

Western Europe

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The Euro: The Politics of the New Global Currency. BY DAVID MARSH. Yale

University Press, 2009, 352 pp. \$35.00.

For those who find international monetary policy a snooze, Marsh—a former *Financial Times* correspondent, now an investment banker—is the man to liven it up. The result is the most readable overview available of European monetary cooperation, from Bretton Woods to today's European Central Bank. Yet Marsh's tendency to focus on individuals and their stories, even when backed by admirable forays into the archives, sometimes misses the forest for the trees. Too little attention is paid to the deep structural forces and profound economic illusions that drew Europeans together. Marsh revives, for example, the tired view that Germany surrendered the deutsche mark only when, in 1990, French President François Mitterrand threatened to block German reunification. In fact, Marsh's own evidence suggests that European leaders, including German ones, wanted to stabilize trade, reform domestic labor markets, and ward off the effects of dollar instability. Pity it has not always worked out that way.

The Third Reich at War. BY RICHARD J.

EVANS. Penguin, 2009, 944 pp. \$40.00. World War II was the defining international conflict of the twentieth century. Evans' magisterial trilogy, of which this is the final volume, is the best account of the regime that caused it. The book is not simply an informative reference but also a riveting read, drawing piquant

details from mass statistics and individual lives alike. Three themes dominate: first, that Germany's defeat was likely from the start, given that the Allied coalition was, in industrial and military might, five times as powerful as the Reich; second, that the brutality of German occupation was not only immoral but self-defeating, undermining potential supporters and allies, particularly in the Soviet Union; and third, that Germans backed this futile effort because a minority truly believed in it and the rest were caught up in Hitler's clever policy of incrementally implicating the population in his own crimes.

History Strikes Back: How States, Nations, and Conflicts Are Shaping the Twenty-first Century. BY HUBERT VÉDRINE.

Brookings Institution Press, 2008, 160 pp. \$22.95.

When a French Socialist calls the United States a "hyperpower," most Americans assume he is an ideologue—or just jealous. Yet this thoughtful book by the former French foreign minister who coined the phrase and opposed the Iraq war is no rant. It is a sober plea for what Védérine terms "smart realpolitik," on which he thinks the United States and Europe could agree. National cultures and interests inevitably diverge, so international problems, he argues, are not best solved by imposing democracy. Instead, countries must strike tough-minded deals with foreign governments, whether those governments are likable or not. Védérine believes that stronger multilateral institutions, which many Europeans dream of, often undermine national capacities. And so, he says, naive EU federalists should not push a constitution or Turkish membership; European defense cooperation would be

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more useful. Védérine is not always so sure-footed: his pan-European referendum would be unruly, his solution to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute remains vague, and, like many in France, he overemphasizes military power. Overall, however, his analysis is balanced and lucid.

Reflections on the Revolution in Europe: Immigration, Islam, and the West.

BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL.

Doubleday, 2009, 432 pp. \$30.00.

Nothing is as seductive as a half-truth. Caldwell's is that immigrants to Europe cause serious problems because Europeans, overcome with leftist good intentions, have coddled them with generous welfare and tolerated their non-Christian values. Yes, immigration poses distinct challenges for Europe, but to attribute them to European generosity and tolerance is like saying that crime, drugs, and other social problems in the United States are caused by welfare, affirmative action, and lax cultural mores. Of course, that is what the crowd that reads Caldwell regularly in *The Weekly Standard*, among whom this book will play well, really does believe. In truth, however, the role of Muslims in contemporary Europe is far more ambiguous. When the Parisian *banlieues* erupted in riots, for example, traditional imams tried to quell the violence, but they could not control the non-Arabic-speaking, irreligious young men who wanted nothing more than to be assimilated as secular, employed Frenchmen. As the title of this overwrought book suggests, however, an appreciation of the complex challenges facing European leaders is not Caldwell's objective. For that, look elsewhere.

Re-energising Europe's Security and Defence Policy. BY NICK WITNEY. European Council on Foreign Relations, 2008, 66 pp. Free online.

This slim volume makes the most persuasive case possible for the collective modernization and reform of European defense. Witney, a longtime British diplomat and defense official, points out that Europe, which accounts for 25 percent of the world's military spending, wastes much of that money. Seventy percent of European troops are not capable of operating outside Europe. Their weapons are obsolete, and essential tasks are beyond them. According to Witney, the European Union cannot fix this; its members must do it themselves. Europeans, he proposes, must commit to an arrangement whereby "pioneer groups" of those countries that agree to pool their resources and set sensible priorities take the first step of reform together, leaving the others behind. Yet Witney's prescriptions presume that governments are independent from the military-industrial and parliamentary special interests that impede reform in Europe, as they do elsewhere—a problem about whose solution this report tells little. Still, for those who hope that Europe can be more than the world's leading civilian superpower, there is no better place to start than with this book.

Western Hemisphere

RICHARD FEINBERG

Brazilian Foreign Policy After the Cold War.

BY SEAN W. BURGESS. University Press of Florida, 2009, 248 pp. \$65.00.

Drawing on extensive interviews with Brazilian diplomats, the Canadian scholar