

diverse as they are dispersed across the globe? They include the Danish county of Greenland, Australia's Norfolk Island, Portuguese Macao (soon to return to the Chinese), the French overseas territory of Wallis and Futuna, and Ceuta and Melilla, Spanish outposts surrounded by Morocco. A useful appendix profiles each 'outpost' separately (pp. 252–85).

From this interesting, densely packed study, emerges a vision of these territories as a unity in spite of themselves. Paradoxically, their very dependence on the United States, on European states and on Australia and New Zealand, gives the tiny populations of the outposts a power for leverage disproportionate to their economic or strategic importance. Their symbolic power can be substantial, as shown in crises like the Falklands or New Caledonia, and ongoing territorial disputes like Gibraltar or Diego Garcia. The powers which administer the outposts have become 'captive patrons' (p. 137), unable to wriggle out of their postcolonial responsibilities, even if they should wish to do so. Within the territories themselves, independence is more often perceived as a threat than an opportunity, and is rarely a joke. At worst, a form of negotiated colonialism is the result (p. 249). The authors conclude that there is no simple or single reason why these territories have remained outposts, though small size and remoteness are obvious factors in many cases.

In conclusion, this is an informative and densely packed study. What it perhaps lacks in analytical rigour arises more from the book's subject matter than from any failing of the authors. This is a good teaching guide for a specialised, but interesting, area of comparative politics and human geography, and a useful introduction for anyone interested in islands and enclaves. The study ends rather tantalisingly with the statement 'The "last colonies" have become the avatars of the post-modern future.' One could speculate that Aldrich and Connell might need to join forces again to follow up the implications of this statement in a future study, perhaps on the other 'last colonies' (the list is potentially endless).

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Frank R. Baumgartner and Beth L. Leech, *Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics and Political Science* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 233 pp., US\$16.95, ISBN 0 691 05914 4.

This text is a comprehensive and well-organised review and analysis of the literature of interest groups and lobbying in the context of the US political system. It also considers the 'current state of play' of interest group research and theory and recommends changes in the design of future research studies. *Basic Interests* traces the development of interest group research covering the major controversies and issues including the retreat from pluralism and the impact on group research of Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action*.

Baumgartner and Leech claim that although there was general acceptance of the centrality of groups in the American polity, many scholars in the 1960s and early 1970s viewed groups as marginal and were reluctant to undertake research into this area of the discipline. They argue that this ambivalence stemmed from problems of definition (what is an interest?) and of research design as well as from adverse reaction to the pluralist perspective as contained in Truman's *Governmental Process* (1951). Such a hiatus in group research could also have been the result of the emergence of alternative projects (attracting funding) eg Vietnam War, Watergate and the reform and revival of Congress.

The text also recognises that in spite of the increase of research into interest groups from the late 1970s (following the 'advocacy explosion'), there is still little consensus or unity in interest group theory and that consequently it has a weak theoretical base. They point to the numerous studies into political action committees (PACs) and their influence on legislative behaviour that have produced inconclusive and often contradictory findings.

Chapter 5, covering Bias and Diversity in the Interest Group System, is especially thorough and raises vital issues for democratic governance. Critical of the state of group theory and research the co-authors maintain that the existence of bias in the interest group system (the influence of the well-heeled) is widely acknowledged but research has not revealed the forms that bias can take or its impact on public policy.

The authors recommend that scholars need to develop a more coherent set of research questions, focusing on the actual role of groups in both popular representation and in policy sub-systems. They also suggest that a better understanding of group influence and greater coherence in group theory

would ensue from the use of large-scale research studies and from more emphasis on the context of group activity (as the research focus has been too narrow).

Basic Interests should prove a valuable resource for postgraduate students. The definitional and methodological problems highlighted in the text, coupled with the encyclopaedic bibliography, could serve the needs of those researching interest groups and lobbying both in the United States and in other liberal democracies.

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Kenneth Christie (ed.), *Ethnic Conflict, Tribal Politics: A Global Perspective* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1998), 288 pp., £16.99, ISBN 0 70071 118 X.

According to Kenneth Christie, one of the aims of this volume is 'to show how ethnic conflict is a comparative phenomenon which shares similarities and exhibits differences and unique characteristics across the board'. To this end, it is largely successful. The volume certainly highlights connections among countries as discrete as Turkey, Canada and Sri Lanka, though the nature of the collection necessarily sacrifices theoretical depth. The figures of Benedict Anderson and Anthony Smith loom large, and almost every author draws on either or both for their theoretical grounding. Most refer to the famous 'imagined community' concept of nationhood that Anderson outlined in his eponymous book, while nearly all accept the civic/ethnic nationalism distinction drawn by Smith and others, though with certain caveats. As Michael Keating emphasises, civic and ethnic nationalism are ideal types, and carry normative and pejorative connotations. Thus, civic nationalism is not always benign, and ethnic nationalism is not always nefarious. Moreover, most nationalisms are hybrids, and exhibit traits of both categories, often cloaking an ethnic bent in universal, or civic rhetoric.

Perhaps the element which distinguishes this volume from many other nationalist anthologies is tribalism—a complex, value-laden term with which each author grapples to varying degrees of success. It is here that the difficulties arise in trying to generate a theme, however loose, out of so many discrete case studies. Interestingly, Michael Freeman acknowledges that 'the study of ethnicity and nationalism is notorious for its confused concepts, and the reintroduction of the term "tribalism" has not contributed to their clarification'. Yet, undeterred, he continues to challenge the idea of a 'new tribalism' as an essentially atavistic reversion, and argues instead that the tribes of today are defined by their contemporary relation to the state. While most authors cite the centrality of this conflict with the state to the question of today's tribes, others like Trond Gilberg refer instead to nation-tribes, arguing that the Balkans provide evidence of self-styled nations behaving like tribes, 'utilising the machinery of the state to implement their particularistic goals and aspirations'. Nergis Canefe maintains that tribalism is a form of essentialist identity politics, dangerously modern in its utopian yearnings and dreams, while Denny Roy opines that 'if there was ever a case where tribalism was justified, it is Tibet'.

The volume stresses that it is attempting to illustrate the 'rich and varied complexity' of such terms as tribalism, and each author certainly brings a different perspective to the debate. To what extent this contributes to clarifying nationalism and ethnicity as terms is more questionable. As acknowledged, tribalism is so complex, pejorative and historically laden as a term that it is difficult to unpack, and this format is probably not the ideal one for such an ambitious exercise. Thus a variety of well-written analyses of various nations and regions here co-exist with incisive, divergent and sometimes contradictory thoughts on the tribal phenomenon. The volume provides less of a global perspective than a variety of highly specific perspectives, taken from across the globe. Indeed, by underlining the notorious difficulties in defining terms of nationalism, the project highlights how unlikely and perhaps dangerous the attainment of a global perspective is for ethnic conflict. Nonetheless, the authors' highly individuated and attenuated use of the term 'tribalism', and the specific, empirical nature of most chapters limit the text's contribution to broader theoretical debates around nationalism and globalisation.

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