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Editor's introduction

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This is the second volume of the annual *Review* and its purpose remains fundamentally unaltered: to review, in English, political science literature written in other languages. By exploiting the position of English as the international language of scientific communication the *Review* thus seeks to disseminate more widely the broad range of research being conducted across Europe.

As usual two competing principles struggle in the selection of contributions: the desire to be thematic and the attractions of eclecticism. As usual they are reconciled by compromise: this issue contains a mixed selection designed to appeal to a wide audience, but some of the contributions plainly tackle common themes.

In English a furious debate has been conducted for many years on the politics of the welfare state: on its 'crisis', real or imagined, on the nature of the coalitions for and against welfare, and so on. That literature has been excessively Anglocentric, and the contributions by Hupe and by Erichsen demonstrate that outside the arena of English language writing debates of equal intensity have been taking place.

The editor of a review such as this soon learns that a complex traffic takes place between literature originating in English (or American) and research reported in other languages. In their different ways the contributions offered by Mule and by Sturm, though about very different subjects, illustrate that traffic: in the case of the literature on Italian electoral behaviour the way a distinctive tradition of ecological analysis is being challenged by the prevailing Anglo-Saxon reliance on survey data; and in Sturm's fascinating account by the evidence of how American political economy classics – like Downs – are both influencing, and being partly rejected by, Germany scholars. That essay demonstrates more clearly than any other the mix of the cosmopolitan and the national which now shapes political science writing.

The prominence of articles about German research reflects the richness and vitality of that nation's political science community. Last year's review carried two pieces examining the outer reaches of the German party universe: Poguntke on the Germany Greens and Schmitt-Beck on the new social movements. The intense analytical interest aroused by the Greens tempts us to forget that they are dwarfed in their political impact by more electorally successful parties, and that the literature on these parties is of corresponding importance. The contested and uncertain character of the literature on the

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major German parties is the subject of Immerfall's contribution. Müller's review of a German language literature about a smaller, very different country actually shows some striking parallels – parallels both in substantive findings and in the quirks and omissions of the literature.

The papers in this volume mostly come from national political science communities with an established history of organisation. The fascination of Tsinisizelis's contribution is that it sketches the work of a relatively recently organised professional discipline-but a discipline which, of course, draws on intellectual traditions of social enquiry richer than in perhaps any other European nation.

Acknowledgement

The editor of a publication such as this soon incurs many debts. I particularly which to thank Alison Enticknap for her editorial assistance, Karen Hall and Marilyn Dunn for their secretarial help, and the contributors for their patience in responding to editorial demands for revisions.

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