
Western Europe

Andrew Moravcsik

World in Danger: Germany and Europe in an Uncertain Time

BY WOLFGANG ISCHINGER.

Brookings Institution Press, 2020, 320 pp.

As a former German ambassador to the United States and the current head of the Munich Security Conference, Ischinger has earned a reputation as a prudent diplomat and a card-carrying member of the post-Cold War global establishment. Yet this book, from its first page (which cites COVID-19 as the greatest international security threat since World War II) to its last (which cites climate change as the major security threat of the future), distinguishes itself as an uncommonly original, thoughtful, and forward-looking analysis of world politics. It represents the view not from Beijing, Moscow, or Washington but from Berlin. Today, with Brazil, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States running off the rails, France often contributing more style than substance, Japan remaining insular, and China and Russia tightening their authoritarian rule, Germany is the only major country that consistently articulates and often acts on a genuinely progressive vision of global multilateral order. German leaders view many policies adopted by today's great powers as shortsighted, overmilitarized, and dangerously ideological—even if their country's unique history obliges them

to speak softly on such matters. They are convinced that regional integration, patient diplomacy, economic assistance, trade agreements, international law, democracy promotion, and other nonmilitary tools of statecraft can make the world a better place. No clearer statement of this pragmatically optimistic outlook can be found than the one elaborated in this important book.

We Are the People: The Rise of the AfD in Germany

BY PENNY BOCHUM. Haus, 2020, 90 pp.

Recent years have seen a flood of books and articles on extreme-right parties—a torrent out of proportion to the meager influence these parties wield. Bochum, a German political researcher, argues that the future dangers posed by the Alternative for Germany (AfD) demand serious attention. But it is hard to see why. In this slim volume, she reports that other parties perpetually exclude the AfD from participating in the German federal government. Brexit has been such an embarrassment that extreme-right parties of reasonable size in Germany—including the AfD—no longer advocate leaving the EU. The AfD's other policy aims have met with equally little success, except, at first glance, the imposition of greater restrictions on immigration. Yet even there, Bochum might have added, these measures passed not because of extreme-right pressure but because most Germans favor strict controls on immigration. Riven by factionalism and scandals, the AfD is now, in the author's words, "self-destructing." It may be admirable to sound the alarm about the rise of the far right in Germany, but is it still necessary?

Ruin and Renewal: Civilizing Europe After World War II

BY PAUL BETTS. Basic Books, 2020, 544 pp.

For Europeans, the end of World War II—“zero hour” (*Stunde Null*), the Germans called it—was a new beginning. Many historians have told the story of how European countries, ravaged by war, depression, and tyranny, were transformed after 1945 into models of tolerance and concern for their citizens’ welfare. Most such histories, notably the works of the late historian Tony Judt, stress the consolidation of democracy, the rebuilding of economic production, the construction of the welfare state, and the integration of Europe. Betts argues instead that what Europe really did was reconstruct a civilization: a set of basic secular and religious values that Europeans share. In this account, the postwar period marked the moment when Europeans discovered—or perhaps rediscovered—humanitarianism, universal human rights, ecumenical Christianity, the appreciation of diverse cultures, a respect for science, and a broadly accessible consumer culture. At times, one wishes for more depth and subtlety, as well as more attention to the often dark ways in which colonialism, anticommunism, and simple wealth accumulation actually drove the process. Yet this book succeeds in casting new light on a critical European legacy of liberal and moderate values, one that may again be in danger today.

Forging Global Fordism: Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia, and the Contest Over the Industrial Order

BY STEFAN J. LINK. Princeton University Press, 2020, 328 pp.

The great industrial innovation of the first half of the twentieth century was Henry Ford’s system for organizing mass industrial production. In this “Fordist” model, very large and specialized factories employing relatively well-paid workers efficiently produce an abundance of consumer goods. This method—combined with the Great Depression—sharpened global competition among democratic capitalist, fascist, and communist political systems, each trying to employ Fordist means of production to achieve different ends. This book traces the calculated way in which Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union studied the success of Fordism in the United States as at once a model of modernization to emulate and an ideological threat to fight. Later, in the Cold War, newly moderate Western Europeans came to view the United States as a potential partner, not just in the ideological crusade against communism but also in realizing Ford’s vision of an affluent, mass-production-focused society. This period’s lessons resonate today as new technologies threaten to disrupt production systems once again.

Wine Economics

BY STEFANO CASTRIOTA.

TRANSLATED BY JUDITH

TURNBULL. MIT Press, 2020, 320 pp.

Drinkers in China, Russia, the United States, and elsewhere appreciate fine wine as one of European culture's great gifts to the world. Yet in recent decades, wine production has become a truly global industry, pitting producers of wine (fine and not so fine) nearly everywhere against one another in what this author calls a "wine war"—a ruthless battle to establish brand recognition and grab market share. Castriota, an Italian economist who doubles as a certified sommelier, offers the best introduction to the economics of wine currently available. Many factors, from cultural predispositions to the climate, shape the supply of and demand for wine and the profitability of the firms that make it. Various types of producers, from California conglomerates to Tuscan family farms, have found ways to prosper in the global wine economy. In the end, however, the most important factor determining success appears to be government regulation. In many countries, particularly within the European Union, tax advantages, classification systems, and trademark protection help keep production profitable, and states even directly subsidize small producers.

Western Hemisphere

Richard Feinberg

Dragonomics: How Latin America Is Maximizing (or Missing Out on) China's International Development Strategy

BY CAROL WISE. Yale University Press, 2020, 328 pp.

Dependency in the Twenty-first Century? The Political Economy of China–Latin America Relations

BY BARBARA STALLINGS. Cambridge University Press, 2020, 75 pp.

Two books explore the burgeoning ties between China and Latin America. Wise is largely optimistic about China's commercial presence in the region, whereas Stallings describes a relationship of growing, but not necessarily malign, dependency. Wise counters the claim, sometimes voiced by the Trump administration, that exploitative Chinese trade and investment practices endanger Latin American economies. She strenuously argues that closer commercial ties can benefit both China and Latin American countries. China has turned to resource-rich Latin America not because it harbors hegemonic ambitions but because it is heavily dependent on imported raw materials and foodstuffs. China's rise has improved the international economic environment for many Latin American countries and widened their room for maneuver. Positive outcomes, however, are not guaranteed. Wise convincingly demonstrates that Latin American countries must make