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Book Reviews

Party Politics in Germany. A Comparative Politics Approach. By CHARLES LEES. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Pp.xiv + 269; £60.00 hb. ISBN-13: 978-1-4039-9742-5.

The temptation to treat Germany as a unique case study following a singular, path dependent logic has exerted a strong pull on many scholars. The model of the *Sonderweg* has cast a long shadow over an extensive and valuable literature on German politics, with most political scientists disregarding or underplaying significant (and increasingly clear) signs of comparative similarity. It is to Lees' considerable credit that his book redresses this imbalance with great lucidity and precision. The book focuses on putting the cleavage structures, electoral behaviour, political parties and party system and dynamics of party competition in Germany within a comparative context.

Lees convincingly demonstrates that although the *Sonderweg* narrative gives 'an intuitive account . . . [of] why the broad parameters of party politics in the contemporary Federal Republic are as they are' (p.239), micro- and meso-level analyses of voters and political elites are essential to properly understand complex patterns of behaviour and to see the strong similarities between Germany and other advanced industrial democracies. The emphasis on micro- and meso-level analysis also stems from the author's epistemological position. With advances in social science methods allowing us greater insight into individuals' motivations, Lees strongly rejects the idea of voters as 'cultural dupes', insisting instead that 'political agency lies at the heart of political phenomena, but that political agents are constrained by the institutional setting within which they operate' (pp.5–6). Indeed, it is unusual to read a study which guides the reader so clearly and methodically through its underlying rationale, methodology and normative implications, not just in its excellent introduction but also throughout the text. Major elements of comparative theory (change and persistence in social and political cleavages, models of voting behaviour, the impact of institutional design on political opportunity structures, coalition theory) are introduced and systematically applied to the Federal Republic. As a result, the book should make for a stimulating read for advanced undergraduates, postgraduates and specialists.

Most of the book relies upon secondary data sources and these are used adeptly throughout with the author fully teasing out patterns and explanations from the large number of tables and figures. In addition, the penultimate chapter ('Competition and Co-operation') includes valuable analysis of primary sources and original material relating to party campaigns. The inclusion of a systematic, non-qualitative analysis of party documents, a somewhat neglected aspect of the study on parties, is particularly welcome although longer term programmatic trends might also have been covered. The chapter on political parties, perhaps somewhat contentiously, applies the recent Gunther and Diamond classificatory scheme rather than one of the more established frameworks. Although some interesting points are raised (for instance, about the changes in the SPD and CDU/CSU), the coverage of the FDP is rather thin and the application of the model provides for a rather disjointed narrative of the party histories. There are a few potentially confusing typos (for instance, repetition of SPD on page 65

while the table on page 182 mixes up 'internal' and 'external' functions of party programmes). These, however, are minor frustrations and the book should not only become a staple on German politics courses but also serve as an exemplar of how to ground single country studies in a comparative framework.

FRASER DUNCAN

Glasgow Caledonian University

The Politics of Constitutional Review in Germany. By GEORG VANBERG. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2004. Pp.xii + 193; £40.00 hb. ISBN 0-521-83647-6.

Are legislative majorities able to constrain constitutional courts by avoiding implementation of the decisions they have taken, especially such a powerful one as the German *Bundesverfassungsgericht*? Furthermore, assuming there are, do judges realise this and react to the behaviour of the legislatures accordingly? This is the puzzle of Georg Vanberg's *The Politics of Constitutional Review in Germany*. The conclusion he provides to both questions is a conditional yes. The ability and propensity of the political majority to constrain judges hinges on two factors regulating the cost and benefits for the government of avoiding implementation: the amount of public support a court receives and the transparency of the issue. The more supportive the people are towards the court and the more easily the court can activate this support in case of non-compliance with its decision due to the transparency of an issue to the wider public, the more difficult it is for politicians to avoid a court decision. After introducing these theoretical considerations (chapter 2), Vanberg outlines the history of the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* and its institutional structure (chapter 3). In the following chapters, he empirically supports his hypotheses with a mixed-method approach. He statistically analyses 329 court decisions from the years 1983 to 1994 (chapter 4), he interviews several justices, law clerks and members of parliament (chapter 5) and provides a case study about the famous issue of party finance reforms (chapter 6).

Vanberg's book is most certainly a major step towards a deeper knowledge of the under-researched area of European judicial politics. While various facets of the constrained court hypothesis are intensely discussed, such as the strategic approach in literature about the US Supreme Court, European scholars traditionally see their courts as unconstrained and political neutral guardians of the constitution. If a social scientist challenges common knowledge he is wiser to do so in a properly founded way. Vanberg exactly fulfils this oft-trumpeted hope. He proposes a plausible game-theoretic model in a non-mathematical way. He supports his model with a solid methodological mix using elaborated statistics, qualitative interviews and a case study to cross-validate his findings and links his empirical chapters to the theoretical framework in a consistent manner.

A few minor criticisms can be made. Readers familiar with Vanberg's previously published articles will find overlaps in the theoretical chapter, in the section on the history of the court, and the statistical analysis section. Also, contrary to what the title suggests, the book is not a compendium about the various aspects of constitutional

review in Germany. It focuses on a situation where the court is opposed by a hostile majority in the Bundestag – a situation which is limited due to the consensual composition rules. So the title is obviously devoted to the publishers' interest of selling the book in large quantities. Unfortunately, the normative implications of Vanberg's findings are only sparsely discussed and not adequately brought together in the conclusion.

Georg Vanberg's book is nevertheless a very important contribution to our understanding of European constitutional courts, which very much resemble their US counterpart. This result challenges the hypothesis that constitutional courts foster unrestrained judicialisation. The book presents information both for scholars and students in a very readable style. It is highly recommended for anyone interested in the role of the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* in the German political system.

CHRISTOPH HÖNNIGE
University of Potsdam

Handbuch Politisches System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Edited by OSCAR W. GABRIEL and EVERHARD HOLTSMANN. München/Wien: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 3rd edition, 2005. Pp.999; €54.80 hb. ISBN 3-486-27343-4.

Oscar W. Gabriel's and Everhard Holtmann's extensive edited volume provides readers with an exceptionally good and complete overview of the German political system. The book starts out with an historical overview (part I) and consideration of the social context (part II) before it turns to the constitution (part III) and the formal institutions at the federal level (part IV). The fifth section deals with federalism and local government and this is followed in part VI with consideration of political culture and political behaviour. In the following chapters the most important actors, e.g. parties, interest groups, the media and political elites, are analysed (part VII) and part VIII focuses on public policies. The final section is devoted to German foreign policy and the effects of Europeanisation on the German polity.

The *Handbuch Politisches System* differs from most other introductions to the German political system in a number of respects which make it particularly worth reading. First, the character of the book as an edited volume ensures that well-known specialists report on the different facets of the political system. Second, these extensive reports often start with a few comments on theoretical issues before addressing the topic in question. Third, some areas of the political system (e.g., public policies, foreign policy and the question of Europeanisation) are not dealt with at all in most other standard textbooks on the German political system, let alone in the extensive manner one can find in the *Handbuch Politisches System*. There are a number of new chapters on Europeanisation, foreign policy and governance and the chapter on public policies has been completely re-written. All other chapters have been updated. It is therefore useful for all concerned, even those with knowledge of earlier editions, to take a look at this latest edition.

REIMUT ZOHLNHÖFER
University of Heidelberg

Germany, Pacifism and Peace Enforcement. By ANJA-DALGAARD NIELSEN. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006. Pp.x + 185; £55.00 hb. ISBN 0-7190 7268 9.

This book makes some important theoretical and empirical contributions to our understanding of German defence and security policy and the literature on national security cultures. The core argument of the work, in line with culturalist approaches to German security policy developed by Hans Maull, Kerry Longhurst, Mark Duffield and Peter Katzenstein, is that in order to understand the transformation in German attitudes to the use of force between the Gulf War of 1991 and 2003 War on Iraq, we must focus not on realist thought and power politics, but on Germany's historically-rooted and institutionally-embedded culture of national security. This acts to mediate systemic developments and international pressures and determines the range of policy choices deemed appropriate by policy makers.

Crucially, Nielsen builds upon the existing literature by moving away from a relatively static and path-dependent conception of national security culture. She does so by examining how culture both enables and constrains policy makers and enquires into how individual actors are able to re-forge the cultural context within which they operate, shaping the role of the Bundeswehr and the international institutions considered appropriate for the embedding of German security policy. Nielsen constructs her convincing argument through a detailed and rich empirical analysis of post-Cold War domestic debates over the use of force. Chapters 3–5 form a lucid and compelling account of how two competing schools of thought, 'Conservatives' and 'Liberals', vied over the terrain of German defence and security policy. The chapters demonstrate how political entrepreneurs within the SPD, CDU/CSU, FDP and Greens used external events to refashion the political consensus over the use of force in German foreign policy and the role and projection capability of the Bundeswehr. Chapters 6–7 could be criticised for underplaying the importance of domestic material factors in military reform, notably the politics of base closures and the implications of the abolition of conscription for community service and the German social system. This might help explain why successive defence ministers acted not only as entrepreneurs in refashioning the politics consensus on the use of force, but also as policy brokers or veto-players in translating this into doctrinal and structural change to the Bundeswehr, ensuring the dominance of the doctrine of territorial defence until 2003 and the survival of conscription. The analysis might also have benefited from a stronger focus on how defence ministers have controlled the spread and flow of policy ideas within the Defence Ministry, its institutional culture and the processes of 'uploading and downloading' to and from NATO and the EU. In short, how culture can be used as a resource not only to promote change, but also to encourage policy stasis in the face of the constraints of the political and electoral consequences of far-reaching military reform for the *Volksparteien* and the political ambitions of defence ministers.

However, such criticism does not detract greatly from the book's strengths. It is a compelling and well-researched account of the role of agency in reshaping German strategic culture and in determining critical issues, including Germany's definition of its national interests, of when, where and in what forms German military engagement is appropriate and in explaining the continued 'bridge role' that Germany plays in

trans-Atlantic security architecture. The book should be of interest to students and scholars, not only of German and European security, but also the wider discipline of security studies.

TOM DYSON
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Deutschlands Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik: Eine Einführung. By SVEN BERNHARD GAREIS. Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2005. Pp.265; €19.90 pb. ISBN 3-938094-16-8.

Deutsche Außenpolitik. Eine Einführung. By GUNTHER HELLMANN (with RAINER BAUMANN and WOLFGANG WAGNER). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2006. Pp.260; €21.90 pb. ISBN 3-531-14906-7.

The recent publication of two introductory studies on German foreign policy provide an ideal opportunity to reflect upon the current state of academic research into this topic. Whilst there are a number of similarities in terms of the ground covered, there are also noticeable differences in interpretation.

Where the similarities are concerned, both authors are to be commended for mapping the conceptual foundations of the analysis of German foreign policy. Both studies put forward working definitions of foreign policy and distinguish different theoretical frameworks of analysis. Gareis essentially sticks to the established notion of foreign policy as the entirety of actions of states represented by governments to pursue their interests in different policy areas vis-à-vis their international environment (p.11). Building upon this definition, he thoughtfully delineates the boundaries and overlaps between foreign, security and defence policy (p.13). Hellmann, on the other hand, refers to the work of Niklas Luhmann and defines foreign policy as those actions of state actors that are aimed at enabling and establishing collectively binding decisions in international relations (pp.15 ff.). Whereas definitions along these lines are uncontroversial in the domain of domestic politics, their transfer to the realm of foreign policy appears problematic in at least three respects. Firstly, the nature and scope of collectively binding decisions within the anarchically structured international system as opposed to the hierarchical structure of domestic political systems remain underspecified by Hellmann and should have warranted further elaboration. Secondly, and again in contrast to domestic political systems, it is not evident which collective's decisions need to be binding for state actions to qualify as foreign policy. Thirdly, the definition proposed by Hellmann is rather narrow as it excludes those state actions traditionally regarded as foreign policies that are explicitly not meant to establish collectively binding decisions on the international level, for example the classic means of diplomacy to foster friendly relations to another state or deliberate decisions not to take part in international cooperative arrangements.

When it comes to theoretical perspectives on foreign policy, Gareis' study offers a short introduction to realist, idealist, institutionalist and constructivist theories (pp.23–30). These overviews, however, suffer from the lack of a clear distinction

between theories of international politics and theories of foreign policy and tend to blur the defining difference between the dependent variables of these two strands of theorising. At this point, Hellmann is more systematic in that he organises his theoretical account around the established dichotomy between systemic and subsystemic theories of foreign policies, i.e. between theories that locate the explanatory factors of foreign policy either on the level of the international system or on the intrastate level (pp.18–23).

Furthermore, the two studies closely resemble each other in their discussions of the German foreign policy decision-making process. Both Gareis (pp.31–44) and Hellmann (pp.42–58) assign one chapter of their books to the institutional foundations of German foreign policy in which they attend to the most significant actors and legal rules in this field. Both chapters offer equally concise descriptions of the distribution of decision-making competences between the federal and the state levels of government as well as between the federal government and the two chambers of the federal legislature.

Moving beyond the conceptual groundwork, the two studies perspicuously part company. Whereas Gareis structures his work around the different themes and pre-occupations of German foreign policy, Hellmann's study follows a theory-driven approach. As a consequence, Gareis provides a more comprehensive account of the predominant empirical questions of current German foreign policy, while Hellmann's work offers richer insights into different theoretical perspectives on the subject.

Assessing both approaches in turn, Gareis anchors his discussion in a condensed overview of the general patterns of German foreign policy before and after unification in a changing international and domestic context (pp.45–74). In his discussion of national interests as the major point of reference for national foreign policies (pp.75–90), Gareis develops his major criticism of current German foreign policy, which he depicts as being devoid of coherent strategic direction lacking the guidance of clearly articulated national interests and priorities. This criticism is a recurring theme of the book and provides the rationale behind its argument for a comprehensive debate within German politics and society about the country's role in the world (pp.221–35).

Against this background, Gareis presents six chapters dealing with specific issues of German foreign policy regarding the most significant international organisations – the European Union, NATO and the United Nations – and on some of its most pertinent current challenges: the use of military force, the fight against terrorism, crisis and conflict prevention. These chapters taken together make for a very insightful, current and readable introduction to the issues under consideration. As a critical note, the discussion at some points is close to focusing more on the respective policy areas in itself than on Germany's foreign policy in this regard (pp.114–21). Finally, and precisely because Gareis' study is organised in terms of German foreign policy's major themes, it comes as a surprise that the author abstains from analysing German foreign economic and trade policies in a separate chapter, since that certainly constitutes one of the most important dimensions of Germany's overall foreign policy strategy.

Contrary to Gareis' study, Hellmann does not intend to give a systematic account of the empirical subject matter of current German foreign policy. Rather, he employs selected themes and episodes of German foreign policy as empirical illustrations to

exemplify the analytic value of different theoretical and methodological approaches to the analysis of (German) foreign policy (pp.59–60). These illustrations are not restricted to post-World War II Germany but go back to the foreign policies from Bismarck to Nazi Germany.

Recurring to the levels-of-analysis distinction between systemic and subsystemic theories, Hellmann in chapters 4–6 introduces three major system-level approaches to foreign policy analysis: (neo-)realism, international political economy, and socio-logical institutionalism (pp.59–111). Moving down to the intra-state level of analysis, he then addresses the role of individuals, bureaucracies and organisational processes, interest groups, public opinion, political culture and political discourses in foreign policy making (pp.112–220). All of these chapters follow a similar structure in that they begin with discussing the basic tenets of the respective analytic perspective which is then applied to a historical period and/or issue area of German foreign policy.

This overall structure of Hellmann's study deserves credit for stressing the importance and necessity of theoretically informed analysis of foreign policy. However, some of the chapters do not entirely live up to the ambition of establishing a clear-cut analytic link between their theoretical frameworks and empirical illustrations. For example, the added value of the bureaucratic politics and organisational process paradigms for the author's take on Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* appears rather indirect and superficial (pp.146–9). Moreover, Hellmann's study conspicuously omits some of the most prominent frameworks of foreign policy analysis like groupthink or the two-level approach and does not disclose the reasoning behind this selective attention. It may be a side-effect of the study's endeavour not only to introduce different analytical perspectives but at the same time to relate them to a variety of empirical foreign policy puzzles, that it does not achieve the theoretical sophistication and comprehensiveness to be expected of accounts solely focused on theories of foreign policy analysis.

In summary, a comparative perspective on Gareis' and Hellmann's introductions to German foreign policy highlights their markedly different approaches. It is precisely due to the complementary strengths and weaknesses of these two studies that they can fruitfully be read in conjunction with each other.

KAI OPPERMAN
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Abschiede, Anfänge. Die Bundesrepublik. Eine Anatomie. By GUNTER HOFMANN. München: Piper, revised edition, 2004. Pp.432; €13.90 pb. ISBN 3-492-24099-2.

Since the mid-1990s it has become usual for analysts to contend that post-unification Germany is trapped in a state of stasis and political immobility which makes it unable to push through radical reforms. One of the voices that stands out against the choir of general pessimism is that of Gunter Hofmann, Berlin correspondent of the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*. His book sets the development of the Federal Republic within its full historical context and comes to a far more optimistic conclusion.

Hofmann's main argument is in marked contrast to the mainstream view of political gridlock. The foreword sets out the tone of the book by clearly and convincingly

mapping out the positive view on contemporary Germany. In a way the book takes Germany's political blood pressure and finds it surprisingly high. In his view it is incorrect to term the country 'inflexible, unhappy, pessimistic' (p.7), because the political machinery is in constant motion. Like an ongoing 'velvet revolution' (p.15), public policy making in Germany is more about farewells and new beginnings lubricated by a civil authority coming from society.

The book's leitmotif is the fact that the Federal Republic has been exposed to constant political dynamism and change. Rather than identifying abrupt caesuras, he is more inclined to ongoing processes of endings and new beginnings. Policies cannot be dictated or decreed, but increasingly have to be negotiated in a multiple set of arenas of political bargaining. Consequently, the author sharply disagrees with President Roman Herzog, who in his famous 'Ruck-Rede' in 1997 called for far-reaching reforms.

By looking at the overarching broad lines of continuity, discontinuity and the foundations of political culture, Hofmann identifies those elements that are constitutive for the Federal Republic. Over the course of 50 years Germany has travelled a long road and one of the mechanisms that became essential elements for Germany's self-understanding are a number of collective learning processes – the so-called *Selbstverständigungsprozesse*. Hofmann rejects the argument that Germany is resistant to direct influences coming from government (*unregierbar*). The country developed a strong civil society and collectively organised actors injecting their expertise and willingness for change into the political system. Thus the multiple metamorphoses Germany has experienced were not only triggered by the political management, but tend to happen outside the established channels of decision making. All this leads to slow changes which are 'carefully wrapped' (p.215).

The new capital has led to calls for the label 'Berlin Republic'. Hofmann elaborately deals with this debate and this chapter (entitled *Metropolen-Tam-Tam*) surely is one of the strongest parts of the book. The author shows how the capital debate advanced as a focal point for intentions of a new beginning in Berlin and a new republican foundation – what Hofmann calls *Umgründung*. Not surprisingly, he rejects this shorthand notion and prefers the distinction between 'old' and 'new' *Bundesrepublik*. Any moment of a critical turning point emanating from a change of the capital would have been 'fairly bizarre' (p.352). What is more important, however, is to look for what has been central for the German collective self-understanding constituting the long lines of continuity.

Overall, the book is a compact description of post-war German history, excellently written in style and tone. With the experience of almost 30 years of reporting from the capital, the author shows deep insights behind the scenes of Bonn's and Berlin's policy making which gives the book a thoughtful aura. In contrast to a wide range of literature dealing with Germany's rigid 'reform congestion' in the 1990s, Gunter Hofmann writes against the verdict that Germany is structurally unable to reform and praises the variable policies of muddling through embedded in the dynamics of continuity and discontinuity.

HELGE F. JANI
University of Birmingham

Democracy Under Construction: Patterns From Four Continents. Edited by URSULA J. VAN BEEK. Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2005. Pp.496; € 49.90 pb. ISBN 3-938094-23-0.

The volume under review compares five new democracies of the Third Wave: Chile, (East) Germany, Poland, South Africa and South Korea. These countries are considered to be prominent examples of the world regions in which they are located. This method seems to be fruitful because it promises insight beyond the usual single-country or single-region studies. The book focuses on favourable and unfavourable conditions for the consolidation of democracy in the arenas of political society (part 1), economic society (part 2), civil society (part 3) and historical memory (part 4). The common premise of the contributors is that people with different historical and cultural backgrounds are likely to create different types of democracy. Moreover, it is argued that the better structure and culture fit together, the better the prospects for the consolidation and the persistence of democracy. Susanne Fuchs and Edmund Wnuk-Lipinski explain the theory and methodology of the project. For them, consolidation is closely related to the 'process of change in human attitudes, values and forms of behaviour'. The transition from transformation to consolidation begins when the democratic performance starts to have an effect. At that point the existence of democratic institutions is no longer sufficient to satisfy the citizens. The presented model emphasises the fundamental importance of the relationship between the mostly elite-driven activities on the formal level with the values of the citizens that guides activities on the informal level. As the volume is full of interesting conclusions, I will only mention a few.

Radek Markowski gives insight into the support for democracy within the five countries. The people in these democracies do not differ much in their high esteem of democracy as the preferable system of government. Very often political scientists fail to consider that different people connect very different ideas with democracy. So Markowski distinguishes between a libertarian, a republican, a social democratic and a socialist conception of democracy. On this basis he shows that people with a libertarian conception of democracy perceive democracy best and are the most supportive. Vice versa, people with a socialist conception of democracy show the least support to the democratic regime in the five countries.

In an excellent contribution Hans-Dieter Klingemann systematically distinguishes between post-autocratic and anti-autocratic parties in the new democracies. It seems quite plausible to the common sense that the regime cleavage as Klingemann calls it is of fundamental importance in post-autocratic democracies. But surprisingly the data for all five countries show that the regime cleavage is not as important as older divisions of the party system (e.g., the historical Xhosa–Zulu conflict in South Africa).

Philip Mohr's conclusion that in South Korea and to some degree in Chile economic strength fostered the change to democracy, but in East Germany, Poland and South Africa economic weakness provided the impetus for change seems also seminal for further research. For some researchers this result (which is supported by evidence from all the former communist East European countries) may contradict the popular modernisation view of Seymour Martin Lipset *et al.* Others may say that this is not a contradiction of Lipset *et al.* because all of these countries were on a macroeconomic level that fostered democratisation. Nonetheless, it is an important

result that economic weakness as well as economic strength can foster a transition from dictatorship to democracy.

All in all, the study impresses the reader with plenty of different variables in the process of democratisation, which are taken into consideration. The study, particularly the methodical approach, offers many seminal suggestions. It would be interesting to transfer the approach systematically to countries of the democratisation wave after World War II, e.g. Germany and Japan. A comparison between the democratisation processes of the 1990s and the 1940s would allow an analysis of the importance for these developments of international conditions and other time-specific circumstances.

STEFFEN KAILITZ
University of Chemnitz

Becoming Party Politicians: Eastern German State Legislators in the Decade following Democratization. By LOUISE K. DAVIDSON-SCHMICH. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006. Pp.xviii + 212; \$27.50 pb. ISBN 0-268-02585-1.

This book offers an important contribution to the literature on the integration of German policy makers in East and West as well as to wider debates on institutional transfer and elite socialisation. Although there are a number of parts of the book where it would have been nice to have seen a little more adventure in the analysis (see below), it is none the less a decent piece of scholarship that will interest German politics scholars and comparative party politics scholars alike.

The aim of the book is to show that 'eastern parliamentarian's political attitudes and values have been overridden by five main mechanisms embodied in Germany's parliamentary and electoral institutions. These include selection bias, career incentives for office-seeking politicians, competitive elections, a high degree of efficiency, and federalism' (p.166). Davidson-Schmich presents compelling evidence to support this argument in five well-structured chapters. She illustrates that, despite considerable attitudinal differences between Germans in East and West at both the mass and elite levels, the likelihood of eastern German state legislators occupying high office within their parties, responding to pressures to be loyal to their party, blocking attempts to bring in direct democracy (even on the subject of granting more economic equality) and granting rights for minorities (in this case same-sex unions) have clearly grown closer to that found among western German politicians.

The best chapters of the book come later in the monograph. Chapters 2 and 3, meanwhile, take a while to work up any genuine steam. If legislators try, for example, to enhance their respectability within their parties by taking on ever more jobs within the party (as illustrated in chapter 2), it should not really come as too much of a surprise that they also adapt to another logic of the German party state by becoming more disciplined over time as well (chapter 3). The chapter on same-sex unions is, however, very much more instructive as it shows the degree to which legislators are bound by institutional rules, in this case the federal law on the same issue. Significantly, the way in which the Länder implemented this federal law only differed according

to the respective majorities in each Land but not between East and West, illustrating the degree to which eastern legislators clearly adapted to western rules. What is, however, slightly more problematic is the alleged link between direct democracy and attempts to achieve economic equality. Although Davidson-Schmich claims that she does not want 'to draw out some kind of relationship between support for direct democracy and for economic equality' (p.88), she still expects that 'given attitudinal differences [between East and West on economic values, MK] *combined with* easterners' preference for direct democracy', easterners would be 'more likely than westerners to support citizen initiatives in general, and ones designed to obtain direct democracy and social equality in particular' (p.117, emphasis added). A counter-hypothesis would assume here that easterners turn down referenda because of institutional self-interest no matter what subject they are on. The issue of economic equality, a theme where easterners and westerners show quite distinct attitudinal profiles, is very difficult to investigate at the state level since, as Davidson-Schmich rightly claims, in economic matters Länder almost never make decisions independent of federal influence. However, this renders her statement that 'Germany's political system prevented legislators consistently acting on their attitudes and values' (p.171) very difficult to prove.

These criticisms aside, Davidson-Schmich nonetheless clearly shows that eastern German state legislators have adapted to the institutional norms set by the (western) German consensus and that this rewards their professionalisation and prompts self-interested behaviour. Although Davidson-Schmich makes a forceful and persuasive case, it would have been interesting to have investigated how the behaviour of eastern German parliamentarians compares to that of their western colleagues. It would have also been fascinating to see Davidson-Schmich take up the challenge of investigating whether state legislators in East and West hold different views on democracy and whether they agree on policy goals.

Again, these criticisms aside, there is certainly no reason to challenge her conclusion that 'the party state is an institutional equilibrium in both parts of Germany, unlikely to change even as German society does' (p.168) and this book will find its way on to a considerable number of German Politics course outlines and, more significantly perhaps, to courses that look at the behaviour of parliamentarians more generally.

MICHAEL KOß

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The Politics of Citizenship in Germany. Ethnicity, Utility and Nationalism. By ELI NATHANS. Oxford and New York: Berg, 2004. Pp.xvii + 294; £16.99 pb. ISBN 1-85973-781-1.

This book is an attempt to give an overview of the development of German citizenship policies from the early nineteenth century to the contemporary period, tracing the steady Prussian-driven standardisation of laws across the German states to subsequent modifications through the Weimar, Third Reich, Bonn and Berlin eras. In doing so, Nathans follows a number of recent historical studies which have addressed the development of the German model, with Brubaker and Gosewinkel prominent in exploring

the influences shaping German citizenship. Nathans' book makes a less original contribution, but is still a concise and eminently readable study.

Although the book covers nearly 200 years of history extending up until 2000, Nathans is primarily concerned with detailing the first efforts to centralise control over citizenship (and immigration) and the changes in the policies of the German state(s) in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In tracing the shifts in this period, he highlights the importance of economic, foreign policy and military motivations in bringing about reform as well as appeals to ethnic identity. Departing from Brubaker's focus on continuity and unanimity, Nathans endeavours to show the multiple and competing strands within German ideas about citizenship and the importance of individual agency in effecting change. Accordingly, he argues that the emergence of a primarily *jus sanguinis* citizenship regime with very limited scope for naturalisation (particularly for certain groups) was not 'inherent in the logic of the developing nation-state' (p.8). A further interesting sub-theme of his study is the gender gap in citizenship rights. Until the creation of the Federal Republic, women marrying foreigners lost their citizenship rights. Even in the Bonn republic up to 1969, non-German men marrying German women were not entitled to German citizenship, unlike foreign women married to German men. The penultimate chapter also briefly covers the reforms to German citizenship laws that were enacted in the 1990s, highlighting in particular the significance of the 1999 law introduced by the Red-Green government which marked a break from previous practice.

Nathans' book provides a useful introduction to the topic and the use of case studies drawn from archival material successfully shows the effect of political and administrative decisions at the level of individuals. There could, however, have been a more thorough investigation of the concept of citizenship at the beginning of the book. Nathans appears to take its meaning, and that of other contested concepts, as self-evident. A further criticism is that the author's arguments are often too implicit. A number of important points are made here but not stated clearly enough or explored fully, and the introduction's discussion of the central themes of earlier writers is frustratingly brief. Although the ambition to give a broad overview of German citizenship is a laudable one, it might also be questioned whether including a solitary chapter on post-1945 developments really adds to the study. The consideration of citizenship in the Federal Republic is so short and condensed that important details are missed out (for instance, there is virtually no discussion of the impact of returning ethnic Germans from the countries of the Communist bloc on ideas about citizenship) while the brevity of the chapter also appears inconsistent set against the descriptive detail of earlier chapters.

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German Electoral Politics. By GEOFFREY K. ROBERTS. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006. Pp.xiii + 158; £45.00 hb. ISBN 0-7190-6990-4.

Does German electoral politics matter? Yes, according to veteran German politics expert, Geoffrey K. Roberts, whose interest in, and enthusiasm for, parties and

elections in the Federal Republic spans several decades. For Roberts, an understanding of German electoral politics is an essential prerequisite for anyone seeking to understand the German political system as a whole. Furthermore, both elections and the electoral system have a variety of consequences, not all of which are necessarily obvious or desirable. In this new work the author argues that the electoral system fulfils its constitutional functions, but questions its political effectiveness, firstly because Bundestag elections rarely directly affect the composition of the federal government, and, secondly, because they are not a very effective means of expressing public opinion. The intricacies and quirks of the electoral system are clearly explained and separate chapters deal with the role and behaviour of the German electorate and the parties. Refreshingly, smaller parties receive ample attention. In addition, the author briefly examines every federal election campaign since 1949 (with the exception of 2005), and includes many interesting snippets of information which many readers will be unaware of, or may have forgotten. But the focus of the book is not confined to the federal level – the author shows how important Land elections are for the political system as a whole. Unlike federal elections Land elections do often result in complete changes of governing parties, and directly affect the make-up of the Bundesrat. Furthermore, they influence forthcoming federal elections, act as popularity tests for parties, raise the profile of individual politicians, and help small and new parties. With elections in at least a handful of the 16 Länder every year (not to mention local and European elections), today's Germany seems to be engulfed by a permanent election campaign which Roberts does not view as entirely a good thing, blaming politicians' reluctance to introduce radical and unpopular reforms on the constant need to take the timing of elections into account. Overall this work is very comprehensive and readable, with clear explanations and good examples to help the less knowledgeable reader, and enough interesting details to hold the attention of those with prior knowledge of the subject.

The book is meticulously well researched and written with great care and attention to detail. By the end the reader will be in no doubt that electoral politics is indeed 'one of the most pervasive elements of the German political process, indeed the bedrock upon which the political system is supported'. (p.1)

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