editorial

In 2009, *European Political Science* (*EPS*) will become more 'electronic', insofar as the method of its distribution will change to meet the changing demands of our readers. Data confirm that online usage of the journal is rocketing, while access to hard copies of the journal via the ECPR's Official Representatives is becoming more difficult for many individuals, given the expanding nature of political science departments and the discipline's increasing interaction with other disciplines. Too many individuals are simply not able to obtain paper copies of the journal. From next year, therefore, member institutions will receive a single copy of each issue of the journal, which will be mailed to the institutions' Official Representative. Online access to the journal will continue to be available via the institution's library, in the form of a site license giving access to *EPS* to all library users at that institution, regardless of their campus location. In addition, and to make up for the fewer hard copies of the journal being distributed, a PDF download of the entire contents of each issue will also be available to *all* ECPR member institutions through the members-only section of the new ECPR website, which should be launched in late 2008. The ECPR hopes that this move will meet the rising demand for easy and instant access to the journal (libraries will, of course, also still be able to subscribe to a hard copy of the journal if they so wish), something that we hope is a reflection of the consistent topicality and quality of the articles it publishes.

A recent indication of the quality of our publication is that it has now (starting with the 2007 volume) been included on the list of journals indexed by Thomson-Reuters Scientific's Web of Knowledge, perhaps better known to some under the name of one of its components, the Social Sciences Citation Index. Martin Bull and James Newell, the editors of the three 'normal' issues of *EPS* are to be congratulated, along with *EPS*'s editorial assistant, Maria Bucalo, for the result that their and their contributors' hard work has achieved. The first Impact Factor for *EPS* will be announced in Summer 2010, which no doubt will generate a debate in *EPS* on the relation, if any, between bibliometric rankings and real life. It is interesting to note that if the participants in any future debate refer to previous discussions of scientific publishing, citation rankings and their derivatives carried out in these pages since 2007, then those references alone will cause our Impact Factor to rise. So just to get the ball rolling and to help prospective contributors locate the relevant articles from recent issues of *EPS*, here they are (Cisar, 2007; Deschouwer, 2007; Richardson, 2007; Bellamy, 2007; Plumper, 2007; Schneider, 2007; Gleditsch, 2007; Boncourt, 2007, 2008; Budge, 2007; Bull, 2007; Erne, 2007; David, 2008; Nentwich, 2008; Taylor, 2008). To avoid accusations of complete self-referentiality, we should also mention a recent relevant study by Giles and Garand (2007) about differences between reputational and citational approaches and an important survey by McClean *et al* (2008) on comparative journal rankings in political science. Citation, it could be said, is the game of the name.[1]

Now also seems the right time to welcome the imminent arrival of a major

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new European political science journal sponsored by the ECPR, published by Cambridge University Press and which will also undoubtedly end up being indexed by Thomson-Reuters Scientific. In a daring branding exercise, the new journal has been called the *European Political Science Review* (*EPSR*) and will be edited by Donatella Della Porta of the European University Institute, Florence and B. Guy Peters of the University of Pittsburgh in the USA. The journal you are reading will be referred to as *EPS* and the new journal as *EPSR*. More information about *EPSR* is available on the publisher's website: http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=EPR. The special annual issue of *EPS* you are now reading will continue to be referred to as *EPS Reviews*.

To turn to the 2008 Reviews issue, we believe that we have maintained the usual high standard of quality both of the books under review and of the review articles themselves and it also seems that the present number is more than usually topical. Readers may be relieved to note the absence of reviews of books dealing with the implications of the Irish No to Lisbon – or whatever it was that the Irish actually said No to and whatever it will be that the Irish are given yet another democratic opportunity to say Yes to (also known as 'their last chance'). Still, as Martin Westlake points out '[t]hose who write about the EU and its institutions and processes seem doomed always to be caught out by a fresh and generally unforeseen development'. Lisbon travails aside, many of our reviews focus on issues prominent in contemporary public discussions: Steven Lukes on torture, Javier Alcalde on the treaty banning mines, Hans Keman and Thomas Paster on the future (and past) of social democracy and Emin Poljarevic on the difficulties of Islamic polities. Albrecht Rothacher, writing about Putin's Russia, was more than topically perceptive when he pointed out in a piece submitted in early 2008 that '[s]urely the Russian planners also envisage the eventuality of military advances into small neighbouring countries, like Georgia or Estonia (presumably in the name of protecting Russian citizens there)'.

An entire section has been devoted to the ever topical and inter-connected debates in political science concerning states, regions, regulation and governance. And finally many of the books under review are topical in the sense of being comparatively recently published – mostly in 2007 and 2008 which given the long lead time of an academic journal and the burdened schedules of most of our reviewers is an achievement for which they should be thanked.

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Note

1 Or possibly 'You cite my back-numbers and I'll cite yours'. Such behaviour is merely confirmation of a well-known difference between the human and natural sciences, viz., that any attempt to introduce would-be objective measures of rankings of human activity almost invariably become themselves the object of subversive manipulation by the individuals or institutions ranked.

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