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political apathy in Hong Kong. The author does not demonstrate the existence of a civil society except during the unrepresentative period of the late 1980s through 1990s. Today, a common problem besetting all political parties in Hong Kong is that those under age 30 are not interested in politics, much less in joining political parties (James C. Hsiung, *Hong Kong the Super Paradox*, 2000, p. 340). The prevalence of political apathy is unmistakable. The question is not whether a civil society is being dismantled but whether it ever existed. Although the book reads like a Ph.D. dissertation, it provides an interesting theoretical framework that merits the attention of anyone interested in pursuing the study of social movements.

Subnational Politics and Democratization in Mexico. Edited by Wayne A. Cornelius, Todd A. Eisenstadt, and Jane Hindley. La Jolla: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego, 1999. 369p. \$69.95 cloth, \$25.00 paper.

Edward J. Williams, *University of Arizona*

Treatments of subnational politics in Mexico and other Latin American countries have been tardy in coming, but the recent literature is heartening. Spurred by the contemporary fashion for political devolution in the affairs of government, scholars have begun to get to this long-forgotten dimension of Latin American politics. *Subnational Politics and Democratization in Mexico* is a valuable contribution to that emerging literature.

The book contains an introductory essay and 14 selections divided into three parts. The section topics are subnational party organizations and democratization, popular movements and democratization, and the implications of center-periphery conflicts for democratization. Popular movements receive rather more attention than the other two foci, and indigenous movements predominate.

The volume evolves from a four-year project by a core group of researchers in residence at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego. A workshop was convened in Mexico City at midstudy to critique the first drafts.

As are all such enterprises, the result is a mixed product. On the positive side, scholars must welcome whatever they find on subnational groups in a time when their competence is burgeoning. The "damnificados" of the Federal District, the Navista movement of San Luis Potosí, the PANistas of Baja California (and elsewhere), the COCEI in Juchitán, and the Barzón in several parts of the Republic define extraordinarily significant contributions to the evolution of participatory democracy in Mexico. Their inclusion in the volume is, of course, predictable but also quite valuable.

In a somewhat different guise, the introductory chapter, by Wayne Cornelius, also strikes a valuable chord in reminding that devolution contains a mixed message for advocates of authentic democratic participation. The despotic *cacique* tradition lives on in Mexico, and well-meaning constitutional "reforms" frequently buttress and reinforce parochial tyrants rather than liberate local democrats. The ham-fisted Rubén Figueroas of this world are a long way from idealized Jeffersonian democrats. To make matters worse, narco-politics adds a special contribution to the forces of state-level tyranny, as the experience of Quintana Roo exemplifies. The devolution of political authority is a double-edged sword wont to suppress as well as liberate.

That theme also forms the focus for a splendid chapter by Richard Snyder, the best of the lot. Beyond political devolu-

tion, Snyder fastens upon socioeconomic neoliberal "reforms" as making significant contributions to local political authoritarianism. The national deregulation and state-level reregulation of the coffee industry provided an opportunity for authoritarian state governors to strengthen their grip through the imposition of neocorporatist mechanisms and the cultivation of crony capitalism on the state level.

The chapter by Gabriel Torres on the Barzón debtors' movement is a trifle dated and a little loose, but it is chock full of useful insights into the bewildering divisions, contradictions, redefinitions, and coalitions of the several currents and extrapolations of the movement. The Barzonistas form the most potent of the contemporary social movements. Their story has yet to be definitively told, but Torres makes a useful contribution to the literature.

The four chapters on the role of indigenous communities, customs, and traditions in Chiapas, Guerrero, and Oaxaca seem a little too much of an admittedly good thing. To be sure, the indigenous reality defines an important element in the evolving panorama of subnational government in Mexico—and beyond. The aborted San Andres Accords in Chiapas exemplify how indigenous traditions promise to contribute to the parameters of newly defined subnational institutions and processes.

Yet, other regions of Mexico have been significantly more influential in the movement toward decentralization and devolution. For example, the collection makes the occasional bow to Chihuahua, but there is no comprehensive analysis of its contribution to contemporary devolution in Mexico. The case of Jalisco may be a trifle less compelling than Chihuahua, but it is certainly significant in understanding subnational politics and democratization in Mexico. In truth, Mexico's northern and west-central regions have been far more important than the South in the politics of devolution, no matter how theoretically evocative (and romantic) the message of the indigenous South may appear.

The volume also does not offer any measurable analysis of exogenous influences. How soon we forget our dependencista lessons! The North American Free Trade Agreement specifically and the relationship with the United States more generally nudged both presidents Carlos Salinas and Ernesto Zedillo toward the devolutionary option (albeit, in different modes). The Central American conflagration and Mexican decision makers' fears of the contagion wafting north helps explain Mexico City's policies vis-à-vis the southern part of the country. Public and private international bankers urged Mexico to embrace neoliberalism, the economic handmaiden of political devolution.

Finally, in the calculation of positives and negatives, the book boasts a splendid list of acronyms, but it has no index. A list of acronyms is quite useful, but an index is an indispensable attribute of a good scholarly book. The volume is good enough; we should be pleased with it, but it could be much better.

The Logic of Japanese Politics: Leaders, Institutions, and the Limits of Change. By Gerald L. Curtis. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. 303p. \$27.95.

Regime Shift: Comparative Dynamics of the Japanese Political Economy. By T. J. Pempel. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998. 263p. \$65.00.

Leonard J. Schoppa, *University of Virginia*

The 1990s were a tumultuous decade for Japan. After four decades of steady economic growth and stable one-party rule by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the economy slowed

to a crawl, and politics went through a series of surprising twists and turns. The LDP split in summer 1993, which allowed the break-away groups to join a coalition of opposition parties that pushed the LDP out of power for the first time since 1955. After staying together long enough to pass electoral reforms, however, the coalition broke up in spring 1994, which opened the door for the LDP to come back into power together with its long-standing arch-rival, the Socialist Party. The LDP did well in the first election held under the new electoral rules in 1996, but it has struggled ever since to maintain its grip on political power in the face of a continuous stream of bad economic news and politics that are much more fluid than in earlier decades.

These books by T. J. Pempel and Gerald Curtis, both of whom are leading Japan specialists in political science, are extremely readable efforts to make sense of these developments. Pempel emphasizes how much change has taken place and argues that the developments of the past decade can be seen as part of a "regime shift" under way since the 1960s. Curtis stresses the "limits of change," as stated in the title. Nevertheless, both books offer arguments with enough nuance (perhaps too much) to account for the mix of change and continuity seen over the last ten years.

Regime Shift argues that the transformation going on in Japan is an example of changes that have taken place at the "middle level" of politics and economics in all the advanced industrialized nations in response to changes in their socioeconomic demography and international environments. At various times in the past, Pempel argues, all these nations developed "regimes"—defined as mutually reinforcing combinations of socioeconomic alliances, political-economic institutions, and public policy profiles—that were suited to the demographic and international circumstances of their day. Because various features of these regimes supported one another, they tended to be quite durable and in many cases lasted for decades. In all these countries, however, trends such as declines in the agricultural share of the economy and rising levels of capital mobility eventually led to tensions among various elements that have produced periodic sharp shifts to new "equilibrium points," where the three elements are once again in harmony. Japan, he argues, is currently going through one of those shifts.

The first half of *Regime Shift* describes how the old regime in place in Japan in the 1960s constituted a mutually reinforcing system that was distinct in important respects from the regimes that grew up in other advanced industrialized societies. After providing brief sketches of the regimes in Sweden, the United States, Britain, and Italy, Pempel shows how the old Japanese regime differed from these: It was based on a social coalition of big business, small business, and agriculture; featured a one-party dominant political system; and pursued a policy of "embedded mercantilism" that propelled Japan's rapid climb up the product cycle through a combination of protectionism and industrial policy while circulating some of the nation's economic gains to inefficient sectors, such as agriculture. This description will be familiar, of course, to many readers.

More novel is the second section of Pempel's book, which describes a thirty-year transition (still under way) from the regime of the 1960s to a new and as yet unformed equilibrium. As have other advanced nations, Pempel argues, Japan has experienced changes in socioeconomic demography and the international economic environment that have put its social coalition under stress and limited its ability to continue the old policy line. In his telling, two forces seem to be most responsible for undermining the stability of the old system. First, agriculture and small business have shrunk to such an

extent, relative to the rest of the Japanese economy, that they can no longer supply the LDP with the votes it needs to stay in power. This forces the LDP to rely on the votes of urban salaried voters, who often prefer policies at odds with those needed to keep the party's traditional supporters happy. Second, growing foreign investment and reliance on foreign markets have led the interests of the export-oriented segment of Japanese industry to diverge from those of import-competing sectors, which strains the LDP's ability to keep both sides happy.

Pempel is convincing in his depiction of the growing stresses in the LDP's support coalition, but he ultimately has difficulty linking these developments to the specific events of the 1990s described at the outset of this review. The problem is that he seems stymied by the contradictory evidence as to exactly how much Japan has changed. For example, he is impressed enough by the evidence of change to describe the nation as having made a "sharp break" from its old policy of embedded mercantilism during the 1990s (p. 146), but just a few pages later he reports data showing how levels of foreign investment in Japan and the share of manufactured imports coming from non-Japanese firms remain distinctly low, to the point that "the old wine of mercantilism filled much of the new wine of internationalism" (p. 149). Similarly, he states at one point that the old regime "collapsed" in 1993 (p. 197) but later admits that political forces advocating reform have yet to establish an effective electoral vehicle for their cause. Consequently, Pempel is able to imagine a scenario for the future in which the current "muddled mix," despite the tensions within the regime, is able to survive for quite some time. One wonders how much analytical leverage can be gained from Pempel's concept if "regimes" are able to survive transitional periods of thirty to forty years in which their elements are in growing tension.

Curtis is less ambitious in that he does not attempt to advance the case for employing a new analytical concept in order to understand what is happening in Japanese politics. His aim is simply to show how formal and informal institutions, as well as the quirks of individual leaders, have constrained the pace and direction of the changes seen during the 1990s. In advancing this claim, Curtis challenges the new generation of political scientists (including his own student Frances Rosenbluth) who have advanced rational choice accounts of Japanese politics. He argues that these scholars, in assuming that all politicians are motivated by nothing more than reelection and that this single concern predictably limits their options, "miss most of what is interesting, and important, about politics" (p. 3). Curtis claims that politicians are complex individuals with mixed motives who frequently have many choices about how to act in a given situation. Their environment, especially institutions, constrain their behavior and point them in certain directions, but they are frequently able to "maneuver to exploit opportunities" (p. 4) in ways simple rational choice models cannot capture.

Curtis is careful, however, to make it clear that just because he challenges rational choice models does not mean he is a culturalist, and he devotes seven pages to making sure that no one misunderstands his position. What interests him are the unique personalities, motivations, and talents of specific individuals, whose choices at key moments have shaped the twists and turns of Japanese politics in the 1990s. Setting up rational choice and culturalist arguments as his foil in this way allows Curtis to regale us with story after story of the infighting and intrigue behind the scenes in Nagatacho and Kasumigaseki (the political and bureaucratic districts of Tokyo) to show how complex individuals shaped political

developments. Curtis had unparalleled access to leading politicians, including the numerous former prime ministers whose interviews are cited in the footnotes, and he offers fascinating blow-by-blow accounts of the LDP's split in 1993, the maneuvering that led to the Hosokawa coalition cabinet that same year, the electoral reform of 1994, and specific policy decisions. In each case, he argues, quirks of the individuals involved, such as personal rivalries among faction leaders, led to outcomes that are difficult to characterize as "rational." Politicians were frequently so focused on short-term "tactics" that they failed to pursue their long-term strategic interests (p. 156).

Although Curtis emphasizes personalities, he recognizes the important role played by institutions in constraining political behavior. He devotes a segment of one chapter, for example, to detailing the little-known rules of Diet procedure that encourage small parties to join together in larger parliamentary caucuses (*innai kaiha*), and he shows how this led politicians to make key decisions that split the anti-LDP coalition in spring 1994. As this example suggests, Curtis is sympathetic to the rational choice argument that institutions create incentives.

In the end, therefore, Curtis's perspective on Japanese politics is probably not as far removed from those of the younger generation as Curtis thinks. He sees enough incentives operating in Japanese politics to use the word "logic" in the title of his book. At the same time, most rational choice scholars are sensitive enough to the complexity of the real world to recognize that few incentives are strong enough to leave politicians with just one choice. They should take Curtis's book as a challenge to begin addressing political situations in which mixed motives and tensions between short-term and long-term incentives create room for political actors to take advantage of their "agency" and make a difference in the world.

The Stable Minority: Civilian Rule in Africa, 1960–1990. By Samuel Decalo. Gainesville, FL: Academic Press, 1998. 344p. \$47.50.

Yomi Durotoye, *Wake Forest University*

When in 1990 the Beninois inaugurated a revival of electoral democracy in Africa, many observers proclaimed the beginning of the end of both civilian and military dictatorships in the continent, but reversals in Nigeria (1993), the Gambia (1994), Niger (1996), Republic of the Congo (1997), and Cote d'Ivoire (1999), among others, have dampened optimism that the military, in particular, are retreating to their barracks under the onslaught of electoral democracy. At this juncture, the pressing question for many is what Africa needs to do to avoid taking two steps back toward military dictatorship for each step it takes forward toward democracy. *Stable Minority*, which sets out to examine "the features and policies of civilian leaders and the strategies [that] bond military leaders to postures supportive of civilian rule" (p. 4), offers hope for an answer to this puzzle. Those familiar with the work of Decalo know that he is a significant contributor to the study of civil-military relations in Africa (e.g., *Coups and Army Rule in Africa*, 1976). Therefore, no one can argue with his proposition that the lacuna in the study of civil-military stability (rather than civil-military instability) needs to be addressed. The first paragraph of the opening chapter as well as the title of the final chapter signify that Decalo recognizes that the survival of democracy in the continent is at stake. Thus, one quickly begins to expect *Stable Minority* to

contribute significantly to both civil-military and democratization studies.

The five chapters can be usefully divided into three parts. Chapter 1 develops a theory of civil-military stability. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are case studies of three of the dozen African countries that in 1990 had never experienced military rule. The final chapter assesses the factors that initiated and currently challenge the redemocratization process in the continent. I agree with Decalo that because the "stable minority" of twelve countries has very little in common, a "search for systemic conditions that act as causes of stability is a false trail" (p. 17). It also validates Decalo's methodological preference for focusing on discrete control policies and strategies. This approach justifiably undermines the persistent tendency to assume that Africans and African countries respond alike to common afflictions.

Decalo's major finding is that the only effective method of subordinating the military to civilian authority in Africa is to neutralize the security forces. Of course, there are many strategies for achieving this control, and Decalo identifies three. The first, the external guarantor modality, speaks to "the existence of external guarantees of military assistance in case of domestic upheavals" (p. 30). Until 1990, France was the only country that assumed such responsibility in Africa, based on bilateral defense agreements signed at independence with its colonies. The agreements were given teeth by, among others, the presence of thousands of French troops in several bases in Africa, a rapid deployment force of 40,000 in Provence for use in Africa, and an oft-demonstrated muscular will to intervene on behalf of clients. Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Swaziland, Tanzania, and Gabon are said to rely on this strategy to secure civilian-military stability. The problem is that it is really not an African but a French strategy. Indeed, the end of the Cold War has removed the slight African agency inherent in the modality. To illustrate, while holding out in the French barracks, President Bedie of Cote d'Ivoire lost power to General Guei in a 1999 coup. It was simply not his call to make. Nevertheless, it is ironic that of the three modalities Decalo identifies, the external guarantor is the only testable and sustainable strategy. The efficacy of the other two is impossible to test a priori.

The second broad strategy is the trade-off modality, which "rests on a tacit but visible trade-off of material benefits (to the military as a corporate body, and to officers as individuals) in exchange for political fealty" (p. 36). Decalo admits that although this strategy is theoretically less reliable and stable than the external guarantor modality, it has proven somewhat effective in Kenya and Zambia. As a testimony to its unreliability, attempted coups and conspiracies by the military in Kenya occurred in 1964, 1971, 1978, and 1982 (pp. 237–46). Furthermore, this strategy, which is widely used in the continent by both the civilian and military governments, has in most cases failed to serve the practitioners well. One can only claim its efficacy so long as no coup attempt succeeds, which is little comfort for those who seek reliable ways to keep the military in the barracks.

The legitimization modality is the third broad strategy for maintaining civil-military stability, whereby the military internalizes the concept of civilian supremacy. During the period under study, the six countries that relied on this strategy were Botswana, Gambia (now off the list), Malawi, Mauritius, Swaziland, and Tanzania. Several factors are said to promote the observed systemic legitimacy, including the absence of divisive subnationalities (or where it is present, mitigated by the force of the personality of the founding fathers) and the permeation of traditional values consistent with competitive democracy. Malawi is not, in my opinion, an appropriate case