks on the left, no senator, as if to bury Joe McCarthy once and for all, followed their lead. Bipartisanship reigned. It is as if Americans wished to show what Abraham Lincoln had once called 'the better angels of their nature'.

Twelve years after the attack, the situation could not be more different. Anti-Muslim sentiment is palpable. Two futile wars have dominated the foreign policy decision-making of the United States. The Bush–Cheney administration went over to the 'dark side', and the Obama administration left in place much of the secret apparatus that had been created by it. Nothing stopped hawkish voices in both parties from insisting that the United States must do everything in its power to stop Iran and Syria in their tracks. One would think that a crisis such as 9/11 would be met with hysteria that would moderate over time. Instead it was greeted with a kind of maturity that morphed into madness.

Joseph Margulies, who was counsel of record in *Rasul vs. Bush*, which challenged indefinite detention at Guantánamo Bay, argues in *What changed when everything changed* that both the attractive as well as the ugly are parts of American identity. Americans believe in such abstractions as freedom, the rule of law and limited government, but in reality such terms can be stretched to include both the use of torture and the prohibition against it, intervention and isolation, and tolerance and hatred. Huge changes have come over American life in the past twelve years, he insists, but they did not transform the way Americans think of themselves so much as they added new wrinkles to such self-conceptions.

Margulies's book is marvellous on description but less persuasive as theory. He offers a compellingly written treatment of the events that have marked America's moral decline. None of those events was more important than the way torture came to be seen as compatible with American values. Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz not only defended the use of warrants permitting torture, he entered into the gory details, writing favourably, for example, of 'maximal pain, minimum lethality' or pointing out that testicles constituted a common site of torture efforts (p. 196). Television shows made money from depictions of torture. When America was most in danger, Margulies writes, it did not use torture; when the danger began to subside, it did.

Does it make sense, however, to include both opposition to torture and the embrace of it within the concept of American identity? Certainly, as Margulies correctly points out, attempts were made to do so. Harsh interrogation techniques, Americans were told, were different when we relied on them; as he summarizes this rationalization, 'we tortured because we were civilized; they because they were not' (p. 220). Torture was redefined to

exclude techniques used by our side. Low-level functionaries were treated with scorn, as if indefensible acts were the responsibility only of people too unsophisticated to know better. Margulies writes that ‘this attempt to remake national identity to rationalize torture has been remarkably successful’ (p. 225). The country took a more punitive turn, but in so doing, it believed it was keeping faith with at least part of its tradition.

I am not sure what Margulies gains by making such an argument. Americans could only have approved what took place during these years, he writes in one place, so long as those events could be reinterpreted to fit into the American creed. Yet he also suggests, at the end of his book, that ‘there are indications that the punitive turn may have run its course’ (p. 291). I think he is right to say so, but if it is true that America’s vindictive side was time-bound, due eventually to run its course, it makes more sense to view it as an exception to the American creed. It is true that Americans have not come anywhere close to understanding how far they wandered from fundamental American values under both of the administrations that held power in the aftermath of the attacks. Still, I would like to believe that the better angels are still lurking around out there. We don’t yet know what changed when everything changed. America’s best hope lies in the chance that nothing much did.

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Latin America and Caribbean

Democratic Chile: the politics and policies of a historic coalition, 1990–2010. Edited by **Kirsten Sehnbruch and Peter M. Siavelis.** Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. 2014. 375pp. Index. £54.50. ISBN 978 1 58826 873 0.

Chile under the Concertación, the centre-left coalition that governed Chile for two decades in the wake of the Pinochet dictatorship (1973–90), was held up at the time by outside political commentators, and again in a number of more recent comparative scholarly works on the so-called ‘pink tide’ in Latin America, as a model of political moderation and economic growth which was suitably rewarded by the country’s accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2010. There has also been concurrently a much more critical literature, exemplified by the edited volume *The Bachelet government: conflict and consensus in post-Pinochet Chile* (University Press of Florida, 2010; reviewed in *International Affairs* 87: 2), several of whose authors are contributors to the present volume.

The editors of *Democratic Chile* concur with the widely accepted view that the policy options of the first three governments of the Concertación in particular were circumscribed by the peculiarities of the Chilean transition—the various ‘authoritarian enclaves’, deliberately constructed by the preceding regime to block any radical change, until constitutional reforms enacted in 2005 after years of negotiations removed the most flagrant of them. They argue that the Concertación, to the further detriment of Chilean democracy, was additionally constrained by a number of ‘transitional enclaves’—the negotiated sharing of executive power (the *cuoteo*) within the coalition that was designed to ensure smooth governance but in practice too easily ‘reeked of cronyism and clientelism’ (p. 308); party-dominated electoral politics to the exclusion of civil society input; extra-institutional policy-making; and the inviolability of the inherited economic model. These all contributed to an ‘entrenched model of elite politics’ (p. 306) that became increasingly out of kilter with the changes wrought in Chilean society in the intervening years, as witnessed

in the street protests of 2006 (and 2011) over the issue of education and popular mobilization against hydroelectric projects that threatened the environment. While justifiable in the difficult early years of the transition, such an elitist mode of politics was transparently outdated once the military had definitively returned to its barracks, the political right had clearly accepted (and profited from) the rules of the democratic game and the constitution had been substantially reformed. These constraints, in the editors' opinion, prevented the Concertación from carrying through the necessary reforms to remedy the profound inequalities in Chilean society (the worst within the OECD) that arose as a result of the prevailing ideology of market economics and a minimal role for the state.

The contributions to the volume are uniformly of a high calibre. Half are by Chilean scholars, many of whom have had some personal involvement in the policy process from a critical perspective. Most authors succeed admirably in conveying, in a thorough and lucid manner, the precise issues at stake and the trade-offs that were needed to secure the right's concurrence to the passage of even limited reformist legislation. There are also useful comparisons to the political experience of other countries in the region. There is some variation in the degree of criticism of the Concertación; few echo Ramón López, in his otherwise excellent chapter on the inequities of the Chilean taxation system, in his scathing verdict that the coalition, in a Faustian bargain, 'sold its political soul by betraying ingrained principles of social justice for the sake of short-run political gains that allowed [it] to remain in power' (p. 219). Even the editors draw back somewhat in their conclusion by pointing to the Concertación's positive accomplishments. Some authors also have overly high expectations, such as a rapid move to full gender equality and the institution of same-sex marriage, which are currently far from the regional norm. On the other side of the coin, the book's overall argument would have been strengthened by a chapter on the treatment of the indigenous Mapuche, against whose activism the Concertación unconsciously invoked Pinochet-era anti-terrorist legislation.

This reviewer felt that the editors understate the extent to which the dead hand of the Pinochet regime exercised an abiding influence even after the 2005 constitutional reforms. The binomial electoral system, which permits the overrepresentation of the right, is still firmly in place; it is this system that obliges parties at either end of the political spectrum to form unwieldy and internally contradictory coalitions entailing much of the political horse-trading which they so loudly bewail. It should be noted, too, that a 60 per cent majority in Congress is still required to change the electoral system and a 67 per cent one to amend the constitution; these are seemingly insurmountable obstacles to meaningful change. The Concertación's electoral defeat in 2010, moreover, was by no means catastrophic, as the editors seem to imply, for a coalition that had been in power for a remarkable 20 years. Furthermore, Michelle Bachelet's re-election in late 2013 (after this book went to press) at the head of an expanded centre-left New Majority coalition with an ambitious reformist agenda showed that some lessons have indeed been learned from the coalition's long tenure of power.

This volume will be an indispensable tool for those seeking to understand the complexities of contemporary Chilean politics and the challenges facing the second Bachelet administration in its avowed aim of supplanting the authoritarian 1980 constitution.

Philip Chrimes

Política externa e democracia no Brasil: ensaio de interpretação histórica. By **Dawisson Belém Lopes.** São Paulo: Editora Unesp. 2013. 360pp. Pb.: R\$52.00. ISBN 9 788 53930 411 0.

Towards the end of Lula da Silva's presidency in 2010 new voices from academia and Brazil's diplomatic core started a debate on Brazil's foreign policy. The arguments concern the roles and legitimacy of actors, the foreign policy decision-making process, the nature of the process itself, and the implementation of foreign policy. Five challenges for scholarship on Brazilian foreign policy have also emerged: (1) imprecision in analytical terminology; (2) lack of a common baseline to establish comparisons; (3) difficulties in finding an empirical basis for the argument of bureaucratic insulation; (4) limitations on the use of primary sources due to foreign ministry habits of secrecy; and (5) overestimation of the impact of systemic forces.

Dawisson Lopes is one of the voices tackling a set of questions such as: how ideological patterns are transferred from the political to the policy arena; the position of bureaucratic elites; the insulation of the diplomatic corps within the state; and the role of new actors in the formulation of a democratized foreign policy. With this in mind, the research question is clear: how viable is a foreign policy if it is driven by the political whims of society?

Given that answering this question directly is perhaps impossible, the author turns instead to a critical review of four hypotheses about the public image of Brazilian foreign policy: (1) foreign policy as subject to a high level of public image; (2) foreign policy as a tool for a developmentist government; (3) foreign ministry organizational culture as a key determinant; and (4) foreign policy as a field limited by Brazil's political-administrative institutions. To grapple with these contrasting hypotheses, Lopes turns to Raymundo Faoro's arguments in *Os donos do poder* (Editora Globo, 1984) to develop an elegant answer: foreign policy in Brazil is hostage to the authoritative quasi-aristocratic bureaucracy of the foreign ministry.

Lopes's book is important because it presents a new approach to the traditional understanding of the Brazilian foreign policy community in which a powerful and socially detached state is manoeuvred by an elitist bureaucracy. The book's theoretical foundation stems from a normative attempt to argue consistently that despite Brazil's traditions, it is necessary to incorporate new actors in the foreign policy decision-making process.

Three complementary approaches can be discerned here: the shaping of a theoretical framework; a discussion of contemporary foreign policy analysis; and a new reading of the institutional relationship between state, foreign ministry and society.

For those well versed in the study of foreign policy decision-making, seeing this area as a question of public policy will seem old-fashioned. In the context of Brazil, which is only in its third post-authoritarian decade, foreign policy remains a realm apart for many and this book is an important step in reopening a debate largely closed since 1902. Lopes's book is the first major work on this subject in over thirty years.

I would strongly recommend that anyone interested in Brazilian foreign policy analysis or contemporary Brazil in general read this book for the insights it provides into the debate. The reader should pay special attention to the interviews in the annex.

Nevertheless, the book leaves some questions unanswered. For instance, why are intellectuals such as Lopes taking such a critical approach to Brazil's foreign ministry? What are the factors driving this emerging criticism and prompting useful books such as Lopes's?

To be fair, Lopes has been tackling some of these questions in his recent academic and policy writing and this book has an important role in developing the theoretical frame-

works that he and others are using to shape critical appraisals of contemporary Brazilian foreign policy processes.

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In search of the Amazon: Brazil, the United States and the nature of a region. By **Seth Garfield**. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2013. 368pp. Index. Pb.: £16.30. ISBN 978 0 8223 5585 4. Available as e-book.

‘Between 1941 and 1945’, historian Seth Garfield writes, ‘the Brazilian government transported 54,972 migrants to the Amazon in the largest state-subsidized domestic transfer of free labour in the nation’s history’ (p. 127). These *soldados da borracha* were engaged in a joint US–Brazilian effort—dubbed the Battle for Rubber—to boost rubber production for the Allied war effort, a vital commodity in short supply due to the Japanese capture of the rubber plantations of South-East Asia in early 1942. This short period in the history of the Amazon has notably caught the attention of Brazilian historians over the last decade, but Garfield is the first scholar to approach the subject from a local, regional, national and global level. To do so, he has consulted relevant archives in the United States and Brazil, including subnational holdings such as those of the Amazonian states of Acre and Rondônia, as well as conducting interviews with surviving rubber tappers; this has enabled him to present an extraordinarily multifaceted and deeply researched study—the endnotes alone take up more than 70 pages of the book.

One of the strengths of the book is that wartime developments are viewed against a broad backcloth and through a wide lens at each level. The author examines in some detail the multiple meanings of the Vargas regime’s development project for the Amazon, inaugurated in 1937, and the differing objectives envisioned by the ‘discrete sets of mediators’ involved (p. 26): members of the Amazonian elite, junior military officers, intellectuals, plant scientists, doctors, industrialists, engineers, journalists and geographers. Plant scientists, he avers, in one of many memorable turns of phrase, ‘roamed as evangelists of nationalism in the backlands’ (p. 37). Although direct US interest in the Amazon was honed by immediate wartime needs, the region in the 1930s had, more profoundly, ‘loomed ... as a flashpoint for deeper American anxieties over modernity and national identity’ (p. 52). The distinctive US wartime vision of the Amazon, moreover, was divided between the paternalistic outlook of US liberals, led by Vice-President Henry Wallace, who stressed Amazonian redemption through US-led reform, and US conservatives who ‘deemed the native population as refractory to uplift’ (p. 82). At the regional level, Garfield situates the wartime relocation of workers from the drought-stricken north-east, especially the state of Ceará, against the background of the Amazon’s historical place in the north-eastern imaginary; indeed, he traces the pattern of Cearense out-migration over time. It was another example of migrant flows in the Americas in the war years, such as the Mexican *braceros*’ peregrination to the US for agricultural work, which responded to economic opportunities.

Another distinguishing characteristic of the book is its nuanced portrayal of migrants to the Amazon that runs counter to the one predominant in the literature, which has tended to blame them for their own misfortunes: ‘[m]igrants were neither dupes, nor passive victims but agents of change in their sending and receiving communities’ (p. 129). The court cases in the Amazon that the author considers, although mostly unsuccessful for the plaintiff, by the very fact that they were brought, illustrate a change in popular understanding of the state’s role in ensuring justice, as much here as elsewhere in Latin America at this time.

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Although traditionally considered an intermezzo between the great Amazon rubber boom at the beginning of the twentieth century and the military's Amazon development programme of the 1970s and 1980s, the ramifications of which account for intense global interest in the region today, Garfield makes a credible case for looking again at the changes wrought during the war years. The Vargas regime, he contends, established 'the infrastructural and ideological foundations for subsequent state projects in Amazonia' (p. 211). The main credit institutions in the Amazon today are the legacy of US–Brazilian cooperation, along with public health programmes. North-eastern migrants, moreover, through their labour 'were modernizers of the "rainforest cities" that today account for nearly three-fourths of the Amazon's population' (p. 197).

This thoughtful, well-rounded book is, then, an invaluable addition to the English-language historiography of the Amazon that remedies a gap in the extant literature. It also foregrounds an aspect of the war effort far from the battlefields that made an important, if largely unacknowledged, contribution to Allied victory for which participating Brazilian rubbers tappers could retrospectively be proud.

Philip Chrimes