CSSH NOTES

John L. Campbell, *Institutional Change and Globalization*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

John L. Campbell, a sociologist at Dartmouth, has written one of the most insightful and useful books on globalization and institutional theory. The book makes three important contributions. First, it includes a wonderful literature review on the progress institutional theory has made in terms of offering an understanding of the mechanisms underlying economic, political, and social change, by systematically comparing three broad strands of institutional theorizing, namely, rational choice, organizational, and historical institutionalism. The book's second contribution consists of a series of empirical analyses of how the institution of the state has changed as a result of globalization over the last three decades, focusing on taxes and redistribution. Finally, the book's most useful chapter is the last one, which formulates a series of theoretical propositions to guide empirical research.

Campbell's analysis of the mechanisms of institutional change is extremely well done, especially when he lays out the impact that ideas have on change in general and on policymaking in particular. He specifies four different types of ideas according to their cognitive versus normative character, and to whether they are explicitly articulated or lie implicit in the policy debate: programs, frames, paradigms, and public sentiments. This part of the book clarified a great deal for me. Much of the literature on the impact of ideas on economic, political, or social change suffers from a lack of definitional precision. In proposing two crucial dimensions along which ideas vary, Campbell provides researchers with a useful toolkit.

The theoretical propositions developed toward the end of the book are perhaps what most scholars in related fields such as history, political science, and anthropology will find useful. The first argument revolves around whether institutional change is triggered by specific problems that actors seek to address or to ignore. Campbell poses the issue in a very smart way by arguing that one must look at whether the "problem" is endogenous or exogenous to the institutions. His overall conclusion is that problems are necessary but not sufficient conditions for institutional change. Next he tackles the issue of power and institutional change by arguing that problems do not simply translate into institutional change, but rather that problems trigger political struggles because actors realize that any solution to them might change the balance of power. Campbell also theorizes about evolutionary

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versus revolutionary institutional change, and about the resource base that helps one solution triumph over others. These theoretical contributions make the book essential reading for social scientists of all stripes interested in doing research on institutions and institutional change at different levels of analysis, ranging from groups and communities to organizations, industries, parties, social movements, nation-states, and even global systems.

———Mauro F. Guillen, University of Pennsylvania

Jane C. Schneider and Peter T. Schneider. *Reversible Destiny: Mafia, Antimafia and the Struggle for Palermo*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

It is not much of an exaggeration to say that there is a mafia-related murder on every page of anthropologists Jane and Peter Schneider's exhaustively researched investigation into the possibilities of a definitive elimination of the mafia in Palermo. Police officers, jurists, magistrates, politicians—all fall prey to assassination as the history of the presence of the mafia in Sicily more generally is narrated and analyzed. Even readers versed in this history will experience the chill of so much systematic violence, often directed exactly against those who are courageous enough to confront its source. But *Reversible Destiny* is also reasoned and cautiously optimism about the possibilities of concomitant and, sometimes, conjoint social, economic, political, and cultural reform that accumulates into something resembling real change. The book aims to work simultaneously on all of these analytical levels, both in describing the embeddedness of mafia relations in the Sicilian economy and society, and in historicizing the mafia as an organizational form and social formation that developed in the nineteenth century and grew dramatically in power in the post-World War II era of the hegemony of the Christian Democrat party.

The first half of the book details the history and paradigmatic activities of the mafia in Palermo, with a particularly persuasive chapter on "The Cultural Production of Violence" (ch. 4). Here the Schneiders illuminate the convulsive nature of mafia violence when they link that violence to the mafia's constantly uncertain social status as a social organization: "a closer look at the social and cultural aspects of the mafia reveals it to be an engine of insecurity, its order-enhancing structures and solidarity-building rituals frequently distorted by rivalries and provocations" (82).

The second half switches gear to follow the trajectories of various anti-mafia social movements and organizations. Long-term fieldwork in Palermo, mostly summers from 1987–1999, have given the Schneiders a deep knowledge of the culture and institutions of the city, and they have interviewed a wide range of social actors and participated in many cultural functions in order to access

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the texture of the city's life. One problem with this exhaustive approach is that the details can threaten to overrun the analysis as various anti-mafia projects, judicial and law-enforcement campaigns, infrastructure scandals, and intellectual polemics come into and out of focus. We move from the mafia maxi-trial of 1986–1987, to the assassinations of prosecutors Falcone and Borsellino, to anti-mafia demonstrations, to school field trips recuperating historical monuments, to discussions of particular anti-mafia laws and their economic consequences. Thus, the multi-dimensionality of the analysis can be viewed either as a methodologically brilliant technique for demonstrating the inescapability of the mafia in Palermo (it is relevant to every aspect of life), or as diffidence toward organizing the information according to an overarching theoretical framework. Toward the book's end the former prevails as the focus sharpens. Chapter 9, "Civil Society Groundwork," calls the concept of civil society into distinct service. In assessing the way in which this concept underwent a change of meaning in the Palermo anti-mafia movement from the 1980s to the 1990s, the Schneiders highlight the initial step of overcoming the Communist left-Catholic right dichotomy, and the follow-up step of demarcating the difference between progressive cosmopolitanism and *clientelismo*. While not going so far as to claim that the cultivation of civil society can in and of itself vanquish the mafia, the Schneiders do see this process as pivotal in sustaining the anti-mafia movement.

———Robin Wagner-Pacifici, Swarthmore College

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