

Getnet Tamene; William T. Bagatelas; David Reichardt; Bruno S. Sergi (eds.): Studies in Contemporary International Relations and Politics: New Europe and Beyond.

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The book "Studies in Contemporary International Relations and Politics: New Europe and Beyond" (Budrich UniPress Ltd. 2010, ISBN 978-3-940755-65-0) was published for general public, media, policy and decision makers, scholars and different institutions so that they have the opportunity to understand more thoroughly global politics and international relations through analyses and solution suggestions of different global political issues. The work consists of fifteen chapters, each approaching a particular political issue, thus covering plentiful of topics and different countries and regions.

Getnet Tamene is the author of four articles: Chapter 1: International Relations and Global Politics: CEE-EU-US Correlation's Possible Outcomes; Chapter 4: Aspects of Global Politics in the 21st Century; Chapter 7: Some Problems of International Regimes; and Chapter 10: Democracy and Pluralism in the 21st Century Africa: Perspectives and Challenges. The first two articles deal with similar topics and are too theoretical, without any particular suggestions for improvement.

Chapter 2 Current Development of Elites in Slovakia by *Rastislav Tóth* provides an overview of who and how has lead Slovakia since November 1989 and how the elites have been transformed, which the author brings under challenge. Certain visions how to enhance the current state are mentioned as well. Concerning the formal level – the study could have been better arranged with introduction and conclusion.

Chapter 3 From an American Dream to a Global Dream by *Anamika Twyman-Ghoshal* and *Danielle Rousseau* outlines a transformation of the American Dream to what the authors called the Global Dream, since the notion of American Dream is used and adopted in a more general sense nowadays due to globalization. The authors point out main advantages as well as problems regarding this phenomenon.

Chapter 5 Withdrawal of Soviet Troops from Central Europe after the Collapse of Communism by *Milada Polišínská* deals with the period of the end of 1980s, when communist era in Central Europe finished. The author describes how this period proceeded in Czechoslovakia, and does not deal with other Central European countries in detail, which is why I assume that the title of whole work is not accurate. From the formal point of view, paragraphs are not formatted evenly, there is no abstract, no clearly defined introduction, nor con-

clusion. Some paragraphs are too short and would have better been included in one of other paragraphs.

In the Introduction to Chapter 6: Che Guevara and his Legacy, *Andy Brown* defined the aim to describe Che Guevara's life, to study his works and his legacy for contemporary politics, and did so in a predominantly descriptive way. From the formal point of view, as to references – using primary literary sources is a positive point, however within analysing, quoting more different authors would have been more appropriate.

Chapter 8 Democratization in Belarus: A Failed Project by *Alex Danilovich* is an essay describing the transition from communist rule to democratic governance in Belarus, which was led by Alexander Lukashenka in the 1990s, and points out reasons why the author assumes that it was not successful in Belarus as it was in other European countries. Analysing the issue, author emphasises culture as one of crucial decisive points. The same country is presented in Chapter 14 The Phenomenon of Lukašenka: How Belarus Broke with Democracy! by *Hanna Vasilevich and Kiryl Kascian*. The paper brings results to some extent very similar to the results of Danilovich's paper, which is why I suppose it would have been better to include only one of them in the book.

Chapter 9 Democratization and its Impact on Diplomatic Methods – Public Diplomacy by *Erik Pajtinka* introduces us the notion of public diplomacy as a part of diplomacy, or as a diplomatic method, closely related to democratization process, and thus to public opinion. The author puts great emphasis on this issue, since it has become very important in international relations and foreign policy nowadays.

Chapter 11 Democracy and Minority issues in Slovakia: Analyzing Western European Perspectives and Stereotypes by *Zuzana Poláčková* deals with the question whether ethnic tensions cause prejudices and stereotypes in viewpoints of Western countries within integration processes of Central and Eastern European countries. In the analysis, the author uses the issue of Hungarian minority living in Slovakia as an example. Regarding formal point of view, the work could have been divided into more parts under separate titles, since its body comprises only one part, which makes it quite difficult to orientate in.

In Chapter 12 Democracy and Freedom: Belief – Instruments for Safeguarding a Fundamental Human Right in a Time of Transition, *Ariane Sabet* concerns with the difficult relationship between religion and freedom, and analyses three basic tools that safeguard and promote religious freedom, one of fundamental human rights.

Chapter 13 Village Committee Elections in China: Nurturing Self-governance or Fostering State Authority? By *Gabriela Pleschová* discusses semi-competitive elections in China, the relationship between state committees and self-governance ones in particular. The author deals with issues like state inter-

vention and manipulation, elections functioning, as well as with how people support elections.

Chapter 15 The Successful Transition of New Zealand towards Consensus Democracy: FFP vs. MMP Electoral Systems by *Tatiana Červená* deals in detail with reforms that were made to New Zealand's electoral system in 1993, and what the change has brought to the country. The work could have been better divided, Introduction is too long, formatting is not unified.

The book "Studies in Contemporary International Relations and Politics: New Europe and Beyond" was supposed to provide the readers with new knowledge and understanding regarding a variety of current global political issues. On one hand, the topics are interesting and up-to-date, however, criticism should be put on the fact that issues which the given topics cover are rather too varied and different for the given format and thus, they fail in presenting sufficient and thorough analyses. Instead, they often only outline the portrayal of reality. Besides these problematic aspects regarding contextual issues, several formal insufficiencies have been found, like absent introductions or conclusions, not unified formatting of text, insufficient or undue division of individual parts of the given chapter or insufficiencies regarding references.

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