

## COMPARATIVE

**SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND NETWORKS: relational approaches to collective action**  
by **Mario Diani and Doug McAdam (eds)**

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. 368, £55.00, ISBN 0 19 925177 0

Reviewer: STUART ASTILL  
(*London School of Economics*)

All too rarely does one encounter a book that combines stimulating enquiries with a variety of analytical approaches. To then find that the approaches are clearly explained, despite their mathematical roots and technical complexity, is rarer still.

This book is appealing on at least two levels. First, it cements a new approach to social movements by taking a theoretical perspective focusing on networks and adopting rigorous investigation to demonstrate its worth. Second, in terms of network analysis itself, the contributions are often original and inspiring; political science is a field where networks are often talked up rather than subjected to empirical testing. The book positions

itself at a crossroads where the social movement work meets individualist rational choice and sociological approaches meet formal network analysis. The chapters consist of an impressive range of case-based studies stretching from Britain 1787–1834 to environmental movements in San Francisco and Japan. There are also more purely theoretical chapters, and happily these are anything but dry.

Perhaps the most encouraging thing to be found in this work is the consistent way in which the authors clearly lay out not only their theoretical approach, but also the assumptions that lie behind their methods and give 'methodological' descriptions of how they approached their study. This rigour and openness, which takes courage as well as learning, is one that would be well followed in some of the work on political networks – a literature that rarely manages to achieve the quality that is seen in this book. In the final chapter, Diani ties together what he admits can be seen as somewhat disparate chapters to form a research program. There is much here for experienced researchers who, along with their students, can learn from the form as well as the content.

**COMPARATIVE FEDERALISM IN THE DEVOLUTION ERA**

by **Neil Colman McCabe (ed.)**

Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2002. 364, £72.00, ISBN 0 7391 0276 1

*Readership:* Academic/research

*Rating:* \*\*

Reviewer: PAOLO DARDANELLI  
(*University of Kent*)

This book can be seen as a product of the renewed interest in federalism over the last few years within and beyond academia. It attempts to provide a comparative reassessment of the theory and practice of federalism in an era when many 'shifts of power from larger to smaller units of government' have taken place around the world. It is derived from papers presented at a symposium at the South Texas College of Law in 1999

inspired by the reluctance of the US Supreme Court to take other federal systems into account when ruling on disputes between the federation and the states.

The fourteen chapters cover topics such as the issue of secession in federal constitutional and international law, the development of South Africa's provincial constitutions, the creation of federalism in Russia, the system of financial equalisation in Germany and the process of devolution in the UK. With a few exceptions, the chapters analyse federalism from a legal perspective and should thus be considered works of constitutional law rather than political science.

Although most of the chapters are informative and academically sound – in particular, Michael Burgess on devolution, James A. Gardner on the paradox of democratic unresponsiveness and C. Lloyd Brown-John on secession – this is one of the books that give edited collections a bad name. Not only are the chapters disparate enough but there is also no introduction or conclusion bringing the analysis together and offering some comparative insights. The book thus totally fails to live up to the 'comparative' approach promised in the title, and I was left with the impression that the editor did not make any effort to turn a collection of conference papers into a coherent edited book. It is very much a case of the whole being less than the sum of its parts.

**DEATH SQUADS IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: murder with deniability**

by **Bruce B. Campbell and Arthur D. Brenner (eds)**

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. 364, ISBN 0 312 21365 4

Reviewer: JAMES M. LUTZ  
(*Indiana University*)

Campbell and Brenner have compiled a valuable collection of essays on the activities of death squads around the world in a variety of circumstances. Even though this is an edited volume, the individual chapters are all of high quality. Their introductory chapter is very well done, presenting information on a complex phenomenon in an eminently understandable fashion without relying on simplistic arguments or categories.

The book contributes to the literature on death squads in two ways. First, it makes clear that death squads are a technique that can be used for a variety of objectives by different kinds of governments. Death squads can serve a form of social control, as a form of state terrorism, or as a means of providing governments with some degree of plausible deniability when dealing with opponents or dissidents. Second, it demonstrates that death squads do not just appear in South America to defend right-wing dictatorships (ones usually supported by the US). Some of the best publicized cases of death squads have occurred in this region (Argentina is a classic case in point), and as the editors themselves note, there was no difficulty in finding experts on death squads in Central and South America (p. vii). But it is important intellectually to realize that death squads are more of a global phenomenon; they are not just associated with authoritarian allies of the US. The chapters with case studies cover

Nicaragua, Weimar Germany, El Salvador, the Philippines, Uganda, Indonesia, Brazil, South Africa, India, and Bosnia – different regions and even different historical periods. An appropriate understanding of the prevalence of death squads has to go beyond the usual suspects.

Because of its breadth of coverage both in terms of geography and regime types, the book could serve as an excellent additional text for courses on terrorism, political violence, or state repression. It could also be important reading for anyone researching these topics.

**BANKING ON DEATH: OR,  
INVESTING IN LIFE: the history  
and future of pensions**

by **Robin Blackburn**

London: Verso, 2002. 560, £25.00, ISBN  
1 85984 795 1

*Readership:* Undergraduates,  
advanced undergraduates,  
postgraduates, academic/research

*Rating:* \*\*\*

Reviewer: HUGH PEMBERTON  
(*London School of  
Economics*)

In this stimulating work, Blackburn unpicks the multiple strands of the present pensions crisis in advanced capitalist economies – low birth rates, increasing longevity, early retirement, discrimination against older workers, a dependence on current taxation, private pensions, stock-market bubbles, and the problems of sustaining growth in mature economies. In a readable and persuasive (though sometimes inaccurate) survey that focuses principally on Britain and the US, he highlights the growing power of ‘grey capital’ – unaccountable pension funds whose worth dwarfs even the largest transnational corporations, and whose primary responsibility is to their shareholders, not to the pension fund members whose con-

tributions they manage (a modern version of Marx’s alienation of the worker under capitalism).

Much less successfully, Blackburn then goes on to map out his proposed solution. First, he airily advocates raising Britain’s basic state pension to ‘at least’ 40 percent of average earnings, glossing over the political difficulties posed by the necessary tax rises. Second, although he makes very good cases for pre-funding earnings-related public pensions, for companies to make substantially higher contributions on behalf of their employees and, rather surprisingly for a former editor of *New Left Review*, for these funds to be invested in stock markets, he fails to deal with some major political difficulties. His proposals reach back to Sweden’s ‘Meidner plan’ in the mid-1970s, and further back to Labour’s ‘National Superannuation’ proposals in the 1950s, but, like both those plans, the vast funds involved would likely politicise the investment process and potentially reduce the economic growth on which future pensioners rely. It is possible to imagine ways round this. But as it is, his enthusiasm for low-yielding social investment and his disdain for the idea that pension fund members might need their contributions to earn a good rate of return to ensure a decent pension serves only to underline the problem.

**SEX AND THE STATE: abortion, divorce and the family under Latin American dictatorships and democracies**  
by **Mala Htun**

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 219, ISBN 0 521 00879 4

*Readership:* Advanced undergraduates, postgraduates, academic/research

*Rating:* \*\*\*\*\*

Reviewer: GEORGINA WAYLEN  
(*University of Sheffield*)

This book is a theoretically sophisticated and empirically complex piece of work that demonstrates comparative politics at its best. Htun has examined the processes whereby changes in the laws surrounding divorce, family law and abortion have or have not occurred under authoritarian and newly democratic governments. She seeks to explain some apparent paradoxes: how it is that some right-wing military regimes (for example, in Brazil and, to a lesser extent, in Argentina) introduced what are considered to be progressive law reforms and an elected centre-left government in Chile has been unable to introduce divorce?

Htun eschews simplistic explanations. She argues, first, that gender issues have to be

disaggregated, as, for example, the issues surrounding reforms to family law are very different to changes to laws governing abortion; and second, that a broad range of factors contribute to the size of the policy window that exists to achieve reform in any particular area. These include both the institutional legacy and the strength of the actors and networks, such as feminist organizations and the Catholic Church, that are involved in that particular issue. Influenced by institutionalism, she adopts a macro-comparative historical approach. After a discussion of the four normative traditions of Catholicism, liberalism, socialism and feminism that have influenced thinking in this area in Latin America, she uses three case studies (Chile, Argentina and Brazil) and examines changes in each of the issue areas under both military and civilian governments. Through careful comparative analysis, she succeeds in making some convincing arguments about the complexity of the processes through which reform occurs.

Few, if any, comparative analyses of this kind have been attempted to date. Htun is to be congratulated for producing a well-written, innovative and theoretically engaging book that helps to gender comparative politics.

**DUAL NATIONALITY, SOCIAL RIGHTS AND FEDERAL CITIZENSHIP IN THE US AND EUROPE: the reinvention of citizenship**  
by **Randall Hansen and Patrick Weil (eds)**

New York: Berghahn Books, 2002. 350, £17.00, ISBN 1 57181 805 7

Reviewer: AGUSTÍN JOSÉ MENÉNDEZ  
(*University of León, Spain*)

This book offers a multidisciplinary and multinational perspective on double citizenship. A rich theoretical framework comes together with two sets of applied chapters – on the practice of double citizenship in Europe, both at the national and at the EU levels; and on the difficult relationship between plural social attachments, naturalisation and social rights in the US.

The book renders clear that the prejudice against double citizenship, which has been very strong in continental Europe, but not in Britain, is being replaced by a more accommodating national practice, which increasingly finds its way into binding legal norms. The convincing underlying argument is that the need of recognising the factual appartenance of individuals to two societies is felt to be as worthy of more weight than the defence of the old-fashioned concept of national loyalty. This underlies not only the changed French and German practice and legislation, but also the continuity of both in the UK. Supranational integration at the EU has further turned double citizenship from an abnormal exception into an essential part of what it means to be a citizen in the member states of the

EU. But the authors are also very aware of the further complications stemming from the practice of double citizenship. This explains the thoroughness of the analysis of the US case and, specifically, of the interplay between the decision to constrain federal welfare provisions to citizens and the ensuing rush towards naturalisation. This is said to have resulted in a dangerous mismatch between formal and active citizenship.

The editors have been extremely successful at combining theoretical and empirical research and at presenting critically the different aspects of the subject matter of the book. However, missing is a concluding chapter that could have highlighted the interconnections between the theoretical and applied sections.

**FISCAL DECENTRALIZATION AND  
THE CHALLENGE OF HARD BUDGET  
CONSTRAINTS**

by **Jonathan A. Rodden,  
Gunnar S. Eskeland and  
Jennie Litvack (eds)**

Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003. 486,  
£33.50, ISBN 0 262 18229 7

*Readership:* Advanced  
undergraduates, postgraduates,  
academic/research, professional

*Rating:* \*\*\*\*

Reviewer: PIETER VAN HOUTEN  
(University of Cambridge)

Many countries have decentralised power in recent years. Often undertaken with the laudable objective of improving democracy and public policies, decentralisation also carries risks. One of them, illustrated recently in Brazil and Argentina, is that subnational governments will run large budget deficits, thus

undermining a country's financial stability. How, then, is it possible to create incentives for local and regional governments to act fiscally responsibly?

In this book, academics and World Bank officials address this issue. The first two chapters indicate the core dilemma for central governments – how to commit not to bail out subnational governments in case of unnecessarily high budget deficits; and the institutional (clear distribution of responsibilities and transfers, independent court enforcement), political (accountability of local and regional politicians), and economic (efficient capital markets) conditions that can create hard budget constraints. Case studies of several decentralised OECD countries (the US, Canada, Norway and Germany), decentralised developing countries (Argentina, Brazil and India), and newly decentralising countries (China, South Africa, Ukraine and Hungary) illustrate the effects of the presence or absence of these conditions.

The excellent concluding chapter discusses the feasibility, strengths and weaknesses of market discipline (reliance on capital markets, accountability, and a lack of central interference) and hierarchical mechanisms (a second-best, but often necessary, approach based on centrally imposed spending controls and borrowing restrictions) as strategies to constrain subnational fiscal policies.

The book provides useful overviews of intergovernmental financial arrange-

ments in the discussed countries and illuminates current political debates in countries as diverse as Argentina, Ukraine, the US and Germany. Although some elements are underdeveloped (for example, the conditions for political accountability are not discussed as thoroughly as one might wish), its consistently applied framework and emphasis on how institutional, political and historical factors jointly shape subnational policies make it a very welcome addition to the literature on fiscal federalism.

**STATE FAILURE, COLLAPSE AND RECONSTRUCTION**

by **Jennifer Milliken (ed.)**

Malden MA: Blackwell, 2003. 325, £19.99, ISBN 1 405 105364

*Readership:* Undergraduates, advanced undergraduates, postgraduates, academic/research, professional

*Rating:* \*\*\*

Reviewer: TANJA E. AALBERTS  
(Vrije Universiteit  
Amsterdam)

The war on terrorism has renewed the interest in state failure and collapse. Several books have been published, among which is this one (which appeared as a special issue of *Development and Change* in 2002). Although it does not address the issue from the perspective of 9/11, it does consider state collapse as an international security matter, whereas this was regarded previously as a domestic or, at most, regional problem.

In a clear introductory chapter, the editor enumerates the main aims of the volume

– conceptual clarification; examination of causes; and analysis of intervention strategies. The premise is the relative rarity of complete collapse, the scope of which depends on its definition. As such, the claim is not the ever-widening crisis of state collapse, but the failure of an ideal-type-like vision of statehood. Rather than looking for universal state essentials, the focus should be on historical dynamics. States are, and always have been, ‘work in progress’. Moreover, for conceptual clarity, distinction is made between *functional* failure and *institutional* collapse. The book proceeds with three conceptual chapters (Christopher Clapham, Martin Doornbos and Alexandros Yannis). The second part consists of anatomies of collapse in Nigeria (William Reno), Georgia (Spyros Demetrious), Afghanistan (Jonathon Goodland and Christopher Cramer) and two broader analyses on the international arms trade (Abdel-Fatau Musah) and ‘conflict trade’ (Robert Neil Cooper). The third part is focused on intervention policies in the case of Cambodia (Daniel Chong) and Bosnia (James Boyce) and counterproductive reconstruction efforts by the international community (Jarat Chopra, Marina Ottaway and Mark Duffield).

It is questionable whether the conceptual definitions offered in the introduction are consistently applied throughout the individual contributions. Besides, it would have been helpful to have a chronological index of cases of collapse/failure. This

would also have revealed apparent dissimilar categorisations of collapse and/or failure in the separate chapters. This is a nice collection of interesting papers, addressing a variety of pressing issues with regard to state collapse and reconstruction.

**AUTHORITARIANISM AND  
DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE, 1919–39:  
comparative analyses**  
by **Dirk Berg-Schlosser and  
Jeremy Mitchell (eds)**

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.  
366, £55.00, ISBN 0 333 96606 6

Reviewer: **MARÍA INÉS TATO**  
(*University of Buenos Aires*)

This book constitutes the second part of a research project focused on the conditions of survival or breakdown of eighteen European democracies during the inter-war years. The compilation of articles is placed at an intermediate level, equidistant as much from abstract and theoretical essays, as from a detailed historian's work. The cases considered (Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the UK) are tackled from a multi-methodological approach that includes historical insights, systematic comparative analysis, macro-quantitative and qualitative procedures, cross-sectional and longitudinal dynamic approaches, structure- and actor-oriented perspectives, universalizing and conjunctural appraisals.

Among the purposes pursued by the editors, there are theoretical aims and practical contemporary political concerns. First, they intend to refine empirical democracy theories, testing their explanatory capability with the consideration of national cases usually absent in the classical analysis. Second, the authors hope to obtain some lessons from the study of this 'first reverse wave' of European democratization, in order to improve the current experience of democratization developing in the ex-Sovietic bloc. In the editors' own words: 'Better democratic theory may then also become an important guide for better democratic practice' (p. 323).

After drawing an outlook of the historical and social background of the political development of the analysed cases, the book deals with the systematic matching and contrasting of those partial comparisons. Leaning in the direction of Robert Dahl's and Juan Linz's assessments, the conclusions are far off the single-factor approaches and reject their mechanical application or generalization. The authors advocate the combination of their conclusions with theoretical propositions and specific historical knowledge. In that sense, this essay maintains a healthy non-dogmatic perspective, open to the consideration of multiple variables.

**POLITICAL PARTIES AFTER  
COMMUNISM: developments of  
East-Central Europe**

by **Tomáš Kostecký**

Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center  
Press, 2002. 233, £19.00, ISBN 0 8018 6851 3

*Readership:* Advanced  
undergraduates, postgraduates

*Rating:* \*\*\*

Reviewer: RICK SIMON  
(*Nottingham Trent  
University*)

Kostecký, a regular contributor to the literature on the recent development of political parties in East-Central Europe, has produced a book that represents a synthesis of research in respect of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

The book is logically structured, beginning with a chapter on the historical evolution of political parties before 1989, and followed by chapters on the parties themselves, the influence of pre-communist roots, underlying cleavages and the institutional environment shaping party system development. A concluding chapter, in which Kostecký seeks commonalities across the countries examined, argues that party development since 1989

has been characterised by three trends – a shift from personalised to party politics; a gradual transition to a politics based on interests and rational choice; and the increasing relevance of the relationship between social structures and political parties.

Kostecký overtly states the book's modest aims at various points and makes no claims to methodological originality. The discussion of social cleavages, for example, is derived from the work of Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, but the concept of social cleavage is expanded to encompass a very useful discussion of the role of gender. Nor is the book littered with statistical analysis of opinion-poll evidence. Although this is to be welcomed, the distinct lack of references to the more recent literature on party development in the region results in very weak evidence for the trends identified above. In particular, Kostecký asserts the shift towards a rational-choice model of party support despite noting earlier remarkable continuities in voting behaviour between pre- and post-communist periods based on national, religious or regional identity. Overall, however, this is a useful, well-written book that makes the literature on political party development accessible to readers not so well versed in the mysteries of regression analysis.

**THE FUTURES OF EUROPEAN  
CAPITALISM**

by **Vivien A. Schmidt**

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. 371,  
£12.99, ISBN 0 19 925368 4

*Readership:* Advanced  
undergraduates, postgraduates,  
academic/research

*Rating:* \*\*\*\*\*

Reviewer: MICHAEL J. STEFFENS  
(*University of Sheffield*)

This book examines the responses of three European countries (France, Britain and Germany) to the pressures of globalization and Europeanization. It is divided into three parts, which offer an overview of the policies, practices and politics of economic adjustment. With a diverse set of new-institutionalist theories and a focus on the discourses within these three countries, Schmidt aims to capture the complexities of economic adjustment. She seeks to show 'empirically how, where,

and when discourse exerts – or fails to exert – an influence over political economic change' (p. 8).

While rejecting the general thesis made within the globalization literature that countries converge on a market-oriented type of capitalism, Schmidt asserts that there are still three varieties of capitalism, although those evolved considerably from the post-war ideal-typical models. In addition, the identification of a third type of capitalism – state-enhanced capitalism – serves as a first point of departure from the 'variety of capitalism' literature, which assumes contemporary capitalism to be divided into two main kinds – market capitalism and managed capitalism. She stresses that state-enhanced capitalism is based on the continuing

importance of the state or state-related institutions in the economic management system, as is the case in France, Italy and other countries. A second point of departure is given by her emphasis on dynamics of change in economic practices. This is highlighted by showing how changes in economic policies in response to the pressures of globalization and European integration have affected the structures of business, government and labour relations.

In general, this book makes an important contribution to our understanding of the development of capitalism in Europe. It stands out because of its clear structure and its dense analysis, which benefits from interesting theoretical suggestions and a useful set of empirical examples.

**GREEN STATES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: environmentalism in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany and Norway**  
by **John S. Dryzek, David Downes, Christian Hunold and David Schlosberg with Hans-Kristian Hernes**

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. 237, £50.00, ISBN 0 19 924902 4

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS IN JAPAN, GERMANY, AND THE UNITED STATES**  
by **Miranda A. Schreurs**

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 305, £17.95, ISBN 0 521 52537 3

Reviewer: JOHN C. BERG  
(Suffolk University, Boston)

Both these books compare the environmental policies of several states in an effort to determine the domestic political

factors that lead to stronger or weaker policies. Both compare the US, Germany and a nation that still hunts whales, with Dryzek *et al.* adding the UK as a fourth case. Both find that Germany, once a laggard, now leads the way; both attribute this change in part to the success of the German Greens; and both agree that the US, despite the strength of its environmental interest groups, is now a laggard. But they remain very different books.

Dryzek is a political theorist, and he and the co-authors of *Green States and Social Movements* have written a theoretical book. Empirical data are discussed, but their role is to buttress or to challenge the theoretical propositions they advance. Two levels of theory are presented. One focuses on the historical evolution of the state as seen through the addition of such new 'core tasks' as economic growth ('accumulation'), welfare ('legitimation') and, potentially, conservation of the

environment, to the initial three – domestic order, (international) survival and revenue (pp. 1–2). The second classifies states as passively or actively inclusive or exclusive of social movements and argues, paradoxically, that actively inclusive states (Norway) co-opt movements early and make them less effective, whereas passively exclusive states (Germany) can cause movements to grow stronger until they are incorporated into the state with real power. (To complete the picture: the passively inclusive US state responded to environmental movements at first, but then responded equally to anti-environmentalist pressure from industry, whereas the actively exclusive Thatcherite UK eliminated the movements' influence entirely.)

The result is a rich work of theory. I had a few quibbles – principally, I think their use of 'core imperative' lacks rigor (for example, road-building is treated as a core state imperative (p. 71); surely it is more usefully seen as one of many possible policies to pursue the imperative of economic growth; it would be clearer to focus on who has power, rather than which policies are 'core'); but I found the book stimulating, insightful and fun to read. On the other hand, readers must know a lot about environmental policy beforehand or take the authors' characterizations on faith, as they tend to paint with a broad brush.

With *Environmental Politics in Japan, Germany, and the United States*, it is sometimes difficult to see the forest because Schreurs tells you so much about

the trees. If you want detailed accounts of the politics of domestic and international environmental policy-making in her three countries for the last four decades, then this is the book for you. Those details are presented fully and with proper attention to the individual events, such as the greening of Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita, that had important influence but little theoretical relevance. It would be an ideal book for a course in comparative environmental policy. But for her, the theoretical framework serves more as a place to hang the data, rather than as a contribution to the theory of the state.

I could conclude that each book is ideal for its purpose, but I think each would be improved if it were more like the other. As stated above, I think Dryzek *et al.* would gain from a more rigorous presentation of data to support their classifications of states and of their environmental policy records. I think Schreurs would gain from greater theoretical sophistication. Her comparisons are sometimes too mechanical; at some points, she compares numbers of environmental organizations in different countries as a measure of the strength of the environmental movement, whereas at others she acknowledges that in Japanese society influence is exercised less formally. I should have liked to have seen the implications of this worked out more fully. Despite these minor quibbles, I would recommend either book for graduates or advanced undergraduates in an appropriate course.

**THE PERILOUS ROAD TO THE  
MARKET: the political economy of  
reform in Russia, India and China**

by **Prem Shankar Jha**

London: Pluto Press, 2002. 300, £16.99,  
ISBN 0 7453 1851 7

*Readership:* Undergraduates

*Rating:* \*\*

Reviewer: NEIL ROBINSON  
(*University of Limerick*)

Jha's aim is to add to the critical literature on the Washington Consensus. The theoretical underpinning of his critique is Karl Polanyi's observation that state regulation is indispensable if markets are to be stable and capable of replicating themselves. He argues that the Washington Consensus devalues the role of the state in economic transition. As a result, neo-liberalism damages the state's ability to generate revenue and hence its capacity to perform public administration roles. When this happens, the state cannot guide and synchronise complex economic changes by balancing the building of market and regulatory institutions; the

**THE POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF  
GREEN PARTIES: from the politics  
of nature to redefining the  
nature of politics**

by **Gayil Talshir**

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.  
333, £52.00, ISBN 0 333 91986 6

Reviewer: CHARLES LEES  
(*University of Sheffield*)

By and large, the literature on green parties, as opposed to green political theory, has taken two forms – there is an

result is some form of economic adversity.

Most of the book seeks to demonstrate these points through a discussion of the case histories of economic reform in Russia, India and China. As short introductions to the cases, these sections are quite good, although they are not always very sophisticated. In each case, Jha shows how the weakness of the state has created economic problems – collapse in Russia, skewed investment patterns in China, and failure to confront important policy issues or to cope with pressure to increase state spending in India. There is, however, no pay-off from any comparative analysis of these cases. This is not surprising. Only Russia has tried anything approaching unfettered neo-liberal reform, and the three experiences of reform are so different that the only comparative conclusion that can be drawn are that yes, politics matters, but it matters in different ways in each of the three cases, and that a gradual, mutual transformation of state and economy are best.

This hardly amounts to a comprehensive critique of the Washington Consensus, but parts of this book should be useful to students wanting an overview of the cases.

established literature on party political behaviour in which the parties take centre stage; and there is a public-policy literature, primarily but not exclusively focused on environmental policy, which deals with green parties in a more tangential fashion. This book tries to do something different and presents a 'thick description' of the development of green-party ideology, based on two case studies of the German Greens and the UK Green Party, through the lens of discourse analysis.

The discourse analytical approach is complemented by a relatively straightforward

historical narrative about the two parties' development. As a result, this is quite a textually dense book, and at times readers may find it difficult to differentiate between what Talshir considers to be crucial points and data that, albeit interesting, are of secondary importance to the overall narrative. This is a shame, because her knowledge of the development of these two parties is extensive and the analyses generally sound, albeit within the tradition that echoes their own vision of themselves as *sui generis* and somewhat above the more pragmatic or even base practices of mainstream political parties. Having said that, her painstaking deconstruction of the discourse of green-party documents and campaign literature is often fascinating.

However, there are two concerns that readers may have with this book. One is a slight sloppiness or lack of attention to detail in places, such as the segment incorrectly referring to the 1996 British elections. The other concern is the strength of claims made from research using two case studies and overwhelmingly qualitative data. This is important, because Talshir claims to move our understanding of party ideologies *qua* ideologies forward and to posit a model of green ideology that is 'inherently different from that proposed by Green activists and their analysts'. This may be true, but she might have been better advised to extend the range of case studies and triangulate with other sources of data before making claims of this kind.

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## Comparative

*New books received*

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Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore (eds) (2003) *Spaces of Neoliberalism: urban restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Oxford: Blackwell, 305, £15.99, ISBN 1 40510 105 9

Gregg Bucken-Knapp (2003) *Elites, Language, and the Politics of Identity: the Norwegian case in comparative perspective*. Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 205, \$18.95, ISBN 0 7914 5656 0

Paul Carmichael and Arthur Midwinter (eds) (2003) *Regulating Local Authorities: emerging patterns of central control*. London: Frank Cass, 164, £42.50, ISBN 0 7146 5373 X

Bruno Coppieters and Richard Sakwa (2003) *Contextualising Secession: normative studies in comparative perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 292, £45.00, ISBN 019 9258716

Hugo Dobson and Glenn D. Hook (eds) (2003) *Japan and Britain in the Contemporary World: responses to common issues*. London: Routledge, 256, £65.00, ISBN 0 415 30414 8

Nives Dolšak and Elinor Ostrom (eds) [foreword by Bonnie J. McCay] (2003) *The Commons in the New Millennium: challenges and adaptation*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 393, £17.95, ISBN 0 262 54142 4

John L. Esposito and François Burgat (eds) (2003) *Modernizing Islam: religion in the public sphere in Europe and the Middle East*. London: C. Hurst, 288, £16.50, ISBN 1 85065 678 9

Vladimir Gel'man, Sergei Ryzhenkov and Michael Brie (2003) *Making and Breaking Democratic Transitions*. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 309, £57.00, ISBN 0 7425 2560 0

- Jack A. Goldstone (ed.) (2003) *States, Parties and Social Movements*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 288, \$25.00, ISBN 0 521 01699
- Paul Gready (2003) *Political Transition: politics and culture*. London: Pluto Press, 301, £15.99, ISBN 0 7453 2041 4
- Henry Jenkins and David Thorburn (2003) *Democracy and the New Media*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 366, £26.50, ISBN 0 262 10101 7
- Zig Layton-Henry and Czarina Wilpert (eds) (2003) *Challenging Racism in Britain and Germany*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 302, £47.50, ISBN 0 333 64317 8
- David Maybury-Lewis (ed.) (2003) *The Politics of Ethnicity: indigenous peoples in Latin American states*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, 408, £16.50, ISBN 0 674 00964 9
- Ludger Mees (2003) *Nationalism, Violence and Democracy: the Basque clash of identities*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 223, £50.00, ISBN 1 4039 0265 8
- Layna Mosley (2003) *Global Capital and National Governments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 400, £18.95, ISBN 0 521 52162 9
- Mark J. Roe (2003) *Political Determinants of Corporate Governance: political context, corporate impact*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 241, £24.99, ISBN 0 19 924074 4
- Jeffrey Ian Ross (2003) *The Dynamics of Political Crime*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, 208, £25.00, ISBN 0 8039 7044 7
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