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Book Reviews

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PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Book Reviews

Hirokazu Miyazaki, *Arbitraging Japan: dreams of capitalism at the end of finance*. Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press 2013, 216 pp. (pbk).

Miyazaki's *Arbitraging Japan* is an exceptionally skilful ethnography on the lives of a group of Japanese financial market professionals during the period (1998-2011). The book stands out as a compelling, incisive contribution to the field of economic (financial) anthropology. Most significantly, the author is able to present to the reader the precise genealogy of thinking of Japanese traders as they engage through economic practice, and thus to illustrate how 'arbitraging' permeates their most personal dreams and aspirations. As we delve into 'dreams of arbitraging' the book outlines for us the imaginary components that inspire the reflexive encounter of ideas on finances and uncertainty, in a way in which arbitrageurs and social theories create understandings about the market and capitalism.

The premise of the book follows a long standing tradition in anthropology that attempts to explain modalities of thinking in economic practice; as well as to challenge the perception of what represents rationality in economic analysis. This book's first contribution lies in the fact that it looks at internal modalities of thinking about arbitrage as epistemological stances, by presenting economic practice as what brings about inspiration, ambiguity and un-sustainable thinking. Central to the book, the category of arbitrage is not presented as a closed, clear-cut economic concept but as a 'precarious' category. This category is constructed in relation to the category of doubt and faith both essential in making ambiguity work (p54). Its second contribution is Miyazaki's distinction of difference. The arbitrageurs are not mere speculators, fund hedge traders or other categories (in the economic literature they are often presented as one single entity of 'traders'). They are different from speculators because their scepticism and view of risk-taking infuses their position with new value. Arbitrage is not only a category of speculative trade, but exists in a position of relativistic uncertainty and depends on unknowability and uncertainty.

The book is structured in six chapters that bind together the analysis and critique of arbitraging as a modality of thinking. Chapter one makes a case for the role of arbitraging as a powerful economic category and it sets out the premise that will be explored in chapters two to four: the idea that arbitrage is a 'market positionality' (page 38) as well as a cosmological instance from where traders examine their own lives and their own society. For Miyazaki, the market 'is an economy of dreams' (page 42) where different levels of virtuality co-exist: financial theory (arbitrage) coexists with personal dreams and aspirations.

Chapter two proposes that belief and doubt should be treated as dynamic forces in the market, rather than subsumed as non-economic ones. This chapter illustrates how belief and doubt recapture conceptual ambiguity, turning arbitrage into a relative stance. This is followed by beautifully crafted ethnographic instances in chapter three and four. These chapters elaborate on the role of desire (the desired modality of being). Central to these discussions Miyazake crafts his point on how arbitrage represents ‘an anticipation of retrospection’ (p83), in other words, how trading opportunities eventually close; and how traders use arbitrage as a thinking skill to deal with future predictions and the uncertainties of the market. These chapters are brilliant at giving attention to the issue of temporality (and incongruity of temporality of things) and intersecting temporalities in the market.

Chapter three and four bring about a discussion about risk and difference. Miyazaki argues, Japanese traders sense of ‘being competitive’ is due to cultural diversity and difference. They can’t compete (with American counterparts) in risk-taking. Risk-taking not only defines their relationship to uncertainty but also to speculation itself (and speculators being a kind of risk-taker than arbitrageurs are not). Furthermore, Miyazaki argues, risk-taking is made complex by the fact the market moves to a position of no arbitrage; if I understood correctly risk-taking is about a particular way of orienting oneself in time (where the market opportunities and the need for arbitrage disappear) (page 82). The pathos of the traders is that they are never ‘in time’ for opportunities, have no financial incentives, and can’t take as much risk. They operate through long-term refinement of learning and skills instead of speculation itself. If there is a critique to make to this book is the issue of the cultural translation of the word risk and its relation to the book’s arguments uncertainty. As argued by Douglas (Douglas, *Risk and Blame: Essays in Cultural Theory*, 1994: 14) there is no Japanese word for risk. The book acknowledges that traders borrow the American term *risku*. The problem being that risk in the ‘Euro-American’ sense is often ‘missed in translation’ in Japan. Japanese often use a combination of terms on danger (*abunai*) and other modalities of thought extending over the void and lack of notion of risk. Whilst I understand Miyazaki’s point of *risku* as a financial modality, risk (its strategies in absence of it) should be more carefully treated as a translated modality of difference. This could be significant on how arbitrageurs ‘orient’ themselves through a landscape of borrowed (re-interpreted) notion of ‘risk’, responsibility, irrationality and faith in the market regularity.

Chapter four ends up with the assumed circularity that at the end of arbitrage (and end of the book itself) the notion of arbitrage disappears. Chapter five proposes a distinction between the principle of capitalistic speculation and arbitrage itself. Outlined in the previous chapters, Miyazaki is keen on proposing a critique of capitalism from the point of view of arbitrage (as opposed to the traditional view on speculation and self-perpetuation of the market). The extraordinary approach proposed here takes us to consider the possibility of and endpoint to capitalism. Arbitrageurs are positioned in such a way (through their faith in the endpoint of arbitrage) in ambiguity that they can imagine different ‘ends’ to their dreams, and as such, ‘ends’ of capitalistic dreams as well. As arbitrageurs have a ‘double vision’ (they can see through speculation and through arbitrage operations) they are exceptional witness of capitalism and its possibilities. It would have been useful perhaps, to look at anti-capitalist movements in Japan who also seek similar end to capital speculation and share many features (including utopian interests like UFO watching, dreams of healing the youth, alternative psychotherapies) with arbitrageurs. This, however, does not detract in any way from the

purpose of the book and of its many genuine, exciting contributions. This is a brilliant and compelling book that stands as one of the best ethnographies of contemporary Japan.

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Geoff Kaplan (ed.), *Power to the People. The Graphic Design of the Radical Press and the Rise of the Counter-Culture, 1964-1974*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013, 264 pp. (hpk).

The vast majority of this oversize book's 264 pages are reproductions of the graphic design and associated texts of the copious United States (and British) underground press, which had managed to become a salient feature of the alternative media from, roughly, the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, as indeed it had in other parts of Europe and the wider world. Though the reproductions do not always come across in maximum quality in this lavishly illustrated tome, this volume is likely to become a central reference work in the years to come. This is no doubt also due to several informative articles which accompany the iconoclastic reproductions, of which Gwen Allen's 'Design as Social Movement' must be highlighted as the conceptually most insightful contribution.

Bob Ostertag's brief history of 'The Underground Press' provides the necessary background to the infrastructure behind the targeted 'graphic design'. At the end of the sixties, *Newsweek* judged the combined readership of the myriad of underground newspapers to be two million. And in the early seventies, their numbers further increased, once again suggesting that the greatest impact of the spirit of the proverbial sixties would actually be reached in the early-to-mid-1970s. Two news services aided the rapid spread of the alternative press, mirroring the divergent orientation of the oftentimes highly ephemeral underground press. The *Liberation News Service* supplied the more political wing with information, whereas the *Underground Press Syndicate* targeted the more countercultural wing of the movement. By the early seventies, probably more than one thousand papers flooded the 'market' at any one time in the United States alone.

By the turn of the decade, high school students alone published probably close to five hundred usually very short-lived papers, easy victims of repressive acts by principals and other representatives of American democracy. In total, the period probably saw several thousand underground papers originating amongst high school students. Perhaps the most serious challenges to the American way of life amongst these underground papers were newsheets produced by United States soldiers for United States soldiers. 'In 1972, just within the military alone, the Department of Defense reported that 245 underground papers were being published by active-duty US military personnel'(169).

A by-product of the vast array of social movements affecting the United States in this red decade, their content challenged just about every single socially acceptable tradition on which American economic, social, cultural and military power was built. If there was an overarching theme behind this flurry of imaginative activity, it was 'the goal of empowering readers to reject the authority of the expert and take control of their own destinies'(87). Or,

again in the words of Gwen Allen, 'information [became] a form of emancipation'(87). And thus the often rather crude graphics and text passages conveyed self-help manuals with regard to contraception and abortion side-by-side with instructions on how to assemble Molotov cocktails.

Given that this vast social movement coincided with the age of the sexual revolution, it is small surprise that overt and explicit graphic or pictorial reproductions of nudity in various stages of thin or non-existent disguise became a stock feature of many of these journalistic products, and it is to the credit of the editor, Geoff Kaplan, to have given substantial exposure to gay and lesbian contributions to this flowering of the sexual imagination. To the credit of Gwen Allen, the double-edged nature of some of these illustrations is pointed out as well: 'For example, underground commix often used carnivalesque imagery, as well as sexist and racist depictions, to offend conventional social codes, walking an exceedingly thin line between lampooning stereotypes and perpetuating them' (111).

The use of slang and profanity in the accompanying texts further emphasized the purposefully shocking and iconoclastic nature of graphic reproductions. Ironically, the subversive nature of graphic design was frequently the product of the lack of funds available to the makers of these pages. 'The barely legible fonts and serpentine layouts disturbed the rational, gridded hierarchy of the modernist page;'(95) but some of this was no doubt due to circumstances rather than conscious design. That certain issues of underground papers were published with different color schemes of the very same pages was at least sometimes a result of the simple fact that editors could only afford to finance partial print-runs one at a time, thus on occasion involuntarily creating a psychedelic effect.

Several authors stress the supposedly central role of psychedelic drugs – notably LSD – in the fashioning of these journalistic products. This may well have often been the case, but the resulting 'neo-jugendstil of the magazines' (T.J. Clark: 217) is not universally recognized as the most incisive and successful feature of the underground press. Instead, it is likely the creative juxtaposition of innovative techniques which gave much of the contemporaneous clout to these printed sheets and magazines. 'As underground papers chronicled events and experiences that were omitted from established media-venues and expressed alternative political views and lifestyles, they insisted that communication was not only a matter of what was said, but how something was said. Like artists, the editors and designers of the underground press used the media as vehicle to disseminate their ideas but also paid attention to the materiality of language, experimenting with the graphic form of the printed page, and invented participatory strategies to transform the relationship between producers and consumers of media.' (93)

It would be an interesting challenge to investigate the links between the creative individuals behind the graphic design of the underground press and the simultaneous prominence of related iconoclastic thinkers and artists like Roland Barthes and the representatives of Conceptual Art – a topic hinted at, but left unresolved, in the intelligently crafted volume under review.

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Joanna L. Robinson, *Contested Water: The Struggle Against Water Privatization in the United States and Canada*. Cambridge: MIT Press 2013, 236 pp. (pbk).

In *Contested Water*, Joanna Robinson investigates the contentious global debate surrounding the question of water privatization at the municipal scale. While much academic and activist attention has been given to this issue in developing countries, particularly in places like Cochabamba, Bolivia or Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, cases in developed countries have received less publicity. Generally, the debate over privatization focuses on profits for multi-national corporations and what that means for local consumers, versus the Human Right to Water, and the idea of water as a common resource. Anti-privatization proponents generally argue that allocation by municipal governments or even smaller scale units, such as cooperatives, is bound to be more equal and conscientious as they are not in it for the profits. Those in favor of privatization generally adopt a neoliberal stance in defense of the efficacy of markets for providing basic resources such as water, as quality service is incentivized through profit maximization as well as (ideally) robust regulation. This book also drew more attention to the perceived negative environmental impacts associated with private control than I have seen previously.

Robinson chooses to illustrate this debate by choosing the cases of Stockton, California and Vancouver, British Columbia. She looks specifically at the nature of social movements and the structural makeup of the respective anti-privatization movements in these two cities. Her analysis goes through the coalitions formed, chosen strategies, the role of neoliberal globalization and the interplay of global and local trends and actors. She finds that the movement in Stockton was unsuccessful, at least initially, at stopping privatization while the movement in Vancouver did prove successful in this regard. Unsurprisingly, she attributes this primarily to the makeup and goals of the respective anti-privatization movements.

In Stockton, Robinson illustrates through the use of interviews and document analysis, that the movement there was unwilling to consider global implications and connections, and thus missed opportunities to connect with other anti-globalization activists, particularly the younger demographic, as well as others that had dealt with the issue of water privatization before. Furthermore, the interviews showed that there was a split between the environmental organizations that spearheaded the movement, and the labor organizations that could have contributed greatly to the strength of the coalition. Robinson also characterizes the Stockton anti-privatization movement as unwilling to pursue the more 'activist' tactics such as marches, sit ins etc. that were adopted by those in Vancouver and other movements around the world. Instead they attempted to block privatization through a referendum and by holding the 'moral high ground,' largely through a 'fact' based appeal to voter's reason and good sense. This may have enabled the mayor, characterized as a zealous advocate of privatization with questionable moral standing, to push his agenda forward, regardless of their discontent. Relatively little is made of the fact that the Stockton anti-privatization movement did eventually prevail after a lengthy court battle.

Conversely, the movement in Vancouver is shown (again largely through interviews) to have been much more willing to work with global actors and global themes in the construction of their protest movement. Additionally, the anti-privatization movement in Vancouver was composed of a broad coalition of actors, with much more experience in

grassroots campaigning and opposing environmentally destructive practices in the past. Robinson also portrays the willingness of the Vancouver movement to adopt much more overt and disruptive tactics, arriving in a parade at council meetings and engaging in heated debate and direct criticism of council members and their push to privatize. These tactics, combined with a generally more open and available political structure, are credited with the success of the movement in Vancouver.

As noted at the outset, there is generally less attention given to private versus public water allocation in the developed world so this book provides an interesting investigation of this area. In discussing water privatization, it is tempting to make potentially detrimental direct comparisons to other similar debates around the world. In this regard, one is comparing apples and oranges to some extent, with the political, regulatory and socio-economic conditions of somewhere like Cochabamba being completely different than those of Vancouver. Robinson does well to (generally) steer clear of making such comparisons, or at least qualifying those that she does make. She does however, cite some quite broad, and frankly simplistic notions such as our shift from ‘anthropocentric notions’ to the growing “understanding of the interdependence of humans and nature”(Robinson, *Contested Water: The Struggle Against Privatization in the United States and Canada*, 2013: 44) and how that “shapes current conceptions about the environment” (ibid.). While this is based on the work of other scholars, it would not hold true in many parts of the world or even in many areas of the United States and Canada.

The author’s use of interviews brings the input of a wide range of stakeholders to the debate; this technique certainly adds depth to her analysis. However, I would have liked to see a bit more corroboration with policy documents or possibly media coverage at the time, as the opinions of a few to generalize trends can obviously be problematic. Overall, *Contested Water* provided an interesting discussion, albeit not particularly groundbreaking, and did illuminate important aspects and components of anti-privatization social movements.

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Yuri Pines, Lothar von Falkenhausen, Gideon Shelach, Robin D. S. Yates (eds.), *Birth of an Empire: The State of Qin Revisited*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press 2014, 396pp. £27.95 (pbk).

This is a selection of keynote papers from the 2008 international workshop “New Perspectives on Chinese Culture and Society” in the Institute for Advanced Study at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It is a more than welcome multi-disciplinary addition to Qin dynasty historiography. Following a General Introduction this work is divided into three sections of three chapters: archaeological reflections, textual analysis, and personalities and comparison, each prefaced by its own contextualising informative introduction. The nine chapters – an appropriate number for the first imperial dynasty – provide excellent, supporting material for academic debate concerning the question most often asked by students of this period; “How did the Qin achieve so much in such a short dynasty?”

The General Introduction highlights how academic analysis and teaching has traditionally focused on imperial Qin and the First Emperor, Qin Shihuang, whilst almost totally side-lining pre-imperial Qin. This volume refutes the general perception that the Qin arrived from nowhere with no material culture of its own and created a short lived “aberration” (p.279) of a dynasty doomed to collapse under the harshness of its legalist ideology and the vastness of the First Emperor’s grand schemes. The Qin’s conscious emulation of the Zhou, the assertiveness of the early Qin rulers, and Qin unification resulting from the imposition of Qin standards on people conquered during the Warring States period are explored. The concept of the Messianic emperor and interdependence are advanced as possible reasons for the dynasty’s collapse.

There is an astounding wealth of material here highlighting the value of newly discovered material in conjunction with received material. The value of archaeological material furthering our understanding is stressed with the fervour of epiphanic discovery despite, I would argue, being a truth already universally acknowledged amongst historians. There is much interesting minutiae such as a 5 month old’s passport exemplifying regulated population movement although the fascinating human details are placed in the endnotes rather than the main text. (p. 27) Similarly the discovery of mathematical works that included how much cloth women of different capabilities could weave within a certain time. (p. 144)

The section introductions are designed to contextualise for students and a “general audience”. (p.4) However, for the latter there remains a high expectation of knowledge and in places, for example, the received texts section (p. 4), the information could be perceived as over-detailed. Similarly reference to the “infamous book burning” in the General Introduction, without explanation (p. 28), would suggest this text appropriate for an informed general reader with a sound grasp of this period of Chinese history. Within the papers van Ess’s repeated use of “as is well known” assumes a familiarity with the period that the general reader may not share and Shelach illustrates a high expectation of prior contextual knowledge of Qin history and customs (p. 117). However, placing this “general audience” to one side, the main aim of this text to inform on the latest academic developments in scholarship on the Qin is most definitely achieved. Does this text further our understanding of the Qin? Yes. Are human aspects regarding the Qin explored? Yes. These papers are all accessible and engagingly informative.

The title of this text – *Birth of an Empire: the State of Qin Revisited* – is not wholly representative since there is much concerning the nascent Han and Qin continuity. Consequently there is data and analysis here of more than passing interest to Han scholars in the context of the Qin legacy which is not immediately apparent from the title. The *re-visiting* within the title refers not only to a revisionist interpretation of earlier historiography but also a celebration of new data fuelling fresh analysis together with re-affirmation of knowledge from earlier sources. For example Hsings’s research supporting 2CE *Hanshu* population census figures of average family size. Similarly van Ess argues that the presentation of the First Emperor by Sima Qian in the *Shiji* was a covert message to the Han Emperor Wu. Yacobson’s comparison of Qin Shihuang with the First Roman Emperor is interesting and world history is certainly in vogue but is this paper within the scope of the volume considering the title? Unhelpfully for librarians the spine title on this reviewer’s copy was “*The Birth of Empire*” rather than the correct title: “*Birth of an Empire*”.

The multi-disciplinary approach of these papers is, on the whole, successful. Shelach's systems theory approach to "collapse" transfers the Qin historiographical lens from imperial personality to the burden of the great works and society's interdependence as joint catalysts for the fall of the dynasty. Zhao's reference to the significance of "waist pits" (p.66) as opposed to any other type of pit such as a vertical pit was not obvious to this reviewer, a non-archaeologist, despite the difference seeming of importance. Likewise flexed apotropaic burial positions as referred to in Poo's paper (p. 194) on religion; an *in situ* explanation here would have been helpful. At the risk of being over-pedantic Yates, in the opening paragraph of his paper, *the Changing Status of Slaves*, refers to a period of *more than 60 years* since Pulleybank's journal paper in 1958, when it is only 56 years and in the same paragraph he refers to it being *almost 70 years* since Wilbur's monograph in 1943 when it is actually 71 years.

We can perhaps equate the current state of Qin historiography with the existing situation on the ground regarding the First Emperor's mausoleum; in the grand scheme of things much has been uncovered but a great deal more remains to be discovered and analysed. On the understanding that one should always leave one's audience wanting more, in this respect this collection of papers, for this reviewer achieves just that. Further comment upon the "issues and topics left untouched" (p.3), are eagerly awaited.

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Philip Cunliffe, *Legions of Peace: UN Peacekeepers from the Global South*. London: Hurst and Co, 2013, 362 pp. (hpk).

At a time when the United Nations is marketing its peacekeepers as a modernised, cost effective 'Force for the Future' (United Nations, Feature: New challenges spur UN peacekeeping to become 'a force for the future, 29 May 2014), it is essential to critically explore the fundamental concepts underpinning international peacekeeping, and the power imbalances contained within its role in global politics. Phillip Cunliffe's *Legions of Peace* does this, and provides a valuable contribution to the peacekeeping literature.

Cunliffe's core argument is that UN peacekeeping is ultimately a continuation and refinement of imperial practices set up long before the organisation's creation. Thus it is under 'imperial multilateralism', where peacekeeping acts as an enabler for the 'wealthy and powerful' states of the Global North to 'suppress and contain conflict across the unruly periphery of the international order', by using military personnel and equipment from the global south. This facilitates the 'highest form of liberal imperialism', where 'in place of the old imperial slogans of commerce, Christianity and civilization, human rights, free markets and liberal democracy are promoted with no less commitment and vigor' (p81). The premise that the UN is often seen as an *alternative* to imperialist projects is thus turned on its head, with UN interventions being identified as 'toxic subversion[s]' of self-determination. Peacekeeping operations, staffed largely by military personnel from such developing countries, are the 'Askari's and Sepoys' of this imperialist order: a military force comprised of soldiers from the global south, sent to provide security in the global periphery. This, Cunliffe argues is a mirror

image of the imperial order where European empires would levy military forces in their colonies both to garrison those territories, but also to fight wars defending their empires around the world (p30).

The book develops over three sections: Peacekeeping in International Order; Peacekeepers from the Global South; and Imperial Multilateralism. Within these three sections, the argument is developed over six chapters. After the introduction, Chapter two offers a solid deconstruction of the core principles of peacekeeping: the non-use of force, consent, and neutrality. Within this, there is debate over the evolution of robust peacekeeping, to issues of consent, regime change, and exporting of the liberal peace. Chapter three provides a solid deconstruction of the debate that UN peacekeeping is an alternative model to colonialism (p81-104), before offering the author's take on the emerging 'critical peacekeeping studies' field.

Chapter four looks at the longer-term development of colonial militaries undertaking imperial functions, and how trends in peacekeeping operations – most notably 'hybrid operations – perpetuate this. The critique of hybrid operations – where western powers deploy forces which operate on their own terms alongside a UN operation – as being a risk-free form of engagement by western states in UN Peacekeeping is a most good contribution, particularly when linked to wider debates over empire. Chapter five looks at the troop contributors in more depth, examining at Brazil, India, Russia, and China as participants in peacekeeping operations, seeking to understand their role in challenging and possibly revising models of UN peacekeeping (p181-202). The chapter then offers a critique of democratic peace theory – that peacekeeping operations can be used to spread democratic governance, with the aim of facilitating a long-term global peace. The means to question this is through 'peacekeeping praetorianism', a phenomena where peacekeeping has in fact allowed militaries to reassert their authority *within* contributing states.

Chapter six turns the focus to the UN itself, the inherent power imbalances wired into the system, and the emergence of new trends and divisions. This expands on Cunliffe's excellent *International Peacekeeping* article (Cunliffe, P., 'The Politics of Global Governance in UN Peacekeeping', *International Peacekeeping*, 16:3, 323 — 336) about the governance of UN peacekeeping. It also returns to theories of imperialism, and what further study of UN peacekeeping could do to enrich this literature (p246). The book's conclusion wraps the key debates up well, strongly advocating against complacency regarding the use of military power, even in the guise of peacekeeping.

One criticism of note is that the book does not reflect on the field of conflict resolution, which has (since the mid 1970s) sought to understand peacekeeping as a form of third party intervention to deal with conflict at its most violent stage. Work from this field has looked at the extent to which peacekeeping serves the 'status quo', or serves peace (Galtung, J., "Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peacebuilding". In: J. Galtung (ed.). *Peace, War and Defence: Essays in Peace Research*. Vol. 2. Copenhagen: Christian Ejliders, 1976), and has offered theoretical approaches to concepts of consent, impartiality, and the use of force in peacekeeping (Ramsbotham, O. et al, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution (Third Edition)*. Oxford: Polity Press, 2011). Looking toward this literature could be of benefit. However, for those in the conflict resolution field who undertake research on peacekeeping, this book is a stark reminder to not be complacent about wider power imbalances that impinge on all aspects of third party intervention. Moreover, it certainly has made this

reviewer reflect on the work being undertaken in this field, and where it needs to be stronger in questioning what UN peacekeeping is, who it ultimately serves, and where it may be going.

The book is clearly well researched and although not necessarily for beginners, would be of value to anybody who has studied and/or worked in this field. For this reviewer, sections on robust peacekeeping, the evolution of 'hybrid operations', and peacekeeping praetorianism were highlights, as was the chapter on the inner workings of the United Nations. For scholars who seek to understand the current theoretical landscape, this is also of use. Discussions of cosmopolitan approaches, critical peacekeeping studies, studies of empire, and more traditional IR approaches are present throughout this book. The author is not afraid to tackle a range of theoretical frameworks and policy developments, and offer frank assessment of what he believes to be their limitations. It is a fresh, critical approach, which provides a valuable contribution to the literature.

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Cortina Jeronimo and Ochoa-Reza Enrique, *New Perspectives on International Migration and Development*. New York: Columbia University Press 2013, 346 pp. (hpb).

The relation between migration and development is as elusive as it is complex. Migration and development are themselves relational processes, and any attempt to comprehend and to represent the dynamics between the two is necessarily fraught with analytical and normative complications. Rather than shying away from such complexity, the collection edited by Cortina and Ochoa-Reza wants to offer *New Perspectives on International Migration and Development* on both counts, as its chapters interestingly engage with the "big questions" and with the "context-dependent effects" underpinning such relation. As such, it is a welcome addition to the field.

The central message of the book is not particularly risqué: "migration can have a positive effect on development, though it won't be the silver bullet that many had hoped for". At its heart, the book takes issue with conceptualisations of the migration-development equation that narrowly focus on the economic impact of monetary remittances, considering instead a variety of formal and informal institutional realms that work as mediating factors in the equation. Transnational cultural flows, legal frameworks, the activities of Diasporas, migration policies, labour markets, etc., shape the developmental outcomes of migration and need to be accounted for, both conceptually and contextually. Conceptually, these factors broaden the equation beyond the economic realm, and point to "the role of the state and its noneconomic policies, and of culture" as additional components of the equation. Contextually, these factors explain the differential impact of the equation on particular social groups, communities, or geographical contexts, and consequently complicate the policy-making process. Either way, the state is brought back into the analysis, and cast as potential obstacle and/or catalyst for the developmental impact of migration. International migration *can* have positive effects on development, only if the "right" policies are set in place in both sending and

receiving countries. Such analysis and prescription suggest that the Stiglitzian imprint on the collection goes well beyond his co-authorship of the introductory chapter.

The central message of the book is delivered from three different angles, which also define the book's structure. The four chapters of Part 1 broaden the migration-development equation "conceptually". They identify as institutional realms that decisively shape the outcomes of the equation, respectively, the history of development transitions; the degree of transparency and accountability of political institutions in sending countries; transnational cultural processes, regimes and products; legal frameworks for the protection of migrant workers and their implementation gaps. They implicitly or explicitly emphasise the centrality of governmental policies and institutions in all these domains. The following two Parts broaden the conceptualisation of the development-migration equation by setting the latter in context. The two chapters of Part 2 are concerned with families, women, children and transnational communities, and the five of Part 3 examine place-specific developmental dynamics in migration corridors across the world. They emphasise the variety of institutional contexts that are complicit in the production of socially and geographically heterogeneous developmental outcomes, and that render migration and development policies most often contradictory. Not only conceptually, thus, but also contextually, "good" policies are needed to harness the potentially positive aspects of that relation; namely those that are concerned with the developmental impact of migration beyond the economic realm.

The book has to be praised for the process of collaboration between scholars from a variety of professional, national and research backgrounds, which enriches it through their diverse experiences, perspectives and interpretations. Importantly, its contents are not exclusively focused on migration to the North, providing conceptual and contextual discussions in relation to South-South forms of migration. The chapters are diverse in their methodological and analytical trajectories, and the collection somewhat reads like the proceedings of the conference where this project originated, rendered coherent only by the useful narrative and crosscutting linkages provided in the introductions to each Part. The merits and challenges of interdisciplinary approaches to migration and development are thus delivered to readers not only as a central message, but also as an example of research process.

The collection is also to be praised for its desire to move beyond the dominant economic perspectives on the matter. Unfortunately, this goes only as far as suggesting that institutional interventions can be a corrective to market-based model, and misses the chance to include critical contributions at the fringes of or outside the mainstream. The perspectives offered on migration and development, thus, seem *new* only insofar as the economic orthodoxy of certain development circles is taken as a referent. Some important absences in the topics treated -namely, internal and irregular/informal forms of migration- confirm this impression. Albeit admittedly beyond the book's specific remit, both are crucial to the migration-development equation, given the proportion of workers employed in the informal sector in developing countries and in cities in the developed North, the overwhelming percentage of migrants amongst them, and the degree of exploitation and abuse that many of them suffer. The discussion, overall, seems to reproduce the limited scope of contemporary mainstream development interventions, which target those that are already (adversely) incorporated in the system, and which offer few solutions to the disenfranchised ones, other than philanthropic charity. It also reasserts the belief that migration and development win-win scenarios can be achieved through carefully managed international policies, i.e. without

dealing with relative distributions of power shaping that equation globally and contextually. While attempting to broaden them, the perspectives offered in the book simultaneously seem to confirm the main boundaries of the field.

In spite of this, the book is a worth read. Each chapter demonstrates the contributors' high level of scholarship and, whether in relation to conceptual discussions or field-based material, they all demonstrate deep familiarity with the context under examination, and are rich in references, empirical material and attention to detail. The readership targeted by the collection (government and elected officials, civil society and practitioners, and scholars concerned with policy-making) will find a variety of arguments and related evidence to guide their discussions. Other scholars and students at large will take advantage of their engagement with literature and data. Everyone can find in its pages opportunities for reflection on the defining relation of our contemporary world.

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