

were recruited by manufacturers to fill expanding factories. The decline of industrial employment in the last few decades has left both blacks and whites bereft of jobs and subject to the forces of social decay, made worse in both communities by habits of violence and the presence of drugs. Vance's tale of how he made it to Yale Law School (via the Marine Corps and Ohio State University) is a moving human story in itself; it will also help nonblack Americans look at the problems of urban poverty through fresh eyes, undistorted by the prism of race. This isn't a story with an obvious political agenda; Vance does not conclude with a ten-point plan for a new War on Poverty. Readers, however, are likely to come away with the feeling that although it may be harder to address the needs of American communities left behind by the economic transition than people once thought, it is more important than ever to try.

The End of White Christian America
BY ROBERT P. JONES. Simon & Schuster, 2016, 320 pp.

The combination of a decline in the percentage of Americans who consider themselves white and a decline in the percentage of those white Americans who call themselves Christian leads Jones to announce the death of "white Christian America" and the end of the long period during which it defined the national discourse. This topic matters, but the book disappoints. Readers looking for insights into how this shift will change U.S. politics and culture won't find much to chew on here. Jones, a product of the liberal wing of American

Protestantism, seems more interested in scoring polemic points against evangelical rivals than in analyzing what he argues is an epochal transformation. It's a missed opportunity: something is clearly happening in the world of American religion, but *The End of White Christian America* offers only a few tantalizing insights into what it might mean.

Western Europe

Andrew Moravcsik

Karl Polanyi: A Life on the Left
BY GARETH DALE. Columbia University Press, 2016, 400 pp.

The Hungarian sociologist Karl Polanyi, who eventually settled in Canada, was one of the most prescient and persuasive political economists of the mid-twentieth century. In pioneering historical analyses, he argued that a "great transformation" took place in the early nineteenth century that systematically destroyed the premodern systems of welfare and social justice and established unfettered free markets—and thus reduced individual laborers to expendable commodities. His basic premise, drawn from Marxist theory, was that unregulated markets are based on political coercion. They also generate inequality, which those who support market liberalization foster misleading ideologies to justify. After World War II, Polanyi, like most social democrats, supported political reforms that would institute the redistribution of wealth and impose restrictions on private

property rights, thereby reversing the great transformation. If such premises and prescriptions seem old-fashioned, it is because we have moved recently toward a more globally integrated, privatized, financialized, and in some respects unequal and socially segregated world—changes accompanied by a partial return to nineteenth-century values. That reversal would surely have shocked and baffled Polanyi, but it also serves to render this clear explication of his provocative ideas all the more timely and relevant.

The Nazi Hunters

BY ANDREW NAGORSKI. Simon & Schuster, 2016, 416 pp.

The last former Nazis are dying out, and so, too, are those whose life's work was to hunt them down. Nagorski tells their stories evenhandedly, uncovering a fascinating cast of characters from all over the world and placing their efforts in a broader perspective. He describes how Nazi hunters first aimed to exact revenge without trials, how early court cases were exploited to present dubious hearsay that convicted former Nazis in the court of public opinion, and how Germany and other countries eventually lost interest in prosecuting former Nazis. Later, however, authorities established proper judicial proceedings, in Nuremberg and elsewhere, that made it impossible to credibly deny the crimes of the Holocaust. Out of this experience, moreover, came greater public awareness of genocide as a global problem and new norms of international justice to combat it—including the clear principle that “following orders” is not a valid

excuse for committing crimes of this type, which has since been applied in places as far afield as Cambodia, Chile, and Rwanda. In the end, Nagorski concludes, some good can come out of even the greatest evil.

The Nordic Theory of Everything: In Search of a Better Life

BY ANU PARTANEN. Harper, 2016, 432 pp.

“If you want the American dream,” the former British Labour Party leader Ed Miliband once quipped, “go to Finland.” The Nordic countries have higher per capita incomes and more social mobility than the United States. They rank among the world's leaders in education, equal distribution of wealth, and quality of life. Average Nordic tax rates are lower than in the United States, although corporations and very wealthy individuals pay more. Partanen, a Finnish journalist who is married to an American and lives in the United States, is troubled by the pervasive unease she observes in the everyday lives of Americans she knows, an anxiety rooted in diminished educational opportunities, the isolation of the elderly, uneven and often ruinously expensive health care, and declining social mobility. The solutions to these problems that many Americans favor—the deregulation or privatization of education, pensions, medical care, and housing—only make matters worse. Better, in Partanen's view, would be for the United States to adopt some of Finland's policies. Far from being a socialist nanny state, Finland promotes liberty and family values: it frees individuals and families

to enjoy closer, fairer, and less stressful lives. In this election year, Partanen's sensible book should be required reading for those who wonder why so many Americans feel resentful and alienated.

Towards an Imperfect Union: A Conservative Case for the EU
BY DALIBOR ROHAC. Rowman & Littlefield, 2016, 202 pp.

It is puzzling that so many American and British conservatives are vocal critics of the EU. The union's Brussels-based institutions employ fewer bureaucrats than a typical small city government, tax and spend only about two percent as much as their member states, and are primarily dedicated to goals such as free trade, deregulation, quashing state subsidies, facilitating the free movement of capital and labor, and coordinating international policing, counterterrorism, and defense efforts. So why don't Anglo-American conservatives praise the EU? Rohac does. He argues persuasively that the EU is a force for peace and prosperity that, on balance, promotes the precepts of the libertarian philosopher Friedrich Hayek. He argues that rather than seek to weaken Brussels, conservatives should work to strengthen and reform EU institutions. Rohac does not paper over the union's flaws, especially the growth-inhibiting euro. But he concludes that the answer to Europe's problems is more union, not less. Although Rohac doesn't always argue his case rigorously and sometimes recycles questionable criticisms of Brussels, his book is an original corrective to unthinking (and often mendacious) Euroskepticism on the right.

Architects of the Euro: Intellectuals in the Making of European Monetary Union
EDITED BY KENNETH DYSON AND IVO MAES. Oxford University Press, 2016, 328 pp.

The Euro and the Battle of Ideas
BY MARKUS K. BRUNNERMEIER, HAROLD JAMES, AND JEAN-PIERRE LANDAU. Princeton University Press, 2016, 448 pp.

With Europe plagued by low growth and political turmoil, it is natural to ask a simple question: What were the technocrats who created and have managed its single currency thinking? In a model of historiography, Dyson and Maes assemble biographical vignettes of ten economists and economic policymakers, including Robert Triffin and Jacques Delors, who helped establish the euro. Although these people differed in their specific visions of monetary union, they agreed on a few basic principles—most of which the EU has failed to live up to. They believed that the union should encourage symmetrical adjustment, rather than disproportionately burdening countries that run budget deficits, as the current system does. They agreed that the eurozone should include only a small number of core states with convergent economies, rather than the larger, divergent set of countries that eventually joined. And they agreed that a functioning monetary union would require extensive banking, fiscal, and political cooperation, in contrast to the minimalist system that emerged.

Brunnermeier, James, and Landau take the story up to the present by analyzing technocratic debates about

how to manage the euro crisis. They explicitly reject the notion that the misaligned interests of creditor and debtor countries have led to political conflict within the eurozone. They point instead to Franco-German disagreements over a variety of economic ideas, which they analyze with exceptional lucidity and rigor. They ultimately conclude that if only economists, politicians, and central bankers spoke to one another more and could agree on (or transcend) a set of fundamental ideological dichotomies—rules versus discretion, liability versus solidarity, and Keynesian versus non-Keynesian views of austerity—the euro could be reformed.

Both books demonstrate the value of sophisticated syntheses of policy analysis and intellectual history. But they also undermine their own argument that ideas matter and have had a determinative impact on euro policy. Indeed, although they resist doing so, both books acknowledge that the critical political actors have always been the elected officials and governments of the union's member states rather than the technocrats who manage the euro system. Even when technocratic advisers from different countries have agreed, political considerations and narrow self-interest have pushed their political masters in different directions. Both books also make clear that Germany has generally prevailed over the other EU members and gotten its way in debates about euro policy. It strains credibility to maintain that Germany's belief in competitive exchange rates, export promotion, and open capital markets—not to mention the ability of Germany to realize its

goals against the determined opposition of other governments—is simply the result of cultural preferences or technocratic doctrines. Rather, it reflects deep-seated economic interests, electoral imperatives, and institutional legacies.

Western Hemisphere

Richard Feinberg

The Organization of American States as the Advocate and Guardian of Democracy
BY RUBÉN M. PERINA. University Press of America, 2015, 268 pp.

Argentine-born Perina brings 30 years of experience working at senior levels of the Organization of American States to this insider's account of the institution's many strengths, multiple triumphs, and evident weaknesses. In retrospect, the 1990s were the golden age of inter-American diplomacy, as the OAS partnered with the leading powers of the Western Hemisphere to safeguard democracy whenever it was threatened, in places such as Guatemala, Haiti, and Paraguay. But in the decade that followed, the rise of populist caudillos challenged the legitimacy of liberal democracy and its protectors, paralyzing the OAS. Latent tensions within the organization's mission and constitution came to the fore: between democracy promotion and the principle of nonintervention, between the powers of the OAS' secretary-general and those of its Permanent Council of Ambassadors, and between the ethos of full consensus and the goal of institutional effectiveness.