

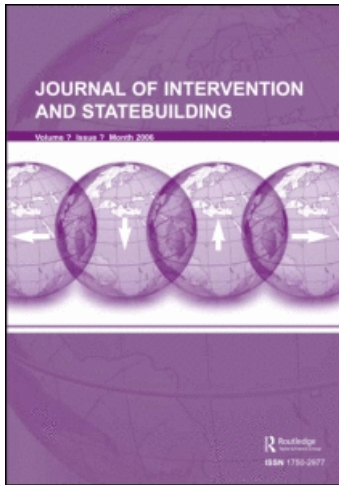
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Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title-content=t741771150>

Book Reviews

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Online Publication Date: 01 June 2009

To cite this Article Jones, Lee, Blume, Till, Venneri, Giulio and Heartfield, James(2009)'Book Reviews',Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding,3:2,277 — 300

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/17502970902833756

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17502970902833756>

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Book Reviews

Liberalism and Democratization in East Asia

Beyond Liberal Democracy: Political Thinking for an East Asian Context by Daniel A. Bell. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006. Pp. 341 + notes + bibliography + index. £14.95 (pbk). ISBN 069-1-12308X.

The Changing Dynamics of Southeast Asian Politics by Jörn Dosch. London: Lynne Rienner, 2007. Pp. 217 + bibliography + index. £35.50 (hbk). ISBN 1-58826-482-3.

Globalization, Democratization and Asian Leadership: Power Sharing, Foreign Policy and Society in the Philippines and Japan by Vincent Kelly Pollard. London: Ashgate, 2004. £56.99 (hbk). ISBN 075-4-615391.

East Asia has often confounded the expectations of mainstream democratization theorists. Despite a broad regional transitions to formal democracy, (the 2006 coup in Thailand notwithstanding), authoritarianism has proved surprisingly resilient (doubtlessly buoyed by the illiberal tendencies of the war on terror). With authoritarian regimes initially indulged by the West for their ability to manage social order and maintain stable investment climates, by the 1980s rapid economic growth saw East Asia diverge from the rest of the developing world. But rather than pushing for democratization as predicted by modernization theory,¹ the East Asian elites and middle classes seemed to care more for profits than ballots. This led theorists like Samuel Huntington to stress the role of 'culture' in political development in order to explain away the failure of their earlier predictions.² Regional elites happily embraced this latest rationale for continued authoritarianism, promoting so-called 'Asian values' as an explanation as to why 'Western' concepts of democracy and human rights did not apply to East Asia. The doctrine of 'Asian values' seemed to suffer, in turn, a mortal blow in the wake of the 1997–98 Asian financial crisis.

Daniel Bell's *Beyond Liberal Democracy* sees 'Asian values' return with a vengeance. Bell challenges Western pieties about spreading 'freedom and democracy' by arguing that there are 'morally legitimate' alternatives to liberal democracy that may be more appropriate to East Asia (Bell 2006, p. 8). This learned and engaging book is also pragmatic: which ideas achieve the greatest

consensus and thus provide a basis for collective action? Which ideas simply work better? Bell argues that elitist, non-democratic and Confucian principles in particular, provide better outcomes than democratic rule, especially in terms of economic management, safeguarding economic, social and minority rights. He also argues that such principles are better at taking into account the interests of non-citizens in decision-making (chs. 5–11). The putatively appealing features of East Asian capitalism are also analysed, such as the efficiency gains offered by the *chaebol* system (business networks and family-owned firms) and the informal provision of social welfare (ch. 10).

The emphasis of Confucianism on securing the basic needs of the population, coupled with Confucius' granting to subjects a right of revolt against unjust rulers, is worked up into a Confucian theory of humanitarian intervention which would narrow the scope of intervention only to rescuing people from tyranny (understood as the failure to save people from starvation, and as long as the intervener is welcomed by the people). This, Bell argues, would have ruled out the US-led 2003 invasion of Iraq (Bell 2006, pp. 37–40).

Bell's claims are contentious. It is far from obvious that authoritarian systems actually safeguard minorities' interests better than egalitarian systems. Bell claims, for instance, that Sino-Indonesians were able to enjoy lucrative patronage and economic success under the Suharto dictatorship (Bell 2006, p. 195). But the upshot of this was, first, that the Chinese were dependent on Suharto's tyranny (and thus the repression of other Indonesians) for the preservation of their interests. Second, when the regime was threatened, it abandoned Sino-Indonesians to anti-Chinese pogroms that it actively sponsored as a way of diverting popular anger against the regime.³ Simply put, authoritarian patronage is capricious. East Asian capitalism may have favourable aspects, but these cannot be analysed in isolation from its drawbacks as Bell supposes, since this ignores the close relationships between, say, the tradition of family ownership, nepotism and cronyism. Similarly Bell's avowedly elitist schema for a 'parliament of scholar-officials' arguably provides no more accountability than China's current one-party state, since the people would still lack the power to discipline or recall their (non)representatives. Indeed, some will doubtless read Bell's work as a lengthy apologia for the Communist Party's continued dominance of China, an attempt to legitimize the absence of civil and political rights by pointing to Beijing's Confucian virtue in ensuring people have enough to eat.

Doubtless some of Bell's claims for the functional benefits of strong centralized rule may occasionally be sound, and there are plenty of Western conservatives who have always admired Asian 'discipline'. To defend democracy, we must go beyond Bell's narrow understanding of it as simply a mode of governance based on measurable policy outputs. Genuine democracy, understood as the expansion of self-rule (as opposed to elite rule⁴ coupled with the trappings of democracy⁴), has accompanied progressive social change and powerfully articulated social demands from below. It has involved the development of intangible but unmistakable aspects of human flourishing such as equality, liberty and personal autonomy—the democratic 'virtues' that John Stuart Mill thought essential to

underpinning enduring liberty. These are values that, unlike, say, social order or 'sound' economic policies, cannot be 'supplied' by authoritarian polities. Moreover, as Mill pointed out, they cannot be inculcated from abroad. Thus, democracy cannot simply be imported but depends on home-grown struggle and the inculcation of democratic 'virtues'.⁵

Mill's appeal to self-determination as a universal principle illustrates that one does not have to be a particularist communitarian like Bell to defend developing countries against the export of ideas fashionable in Western capitals. Notwithstanding Mill's outdated references to 'barbarians', one can be a universalist without being a cultural imperialist. This is also surely a sounder basis for defending the autonomous development of societies than references to 'culture' which, apart from being a flabby concept, is also often parochial and open to elite manipulation. Bell's own concept of culture relies heavily on harking back to ancient philosophy which is allegedly still working its magic today. Yet times change, and so does 'culture'—presumably why Singapore now has to enforce 'filial piety' via statute.⁶ Furthermore, Bell's focus on cultural attributes instead of political processes robs him of resources necessary for his own arguments.

If a crucial facilitator for humanitarian intervention is that the people welcome it, how can people, in the absence of mechanisms for self-determination (given the systems of elite rule that Bell endorses) generate this approval? Similarly perhaps there are 'legitimate' trade-offs between some human rights and 'pressing social needs', but who is to decide on their legitimacy? Culturalist defences lead Bell to exaggerate the benefits of authoritarian rule at the expense of more fundamental human freedoms. When he argues that authoritarian economic governance has provided more benefits for Asian workers than democracy, Bell overlooks the brutality that has accompanied this as developmentalist states have treated brutalized workers and savagely repressed their organizations and political movements. Like Suharto's Indonesia, South Korea and Taiwan were once home to viciously repressive governments. The Panglossian assumption that authoritarianism is the only or best route for Asia to develop and thereby provide for the masses not only patronises Asians, it is also belied by the new democracies' (until recently, at any rate) thriving economies.

Setting aside the question of democracy to Asia, two recent books ask how the foreign policies of some of those Asian states which have embraced democracy actually function in practice. This is an important question, since it is frequently assumed in IR theory that democratized states behave in a more 'liberal' fashion than non-democratized ones.⁷ But this claim is rarely subjected to detailed scrutiny. When it is, the results are often very complex and modest.⁸ Sadly, Vincent Pollard's *Globalization, Democratization and Asian Leadership* is unlikely to provide this required scrutiny in the Asian context. Initially, Pollard's contribution seems theoretically promising, particularly in its emphasis on the illogicality of considering domestic and international politics separately. In practice, however, this is a strange mish-mash of a book, cobbling together very disparate essays on the Philippines and Japan. The basic purposes of various chapters are often far from clear and key points are frequently asserted via

tables or at the end of chapters, rather than being traced out empirically. For instance, Pollard is apparently interested in how the dynamics of foreign and domestic politics play out in the case of the Philippines. Thus one chapter shows how President Ferdinand Marcos was able to 'sell' entry to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) domestically, at the price of being unable to muster the necessary support to definitively resolve the dispute with Malaysia over the territory of Sabah. Key constituencies and actors are helpfully noted, but topics of dubious relevance (such as how ASEAN's name was decided) frequently intrude on the analysis. Later chapters on President Corazon Aquino's attempts to convince her compatriots to re-lease bases to America in the late 1980s terminate before the actual decision (not to re-lease) was forced upon Aquino, which bizarrely denies the reader the opportunity to see a rare example of democratic foreign policy-making through to completion.

More troubling for a book which claims to elaborate causal mechanisms is the chapter on Japanese Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). Pollard seems to want to argue that the Japanese Diet and NGOs are playing a more substantive role in promoting democracy via ODA, substituting Japan's traditional *modus operandi* of propping up both foreign autocrats and uncompetitive domestic industries through tied aid. Yet his own findings seem to indicate the exact opposite: official policy is not being implemented vis-à-vis China, there was little reaction to the 1997 coup in Cambodia, aid to the Philippines tends to bypass NGOs and aid to North Korea apparently does so completely (Pollard 2004 pp. 140–145). Pollard falls back into arguing that Japanese NGOs have the 'potential' to have an important role in policy-making by 2010, but this is speculative (Pollard 2004, pp. 144–146). Indeed, Pollard concludes by arguing that 'official governments' remain in the saddle and 'co-opt' and 'manage' NGOs (Pollard 2004, p. 155). This is also consistent with other scholars' findings in say, the Philippines.⁹ It is thus unclear just what work 'democracy' is supposed to be doing in the shaping and execution of foreign policy in Pollard's cases.

Jörn Dosch's approach in *The Changing Dynamics of Southeast Asian Politics* is more rigorous, empirically rich, well-organized and wide-ranging. Dosch seeks to implement Robert Putnam's 'two-level game' model (where states play domestic and international 'games' simultaneously)¹⁰ by factoring in 'regime accountability' as a 'critical variable'. He also cites a range of literature on 'globalization', though his own position is somewhat vague. While arguing that the degree of pressure on policy-makers varies depending on the overall structure of policy-making, Dosch does not provide a sustained comparison of his three case studies (Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines), opting instead for a broad statist/pluralist distinction which leaves him no way of explaining variance between (or within) these formally democratic states. His focus is on pressure from legislatures and NGOs which now 'participate' in policy-making, rendering states more 'pluralist'. This Weberian framework leads Dosch both to designate highly disparate governments as the same type, and to exclude social pressures not captured by formal parliamentary or 'civil society' actions. For instance, Sukarno and Suharto are both supposedly 'statist', yet they clearly represented vastly different groups

and forces within Indonesia and, consequently, political projects: the former, vainly striving to ride strains of communism, nationalism and Islamism and backed by the largest communist party outside the Soviet bloc, represented a crusading, albeit erratic, anti-imperialism; the latter relied on the army and religious conservatives to crush Indonesia's progressive forces and rule in the interests of capital.

This framework arguably makes it rather difficult to generate evidence to support Dosch's central hypothesis that democratized Southeast Asian states have more 'liberal' foreign policies. Indeed, on Thailand, Dosch says that 'the hypothesis cannot be verified' (Dosch 2007, p. 51). Only the idiosyncratic liberal criticisms of Senator Kraisaak Choonhavan, exaggeratedly described as a 'parallel foreign policy' can be cited, and these apparently had no impact on official policy (Dosch 2007, pp. 51–54). Thailand was democratic from 1988 to 2006, yet its Burma policy, for instance, has generally been highly accommodating of military rule, except during the Democrat Party's post-Asian financial crisis minority administration. This marked a decisive shift in power from the illiberal capitalist class to the more liberal, urban, middle classes, reversed again under Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's *Thai Rak Thai* administration (2000–06). This example would suggest that the particular characteristics of currently dominant social forces matters more than the variable of democracy/authoritarianism; Dosch has overlooked the possibility of illiberal democracy.

Similarly, in the Philippines, the only decision that can be cited in strong support of Dosch's thesis was the refusal to renew US basing rights in 1991; no comparable 'participation' has occurred since, arguably because of the reassertion of dominance by the traditional oligarchy and the demobilization of the radical elements which led the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. The Philippines has probably taken the most hostile stand on Burma but a Senate resolution to seek Burma's expulsion from ASEAN remains, as Dosch notes, unfulfilled (Dosch 2007, p. 56). Similarly in Indonesia, despite an initial post-Suharto period of activism, which Dosch explains as turf-grabbing by the legislature, the Indonesian parliament has apparently settled into a cosy routine of 'advising' the government on various decisions that it would arguably most likely have taken anyway (Dosch 2007, pp. 57–61). My own research suggests Indonesia's parliament has been almost exclusively preoccupied with internal problems and has only recently begun to try to assert a foreign policy role for itself, taking up the issue of Myanmar (Burma) as its means and joining the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus, a development that Dosch oddly completely ignores. Yet this, too, was quietly sanctioned by the executive, and attempts to form caucuses on less 'safe' issues, such as corruption and 'good governance' have not succeeded.¹¹ Aside from legislators, Dosch quotes others' downbeat assessments of NGOs' role in policy formation (Dosch 2007, pp. 65–66).

Dosch is on firmer ground when he digresses from his main topic onto other aspects of Southeast Asian politics. His coverage of the region's various secessionist movements and their socio-economic (rather than religious)

inspirations is a useful rebuttal to those who see Southeast Asia as the 'second front' in a global 'war on terror'. The chapter on 'rethinking regionalism' also provides a refreshing contribution to the often-stale literature on ASEAN. Dosch's chapter on Cambodia is excellent, showing how the country's aid dependency has transformed it into a 'playground' for international NGOs, who are thereby able to dictate institutional change on a whim, leading to the slapdash decentralization of government (Dosch 2007, p. 152). The argument that foreign NGOs have penetrated the Cambodian state is, however, a far cry from the book's principal claim that *domestic* NGOs have acquired a stronger role in policy-making in young democracies—and we might ask why Cambodia, formally democratic for longer than Indonesia, was not included as a full case study. Therefore, perhaps counter-intuitively, the evidence for democratization in Asia producing a dramatic shift from a 'realist' to a 'liberal' orientation, and the participation of new actors, is not readily forthcoming. Rather the evidence points to relatively modest, incremental changes—elites being perhaps a little more constrained than previously. More importantly in terms of theory, the evidence points away from Weberian paradigms that stress institutions and 'civil society' actors, towards the realm of social forces and conflict.

As scholars of critical political economy have pointed out, democracy in Southeast Asia is elite democracy, characterized by corruption, money politics and overt violence.¹² It tends to represent the interests of powerful sections of the capitalist and landed oligarchies rather than those of workers, peasants or the region's generally weak middle classes, that is, it is properly 'polyarchic', not 'participatory' democracy. In this system, a small group actually rules and mass participation in decision-making is largely confined to leadership choices in elections that are carefully managed by ruling elites.¹³ The institutional definition of democracy (elections equals democracy) expects 'pluralism' to flow from these elections; accounts sensitive to which social forces actually predominate might expect otherwise. When the masses begin to intrude on the political scene or segments of the old elite are edged out, democracy itself may be suspended—as in the 2006 coup that overthrew Thaksin in Thailand. As noted above in relation to Bell, East Asia's developmentalist states have tended to suppress workers and peasants, and, despite remarkable resilience, unions and other mass organizations generally remain weak, while rural NGOs often have defensive, even reactionary, agendas.¹⁴ This history of social, economic and political development is potentially crucial in explaining why, despite various transitions to democracy, there has not been a radical transformation in political outcomes.

What is needed now are not scholarly defences of the 'cultural' status quo, with all its attendant inequities, disparities and inequality, but more critical scholarship that uncovers these relationships, and indeed the way 'culture' has been consciously manipulated to maintain them. Scholarship needs to closely attend to these relationships, rather than seeing 'democracy' as necessarily ushering in a new age. Furthermore, a proper understanding of democratization

must see it not as merely as a Western gift, but something that is won through what Mill called 'arduous struggle' in the domestic sphere.¹⁵

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Notes

1 Huntington, S. P., *Political order in changing societies*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968.

2 Harrison, L. E. and Huntington, S. P., eds., 2000. *Culture matters: How values shape human progress*. New York: Basic Books.

3 Budiardjo, C., 2000. The legacy of the Suharto dictatorship. In: P. Hainsworth and S. McCloskey, eds. *The East Timor question: the struggle for independence*. London: IB Tauris London. pp. 61–62.

4 William I. Robinson calls this 'polyarchy.' See: Robinson, W. I., 1996. *Promoting polyarchy: globalization, US intervention, and hegemony*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.49. Polyarchy is defined as a system where 'a small group actually rules and mass participation in decision-making confined to leadership choice in elections carefully managed by competing elites'. Democracy is understood institutionally, not substantively as the rule of the *demos*, and is accordingly limited, for example, so as not to extend to economic relations.

5 Mill, J.S., 1984. A few words on non-intervention. In: J.M. Robson, ed., *The collected works of John Stuart Mill*, vol. XXI. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 111–124.

6 'The Maintenance of Parents Act' was introduced in 1994. For a consideration, see Chan, W-C, 2004. The duty to support an aged parent in Singapore. *Pacific rim law & policy journal*, 13 (4), pp. 547–578.

7 For an instance see, Acharya, A., 2003. Democratisation and the prospects for participatory regionalism in southeast Asia. *Third world quarterly* 24 (2), pp. 375–390.

8 See for example, Kahler, M., ed., 1997. *Liberalization and foreign policy*. New York: Columbia University Press.

9 See for example, Robinson, *Promoting polyarchy*, ch. 3; Hedman, E.-V., 2006 *In the name of civil society: from free election movements to people power in the Philippines*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

10 Putnam, R.D., 1988. *Diplomacy and domestic politics: the logic of two-level games*, *International organization*, 42 (3), 427–460.

11 Author interviews with Indonesian MPs Djoko Susilo and Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Jakarta, February 2008.

12 For instance: Rodan, G., Hewison, K. and Robison, R., eds., 2006. *The political economy of southeast Asia: markets, power and contestation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

13 See for example, on the Philippines, see Linantud, J.L., 2004. The 2004 Philippine elections: political change in an illiberal democracy. *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27 (1), pp. 80–101.

14 See for example, see Hewison, K., 1999. *Localism in Thailand: a study of globalisation and its discontents*. CSGR Working Paper 39/99. University of Warwick.

15 Mill, A few words on *non-intervention*, p.123.

Strategies for Building Peace: From Transparency to Democratization

Promoting Peace with Information. Transparency as a Tool of Security Regime by Dan Lindley. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007. Pp. 280+ appendix + notes + bibliography + index. £22.50 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-691-12943-6.

From War to Democracy. Dilemmas of Peacebuilding edited by Anna K. Jarstad and Timothy D. Sisk. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. 290+ notes + bibliography + index. £15.99 (pbk). ISBN 978-0-521-71327-6.

Two recent books attempt to apply new theoretical approaches to peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Dan Lindley's book introduces regime theory to the study of peace operations, with a focus on the role of transparency for promoting peace. Anna K. Jarstad and Timothy D. Sisk's volume combines peacebuilding and democratization analyses to clarify why peacebuilding can entail certain 'dilemmas' for democratization.

Lindley argues that regime theory helps us in the study of both international multi-lateral agreements—such as the post-Napoleonic Concert of Europe, the 'first peacetime multi-lateral crisis management forum' (Lindley 2007, p. 55)—as well as contemporary peacekeeping operations. Regime theory seeks to account for the impact of transnational actors on international politics. Accordingly, regimes are defined as 'sets of explicit or implicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors expectations converge in a given issue area'.¹ In Lindley's book, transparency is defined as the 'availability of information about potential adversaries' actions, capabilities, and intentions' (Lindley 2007, p. 17).

Transparency is often held to play a key role in reducing the risk of misperceptions and the escalation of security dilemmas (i.e. situations in which the lack of information about the true intentions of the other side lead to defensive measures which in turn exacerbate insecurity). Lindley focuses on 'cooperative efforts to increase transparency' (Lindley 2007, pp. 18–19), and he proposes a set of hypotheses (for an overview, see Lindley 2007, p. 43). These hypotheses are that (1) security regimes provide transparency, (2) anticipated transparency promotes co-operation, (3) transparency promotes co-operation, (4) transparency reduces unwarranted fears and worst-case assumptions on the part of actors, (5) transparency reduces cheaters and spoilers in the regimes, and (6) transparency about the regime itself increases its effectiveness.

With this framework, Lindley studies five cases, one from the post-Napoleonic Concert of Europe (1814–38), and four from the period of post-1945 UN peacekeeping (Lindley 2007, p. 46). Lindley avers that transparency was only of use 'when there was an underlying uncertainty or lack of information' (Lindley 2007, p. 116). Formal regimes, such as peacekeeping operations, only provide a meaningful forum for the other parties 'if they can generate and exchange information over and above the independent information-gathering capabilities of the adversaries' (Lindley 2007, p. 181). The cases vary according to their

levels of information and fear. A case in point is the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) operating on the Golan Heights since 1974. Despite the generally peaceful situation there, UNDOF still contributes to transparency between Israel and Syria, 'lowering already low levels of fear' (Lindley 2007, p. 137). The Cyprus case (UNFICYP, 1964-present) shows that even if transparency is provided by peacekeeping operations, it can be limited by the lack of a commonly accepted narrative about the conflict by the belligerents. In Cyprus, both sides had very different understandings about the conflict. In contrast, UNTAG (1989–90) in Namibia confirms Lindley's fifth hypothesis, with information used by UNTAG to conduct investigations into violations of the peace agreements and 'coerce more lawful or peaceful behaviour from aggressors and troublemakers' (Lindley 2007, p. 151). The ability to directly address spoilers depended very much on the consent of the parties (Lindley 2007, p. 94). Confirming Lindley's first hypothesis, UNTAC (1992–93) in Cambodia clarifies how important the prospect of peacekeeping can be for building trust in future transparency (Lindley 2007, p. 160), especially if mandated to supervise core state functions, such as the provision of public information.

Lindley argues that the strongest evidence for the success of transparency can be found in multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations, with lesser effects in traditional peacekeeping [multi-dimensional operations being those operations with mandates extending beyond merely monitoring borders; for example, UNTAG and UNTAC rather than UNDOF (Lindley 2007, pp. 13–14)]. Other factors influence the 'operational effectiveness' of transparency: strong local information outlets coupled with low uncertainty rendered transparency less important. However, high uncertainty and weak local information make transparency a meaningful tool for peacekeeping. In contrast, in informal, less institutionalized peace-making regimes such as the post-Napoleonic Concert system, the primary benefit of transparency was the increased speed of communication between the parties (Lindley 2007, p. 180), and improved decision-making due to information and access to the other parties (Lindley 2007, p. 13). The second hypothesis is weakly confirmed by the UNTAC case. Lindley's third hypothesis was only weakly confirmed as well (Lindley 2007, p. 185), with little evidence that transparency promotes co-operation by reducing the uncertainties and miscalculations that hinder bargaining.

One key insight for peacekeeping operations is the positive impact of self-transparency and the explanation of its own rules for the peacekeepers themselves. Furthermore, the more intrusive the operation, the more successful transparency: where the UN is tasked with statebuilding, the peacekeepers have to explain what they intend to do. 'Fortunately, [it] is most likely to succeed with information campaigns and transparency precisely where the need for self-explanation is highest [...]' (Lindley 2007, p. 187). The crucial insight for peacekeeping is that information can help peacemaking processes by 'shaping the interests and preferences of adversaries' (Lindley 2007, p. 193). Lindley calls for the conscious use of information and transparency in peacekeeping. During his research interviews, it appeared that there was little knowledge of the value

of providing transparency (Lindley 2007, p. 194). He rightfully argues that the role of information and transparency should be stressed more in both peacekeeping and research. The practice observed in Lindley's case studies, however, may have changed in contemporary peacekeeping operations, which are running, such as in Liberia, extensive public information campaigns.

Lindley's book is a well-structured study of this role, with a methodologically sound case selection and research design. Furthermore, he does not see transparency as a panacea but an important tool to aid the processes of realpolitik going on during crises and conflicts. The chapters and hypotheses are summarized in tables, which is a helpful way of mapping and communicating research results. Well-defined research designs are rare in peacekeeping studies, so this should receive special merit. Lindley's work shows that the combination of 'traditional' theories with more recent phenomena of peace and conflict can bring about insightful results. While transparency is certainly not the only factor relevant for the study of regimes – a point that he also stresses – it shows that for UN peacekeeping missions the role of transparency has to be taken seriously. Yet it cannot be decoupled from other goods in security regimes, such as credible commitments by conflict parties.² But transparency remains nonetheless an important part of this equation.

Anna K. Jarstad and Timothy D. Sisk's volume focuses on the intricate question of how post-conflict societies can move as smoothly as possible towards peace and democracy. The core dilemma relates to the contradictory requirements of building peace versus aiding democratization. For example, one dilemma within the peacebuilding-democratization nexus is the decision of whether to include perpetrators of conflict in post-war power-sharing agreements. Although this may have positive short-term effects, it also runs the risk of undermining long-term democratization. These kinds of dilemmas can be evinced in six dimensions with which international actors have to deal: 'peacekeeping, management of violence, power sharing, political party transformation, civil society, and international reactions to democratization crises' (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, pp. 1–2). For example, democratization can create security dilemmas for former warring factions (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 29).

In the first chapter, Jarstad introduces four types of dilemma: horizontal, vertical, systemic and temporal. The horizontal dilemma refers to the relation between war elites and democratic parties, while the vertical dilemma introduces the relation between elites and the public. For example, while—for security reasons—certain agreements should be negotiated secretly, all steps of the peace process should be as legitimate as possible. The systemic dilemma relates to local ownership of the peace process, and the temporal dilemma clarifies trade-offs between short- and long-term effects. The biggest challenge is to sequence the steps so that they solve the conflict that was not solved by the prior military dispute. The difficulty is that, according to statistical results, those conflicts that end with a clear victory produce more stable democracies afterwards. Accordingly, in the second chapter Virginia Page Fortna proposes that 'the effectiveness of peacekeeping on democratization is open to debate'

(Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 40). The detrimental effects of peacekeeping and the 'positive effects' of civil war, so to speak, need to be considered. In relation to democratization, peacekeeping does not have—according to Fortna—any 'statistically relevant effect' (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 64). This means that peacekeeping does not have any impact on democratization, probably because it actually may contribute to decisions—such as including former perpetrators into peace agreements—that will undermine democratization in a later stage.

Kristine Höglund addresses further dilemmas: while democratization may create new possibilities for violence, the use of coercion by peacekeepers may also undermine democratization. Höglund proposes three key areas in which both effects can be studied: elections, media reform and security sector reform. Her main argument is that ways need to be found to integrate potential perpetrators of violence into the peace process. As Jarstad argues in the fourth chapter, power-sharing agreements decided at the end of war need to be kept open to subsequent democratic negotiations. However, as Mimmi Söderberg-Kovacs shows, the conversion of former fighters into politicians can have positive short-term effects but negative consequences for emerging democratization process due to the hierarchical structure of formerly military organizations.

Similarly, as Benjamin Reilly shows, elections are fundamental but can also have detrimental effects. International actors need to take into account security dilemmas, the incompatibility between short- and long-term effects of elections and the need to build institutions (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 163). Parties need to feel secure enough to sign onto an election process without knowing the outcome in the long term (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 165). Jarstad's conclusion about the flexibility of peace agreements for later amendments comes to mind. Similarly, Roberto Belloni argues in the seventh chapter that the development of civil society is inherently tied to the development of stable and efficient social and political institutions. Peter Wallensteen warns against undervaluing the dangers of the failure of democratization efforts. Peacekeeping 'today differs in many respects, but historical lessons should always be kept in mind' (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 213). Wallensteen argues that dilemmas appear especially at critical junctures of the peacebuilding process, and shows convincingly that international responses to democratization efforts have been so different for political reasons. Wallensteen proposes increasing the research on international organizations promoting democracy and peace.

As co-editor, Sisk takes up the challenge of summing up priorities and the conundrum of sequencing peacebuilding and democratization efforts, without letting them undermine each other. The main task is to 'design [...] a way in which the conflict-inducing nature of transitional processes can be mitigated such that the initial constraints upon democratization that arise from peace imperatives can, over time, fall away as trust and legitimacy ostensibly build in the post-war period' (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 240). He maps the findings of the book according to the four dilemmas. In relation to the vertical dilemma—elites versus mass inclusion—Sisk proposes that due to the lack of capacity for political participation in the population, the mid-level elites and 'political entrepreneurs'

are the most important transmission belts for conflict transformation (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 245). Due to inherent inequalities between elites and masses in developing societies, one crucial priority is to build incentives and institutions for the distribution of resources. Civil society also needs to be integrated.

Furthermore, peace operations should contribute the 'essential credible commitment' to overcome security dilemmas, a key insight of Lindley's book. Sequencing and timing of peacebuilding and democratization steps are crucial if transitions from war to democracy are to be successful. Sisk argues that transitions for each conflict situation need to be tailored specifically to that situation, while maintaining insights from broadly based studies. At any stage, political violence needs to be managed rapidly and quickly, if 'degenerative cycles of violence' are to be turned 'into generative cycles of trust, tolerance, and a willingness to play the game of democracy non-violently' (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 252). Here, international capacities for rapid peacekeeping deployment exist, but they also need to be used more. Furthermore, institutions designed as part of post-conflict peace agreements should not be final choices for institutional designs but should be adaptable according to later electoral and constitutional decisions.

Taking war-to-democracy transitions seriously 'demands a series of successive missions to address the longer-term phases of consolidating peace [...], of addressing the socio-economic conditions [...], and, ultimately, the creation of a self-sustaining social contract' (Jarstad and Sisk 2008, p. 257). The different ingredients are crucial for minimizing the dilemmas noted above. While their volume offers no final solution to the problem—which admittedly would be hard for one volume—Jarstad and Sisk is a great contribution to the literature on peacebuilding, as it maps dilemmas these operations face through a variety of dimensions. These dimensions are mentioned in other scholarly works but are rarely tackled as they are here. Furthermore, an inter-disciplinary lens on peacebuilding and democratization as offered in this volume, yields interesting insights.

Taking the two books together, both adopt innovative paths into problems of peacebuilding. While Lindley is methodologically more coherent, the Jarstad/Sisk volume gives insights into the various dimensions of peacebuilding. It makes clear that peacebuilding requires proper sequencing, both in terms of sorting out the different priorities, and in terms of providing transparency and information to the former warring parties. Peacebuilding dilemmas are strongly intertwined with transparency: one could argue that peacebuilding and democratization both require transparency in order to function. The conflict parties and population need to be supplied with unbiased information about decision-making and future sequences of the peace process. Peacebuilding needs a careful consideration of the issues at stake in the peace process. Here, security regimes may provide key goods, such as information and transparency to start peace processes and provide forums for discussions and negotiations. In a second step, peacebuilding and democratization may produce dilemmas but also remain essentially connected: a well-designed peace process is likely to result in a well-managed

transition to democracy. However, sequencing is not only a technical but also a political matter, and therefore needs to be crafted according to each conflict. There is a strong need for more research on the sequences, transparency and public information in peacebuilding.

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Notes

- 1 Krasner, S.D., 1983 Structural causes and regime consequences: regimes as intervening variable. In: S.D. Krasner, ed. *International regimes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 1–22.
- 2 The author would like to thank Steffen Eckhard for his comments and for a helpful discussion on regime theory.

Nationalisms and Frozen Sovereignty: Bosnia-Herzegovina between Fragmentation and EU Integration

State Building and International Intervention in Bosnia by Roberto Belloni. New York: Routledge, 2007. Pp. 185 + notes + bibliography + index. £70.00 (hbk). ISBN 978-0-415-44925-0.

Where Nation-States Come From: Institutional Change in the Age of Nationalism by Philip G. Roeder. Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007. Pp. 353 + appendix + bibliography + index. £21.95 (pbk) ISBN 978-0-691-13467-3, £40.95 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-691-12728-6.

Understanding the rise and consolidation of new states in the international arena inevitably requires the parallel assessment of both exogenous factors and endogenous forces. The two books under review in this essay shed light on the dichotomy between externally driven statebuilding pressures and endogenous dynamics of state formation. Philip Roeder's *Where Nation-States Come From* provides a series of analytical tools to determine what institutional conditions facilitate or obstruct a national struggle for sovereignty. Conversely, the account by Roberto Belloni on the international presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina helps in understanding the impact of peace- and statebuilding missions on the stabilization of a war-torn society. This review article plays off the arguments in these two books against each other.

Since the prospect of European Union (EU) membership was formally extended to Bosnia,¹ the EU's commitment to the stabilization of Bosnia has pushed this 'potential candidate country'—in the jargon of the EU Commission—along a rather peculiar path. The progressive installation of EU-driven statebuilding has

produced a paradoxical situation. As a 'post-national' institution based on a system of pooled sovereignty, the EU is preparing Bosnia to give up some crucial sovereign prerogatives when the time to join the Union arrives. But does Bosnia have any sovereignty to pool in the first place, given the weakness of state institutions? Bosnia remains an incomplete statebuilding project, a weak state that still needs to be strengthened in the full and efficient exercise of its domestic sovereignty capabilities.

The EU has undoubted influence in Bosnia: European integration represents the only issue on which local elites agree unconditionally. Brussels offers the only credible perspective that, even indirectly, has so far contained the centrifugal forces characteristic of the region. Aware of these potential problems, thanks to the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP), Brussels has tried to limit the direct intrusiveness of its powers and emphasize the importance of 'ownership' and democratization over mere economic reconstruction. All these precautions seem to be backed by the latent conviction that the numerous internal fractures of the country will eventually be healed once Bosnian sovereignty is pooled in the greater European construction.

The inevitable result of this strategy is that, instead of being resolved, the sovereignty struggle between the three ethno-religious factions formerly at war in Bosnia, remains frozen. This impression further confirms that the Bosnian peace process, since its beginning in 1995, has mostly resulted in an 'attenuation of historical ethnic and national rivalries' rather than grassroots reconciliation of a complex multi-ethnic polity (Belloni 2007, p. 1). The stabilization and functional reorganization of Bosnia's costly, inefficient, asymmetric and fragmented state structures still remains far from final. It cannot be denied that since the Dayton consociational regime was implemented in 1995 following the end of the Bosnian war, institutional re-structuring has taken place several times, mostly thanks to international initiative and resources. However, local elites have not been able to ensure a process of constitutional consolidation, thus inducing international and EU policy-makers to marginalize broader constitutional reform and avoid the risk of an endless confrontation without solutions. Against this backdrop, two main questions emerge: first, apart from the acknowledged responsibilities of local actors, what other dynamics have contributed to this stalemate? Second, does the EU actually possess the instruments to rein in nationalist forces, smoothly integrate Bosnia and prevent any further fragmentation? Roeder's analysis of state formation provides the framework for elaborating an answer to the second question. Belloni's book, on the other hand, provides clear hints to assess the first dilemma. Assessing the Bosnian statebuilding project from its very initial phases, Belloni elaborates on a series of interesting observations and successfully overcomes a long-standing dispute among three groups of scholars. The main ambition of Belloni's book is to overcome the confrontation between historical determinists (those who argue that only the creation of ethnically homogenous states is sustainable in the long run), interventionists (those who advocate invasive and protracted international intervention) and autonomists (those who adopt radical standpoints against

international intervention but without offering alternative forms of regulation) (Belloni 2007, pp. 28–40). Based on a well-articulated analysis that encompasses societal, institutional, political and strategic factors, Belloni proposes a simple but convincing methodology. In his eyes, the literature on peace- and statebuilding should be centred less on what degree of intrusiveness is ‘desirable’ after conflict. This ‘quantitative’ focus should be replaced by due regard for what type of interactions need to be established between peacekeepers and statebuilders on the one hand, and local actors on the other. Putting to one side the ‘how much intervention?’ question, the key problematic that experts on Bosnia should address becomes more qualitative: ‘why intervention has been somewhat disappointing and how it could be re-structured to meet the expectations and needs of other similar cases of multilateral intervention in weak and failing states’ (Belloni 2007, p. 5).

Belloni analyses over 12 years of international involvement in Bosnia and suggests that ‘the internationals’ should approach their mission with better articulated bottom-up manoeuvres and enhanced co-ordination between different agencies, thus minimizing the risk of creating phantom states that need international pandering for decades, with continuous injections of external financial aid. Specifically, Belloni argues in favour of policies oriented towards grass-root reconciliation, and criticizes international agencies for their prolonged tendency to ‘consider Bosnia as a blank slate’ (Belloni 2007, p. 97). Such criticisms are not new in the academic literature or in policy analysis. However, Belloni supersedes previous contributions by pushing his investigation in a way that captures the ethos underpinning international statebuilding. He indeed demonstrates that international agencies have not been able to facilitate the emergence of a truly stable Bosnia since they have failed to focus upon a specific operational direction. Not only has the *modus operandi* of the international community in Bosnia lacked co-ordination, critically, international efforts have been backed neither by a clear and definitive acceptance of an institutionalized separation of the three ethno-religious factions, nor by a resolute promotion of pluralism, multi-ethnicity and costly strategies for reconciliation. International agencies can therefore be criticized for having a ‘bias towards maintaining the status quo’ and for procrastinating over a definitive solution for the Bosnia ‘stateness problem’ (Belloni 2007, p. 173, pp.17–19). This predisposition has supposedly induced internationals to overlook the need for structured, coherent and stabilizing changes.

Partially in line with what has been suggested by Stephen Krasner,² Belloni advocates the formalization of shared-sovereignty institutions from the initial stages of statebuilding projects. These arrangements should represent a fair and more transparent alternative to both massive and intrusive international missions on the one hand, and ‘naive calls for domestic autonomy’ on the other (Belloni 2007, p. 6). The experience in Bosnia has shown that while international post-conflict initiatives are systematically accompanied by proclamations on ownership, capacity-building and domestic autonomy, they clearly maintain neo-colonial attitudes and end up compromising self-governance and democracy.

Arguing in favour of transparent and shared-institutional arrangements, Belloni lifts that cloak of naivety that has often enveloped the literature on post-conflict intervention. While calling for a better definition of roles and mission objectives and for the formal appointment of international experts in domestic institutions of the recipient state, Belloni does not overlook the inevitable dichotomy between objective needs of the recipient state and the interests of both multi-lateral organizations and their sponsoring states. As he points out, regardless of the type of mission they undertake or the way in which their personnel can be integrated into local institutions, international agencies remain

organisations with their own institutional interests, priorities and objectives resulting from the self-interest of their member states. Because self-interest is not necessarily in tune with the needs of a country recovering from war, the overall coherence and effectiveness of international intervention will always be difficult to ensure (Belloni 2007, pp. 175–176).

Still, this subtle pessimism about international missions does not prevent Belloni from maintaining a certain degree of confidence in the specific potentials of the EU stabilizing influence: '[t]he long term policy of the Europeanisation of Bosnia and the surrounding region is an important step forwards from short-term, ad hoc conflict management strategies' (Belloni 2007, p. 174).

If this note of optimism can be shared, the uncritical use of the term 'Europeanization' should be questioned. Moreover, it cannot be disregarded that after more than five years of EU-driven statebuilding Bosnia still remains divided by an Inter-Entity Boundary Line that separates two asymmetrical entities—the Bosniak-Croat Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska.³ In spite of the externally facilitated institutional re-structuring and the EU perspective, there is no agreement among Bosnian elites on how to move beyond the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords. While the main lines drawn to implement the agreement represent a 'ceiling' for the Serb community, they are seen as a 'starting ground' for more drastic centralization for the Bosniaks, and something in between these two options for the Croats (Belloni 2007, p. 43). Given these three differing views on the general configuration of the state, Bosnian elites evidently approach co-operation by relying mostly on logics of relative gains. In other words, each ethnic group assesses the desirability of reforms by comparing its own potential benefits with those achievable by others. Policies or institutional adjustments that could potentially increase the efficiency of the state hardly receive cross-ethnic support when they are perceived as steps that push the central state towards the ideal configuration sponsored by one group or the other. As clarified by Belloni in the introductory section of his book 'Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats alike still take the following view: dominate or be dominated, impose one's will or withdraw' (Belloni 2007, p. 2).

In Bosnia, co-operation among elites has remained sporadic even after the last renewal of the parliament, which took place in October 2006. Despite the defeat of the old nationalist parties (once protagonists of the civil war), the new 'moderate' parties that won last elections have thus far confirmed—in their

strategies, interactions and *modus operandi*—that confrontation based on ethnicity remains the key dynamic in Bosnian politics. This has been quite a surprise for the international community. Commenting on this issue, an officer serving in the EU Police Mission has admitted that, paradoxically, ‘internationals miss old nationalist parties. Look at Republika Srpska: [the] SNSD [Alliance of Independent Social Democrats] is totally entity-based. Social-democrats in their name and mottos, they are actually nationalists. They feed their constituencies with nationalism. We were not prepared to handle a renewal of the ethnic tension and accentuation of ethno-nationalist rhetoric’.⁴

This candid admission takes us to the second question outlined above: is Bosnia destined to fragment or will the prospect of EU membership continue to contain the nationalist drift of Republika Srpska and its leadership? Useful elements for addressing this issue are provided by Philip Roeder’s *Where Nation-States Come From*. Based on the analysis of a century of Eurasian history, the book tests the validity of the so-called ‘segmental institution thesis’ by seeking to expand beyond the ‘nationalist narrative’—mainly focused on the rise and fall of ethnic identities in state formation—by throwing light on the institutional and administrative aspects of state formation (Roeder 2007, pp. 9–12).

Providing an impressive amount of both quantitative and qualitative evidence, combined in a magisterial way, Roeder shows that almost all nation-state projects that obtained full independence during the last century were based on the same politico-institutional experience: that of so-called ‘segment-states’. These arrangements cannot merely be read as ‘territorial jurisdictions within a federal state’; as he clarifies, the consolidation of a segment-state depends on the presence of ‘juridically separate communities of people who purportedly have special claim to that jurisdiction as a homeland’ (Roeder 2007, pp.12–13). A state can be thus defined ‘segmented’—rather than more simply federal or decentralized—when both territory and population are organized ‘into distinct political statuses, so that territories constitute separate jurisdictions and the people associated with those territories as homelands enjoy different rights’ (Roeder 2007, p. 44). The experiences first of the Russian Empire and later of the Soviet Union ineluctably show that ‘segment-states were drawn without any consideration for potential nationalism—either they predated the era of nationalism or the common-state government could not imagine that the purportedly benighted population would be capable of generating its own nationalism’ (Roeder 2007, p. 56). Historical observation further confirms that, paradoxically, ‘a population is unlikely to become a nation with widespread consensus on its right to statehood until after the achievement of statehood’ (Roeder 2007, p. 81). In other words, Roeder’s analysis helps us to capture the role of variegated political institutions behind secessionism, rather than simply attributing state-formation to inchoate nationalist passion.

Bosnia-Herzegovina has many of the characteristics that are typical of segmented states. Among other elements—and apart from the various international constraints over self-governance—the most peculiar structural features of Dayton Bosnia include: the consociational configuration launched with an

international agreement, the complex system of balances among three ‘constituent peoples’, the presence of a special district like Brčko (which soon could be joined by Srebrenica),⁵ and the asymmetries between the multi-layered FBiH west of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line and Republika Srpska. In spite of this complex picture, the most relevant periphery-centre struggle for sovereignty clearly takes place between the central capital Sarajevo and Banja Luka, provincial capital of the Republika Srpska. The attitude of the Serb leadership, currently guided by the Prime Minister Milorad Dodik, fully confirms Roeder’s valuable account of the ‘temptations’ that make segment-states leaders drift away from common institutions. Once the debate on the divisions of competences and decision rights between the periphery and the centre starts

segmental institutions create incentives for segment-state leaders to make more radical claims for a greater share of these decision rights. As the nation-state crisis grows more intense, the bargaining range that includes mutually acceptable compromises to keep the common-state whole may simply disappear (Roeder 2007, p. 203).

The proposals presented in *Where Nation-States Come From* are for the most part convincing. Throughout the volume, Roeder supports the initial claim that ‘[r]ather than groups or territories alone, it is the unique conjunction of popular and territorial jurisdictions in segment states that has paved the way to independence’ (Roeder 2007, p 10). A certain centrality can be attached to the analysis of what conditions allow segment-state leaders to consolidate ‘political-identity hegemony’. These conditions mainly stem from the exclusive capability of a segment-state leadership to reward joiners to their cause, sanction free-riders that benefit but do not contribute to the struggle for independence, and finally, protect contributors from possible retaliations that common-state governments might attempt (Roeder 2007, pp. 246–247).

The main correlation presented by Roeder (2007, p. 341) is astonishing: 86 per cent of the nation-states that achieved independence during the course of the last century had been segment-states immediately prior to consolidating full domestic and international sovereignty status. However, his extreme confidence in the segmental institutions thesis causes Roeder to leave two important problems unanswered. The first is where do segment-states themselves actually come from? If the detailed quantitative account of the Eurasian history of the twentieth century indirectly offers several hints, it is equally true that Roeder overlooks whether these institutional arrangements were formed by top-down concessions of leaders that had lost control of their territory, or bottom-up conquests by insurgent elites from the periphery. Second, Roeder seems to overstate the possibility of interpreting current international dynamics by applying the segmental institution thesis. Concluding a nonetheless brilliant exposition, in his final remarks, he criticizes what could be referred to as ‘the international selection mechanism thesis’ (2007, p. 342). Scholars contributing to this strand (e.g. Robert Gilpin, Peter Gourevitch and Hendrik Spruyt),⁶ trace the consolidation of nation-states in the international system back to different so-called ‘selection

mechanisms': international environmental pressures that determine what type of political institution and community survive and flourish. While criticizing this approach, Roeder does not openly dismiss the possibility that segment-states that gain independence are successful because they are structurally resistant to the 'selection mechanisms' that characterize the international environment. In conclusion, it seems that Roeder cements a new brick into the wider explanatory wall erected by the 'internationalists' that he tries to criticize.

The recent experiences of the Western Balkans—and particularly that of Bosnia—allow us to emphasize another controversial point of Roeder's analysis: the role of exogenous factors. It seems undeniable that 'over the past century the willingness and ability of external actors to forestall nation-state crises was very limited and actually waned' (Roeder 2007, p. 342). However, this statement can be questioned by expanding the time frame considered in Roeder's analysis to the nineteenth century and the post-Cold War era. From the fall of Napoleon until World War II, the rise and fall of claims to sovereign statehood was heavily conditioned by a poorly structured but very active international community. Moreover, external intervention and regulation were influential also in the post-1945 world throughout the period of decolonization. Analysing the genesis of nation-states with a focus on the dichotomy between nationalism and institution, Roeder marginalizes international dynamics as well as the role of great-powers.

Analytically rebalancing internal dynamics against the impact of external factors is a necessary exercise. Roeder's account of the centre-periphery dialectic within segmented-states is impeccable, and equally solid is his analysis of the relationships among competing political leaders in a segment-state and between the latter and their constituency. However, the focus on the dynamics of the USSR and the early experiences of the Soviet successor states is less convincing, as Roeder is testing his theory on a region that was largely closed to external political interferences. The explanatory power of the segmental institution thesis partially fades when confronted with the different dynamics that characterize world politics today. The Caucasus and the Western Balkans are a clear example. In the latter region, the struggle of Kosovo against Serbia and of Banja Luka against Sarajevo were solved in the first case and contained in the second, thanks to the decisive interventions of Western powers.

Even if Bosnia—which has few parallels in recent history for the degree of external regulation seen there—seems to be beyond the story of nationalism and institutional change told by Roeder, it is clear that we should not ignore internal forces, the attitude of autochthonous elites, domestic institutions and societal dynamics when analysing such cases. Resembling Yugoslavia on a smaller scale, the complex Bosnian mosaic confirms that only a balanced view, that combines exogenous and endogenous factors, can provide an adequate framework for understanding the dynamics underpinning a state project.

Notes

- 1 BiH was recognized as a 'potential candidate member' in November 2000 at the EU Zagreb Summit, together with other four countries of the Western Balkans (namely Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia and the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). For further details see http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/potential-candidate-countries/bosnia_and_herzegovina/eu_bosnia_and_herzegovina_relations_en.htm [Accessed 5 February 2009].
- 2 Krasner, S.D., 2004. Sharing sovereignty new institutions for collapsed and failing states. *International security*, 29 (2), 85–120.
- 3 A recent agreement among key party leaders could pave the way for a long-awaited territorial re-organization of the country. Rumours from the field confirm that local elites might have agreed on a division of Bosnia into four territorial units.
- 4 Interview with Tobias Flessenkemper, EUPM, Sarajevo, 21 November 2007.
- 5 The district of Brcko, located at the most critical point of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line, has been placed outside the jurisdictions of the two Entities and enjoys a special status and administration. At present, the Bosnian central government and the OHR are discussing the possibility of granting a similar status and independence also to the municipality of Srebrenica, the town of Republika Srpska where thousands of Bosniaks were massacred in July 1995.
- 6 The main works of these three 'internationalist' scholars discussed by Roeder are: Gilpin, R., 1981. *War and change in world politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Gourevitch, P., 1978. The second image reversed: the international sources of domestic politics. *International organization*, 32, 881–991; Spruyt, H., 1996. *The sovereign state and its competitors: an analysis of systems change*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Spruyt, H., 2005. *Ending empire: contested sovereignty and territorial partition*. Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press.

Western Imperialism in Denial

Liberal Order and Imperial Ambition, by G. John Ikenberry. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006. Pp. 272 + notes + bibliography + index. £16.99 (pbk). ISBN-13: 978-07456-3649-8

Defending the West, by James Gow. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005. £14.99 (pbk). ISBN: 0-7456-3234-3.

Empire in Denial: The Politics of State Building, by David Chandler. London: Pluto Press, 2006. £15.99 (pbk). ISBN 0-7453-2429-0.

Princeton professor G. John Ikenberry's collected essays on America's place in the world are eloquent, and softly spoken but carry the force of well-considered judgements, drawing on the likes of Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis and critic of sovereignty Stephen Krasner. Ikenberry takes issue with the idea that the end of the Cold War was an earth-shattering event. Some hard-nosed realists, he says, expected the loss of the common Soviet enemy meant the loss of discipline in the Western camp. There was a lot more to the American system bedded down after the war. Pulling in a slightly different direction from the harsh business of

containing the Soviet threat was a more positive investment in multi-lateral institution-building that created alliances based on open markets, pluralism and democracy. Ikenberry calls this 'A Tale of Two Doctrines', the first being anti-Soviet containment, announced by President Truman to Congress on 12 March 1947—the doctrine that 'impressed itself on the popular imagination' at the cost of the second, six days earlier holding up the civilizing value of free trade (Ikenberry 2006, p. 177).

It is a good question to ask, what the relationship is between containment on the one hand, and liberalization on the other. Pointedly, military containment came to the fore at the point where the liberal economic order found its own limits. What, in the end, was the Soviet Union, but the military-bureaucratic formation that filled the gap left by the collapse of Germany's economic order in the East, expanding to fill the space that the Allies could not stabilize with capitalist growth? Ikenberry shows that the US administration pressed for the creation of a European union, out of a desire for allies to share the burden of post-war stabilization (Ikenberry 2006, p. 31). As Carolyn Eisenberg has shown, the Cold War in Germany coalesced when the US, British and French Zones pushed ahead with currency reform, but withheld the new *Deutschmarks* from the Soviets, distrusting their economic management.¹ Stabilizing the market system in the northwestern corner of Europe only worked by redirecting all available investment funds there, leading to great disinvestment from Africa and East Europe. As a result, those areas had to be contained, not developed. The Common Tariff around the European Payments Union was needed to stop cheaper producers from outside taking advantage of the rising prices engendered by the Marshall Plan.²

Ikenberry rightly resists the argument that the United States imposed its order. As he says, west European and Asian elites actively sought US engagement, making the post-war order an 'Empire by invitation' (Ikenberry 2006, p. 35). This is an important correction to the radical portrayal of US hegemony in Europe as domination, most recently in Daniele Ganser's extraordinary account of American involvement in the formation of secret anti-Communist terror groups, like *Gladio* in Italy.³ Ikenberry is particularly sharp on the role that Britain played, pushing anti-Soviet fears harder even than Washington, emphasizing containment at the expense, Ikenberry suggests, of liberal institution-building (Ikenberry 2006, p. 39). But if pugnacious Britain was provoking fights to oblige America to join in, there were plenty of people in Washington, like John Foster Dulles, who identified more with London's struggle to contain colonial insurgencies than with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's drive for decolonization.

Occasionally Ikenberry's confidence in his argument strikes an odd note. He seems to think that the CIA's clandestine operations against the Communists in Italy were an example of their commitment to pluralism (Ikenberry 2006, p. 151). Certainly American institution-building was pluralistic, secretly funding 'Third-Way' Social Democrats against the Communists in Germany and Britain, recruiting Portuguese dictator António de Oliveira Salazar into NATO and even giving billions to Franco's Spanish Fascist army under the 1953 Pact of Madrid. Yet

this pluralism could not stretch to accommodate the election of Italian Communist Palmiro Togliatti—ironically, probably the last man in Italy who actually did believe in liberal democracy.⁴

Ikenberry's historical reflections are made with an eye on the present. He wants to show that the post-1945 settlement is more robust than the anti-Soviet mobilization, so that he can challenge realists who expected a return to the 'balance of power' after the Cold War. He values multi-lateralism, and in the later chapters, despairs at the 'Neo-Conservative' revolution in foreign affairs that he says has damaged America's standing abroad. Pointedly, he says, America chose the moment of its greatest domination, economic and military, to share power, and limit its own might. The American system was not domination, he says, but a genuine encouragement of like-minded thinking, or what he calls, after Max Weber, 'socialization', the inculcation of norms and values. (Ikenberry 2006, p. 51) Germany and Japan both accepted restraints on their foreign policy as a condition of sovereignty over domestic matters, says Ikenberry—showing that state sovereignty today can indeed be constrained. But Ikenberry's intriguing use of Weber's 'socialization' concept raises some uncomfortable questions. In sociology, socialization is something that happens to children, to make them fit for society. Is that, by implication, what we think of Germans and Japanese?

The point has a bearing on David Chandler's excellent and provocative re-interpretation of contemporary relations between the developed and developing world, *Empire in Denial*. Chandler's central argument is that the great powers are at once dictating terms to less powerful states, but at the same time refusing to accept responsibility for their actions, by formally taking control. The moment in 2004, when the Iraqi government was 'made sovereign', while US and British authorities continued to determine the course of events shows what 'Empire in Denial' looks like (Chandler 2006, p. 25). The Coalition authorities deny all responsibility for failure, while continuing to rule.

In Bosnia, so-called 'democratization' allowed local representatives to be elected, but left all power in the hands of the internationally appointed High Representative (HR). As Chandler painstakingly shows, High Representatives have consistently struck down legislation coming from the elected officials and substituted their own. Indeed, the HR regularly bars candidates from standing in elections, reorganizes local municipalities, deposes elected officials and enthrones those who lose (Chandler 2006, pp. 123–165). The net effect of this perverse system is that Bosnia is an independent nation on paper but its people have no control over the political process there. Still, the United Nations, and more latterly the European Union consistently avoid responsibility for these democratic failures, readily placing the blame on to the nationalist parties.

But Iraq and Bosnia are only the most obvious examples of Empire in Denial. The EU accession process, Chandler shows, manufactures the illusion that the East European accession countries are voluntarily adopting the vast body of pre-existing EU legislation, the *acquis communautaire*, but in fact they are simply jumping through hoops to get to the prize of membership (Chandler 2006, pp. 96–122). Chandler details the elaborate mechanisms the EU has created to

scrutinize and control the accession countries' progress towards an acceptable level of civility. The compelling part of Chandler's argument is that the political process this relationship creates is the worst of both worlds: it is not truly owned by those who must live with it, the accession states, but at the same time the real drivers of the process, the EU, deny all responsibility, insisting that it is voluntary, and so are never held to account. In a phrase suggested by Niall Ferguson, Chandler says this is Empire, but it is Empire in denial.

Chandler shows how the real world trend of Empire in Denial lies behind the intellectual developments in the theory of sovereignty. Contemporary thinking, he shows, has re-defined sovereignty to invert its meaning. Where once the basis of sovereignty was the sovereign people, today, it is argued that sovereignty arises out of the relations between states. The interest in 'statebuilding' in the literature, says Chandler, is the very opposite of bringing about sovereign states, but is in fact the process of creating phantom states—such as Timor Leste—that are sovereign in name, but in fact accountable to the international community rather than to their own publics (Chandler 2006, pp. 189–194). In other chapters, Chandler explains how ethics oriented towards others elevates the 'poorest of the poor' over the public, how anti-corruption drives demonize popular political movements and parties and how the elevation of the 'rule of law' reduces political administration to the application of a pre-prepared tool kit imposed from the outside.

James Gow's *Defending the West* makes a strong case for pre-emptive self-defence against rogue states and terror networks in admirably clear prose. Gow's confidence is attractive and his proposal for a co-mingling of realism and constructivism in International Relations theory is very well made. But unfortunately for him, the practical problems that have de-railed the case for pre-emptive self-defence in Iraq put ever greater strains upon the argument. *Defending the West*, explains James Gow, is as important for ordinary Arabs and Chinese as it is for George W. Bush and Geoff Hoon (Gow 2004, p. 2), because Western values are universal values (Gow 2004, p. 13). Yet Gow also makes clear that some parts of the globe (North America and Western Europe) are more universal than others (Gow 2004, p. 17). Gow sees many threats to Western values—Arabs not letting us have their oil (Gow 2004, p. 64), or the cunning Chinese making our household consumer goods (Gow 2004, p. 70). The sovereignty of free nation-states is a great achievement, but this does not mean that nations should be seen as sovereign unto themselves, but rather derive their sovereignty from other states (Gow 2004, p. 42).

Gow is pleased that the UN allowed the re-definition of the meaning of sovereignty. But according to Gow, the relegation of sovereignty did not lead to a re-thinking of the idea of self-defence, to take account of these new threats (Gow 2004, p. 126). If the UN won't give permission to for pre-emptive retaliation in first, then the West must be free to do it anyway (Gow 2004, p. 118). This puts Gow in the position of arguing that UN ideals must be defended, even if the UN does not actually promote those ideals (Gow 2004, p. 138). So concerned is Gow to defend democracy and free speech, that he is

willing to shut up those newspapers that will not stop criticizing Western policies (Gow 2004, p. 132–133). Gow is irritated that the very people that thought up pre-emptive self-defence will not stand by it, with Britain's New Labour government having taken to saying that pre-emptive self-defence has proved to be a disaster (Gow 2004, p. 133). Even while admitting that Iraq is a disaster (Gow 2004, p. 138), Gow insists that the *idea* of pre-emptive self-defence has never properly been put into practice. As a result, Gow says we need a new theory of international relations to take account of this failure (Gow 2004, pp. 20–36). Given the knots that he ties himself into trying to make his case, and given the actually existing reality of pre-emptive self-defence, perhaps an appropriate name for such a theory would be 'unrealism'.

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Notes

- 1 Eisenberg, C., 1996. *Drawing the line: the American decision to divide Germany 1944–1949*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- 2 Heartfield, J., 2007. Limits of European economic unification'. *Critique*, 35 (1), 37–65.
- 3 Ganser, D., 2005. *Nato's secret armies*. Oxford: Frank Cass.
- 4 Urban, J. B., 1986. *Moscow and the Italian communist party: from Togliatti to Berlinguer*. London: I.B., Tauris, p. 219.