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## Millennium

**Simon Chesterman**, *You, the People: The United Nations, Transitional Administrations and State Building* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, 296 pp., £50.00 hbk.).

**Thomas G. Weiss, David P. Forsythe & Roger A. Coate**, *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*, 4th Edition (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004, 391 pp., £59.99 hbk., £19.99 pbk.).

*The United Nations and Changing World Politics* is a well-established textbook familiar to both students and scholars of International Relations. The book is organised thematically around various issues that have dominated the life of the United Nations (UN) organisation since the end of the Cold War, including: 'international peace and security', 'human rights and humanitarian affairs', and 'sustainable human development'. Through a broad and historically-informed engagement with such topics the book attempts to delineate both the opportunities and the limits confronting the UN in the twenty-first century. The particular value of this fourth edition of the book is to bring such historical engagement up-to-date, without diminishing the clear structure of argument established by previous editions.

Thus the book preserves insights from the era of its original publication (1989). For example, Weiss *et al* date the re-emergence of the UN as a keystone of global security not to George Bush's triumphant proclamation of a 'New World Order' in 1991, but rather to Mikhail Gorbachev's September 1987 *Pravda* article, in which the Soviet premier announced his intention to incorporate the UN collective security mechanism into Soviet security policy. This diplomatic offensive forced Ronald Reagan into modifying Washington's previously hostile stance to the UN, thereby paving the way for the exploits of the Security Council in the eventful 1988-1993 period. While it retains such historical detail, the fourth edition also considers those events that have initiated what the authors term the 'post-post Cold War era': the September 11th terror attacks on the United States and the on-going war in Iraq.

The authors make no grandiose claims to penetrate the veil masking the future of international politics. They astutely observe that '[t]he winds seem to be swirling in no discernible direction' (p. 323). Nonetheless, Weiss *et al* do claim that however much recent US policy towards Iraq has undermined the UN this has not reversed the long-term trajectory towards the multilateral management of international security and restrictions on the 'first use of force' (p. 330). This is one claim that does not entirely convince however, especially given that the precedent of sidelining the UN began with NATO's bombardment of rump Yugoslavia in 1999.

In contrast to the broadness of that textbook, Simon Chesterman's

book is sharply focused on the theme of 'state-building'. The title encapsulates the central contradiction with which Chesterman grapples in the text: under the UN 'transitional administrations' in places like Kosovo, it is not 'we, the people' asserting their democratic right to self-determination, but rather autocratic international bureaucracies seeking to relinquish their authority to 'a people'. In other words, how can a peaceful democracy be forged out of autocracy?

The book begins auspiciously, with quotes from both Machiavelli and Stalin. Stalin's remark that it has become an established fact of international life that 'whoever occupies a territory imposes on it his own social system ...as far as his army can reach' (p.1) sets the tone for a hard-nosed, sometimes incisively critical analysis of 'transitional administration'. Chesterman notes, for example, how '[i]nternational representatives regularly dismiss local political leaders in the Balkans as 'immature' - an adjective that would never have been used in East Timor as it would almost certainly be interpreted as racist' (p. 46). Despite mustering a remarkable array of legal, political and historical detail, as well as his own fieldwork, Chesterman manages to avoid overwhelming the reader with facts, dates and treaties. In this respect, the book provides an eminently useful and succinct guide to state-building operations throughout the twentieth century.

Chesterman also broaches the fascinating question of the appropriate historical context for today's 'transitional administrations'. Or, to put it in Stalin's terms, which social system is being imposed on today's non-self-governing territories? Are the forerunners of today's 'transitional administrations' to be found in colonialism, thinly veiled by the League of Nations 'mandates' system? Or are they to be found instead in the League's assumption of sovereign and plenary powers in a variety of non-colonial settings, such as the League administration of the Saar basin (1920-1935), Upper Silesia (1922-1937), or the Baltic city of Memel (now Klaipeda, Lithuania, 1924-1939)? Chesterman seeks to distil the historical experience of both types of 'transitional administration' and to bring it to bear on contemporary developments.

Indeed, today's 'transitional administrations' do seem to bear elements of both historical precursors. Given the reprehensible authoritarianism embodied in contemporary 'transitional administrations' (Chesterman notes for example, that the populations of League mandates had greater formal powers to hold their rulers to account than the current inhabitants of Bosnia and Kosovo, p. 45), it is tempting to grasp at colonialism as the most appropriate historical precursor of today's international protectorates. Chesterman claims in his first chapter ('Colonies and Occupied Territories') that despite their authoritarianism, contemporary transitional administrations can also be strikingly un-colonial in character, notably in their self-effacing claims to

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pure altruism, contrasting such claims with the British imperialist statesman Lord Lugard's frank admission of the economic self-interest animating European imperialism in Africa (p. 11).

However, while such historical comparisons are insightful, ultimately it is in the present that today's 'transitional administrations' need to be contextualised. During the inter-war period, when the world was dominated by the European empires and racial equality was not even enshrined in the League of Nations Covenant, it was easy enough to see the League mandates for what they were: namely, a patina for the dismemberment of the empires of the powers defeated in the First World War (p. 13). At the dawn of the twenty first century, however, 6 million people are ensconced in 'non-self-governing territories', a figure that pales in comparison to the third of humanity (750 million people) who lived in colonial bondage at the inauguration of the UN in 1945 (p. 37). The fact that 'only' 6 million people currently live under international authority is obviously no cause for celebration. The point is rather that, in the contemporary society of states, 'transitional administration' remains the exception rather than the rule. How then, to reconcile the seeming contradiction between today's atypical, yet clearly historically significant, 'transitional administrations' and an international order dominated by (at least nominally) independent states?

In the light of the formal relinquishment of sovereignty by the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq last year, it may be worth re-considering and problematising this entire vocabulary of 'transition'. It seems increasingly unclear whether it is possible to speak in such clearly-defined terms of a decisive shift from a state of 'non-self-government' to a state of independence. While Iraq, Bosnia and Afghanistan are all nominally sovereign states, they are justifiably spoken of under the same rubric of state-building as non-independent Kosovo. In other words, does 'transition' have any meaning, when formal independence can mean so little (as it does in Iraq, Bosnia and Afghanistan)? Timor-Leste has been a sovereign state since 20 May 2002. Yet Chesterman coolly notes that '[t]he greatest point of leverage for international actors will be Timor's continued reliance on development assistance over the coming years ...' (p. 142).

In this context perhaps Stalin's quote is more apposite than Chesterman realises. For perhaps the contemporary 'transitional administrations' resemble not so much the League's mandates system as the Soviet mode of governance: limited sovereignty combined with the ever-present threat of military intervention; a Brezhnev Doctrine writ global. As Weiss et al. note: '[in the 1990s] a state that was ... contemplating action that might be found to be a threat to or breach of the peace had to deal with the possibility that the UN Security Council would find its action in violation of international law and therefore

launch some coercive response' (p. 337). This is not to mention increasingly invasive bureaucratic regulation: 'as a historical trend, the United Nations is supervising more rights in more states through more intrusive measures than ever before' (p. 339). It is a cruel irony of history that the collapse of the USSR may have precipitated the expansion and consolidation of arguably Soviet-style 'governance' around the globe.

PHILIP CUNLIFFE

*Philip Cunliffe is a Research Student at King's College, University of London*

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**Jean-François Bayart**, *Le Gouvernement du Monde: Une Critique Politique de la Globalisation* (Paris : Fayard, 2004, 448 pp., €24, hbk.).

Jean-François Bayart is concerned with what kind of new forms of government and social practices have been produced by globalisation. Michel Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' is the theoretical cornerstone for Bayart's approach to the political consequences of globalisation. Foucault describes governmentality as the nodal point of political and social practices: commanding and disciplinary techniques of political power are replicated by the individual's desire for recognition, which in turn is achieved through a self-imposed obligation to follow, comply with and adhere to constituted norms. Bayart conceives of globalisation as a mode of governmentality. Unlike in global studies, the book title 'World Government' is not referring to a normative model but to the multiple economic, political and social techniques through which globalisation arguably is 'governing' the globe.

Although globalisation has always existed, according to Bayart (p. 23), he identifies two recent periods in world history which intensified and deepened global forms of domination and multiplied global lifestyles. Global governmentality first became fully apparent through imperialism and colonialism and, in recent times, through global liberalism. These two moments of globalisation in world history have universalised the legitimacy of political concepts such as nation, state, democracy, human rights and market economy. Globalisation, however, does not involve a convergence of politics and culture — as Bayart says, 'the unity of the world does not entail its uniformity' (p. 13). Governmentality is a hermeneutic concept. Domination is never abstract