

Reviews

Freshwater Resources and Interstate Cooperation: Strategies to Mitigate an Environmental Risk by Frederick D. Gordon. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008. 172 pp., £42.75 hardcover, 978 0791476352

This accessible and timely book aims to analyse the challenges faced by policy makers and the international community in addressing transboundary freshwater management: what are the drivers for its success, and why do some attempts fail? Climate change exacerbates physical and economic water scarcities across the globe, and the book's central topic is addressed specifically within this context.

The book takes on the enormous task of trying to draw common threads across a broad range of transboundary water agreements (while also focusing in on three specific case studies). The author has made a welcome attempt to try and go beyond the usual *description* of inter-state water accords, to provide a *ranking* of those accords, based on their success. This is a noble and useful approach. However, reading through the book one still gets the feeling that it has not made the great leap it has proposed. Two main methodological concerns stand in the way.

Firstly, the author could be accused of selection bias: it seems that the desire to come up with a robust ranking and generalisable result may have influenced the choice of the three cases that are focused on in the book: South Africa–Lesotho, Israel–Palestine and EU policies regarding the River Danube. In all three cases, water scarcity is important, and accords have been developed to deal with water management issues. However, the Israel–Palestinian accord is an extreme case which hardly has any parallels in the rest of the world; the case of South Africa and the freshwater in the Lesotho Highlands is also highly unique in that Lesotho is geographically surrounded by South Africa, and Lesotho's economy is largely dependent on remittances from migrant labour into the South African mines and industries; and the third case relating to the River Danube is largely influenced by the role of the European Union. The specificity and unique circumstances of each of the cases chosen undermines the author's endeavour to draw out general (and generalisable) patterns of cooperation and behaviour across a variety of transboundary water accords.

Secondly, the author could achieve a less subjective ranking system by being more careful in his criteria of what makes an accord 'successful'. For instance, the author uses the fact that one agreement *mentioned* equity less than another, but this does not, in practice, determine the *practical* level of equity. Addressing effectiveness of transboundary water treaties continues to be

a nightmare for global environmental governance and international relations in general. The author, however, seems to reduce issues to a common denominator by suggesting that complicated questions on these issues can be answered by 'ranking systematically whether nations ratified and established water-sharing provisions within the accords' (p. 48). This alone will not address the issue of effectiveness of water agreements. More recent initiatives are engaging with benefit sharing beyond the division of the physical water, to sharing benefits of and from water. The success of such efforts emphasises that physical water allocation alone might not be adequate for the establishment of transboundary agreements.

Still, I would strongly recommend interested readers to buy their own copies and delve into the work, as it contributes to important discussions regarding this inherently interdisciplinary subject. The language and style of the text make it easily accessible, and it will potentially enhance understanding on these issues for students, scholars and policy makers alike.

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Security and Migration in the 21st Century by Elspeth Guild. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009. 218 pp., £16.99, paperback, 978 0745644431

'We are all Americans' headed French newspaper *Le Monde* on 12 September 2001. Although the 2003 Iraq intervention caused a rift between the USA ('the bad cop') and *parts* of Europe ('the good cop'), it also led to more coherence between both sides – simply because 'playing policemen' became an indisputable feature of politics across the Atlantic. In the USA the focus shifted towards 'securing the Homeland', whereas in Europe it moved towards 'Justice and Home Affairs'. This policy field is very much alive and kicking, and this book explains why: fear within neoliberal democracies of the individual who is not defined as intrinsically belonging to the collectivity; the foreigner in its many 'disguises'; 'the Barbarians at the gates of the Roman Empire'.

On this issue Elspeth Guild, professor of European migration law at Radboud University Nijmegen, has written a highly readable book with theoretical roots in international political sociology. Building further on the complexities between liberty and security, law and order, political subjectivity and sovereign authority,

Guild deconstructs the neoliberal control that societies and states claim in the face of resistance by individuals. Some individuals will be fully included, others less so. Security is, according to Rob Walker (*After the Globe, Before the World*, 2010), about inclusion, exclusion and choices of sacrifice. In nine short chapters Guild analyses how the insecurity continuum can be interrupted by the individual challenging his or her categorisation as a foreigner. With a wide range of recent European examples Guild illustrates the growing reluctance of liberal democracies to accept foreigners: by rejecting claims for citizenship and protection, through the process of expelling individuals and by refusing to accept refugees escaping conflict or fleeing torture. In addition, Guild notes as evidence of this a growing xenophobia within liberal democracies: the focus on labour migration as a threat to social security; concerns about the cross-border movement and trafficking of human beings; increased protections of territory and border control (Schengen, FRONTEX); and the heightened importance of documenting non-nationals.

The author strives to challenge 'the globalist-cosmopolitanist discourse which downplays the significance of boundaries and exclusion' (p. 27). The book is designed as an introduction in the field of security and migration and is particularly appealing for novices on these issues. On the other hand, it seeks to engage with the current scholarly debate on this issue, but the theoretically informed security studies scholar can feel somehow left behind (not to mention migration scholars). Although seemingly inspired by Michel Foucault, his work is nowhere cited; nor are recent discussions on global governmentality. Guild ignores the often used work of Giorgio Agamben (*Homo Sacer*, 1998) on exclusion – one of the central concepts of this book – and the debate with his critics. Moreover and rather annoyingly, the book mainly fails to speak to the literature that it criticises. It is rather frustrating that it is completely unclear which globalists and cosmopolitans the author had in mind when criticising them. What about critical globalisation studies or the work of critical cosmopolitans? This prevents a real discussion of the author's claim for 'critical migration studies'. Hopefully this will be the focus of future work, and the start of more genuine and interesting debates on the regional and global governance of migration.

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Tax Havens: How Globalization Really Works by Ronen Palan, Richard Murphy and Christian Chavagneux. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010. 280 pp., £15.50 paperback, 978 0801476129

Tax havens reappeared in media headlines in the middle of the global financial crisis, particularly with the London G20 meeting in April 2009. However, the authors of this book firmly declare: 'We can be emphatic here: *tax havens did not cause this crisis*' (p. 241). That said, they also assert that tax havens are pivotal to the operation of global capitalism today, hence they believe this book provides 'the first comprehensive synthesis of the disparate strands of research and knowledge on tax havens' (p. 4). For readers with an interest in a specific aspect of the tax haven phenomenon the chapters are helpfully grouped: Part I, 'Tax Havens and Their Uses'; Part II, 'The Evolution of Tax Havens'; Part III, 'Tax Havens in World Politics'; Part IV, 'The Battle for Hearts and Minds'.

For the most part, this book offers a fairly balanced account of the role that tax havens play in global politics, and how states may go about suppressing them to recover lost tax revenue. However, in common with most international politics and globalisation literature it privileges the interests and desires of larger states. I highlight this point because generally tax havens are small sovereign or semi-sovereign territories, for example Cayman Islands, Mauritius, Monaco and Vanuatu. Even when identifying those practices within the US and the UK that can be identified as 'tax evasive' (e.g. Delaware or Guernsey), the focus throughout remains on a need to suppress the practices of small countries. Over and above the focus on small jurisdictions, the authors also emphasise the structure of the global financial system – one of the authors' concluding points is that tax havens reside at the centre of a global financial network and raise important questions about the nature of state sovereignty and economic globalisation (p. 238).

Despite the large-state bias, the authors rightfully note that the argument against tax havens is less about the actions of small states and more about attitudes over taxation in developed states. 'The debate, unfortunately, tends to be highly ideological' (p. 171). In other words, it is political and echoes the title to Harold Lasswell's *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (1935). Debates over the distribution of public goods and associated taxation have been ideological from the introduction of income taxes (p. 114). While not noted by the authors, it is interesting that concern over tax evasion and tax havens developed in parallel with the tax increases to fight the First World War, and not because of increased capital mobility and foreign investment prior to 1914 (the first phase of globalisation). One might then conclude that