
Book Reviews

The Delphic Oracle on Europe: Is there a Future for the European Union? edited by L. Tsoukalis and J.A. Emmanouilidis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, ISBN 9780199593842); viii+230pp., £45.00 hb.

This book takes its title from a seminar held in Delphi in June 2009. In keeping with the theme of Classical Greece, the book's contributors are all men, but at least the oracle was female. Loukas Tsoukalis, one of the editors, flogs the Delphic metaphor to death. His conclusion is tiresome and disappointing; it fails to provide any insight into the European Union's current predicament or future prospects.

The first part of the book deals with institutions. Jonas Condomines Béraud outlines the Lisbon Treaty's innovations but says little about their likely impact. Josep Borrell, a former President of the European Parliament, sings the institution's praises. Olaf Cramme is pessimistic about EU leadership and hopes, without elaborating, that the crisis might come to the rescue.

In the second part, on economics, Pier Carlo Padoan also hopes that the crisis will help, without explaining how. Otherwise, he thinks that deeper integration is unlikely due to political inertia and resistance from special interests. Dealing with the eurozone, André Sapir highlights the EU's inadequate means of crisis prevention, management and resolution. He concludes that monetary union needs some form of fiscal union – an important step toward political union. That is the most optimistic scenario in the book. Roger Liddle would like to see 'European-style capitalism' (p. 125) involving more intervention, a new industrial policy and less rigid enforcement of competition policy rules. Philippe Herzog is bullish on Social Europe and advocates a political strategy for the EU built around 'empowering a European civil society' and 'launching a European New Deal' (p. 144). He fails to flesh out these lofty goals, however.

In the third part, on external relations, Jolyon Howorth explains why the EU needs a grand strategy and why it is unlikely to get one. He seems reconciled to the EU being marginalized. The fact that the EU is risk-averse, according to Zaki Laïdi, poses another challenge. Not that this makes it impossible for the EU to develop a grand strategy. 'What is at stake [. . .] is not necessarily risk aversion as such but the inhibition to make choices – as if making choices were becoming a risk in itself in Europe' (p. 180). Janis A. Emmanouilidis, the book's co-author, is glum. He explains why the EU is in the doldrums: although it has overcome many crises, this time adversity will not spur integration – the current crisis is too severe. The key question, therefore, is 'how to cope with the actual consequences of Europe's gradual marginalization and relative political decline' (p. 201).

The book's subtitle *Is there a Future for the European Union?* is misleading. None of the contributors thinks that the EU lacks a future, but few think that the future is especially bright.

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Sociology of the European Union, edited by A. Favell and V. Guiraudon (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, ISBN 9780230207127); xiv+266pp., £22.99 pb.

A Political Sociology of the European Union: Reassessing Constructivism, edited by J. Rowell and M. Mangenot (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010, ISBN 9780719082436); xv+270pp., £65.00 hb.

At the March 2011 European Union Studies Association (EUSA) annual conference in Boston, Massachusetts («<http://www.eustudies.org/conference.php?cid=6>»), Favell and Guiraudon's book was hailed as thankfully as rain in a drought. Sociology, writes George Ross in his postscript, was 'arriving late at the European Studies ball' (p. 215), and the volume tackles the thirst (as the contributors see it) in EU Studies for a 'distinctive, new, empirical sociology' (p. 24). It takes the form of an edited, paperback contribution to Palgrave Macmillan's wide range of EU Studies, adopts an approach intended to be interdisciplinary (p. 24) and explicitly declares itself as a 'manifesto' for doing a sociology of the European Union.

In form, the book is somewhat shoehorned into paperback norms, with the presence of boxed inserts of key concepts at the start of each chapter sitting rather superfluously with material that by and large is advanced in nature. Chapter styles fluctuate widely, and in places would have benefited from more rigorous editing, particularly since the book is indeed intended to speak to students. In substance, and following a general introduction, the book is divided into two parts (Social Foundations – the impact of Europeanization on 'everyday European citizens' lives and experiences' [p.25]; and Politics and Policies – 'how sociological tools might be operationalized to study more explicitly political integration' [p. 125]). Each of these halves begins with its own introductory summary, and in this sense, the book can be read as having pedagogical intent since by marshalling its material under these broad headings, and by bringing so many leading scholars onto the pages, it is a valuable introduction to sociological 'data-driven' (p. 4) methodologies and theory applied to a wide range of specific fields of inquiry. Part One brings to a wider readership work seen before in other guises: Juan Díez Medrano on social class and identity; Adrian Favell and Ettore Recchi on social mobility and spatial mobility; Alberta Andreotti and Patrick le Galès on elites, middle classes and cities; and Neil Fligstein on markets and firms. In the second part of the book, the material inevitably, and usefully, overlaps with and complements the French scholarship that is the hallmark of the second volume reviewed here.

Rowell and Mangenot's book, published in hardback by Manchester University Press, is also co-edited, and is an expansive distillation of the scholarship generated by the Strasbourg School ('the Strasbourg research centre on the EU (currently known as GSPE PRISME)', Favell and Guiraudon, p. 126) – namely, the application of political sociology (itself a key dimension of French political science) to the study of the European Union. The book's contributors include authors from institutions beyond the Strasbourg laboratory itself, but all are based in French research teams (or French-speaking, in the case of Laurent Scheek from the Université Libre de Bruxelles). Roughly a third of the chapters draw on studies conducted initially on French research objects: Marine Lasalle on 'European' careers in sub-national French administrations; Hélène Michel on the construction of European interests based on the example of French property owners' associations; Andy Smith on protected geographical indications for food. In contrast, the majority of the chapters start from analyses of specifically EU-level 'fields', 'problems' and 'instruments' (each of these objects organizing one of the three parts to the book): Didier Georgakakis and Marine de Lassalle on EU civil servants; Michel Mangenot on the EU's Council Secretariat; Christele Marchand and Antoine Vauchez on the 'sociology of litigants pleading before the European Court of Justice'; Laurent Scheek on fundamental rights; Willy Beauvallet on the European Parliament and 'the politicisation of the European space'; intergovernmental benchmarking by Isabelle Bruno; 'the instrumentalisation of European opinion' by Philippe Aldrin; Romuald

Normand on 'expert measurement in the government of lifelong learning'; and Jay Rowell, finally, on 'the instrumentation of European disability policy'. Every single contribution is rich in detail and succinct in its conclusions, and, vitally, highly readable thanks to having been held to a clear template by the editors.

In a certain light, both volumes read as Bourdieu-*schriften*, which is to be expected, and are none the worse for that. Both have flaws that are virtually inevitable when dealing with material that is edited and, in the Rowell and Mangenot book, translated in many cases from French to English, although only the lack of gender-aware language in some chapters of the latter really jars in any way. Indeed, of the two books under review here, it is Rowell and Mangenot's which offers the more accessible read, and which provides the more coherent account of how we might think of the EU as a collection of socially constructed objects. It offers the most original empirical material in support of its arguments, and it is the more consistently and effectively edited. Yet it is also the more ferocious of the two volumes in its (self-declared) battle for turf, not only amongst 'EU constructivists' (p. xv), but within 'existing approaches to the EU' in general, to which 'both the individual chapters [...] and the book as a whole, constitute a sustained and systematic challenge' (p. xv). The political sociology of the EU, we can logically conclude, is being pioneered by our colleagues from the Strasbourg stable, and it is a good thing that these two publications have brought the work to the attention of the wider readership that two English-language texts can offer. Its legitimacy thus established, its proponents might consider taking a breather from the battle for disciplinary *lebensraum*, and joining Favell and Guiraudon in promoting the benefits of the equally challenging adventure of forging a truly interdisciplinary sociology of (the) European Union.

HELEN DRAKE
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An Inside View of the CAP Reform Process: Explaining the MacSharry, Agenda 2000 and Fischler Reforms, by A. Cunha with A. Swinbank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, ISBN 9780199591572); xix+226pp., £50.00 hb.

The common agricultural policy (CAP) was the EU's flagship policy of the 1960s as well as its most expensive, absorbing almost 70 per cent of the entire Community budget by the early 1980s. Today, that figure is around 40 per cent. Three decades after its creation, EU leaders, with a sense of reluctance, embarked on a series of reforms to the CAP. It is these reforms that are examined by Arlindo Cunha with Alan Swinbank in this book. It traces the reform process from the late 1980s, spearheaded by EU Agriculture Commissioner Ray MacSharry, through to the early 2000s when Commissioner Franz Fischler began to rework the policy although with mixed results. The book makes an important contribution to the existing and expanding literature on the CAP and will complement the ongoing scholarly achievements by historians who have researched the early years of this policy.

The book is especially useful for the way it attempts to explain the policy and decision-making processes inherent in one of the EU's most complex and technical policy fields. Sensibly structured, the first two chapters attempt, with varying degrees of success, to explain both the origins and development of the CAP, as well as introducing how policy and decision-making work at EU level. For the reader, a pre-existing knowledge of both is required. The remaining chapters chart the reform efforts not only from a European perspective, but with clear links between CAP reform (or non-reform) and wider international trading environment *vis-à-vis* the Gatt (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and, later, the WTO (World Trade Organization). However, the book promises much but falls short on delivery. Cunha, the main author, was Portugal's agriculture minister during the early reforms of the CAP and had a front row seat at national and at EU level to decision-making and political deal-making. Later, he served as vice-president of the European Parliament's

agriculture committee. His unique insights, highlighted in the acknowledgements of the book, are not clearly evident in the ten chapters that follow.

The book makes good use of a wide range of primary sources, such as official EU documents and informative pamphlets like *Agra Europe* – all of which were already in the public domain. What is absent is any real sense of the politics of reform to which the main author was privy – especially the disagreements that would inevitably have taken place behind closed doors between those Member States and interest groups in pushing for or against reform of the CAP. What is lacking is the insider's perspective promised in the book's title.

MICHAEL GEARY
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Regional Representations in the EU: Between Diplomacy and Interest Mediation, by C. Rowe (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, ISBN 9780230220553); ix+245 pp., £57.50 hb.

In the literature on EU multi-level governance and sub-national interest mediation in European policy-making, it is a frequently mentioned fact that the EU comprises a wide variety of regions. At the same time, it is rarely analyzed how this diversity affects the European strategies of regions. The aim of Carolyn Rowe's book is to understand the effects of this diversity on regional representations in Brussels and their roles, forms and functions. Rowe argues that the regional representations in the EU can only be explained with reference to the domestic context and the divergent governmental, constitutional, financial and ideational resources of the regions. Empirically, the book focuses on Germany, the United Kingdom, Poland and the Czech Republic, which allows it to bridge the divide between the multi-level governance literatures on the 'old' and 'new' Member States. It thereby captures two important cleavages between constitutional and administrative regions and between the regions of 'old' and 'new' Member States.

The book is organized with a short introduction and conclusion and five core chapters – namely, a chapter on the framework for analysis; an historical chapter on the emergence of the first regional representations, their purpose and the challenges they faced; and three chapters on the activities, organization and accountability structures of the representations.

The considerable strengths of the book lie in its comparative nature and the four thematic chapters that provide genuine insights into the differences between regional offices and highlight the need for a nuanced, contextualized analysis of regional interest representation. For example, by pointing out the different aims pursued by different offices, the book alerts the reader to the fact that the success of regional representations cannot be measured against a single scale. In the process, by showing that not all regional offices pursue or prioritize governance-related objectives, the book also questions the tendency of the multi-level governance literature to see regional representations as an indicator of multi-level governance.

A weaker point is the framework for analysis in chapter 2, which could have been further developed and applied more extensively to the remaining chapters. The comparison of regional offices with similar forms of interest mediation, such as embassies and lobbying organizations, is original, but a clear discussion of the conditions under which regions tend to adopt one type of representation over another is largely missing from this framework. Nevertheless, by spelling out the differences between regional representations the book contributes a more nuanced understanding of multi-level governance to the literature and will be a useful stepping stone for future research in this field.

ANNA-LENA HÖGENAUER
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Converging Europe: Transformation of Social Policy in the Enlarged European Union and in Turkey, edited by I.E. Vural (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011, ISBN 9781409407096); xiii+274pp., £60.00 hb.

This book analyzes the impact of the Lisbon Strategy on the social policies of the old 15 Member States and the new 12 states that joined the EU between 2004 and 2007, while also including Turkey in the analysis. The contributors adopt various approaches as the basis of their analysis, ranging from institutionalist and intergovernmentalist to neo-Gramscian, according to which the impact of the Lisbon Strategy may be seen to differ. The aspects examined by the authors cover various elements across a wide range of social policies: the national welfare systems as a whole, and more in particular pensions, active labour market policies, social protection systems and social exclusion and poverty. The contributions take into account the impact of the 2007–09 global recession, arguing that it has significantly reduced the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy's targets, with some Member States undertaking rather confused policies over a ten-year period.

Overall, the analysis proposed in this edited book represents an important starting point for the debate on the successor to the Lisbon Strategy, and in general offers very good points of reflection on social issues which, with the recession, needed addressing with extreme urgency. The analysis of various components of social policy and of all the Member States is the second strength of this book, which provides the reader with an exhaustive picture of social policy trends in Europe since the inception of the Lisbon Strategy. The third strength is the adoption of different theoretical approaches as the basis of each chapter. In this way, the reader can gain knowledge by taking different standpoints.

The inclusion of Turkey is an original idea given the pending situation of this country as a possible new member of the European Union. The contributors concentrate mainly on the influence of the EU and of international bodies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the gender equality and the poverty policies. Again, the analysis is rigorous and the authors offer very good insights on the particular case of Turkey.

Through the analysis of the various regulations governing the structural funds, the chapters by Holman demonstrate how cohesion policy increasingly falls into a new liberal paradigm, and that the recent bail-out and austerity measures in response to the global recession will further reduce the scope of cohesion policy, excluding any possibility for a change in strategy any different from new liberalism. I would strongly recommend this book for masters degree courses and research degree training because it represents a very good departure point for the analysis of specific case studies and is timely in its discussion of current topics such as the global recession.

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The High Representative for the EU Foreign and Security Policy: Review and Prospects, edited by G. Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet and C. Rüger (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2011, ISBN 9783832960025); 303pp., €54.00 pb.

The year 2009 constituted a watershed for EU foreign and security policy: it marked the tenth anniversary of the High Representative's (HR) portfolio and Javier Solana's handover to the 'Even Higher Representative', Catherine Ashton. This edited volume synthesizes the existing literature and debate on the office of the HR and its leeway of action throughout its first decade in existence. Solana's approach, achievements and challenges are examined in depth. The book goes on to appraise the prospects for the new HR office with Ashton at the wheel. As is to be expected, this second part is rather tentative as the manuscript was completed whilst Ashton was still carving out a role for herself and her European External Action Service.

Together the authors tell the story of key personalities, relationships and decisions. They provide a peek behind the curtain in the Brussels theatre, exposing turf battles both at home and

away, and let us eavesdrop on some of the talk around the many EU tables. As a result this book is not only informative, but also entertaining. The volume reads like a collection of essays. This means that it is a little repetitive, but also that a number of distinguished scholars agree with its overall conclusion that personalities matter in EU foreign policy. This focus on persons and staffing is significant. All too often the role of individuals is downplayed if not ignored in the study of the Union's external affairs. This research brings out the 'key priming function' of the first two HRs on their new roles, respectively. Through his personal presence and persistence 'the first HR was able to make much more of his office than what could be expected by the provisions of the Treaty'. Ashton, in turn, 'has what Solana never had': treaty-based authority. Avoiding succumbing to the usual 'Ashton bashing' this study suggests that her first six months were 'not too bad for a "mission impossible"'.

The analysis is empirically rich and comprehensive, but somewhat Eurocentric. As a result, it ignores the importance of the Union's strategic relations and leaves some rather large elephants in the room: most notably, the United States, Russia and China. Moreover, the book ends as Ashdown's journey begins, which leaves the audience guessing as to the authors' take not only on events such as the euro crisis, the Arab Spring and the war in Libya, but some of the unforeseen hurdles that face the new High Representative, struggling to stay 'double-hatted' rather than 'double-hated'. I look forward to the second edition.

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Italy and the European Union, by F. Bindi (Washington, DC/Rome: Brookings Institution Press/Scuola Superiore della Pubblica Amministrazione, 2011, ISBN 9780815704966), ix+346pp., £19.99 pb.

With this book Federiga Bindi fills a void in both European Union and Italian studies by offering a description of the institutions and procedures through which Italy makes itself present at EU level, the aims and strategies that are thus pursued and the impact that Italy manages to exert on EU policy-making. Other contributions in the past have analyzed some of these aspects *across a number of policy areas*, but few have actually dwelled on the institutional set-up and legislative instruments that allow the Italian voice to be heard in Brussels *in general*. The many idiosyncrasies of the Italian presence at EU level – its fragmentation, *ad hocness* and frequent belatedness – thus find in this book a useful factual grounding in the description of domestic institutional and political arrangements designed to cope with the demands of EU policy-making.

The book begins by exploring systematically Italy's relationship with 'Europe', recalling the historical milestones of integration (chapter 3) and recording partisan orientations and public opinion's attitude towards the EU (chapter 4). Together, these chapters tell us a well-known story, oftentimes recounted in the literature, which however constitutes the necessary background for the more detailed analysis that follows. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are then devoted to a rather meticulous description of the various apparatuses of the Italian state in their EU-level deployment: from the parliament to the executive, from the public administration to organized interests. The aim is to give the reader a sense of how the Italian state machinery, and even its politics, works in their European declension. This is clearly no easy task, but it is performed with a pleasant narrative style and in an efficacious manner. This wealth of information and analysis is finally meant to allow us to appreciate how and why Italian governments have managed (or have failed) to distil the national interest and to promote it at EU level. This is pursued by analyzing both 'high politics' issues (Treaty negotiations, the European Arrest Warrant and the Albanian crisis) and 'low politics' issues (EMU [economic and monetary union] and the 20-20 climate-energy package) in chapters 8 and 9.

Where the book appears somewhat weaker is in its pursuit of the theoretical ambitions announced in the introductory and theoretical (the first, second and last) chapters. It claims to fill a descriptive void which, in the case of Italy, might indeed be there (but see Maurizio Ferrera's and Marco Giuliani's *Governance e politiche nell'Unione Europea* [Il Mulino, 2008]). What it does not do, however, is to place the Italian case in a theoretical perspective that helps us explain why that should be so. The literature review contained in chapter 2 thus appears a trifle conventional, aimed more at establishing a niche for the book than at engaging existing theories of Europeanization (in its broadest, both top-down and bottom-up, meaning). The book however is a pleasant and informative read, written by a 'European' believer who clearly suffers at seeing her country make an insufficient contribution to the process of integration and who is moved by an authentic desire to boost with her own work the engagement of Italian politicians and functionaries in the European project.

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