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Globalization and international relations

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John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press, 1997

Charlotte Bretherton and Geoffrey Ponton (eds.), *Global Politics: An Introduction*, Cambridge, MA, Blackwell Publishers, 1996

Chris Brown, *Understanding International Relations,* London, Macmillan, 1997

Ian Clark, *Globalization and Fragmentation: International Relations in the 20th Century*, Oxford University Press, 1997

Brian White, Richard Little and Michael Smith (eds.), *Issues in World Politics*, London, Macmillan, and New York, St Martin's Press, 1997

Ngaire Woods (ed.), *Explaining International Relations since 1945*, Oxford University Press, 1996

The first and most obvious point to be made about the six books under review is that they provide clear evidence of the professionalization of international relations teaching in Britain. Any one of them could be recommended with confidence to those embarking on a specialist degree course in the subject or wishing to include an International Relations component within a general politics or multidisciplinary degree, and, to varying extents, they are likely to be used by more advanced students also.

At least since the expansion of British university education in the 1960s, the development of International Relations as an academic subject in its own right has been demand-led. Students, in ever increasing numbers, have wanted to learn about the world they live in, even when they have been unclear about what exactly it is they want to know about it, and their teachers, sharing their interest, but also, if the truth be told, often their confusion, have themselves been at odds about how to study the subject and what to teach. Consequently, for much of the past thirty years the shortfall between demand and supply has been made good by importing North American literature, and the ideas and presuppositions on which it is based. Now home supply has finally caught up with demand.

Given the importance accorded to the internationalization of production in the literature on globalization—the central theme of three of these books, and an important underlying concern of the other three—this development is not without irony. It is notable that most of the new writing is home-grown. Even where this is not the case, as in two of the theoretical chapters in the collection edited by Ngaire Woods, there is little sense any longer of the profession existing on sufferance, as a kind of satellite or poor relation of the North Americans. A claim to this effect is

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advanced by Chris Brown, but the characteristic robustness and vigour of his own text belies it. In itself, the emergence of a self-confident group of British scholars, debating with one another on a regular basis—several of the usual suspects are on parade in more than one of these books—can only be welcomed; but one cannot help wondering whether it is not also an illustration of the kind of fragmentation that Ian Clark reminds us has accompanied the process of globalization throughout the twentieth century. During the 1930s, Keynes urged that ideas should be cosmopolitan, but goods homespun.[1] Could it be that at the end of the 1990s, while the phenomena put under the microscope may be increasingly global, the interpretation of their meaning and significance (or at least the spin put on them in educational texts) will remain stubbornly parochial? It will be interesting to see the North American sales figures for these books in a year or two, let alone those from outside the English-speaking world.

It is not a requirement of a profession that there should be agreement on the substance of the major issues to be examined or even the methods to be used; but it certainly helps to create confidence in the enterprise if there is a consensus on two aspects: the identity of the issues that fall within its competence, and the range of analytical approaches to their examination which deserve to be taken seriously. On the evidence of these books, a consensus has now emerged on both aspects.

The benefits of professionalization are obvious: any students using these books to guide them through the labyrinth of contemporary International Relations will know where they are from the beginning, what concepts they must master, what subjects fall within the field, and the main contending schools of analysis and interpretation. This is a vast improvement over the situation which faced my own generation when we entered the profession thirty years ago and found ourselves having more or less to make up the subject as we went along, drawing eclectically from the literature of other disciplines, in the main from history, economics and law, and less frequently from political philosophy and sociology.

Nonetheless, there are costs which may be unavoidable but need to be understood (and compensated for) if professional sclerosis is not to set in at some point in the future. Since my overall reaction to these books is favourable, I hope I may be forgiven for getting my reservations out of the way at the outset. Let me comment briefly on three.

The blind date approach to international theory

All intellectual advances are the result of a dynamic contest with the past, in which old orthodoxies give way to new, as a result sometimes of cooperative effort, sometimes of trial by combat. At the same time, it is generally held to be important that initiates into any profession should be introduced by means of the commonly accepted concepts and definitions before they encounter, or are invited to choose between, the embattled positions. The result is that textbooks in any subject tend to be somewhat bland, full of information, clearly packaged but generally devoid of the passion which informs the books and articles of original scholarship or critical analysis without which they could not be written. This is a general drawback of the

[1] J. M. Keynes, 'National Self-sufficiency', *The Yale Review*, 22 (1934), pp. 755–69.

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genre, and it seems to me that while the three more or less standard textbooks in this selection, edited by Bretherton and Ponton, Baylis and Smith, and Woods, are not totally immune from this criticism, they nonetheless score well in comparison with similar volumes: they are all broad in scope, if not exhaustive, well structured, easy to use as reference works and, most important, lively.

In part their liveliness is the result of their interactive style, presumably derived from computer technology. These texts are liberally spiced with bullet points, pie charts, box tables containing chronologies and key quotes or points. The reader's attention is constantly being diverted and then refocused by means of these devices. However, interactivity also lends itself particularly well to presenting the fashionable pluralism that has dominated social thought (not just in International Relations) in recent decades. As long ago as 1974, Ernest Gellner noted that most social scientists see pluralism (read relativism) as the solution, rather than, as he believed it was, the problem.[2] Now, it is perfectly true, as Woods argues in her excellent introductory chapter 'On the Uses of Theory in the Study of International Relations', that theories can legitimately be regarded as analytical tools. But it is also the case that they are also more than that, and hence 'need to be carefully chosen and their purposes and limitations carefully identified'.[3]

It is also true that consenting adults must be free to adopt any theory they feel will answer the questions *they* seek to ask. But it does not follow that all questions are equally sensible or all theoretical frameworks equally appropriate. Moreover, silly frameworks may produce silly answers to perfectly sensible questions. Tim Dunne and Steve Smith do an excellent job as the mystery voice, presenting the virtues of, amongst others, Our Ken from Massachusetts, Our Immanuel from Königsberg and Our Rob from Vancouver Island, but I am not sure that the reader will necessarily recognize on the basis of this text what a vast moral chasm divides realism, liberalism and postmodernism. None of us has an unassailable answer to the problem of relativism, but I suspect that the nature of the problem (that all preferences are equal and none are more equal than others), and the dangers involved in seeing it as a solution, need to be laid out rather more clearly before the reader is reminded that 'the decision is yours'. More is at stake, after all, than a playful weekend romp around someone else's conceptual backyard.

The ideological fudge trap

Relativism-as-solution also leads to the ideological fudge trap in which politically correct biases are smuggled into an argument which is intended to convey open-ended tolerance. Once again, for the most part these books escape censure, although there are occasional lapses. Bretherton and Ponton's otherwise exemplary introduction to a text which, in at least one respect, is superior to the others (see below) contains the following sentence which I suspect is not really intended: 'Analytical perspectives are useful in helping us to ensure that these omissions [unspecified but resulting from the necessity of selection amongst phenomena] are not random,

[2] Ernest Gellner, *The Legitimation of Belief* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 6.
[3] Woods (ed.), *Explaining International Relations*, p. 1.

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provided we are aware that the criteria for selecting what is significant, and worthy of study, are based upon gendered, culturally specific and ideologically biased judgements about how the world is or should be ordered.'[4]

Even allowing for the fact that there is no gilt-edged objective vantage point available, I am not sure what this sentence means. Either the criteria for selection are not random—and can be applied across cultural, ideological and other boundaries, despite the difficulties—or they are. One cannot have it both ways. If they are bound by culture, ideology, etc., from a global perspective they are random and misleading. It is no good aiming off for gender or ideology if we do not know how far to aim. In these circumstances, it is difficult to see social science as a serious activity of global relevance. If the criteria are not so bound, it may still require empathy and sensitivity to different cultures and world-views to translate them into a common idiom and to tease out common values about what is and is not compatible, but the project of social enquiry and analysis survives. The problem is one which does not have an easy solution, but it is difficult to see that students can be helped to make up their own minds by intellectual trimming.

Interdisciplinary indigestion

International Relations has emerged as a distinct discipline by appropriating certain aspects of its interdisciplinary past and retaining open borders for influences to travel in both directions. The result has paradoxically carried the subject much closer to the rest of the social sciences than it was thirty years ago when, lacking a clear identity, it was widely regarded as a magpie subject without a recognizable or respected ethos of its own. Some, though by no means all, economists may still look askance at the thriving sub-field of international political economy, whose central position in the field is reflected in all six books under review. Some historians may cling to the view that International Relations is simply history in the absence of facts and evidence, but not many. As Zara Steiner has pointed out, 'in the last three decades the field of diplomatic history has burst its seams at every level of analysis', necessarily affecting 'the writings of both international theorists and international historians',[5] an observation which is vividly borne out by Ian Clark's sophisticated analysis of twentieth-century international relations. But as International Relations has become more securely anchored among the social sciences, its links with its other ancestor discipline, international law, have weakened. There is much about regimes in these books, and of course reference to particular conventions and laws, but one will search their indexes in vain for any reference to international law as such, or the texts themselves for any discussion of the role law plays in international society.

Why does law so often induce a bad attack of interdisciplinary indigestion? The lawyers themselves are, one suspects, partly to blame since their worldly success to some extent depends on maintaining a closed shop: their courses are designed to train international lawyers, and consequently sometimes appear irrelevant to

[4] Bretherton and Ponton (eds.), *Global Politics*, p. 13.
[5] Zara Steiner, 'On Writing International History: Chaps, Maps and Much More', *International Affairs*, 73:3 (Jul. 1997), p. 532.

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International Relations students who should have much to learn from them. But the main responsibility surely lies with ourselves. For all our concern with the structure/agency problem, we mostly ignore the role of law in managing one of the great puzzles of human existence, which remains, in a philosophical sense, insoluble. What ultimately, after all, is jurisprudence, the theory of law, but the attempt to construct a plausible human structure to limit the potentially destructive effects of human will and wilfulness?

To a lesser extent, a similar point might be made with respect to political theory. Both the philosophical marginalization of the subject—the great political philosophers regarded the international problem as a footnote to their major works—and the need of academic International Relations to fight for turf with sceptical colleagues in political science departments whose primary concern was always what went on within the state, reinforced a paradoxical emphasis on intellectual autonomy if not autarky. This isolation from the intellectual concerns of the other social sciences has been rightly attacked by Chris Brown, although in recent years it has been breaking down, mainly as a consequence of the discovery by political theorists that it is the international world that now poses the most challenging questions for political thought. Whether as Brown concludes, the discourse of international relations theory 'may gradually disappear as a separate focus of study' remains to be seen.[6] Academic disciplines, rather like international organizations, are institutionally disposed against bringing in the receivers, and for much the same reasons. Still, it is true that political theory (and indeed political science generally) is no longer a major source of indigestion.

So much for the costs of professionalization. What of the consensus revealed by these six books, all of which aim to introduce the subject, albeit at somewhat different levels? Since they all aim to survey the field as a whole, it is impossible within the scope of this review to do justice to the many themes they explore. I shall therefore limit my remarks to what I take to be their three central concerns: the evolving agenda of world politics; the role of theory in illuminating this agenda in particular, and the study of international relations more generally, and the context of globalization.

The agenda

Most people become interested in international relations (if they do) not as a result of grappling with problems of epistemology or even abstract thought, but because they find themselves caught up in some issue, for example the process of economic integration, or the debate over the possession of nuclear weapons, or the series of so-called humanitarian interventions that followed the end of the Cold War, as a result of personal experience or more often vicariously through the media.

Issues in World Politics is addressed to this audience of university initiates, who may or may not be proposing to specialize, and the world of interested citizens beyond the university. Although the editors' approach is non-theoretical, in the sense

[6] Brown, *Understanding International Relations*, p. 246.

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that it is not explicitly concerned with debates between neorealists, neoliberals, structuralists, critical theorists and the rest, it is analytically well organised, defining the dominant issues of world politics by their extent or scope, their urgency or intensity, their salience or visibility, and their centrality or location.[7] Their central criterion for selecting amongst the many issues that could be identified under these headings is that they 'appear to have been affected by the end of the Cold War, at least in the form they are presented on the international agenda'.[8]

On this basis they have opted for ten issues: the state and statehood; trade, money and markets; regions and regionalism; development and inequality; arms and arms control; peace-keeping and humanitarian intervention; national and ethnic conflict; Islamic fundamentalism and political Islam; migration and refugees; and environment and natural resources. The essays devoted to these issues have all benefited from close editorial control and are admirably focused, explaining the historical background to how the issue got on the international agenda, and how it has been managed or mismanaged internationally since the end of the Cold War. This list, with a few additions such as human rights, democracy and gender issues, reappears in one shape or another in the other five texts.

So there is a broad consensus on the subject matter. There is also no evidence of the kind of paranoiac defensiveness with which many traditionalists sought to deny the relevance of political economy to international relations a generation ago. White et al. tell us that one of their purposes is to counteract the impression 'that we are being confronted by a constantly moving target', so that 'nothing is permanent or stable'. In a media-saturated age, there may be no permanent items on the agenda, but, as these essays show, what gets on to it is not merely an arbitrary soundbite: these issues all have a history and a life beyond the few days or minutes they occupy on our television screens. On the other hand, the role of the electronic media in particular is so crucial in shifting issues on and off the agenda—think, for example, of the part they played in first ignoring and then orchestrating the international response to the Sahelian famine in the 1980s, or in forcing Western governments to establish safe havens for the Iraqi Kurds in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War—that a case could be made for regarding the role of the media in international politics, like that of the state, as an issue in its own right. The short section in the introduction which rightly portrays the media in both their positive and negative aspects, is highly suggestive, but it is regrettable that none of these books has an extended analysis of the media's role in the context of debates about globalization.

The role of theory

One reason for their relative neglect—despite the attention paid to the communications revolution in the argument that globalization has introduced a qualitative change in the nature of international relations, and is not just a fancy name for greater interdependence—may be that the media have remained stubbornly resistant to theoretical analysis. On this view, they may provide supporting evidence for questions that do require theoretical investigation—for example, whether foreign

[7] White et al. (eds.), *Issues in World Politics*, p. 17.
[8] Ibid., p. 22.

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policy is really the result of rational choices or follows systemic rules—but do not themselves pose such questions. In *Understanding International Relations*, Chris Brown makes the case for theoretical social science in ways which could support this conclusion. He borrows Susan Strange's graphic example of why 'we tend not to waste much time asking ourselves why people run out of a burning building', and suggests that, by contrast, if we want to explain or understand why some passers-by run into the burning building, we may soon find ourselves involved in a theoretical enquiry, for example about the motives for and limits of altruism. He could have made the same kind of point about the media. On the whole, we do not waste time asking why people turn on the television when they get in from work, although we could. But, if we wanted to know why people prefer *EastEnders* (or *Blind Date* for that matter) to news programmes, or what the effects of channel-surfing are on the formation of public opinion, we would immediately have to embark on a theoretical enquiry. What kind of theory—explanatory, interpretative, normative, etc.—would depend on what we wanted to find out.

Understanding International Relations is a very appealing book. Like many of the most successful texts, it has clearly grown out of the author's own lecture courses. Like Robert Heilbronner's *Worldly Philosophers*, a book with which in terms of aim it can be compared, it bears the hallmark of the author's own enthusiasm and tone of voice. The book follows a fairly conventional pattern, expounding the contending theoretical positions within the history of the subject. It starts with the idealist reaction to the horrors of the First World War, and ends with an excellent, if summary, discussion of the post-Cold War agenda identified above. The text succeeds in giving a clear account of all the main theoretical possibilities and, in a non-judgmental but not uncritical way, setting them in context. For the present reviewer, it also has the great merit of making theoretical sense of the core IR syllabus with its emphasis on the international political system, foreign policy analysis and institutions, and its supporting forays into political economy and strategic analysis, which emerged pragmatically, and often by a process of trial and error, at the London School of Economics, where Brown was first introduced to the subject. I can think of no book more likely to succeed in persuading a sceptical undergraduate—someone convinced of the existence of a self-evident world of facts—that not only is a knowledge of theory necessary to understand international relations, but it is fun.

The three edited texts have different but complementary virtues. For some readers, one problem with Brown's text may be that it moves at such a cracking pace that they will get swept on to a new part of the argument before having time to fully absorb the earlier points. Of course, that is intended, and there are appropriate suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter. Nonetheless, for students who may need coaxing towards the wider literature, there is something to be said for a composite text which brings together different authors and shows clearly how their work contributes to the development of the field as a whole. Both *Global Politics* and *The Globalization of World Politics* meet these requirements. I shall comment on their treatment of globalization in the final section of this review. Here the point is the way they handle the relationship between history and theory, the two main sources of writing on international relations.

Unlike Brown's, neither text spends much time discussing the history of the subject. On the other hand, Bretherton and Ponton locate their theoretical analysis

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firmly within a framework of contemporary history, while Baylis and Smith juxtapose four chapters on the historical context (Robert Jackson on the evolution of international society, Susan Carruthers on international history 1900–45, Len Scott on international history 1945–90, and Richard Crockatt on the end of the Cold War) with four on theories of world politics (Tim Dunne on realism and liberalism, Steve Hobden and Richard Wynn-Jones on world systems theory, and Steve Smith on new approaches to international theory). Both books cover much, although not quite all, of the same ground, and survey many of the same authors, so to some extent the choice between them is a matter of taste.

In organization rather than argument, *Global Politics* is more old-fashioned, with a clear two-part division, one part re-examining the traditional IR agenda in the light of globalization, with chapters on structure, North–South relations, the end of the Soviet era, contemporary sources of armed conflict, and security after the Cold War; the other part discussing the new agenda—the global economy, the global environment, democracy and human rights. A cast list of only five authors lends the text coherence. *The Globalization of World Politics*, which is affectionately dedicated to Jack Spence for his contribution to the study of international politics, spreads its net wider, with five chapters devoted to structure and process, and ten to international issues, in addition to its theoretical and historical sections. If it sometimes struggles to control so many different voices, by any standards this is an attractive text, which invites readers in, and holds their attention by its innovative and imaginative presentation.

Ngaire Woods' collection, *Explaining International Relations since 1945*, will appeal, one imagines, to a rather more advanced audience of readers. It is the only one of these books to treat the relationship of history and theory as intrinsically worthy of exploration. The book as a whole comes with pre-publication iconic endorsements from Stephan Haggard, Stanley Hoffmann and Steve Smith. Am I alone in finding this attempt by publishers to protect themselves (and their authors) from failure, distasteful? In this case, however, the endorsements seem entirely justified. The quality of the collection is uniformly high, and even if it were not, the book would be worth buying for the first three chapters, which discuss 'The Uses of Theory in the Study of International Relations' (Ngaire Woods), **'**History, Science and the Study of International Relations' (John Lewis Gaddis) and 'Benefits of a Social, Scientific Approach to Studying Affairs' (Bruce Bueno de Mesquita).

I have already suggested that Woods cannot seriously be charged with adopting the blind-date approach to international theory. This is mainly because she is scrupulous in setting out not merely the strengths of particular theories but their weaknesses and the purposes which they serve. Her repeated advice to the reader is '*caveat emptor*', know what you are buying, precisely the seductively missing ingredient in the television show. Her approach to theory is down-to-earth rather than metaphysical. Thus she introduces the reader in turn to the concepts and definitions employed in the study; the different maps or perspectives that can be constructed, sometimes using the same concepts; formal theories; quantitative methods; and reflectivism, a category under which she includes postmodernism, critical theory and constructivism. There is a useful summary table on page 28 setting out the main points from each of these positions, a device which is employed to good effect throughout the book.

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The authors of the next two chapters, Gaddis and Mesquita, seem to reach a kind of truce under which we are assured that it is possible to move beyond the useful but ultimately flawed distinctions between explanation and understanding, causation and meaning. 'For the social scientist', Mesquita writes, 'the events of history are a laboratory in which to test their claims about how variables are associated with one another; to test their theoretical propositions about causation . . . [F]or the historian the search is for which variables were of relevance in a particular past case or series of events'.[9] So both are concerned with explanation, and, if truth be told, both occupy the disenchanted modern world in which in order to understand how we got to where we are today, we must distance ourselves from the meaning that involvement in historical events had for the participants. A novelist may be able to recreate the impulses of, and allow us to identify with, the young men who lined up, on all sides, like so many sheep to the slaughter, to fight for country and civilization in 1914; but knowledge of causes, if it is available at all, and whether it is historical or social scientific, uncomfortably comes at a price—a measure of alienation.

How great a measure? is the question. On the basis of Mesquita's absorbing account of rational choice theory, it seems to me that social scientists are both essentialists and realists (small 'r' of course) in the sense that contexts are made endogenous, moulded by the strategic moves we all make to get the better of our rivals. We don't seem able to opt out of such behaviour, and the range of options we can choose or invent is somehow dictated by the context. The nature of the particular context, the story of how it came to be filled up with, and constituted by, particular bits of cultural furniture and bric-à-brac is subordinated to the logic of strategic action.

The truce, one suspects, is just that. The claims Mesquita makes for the social-scientific approach are more extensive than Gaddis, or, I imagine, most historians, could accept, if only because rational choice models work only if the clock is stopped and the chain of causation which produces what counts as a social-scientific event is both ignored and regarded as unambiguous. The historian also has to make simplifying assumptions, but he keeps the clock ticking over. 'The point of having a model in science or a metaphor in history', Gaddis writes, 'is much the same; it is a way of coping with complexity . . . [T]he historical narrative has exactly the same purposes to those of the scientist's model; indeed because it does not depend on reductionism, because it does incorporate the passage of time and because it accommodates and even relishes particularity, it may be—if thought of in this way—the most sophisticated model of all'.[10] Moreover, in contrast with Newtonian science, which was static, reductionist and universal, Gaddis argues that the historical method now accords better with much of the most advanced work in natural science.

The second part of the book consists of thirteen chapters moving the discussion of theory to its application. There are five chapters on the Cold War, the super-powers and beyond; four on other regions and states; and four on international institutions. Except for the chapter by George Downs and Peter Barsoon on arms control negotiations, a subject whose technical containment arguably makes it better suited to game-theoretical analysis than most, the chapters discuss the strengths and

[9] Woods (ed.), *Explaining International Relations*, p. 53.
[10] Ibid., pp. 42–3.

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weaknesses of various theoretical positions within the context of a narrative of major developments since 1945. For example, Andrew Hurrell assesses neorealism in US–Latin American relations, Paul Taylor weighs the relative merits of functionalism, federalism and consociationalism as explanations of European integration, Adam Roberts reflects on the mutations of collective security at the United Nations, John Darwin examines various structuralist accounts of African decolonization, and Andrew Walter analyses the plausibility of hegemonic stability theory. What all the chapters show is that the theories that have dominated the development of international relations as a professional field of study mostly fall under the category, described by Woods in her introduction, of Maps or Perspectives.

The plausibility of such theories can only be tested within an historical context; in this sense, the difference between history and social science is one of degree and emphasis. Social scientists may be more interested than most, although by no means all, historians in regularity, repetition and pattern, but researchers in either discipline can only communicate their findings—certainly beyond a very narrow circle of experts—by telling the story of how their discoveries are made. Gaddis concludes his chapter by suggesting that 'a rediscovery of narrative by social scientists could move us back towards that pre-professional era when intelligent people could comfortably involve themselves in, and learn from, multiple disciplines without being regarded as dilettantes'.[11] On the evidence of this book, he is largely preaching to the converted within the field of International Relations.

Globalization

We come finally to globalization, a concept which it is increasingly difficult to ignore in the literature, and which some authors insist is fast making all previous maps of the political world obsolete, in the process threatening both the power of the state and its relevance to our understanding of international relations. The advantage of big-ditch theories of history is that they allow the theorists to ignore everything that lies on the other side; the drawback, of course, is that the further we move away from the ditch the shallower it may appear, so that everything on the far bank will again have to be taken into account.

Globalization already confronts us with this dilemma. There is a general consensus that the end of the Cold War was a world-historic event, which transformed the political landscape and consigned much of the theoretical mapping that had gone on since 1945 to the waste paper basket. The consensus ends there. For some the Cold War was an aberration and its end clears a path 'back to the future'. For others the end of the Cold War ushered in an entirely new era of globalization, in which, as Jan Aart Scholte puts it, 'social relations acquire relatively distanceless and borderless qualities, so that human lives are increasingly played out in the world as a single place'.[12]

There are no hyperglobalists amongst the authors represented in these books. By hyperglobalism I mean the belief that capitalists have achieved what Marx main-

[11] Ibid., p. 45.
[12] Baylis and Smith (eds.), *Globalization of World Politics*, p. 14.

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tained could only follow the transition to Communism, namely, the withering away of the state. Bretherton and Ponton, and Baylis and Smith, have both constructed their texts on the assumption that world politics now takes place in a context whose nature is not captured by the word international, or even by the concept of interdependence. For the first pair 'globalization suggests a significant intensification of global connectedness and a consciousness of that intensification, with a corresponding diminution in the significance of territorial boundaries and state structures',[13] while the second suggest that it is simply 'the process of increasing interconnectedness between societies such that events in one part of the world more and more have effects on peoples and societies far away'.[14] Both pairs of authors concede that these developments have weakened the state in some areas but strengthened it in others. They also both examine the differing ideas among realists, liberals and structuralists about what globalization entails, and Baylis and Smith provide a useful summary of the main arguments for and against the globalization thesis.[15]

Their caution is well founded. While few would want to deny that the growth of the global economy, the revolution in information technology, and the diffusion of political and cultural ideas beyond their original homelands, have had and will continue to have profound political implications, there are intractable structural obstacles to the withering away of the state. It is true that since there was a time before the centralized nation-state, there is no reason why at some point a new form of political organization should not emerge to take its place. But we have no means of knowing what it will be or when it will emerge. Alexis de Tocqueville could predict from economic, demographic and political trends that the United States and Russia would supplant the European great powers in the international hierarchy during the twentieth century, but that was a relatively straightforward matter compared with predicting what will finally replace the state itself. Moreover, if democracy and the idea of popular sovereignty are considered integral to political globalization, then many states may have to undergo constitutional transformation, but the s tate itself is secure. Votes, after all, have to be cast somewhere; and taxes paid to particular authorities, who can be held accountable, if services are to be provided. In these respects, if no others, boundaries will be strengthened, not weakened, by globalization.

Both texts have correctly identified democracy as a problem for the globalization thesis, and Bretherton and Ponton are to be congratulated for devoting an entire chapter (by Mike Mannin) to the range of problems posed by globalization for democratic government. It is, however, Ian Clark who has most clearly grasped the difficulty in adopting unalloyed globalization as the map of the new post-Cold War order.

His is not a big-ditch theory. The title of his book *Globalization and Fragmentation* takes up and acknowledges a theme previously identified by John Lewis Gaddis. He does not argue that globalization is a myth, but suggests that throughout the twentieth century, integrative and fragmenting forces have been operating, sometimes in a dialectical relationship with one another, as when the imperial enclosure of the world led to pressure for decolonization, and sometimes

[13] Bretherton and Ponton (eds.), *Global Politics*, p. 3.
[14] Baylis and Smith (eds.), *Globalization of World Politics*, p. 7.
[15] Ibid., pp. 9–10.

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symbiotically, as when the principle of self-determination is advanced as a universal human right whose realization may require the dismemberment of existing states. Thus, Clark 'rejects the view of historical discontinuity which can be only so described after 1945, and prefers, in contrast to trace the historical evolution of these trends'.[16] The trends themselves, economic, military and political globalization and fragmentation, he points out, are observable not merely at the level of interstate relations, but also within states and societies.

This admirably short and readable book will not suit those who want globalization to mean something unambiguous. In it Clark succeeds in reviewing all the major debates in international theory in the twentieth century, and placing them in the historical context in which they arose. His conclusions, those of a liberal but sceptical realist, remain, at least for this reviewer, the most plausible synthesis available. What drives economic globalization in particular, the desire to shift the costs of economic and political order from the domestic to the international level, also produces a contrary drive towards fragmentation whenever domestic demands trump international norms. There is no reason to believe that the World Wide Web, or any other global phenomenon, can replace this tension with a teleological resolution. Clark's conclusion is both a prudent assessment of the current level of our understanding and a warning against complacency. 'Precisely how the balance between globalization and fragmentation will be adjusted', he writes, 'depends on the new role that states are able to forge for themselves, and how successfully they manage to mediate between increasingly potent international pressures, and the heightened levels of domestic discontent that will inevitably be brought in their wake.'[17] This assessment may be less exciting than the vision of the state melting down in the heat generated by the new technology, but it inspires more confidence.

[16] Clark, *Globalization and Fragmentation*, p. 31.
[17] Ibid., p. 202.

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