

fears of encirclement, establishing that the Eurasian states have variegated interests and preferences with respect to the EU and NATO, and demonstrating that Russian neoimperialism would face significant resistance from the states along its periphery. Although the concept of assertive sovereignty is perfunctorily defined, it allows her to investigate the differentiated responses to the offer of NATO and EU membership, and to falsify the Russian “myth” of a western-orchestrated encirclement. Assertive sovereignty may explain the precise trajectories of the individual domestic and foreign policies of the central European, Baltic, and Eurasian states under consideration, but her explanation of those trajectories does not directly address the Russian concern with encirclement or the western fear of a renascent and nationalist Russia, the two questions animating the inquiry.

The book contains three substantive chapters in addition to the introduction, which present the questions to be addressed in the book, and the conclusion, which provides a less compelling set of policy recommendations for reconciling Russia and the west. The first two substantive chapters consider, in turn, the accession of the central European and then the Baltic states into the EU and NATO. The third substantive chapter considers the “late-bloomer” republics, a catch-all category for the Central Asian states, and their individual relationships with Russia, the EU, and NATO. Each substantive chapter is similarly organized: historical background; an investigation of the domestic policy assertiveness (defined in terms of accepting or rejecting the EU *acquis*); and a similar investigation of foreign policy assertiveness (defined in terms of seeking or abjuring NATO membership). The chapters on the central European and the Baltic states are well executed and demonstrate that these states’ political elites are not western marionettes but instead have foreign policy agency and identifiable national interests.

This framework disintegrates, however, when Pourchot turns to the Central Asian republics. In that chapter, the narrative is reduced to a series of highly selective vignettes that cannot carry the weight of her argument: the neat distinction between domestic and foreign policy assertiveness collapses owing to the multitude of institutional fora in the region and the underdeveloped institutions of domestic governance; the highly differentiated relationships and aspirations vis-à-vis NATO and the EU; and, more grievously, the absence of criteria for systematically differentiating between the foreign policy behaviors of these eleven states. Arguably, the ways in which these states assert their sovereignty is a function of geopolitical and geocultural distance from the west, the level of threat posed by Russia to national sovereignty, and the strategic and economic benefits and costs of alignment with one or the other.

The absence of a common set of criteria for assessing the sources of assertive sovereignty plagues the entire narrative of *Eurasia Rising*. Had Pourchot developed a more rigorous and comparable framework for foreign policy analysis, she could have used it to provide insight into the dynamics of Eurasian foreign policy, but how small states and Great Powers interact. That she did not do so is a pity.

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Representation through Taxation: Revenue, Politics, and Development in Postcommunist States.

By Scott Gehlbach. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2008. xix, 194 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. \$80.00, hard bound.

Scott Gehlbach has written a short book on a big topic. Tax is central to the life of the state. As Edmund Burke long ago recognized in his *Reflections of the Revolution in France*, the “revenue of the state is the state . . . all depends on it for support or for reformation.” Gehlbach demonstrates that this two-hundred-year-old axiom is true across postcommunist states by showing how the provision of collective versus private goods reflects the patterns of taxation in the former USSR (excluding the Baltic states) and postcommunist eastern Europe, and how taxation has had an impact on the reform of economic structures and the representation of interests in postcommunist political systems.

Gehlbach argues that in Russia and the rest of the former USSR (again, excepting the Baltic states) what is taxed and how it is taxed has changed only very slightly since the end of communist central planning. The story in eastern Europe is very different. There, how tax is taken and on what has shifted toward the taxation forms common to industrially developed, liberal democracies like those of western Europe. Political developments have gone hand-in-hand with tax changes. Where, as in eastern Europe, indirect taxation and revenue from corporate taxes and from energy rents have been replaced by direct taxation, politicians have served broader social and economic constituencies, provided collective goods over private ones, and provided these goods to a wider range of economic actors and in response to lobbying. Where, as in the former USSR, there have been few changes in tax revenue sources or in forms of taxation, there has been a more focused provision of collective goods to that narrower section of the economy that provides tax revenue. Public policy, in other words, supports its own revenue sources even if this means that reform (principally the diversification of the economy) stalls and representation of interests is skewed in favor of a minority. Where taxation does not change, the result is a "revenue trap." Economic sectors that are less taxable (harder to get at, for example) are not provided with support through public policy and so remain underdeveloped and cannot provide the tax revenue that might raise their political profile and thus help create conditions that would enable them to develop. The state's capacity to reform is thus constrained institutionally since taxation is an institution (a set of rules) and the costs of changing these rules are high. The structure of taxation thus helps to explain the different fates of postcommunist countries and the differences in their forms of capitalism. Politicians in the former USSR have been unable to break with the past and thus they continue to raise revenue through neo-Soviet tax structures and methods and to rule in a neo-Soviet fashion, while eastern Europeans have been able to break with the past.

Gehlbach claims that these findings do more than just tell us why there have been differences in postcommunist political economy. They also, he argues, tell us something about the problems of collective action. It is not always the case that overcoming collective action problems leads to provision of favorable public policy as suggested by Mancur Olson. Indeed, Gehlbach argues, there may not be a relationship between the ability to overcome collective action problems and provide collective goods at all. Such provision might have been made no matter what capacity a sector has to organize collectively and may, Gehlbach argues, be provided even if there is no effort to overcome collective action problems if politicians have an interest in a sector because it is taxable.

Gehlbach's argument about taxation and its impact on the development of postcommunist states is well laid out and broadly convincing and overall the book makes an important contribution to the study of postcommunist political economy that should be read by anyone interested in the area. Gehlbach's qualification of Olson's broad argument about the relationship between collective action and the provision of collective goods is also sensible. As I am sure Gehlbach recognizes, there is still work to be done to show how far his argument works for individual cases. The clarity of the argument that he has already put forward, though, and its neat explanation of the different relations between politicians and the economy in eastern Europe and the former USSR make Gehlbach's book invaluable.

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Krisen im Kalten Krieg. Ed. Bernd Greiner, Christian Th. Müller, and Dierk Walter. Studien zum Kalten Krieg, vol. 2. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2008. 547 pp. Notes. €35.00, hard bound.

This work examines the political and military crises that were a recurrent feature of east-west relations during, as Bernd Greiner notes in his introduction, "half of the four decades of the Cold War" (7). Greiner recalls that the crises were played out not only on the European central front but also in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Possession