99, Japan floated the idea of co-leadership in crisis management with the United States through an Asian Monetary Fund but was brushed off. Other important states, including India, have had similar experiences. Explicit attention by the declining hegemon to the allocation of status as well as material goods, and humility about the need for this, would go a long way. Moreover, and this is a theoretical as well as a policy-relevant point, when and if geographic neighborhoods of small and intermediate powers are able to constitute themselves as somewhat coherent "regions," they are likely to be positionalist revisionists. This is true in Latin America, as argued in a recent book edited by Carlos Fortin, Jorge Heine, and Carlos Ominami (*El No Alineamento Activo y América Latina*, Catalonia, 2021) making waves in the region.

Third, this volume is unduly stuffed with clever conceptual lists of theoretically intriguing concepts. Thus, the "alternative logics of goods substitution" (p. 13) include addition, exiting (client switches to a new dominant power provider), hedging (clients ensure against future risks of their current provider raising "prices," by "buying" a bit from an alternative supplier … such as China), and leverage (client prefers its current supplier, but pretends to switch to secure a better "price"). See also the editors' short discussion (pp. 20–21) of the social construction of goods, which may bear symbolic, social, or performative qualities. I counted 10 such lists scattered throughout: A nice meta-theoretical task for the future would be to decide which are important and which merely clever.

Overall, *Undermining American Hegemony* provides a timely theoretical structure for seeing a few steps further into the fog.

Delegating Responsibility: International Cooperation on Migration in the European Union. By Nicholas R. Micinski. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2022. 232p. $70.00 cloth, $29.95 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592722001682

— Ariadna Ripoll Servent, *University of Salzburg*
ariadna.ripoll@plus.ac.at

Despite being central to the control of the territory and sovereignty of states, migration management was often delegated to European Union (EU) agencies, international organisations (IOs), and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) during the 2015 refugee crisis. Nicholas R. Micinski's book explores why new forms of cooperation emerged in Italy and Greece. The introduction offers a comprehensive overview of the puzzle and main argument, defines the main concepts, and explains the methodology succinctly. In chapter 2, Micinski proposes that cooperation is not equal but takes different forms along a cooperation decision tree (p. 17), moving from noncooperation (unilateralism) to coordination, collaboration, and subcontracting. The choice between these forms of cooperation depends on two necessary conditions: administrative (state) capacity—defined as the ability to allocate resources for operating and implementing migration policies (p. 26)—and credible partners, with credible commitments "based on the state's past behaviour and reputation" (p. 29). Their combination leads to a 2 × 2 typology: States with high capacity and credibility will decide to coordinate by agreeing to adjust their policies. When states are credible partners but have low capacities, collaboration—where implementation is carried out jointly (e.g., using agencies)—is likely to emerge. Third, if states are neither capable nor credible, they will subcontract to external actors like IOs and NGOs to help them credibly increase their administrative capacities. Finally, when states have high capacity but low credibility, they will prefer to go it alone. The chapter concludes by drawing on public goods theories to identify potential obstacles to cooperation, namely: credible commitments, divergent preferences or interests, defection, and free riders.

The following chapters test this typology empirically. Chapter 3 explains the evolution of EU migration management, showing how failures in coordinating asylum policies led to new forms of collaboration, notably through EU agencies. Chapter 4 examines Italy as a case of high administrative capacity and credibility. It shows how center-right and center-left governments actively sought to implement EU legislation and reinforced the state's administrative capacities, which explains why coordination was sufficient in the aftermath of the 2015 crisis. In contrast, chapter 5 argues that the inability (or unwillingness) of Greek governments to implement EU legislation undermined both its administrative capacities and credibility. Hence, the main approach to manage the refugee crisis was to subcontract to IOs. The conclusion underlines the importance of, first, policy learning through failure and, second, implementation as a core stage of the policy cycle. It also opens new questions regarding the concept of sovereignty in the area of migration, asking how compatible it is with collaboration and subcontracting, which both require delegating competences (and hence responsibility) to external actors.

The main contributions of the book are threefold. First, it contributes to theories of cooperation through its typology; its careful operationalization helps to prevent further concept stretching and test these four subtypes empirically. Second, Micinski provides a comparative analysis with rich and original empirical data. As he acknowledges (p. 149), limiting the number of cases allows him to provide stronger and more solid evidence that can only be acquired through time-intensive (ethnographic) methods. Finally, his book fills an important gap in studies of implementation in EU migration governance. This is,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592722001682 Published online by Cambridge University Press

indeed, an area that remains underexplored, mostly due to the methodological challenges mentioned in the previous point. Although we have long known that there is a highly problematic gap between EU legislation and its implementation, we are only just starting to understand why it exists, how it differs in various countries and what the consequences are.

There are, however, three weaknesses in the book. First, the principal-agent relationship underpinning the decision to coordinate, collaborate, or subcontract remains undertheorized. Micinski asserts that he conceptualizes "EU member states as the primary principals" (p. 15); however, throughout the book, the "EU" becomes the main principal. For example, he argues later: "[T]he EU considered the Greek government's record of failed implementation" (p. 136) as a ground for subcontracting. This is problematic first, because we do not know who is responsible for this decision (the Commission? the Council?). Second, because Greece is also part of the "EU," we should ask: Which role did it play in assessing its own credibility? At the end of the case study, Micinski alludes to a "geopolitical dynamic" (p. 138), where powerful member states dictated the choice for subcontracting. This resonates with previous research showing that northern member states enjoy a position of hegemony in EU migration governance (see Natascha Zaun, *EU Asylum Policies: The Power of Strong Regulating States*, 2017), to the point that they use EU agencies as proxies to ensure their own interests (Ariadna Ripoll Servent, "A New Form of Delegation in EU Asylum: Agencies as Proxies of Strong Regulators," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 56[1], 2018). Therefore, the book could have drawn on existing literature to theorize this "geopolitical dynamic" and examine what role it played in the implementation stage.

Second, I find the operationalization of "state capacity" and "credibility" problematic: While Micinski's acknowledges that Italy is weaker than other member states (p. 80), he does not use any comparative indicators (contrary to Zaun mentioned previously). We are left to believe his analysis, which often seems to be more favourable for Italy than Greece, despite both countries sharing similar problems of capacity and credibility (e.g., both were seen to free ride on the Dublin system by not fingerprinting asylum seekers; see Florian Trauner, "Asylum Policy: The EU's 'Crises' and the Looming Policy Regime Failure," *Journal of European Integration* 38[3], 2016). This could have been solved easily by considering Italy a case of "low capacity" and, hence, collaboration; it would also address the empirical bias toward coordination, which seems to contradict other studies showing the key role EU agencies played in Italian hotspots (e.g., Chiara Loschi and Peter Slominski, "The EU Hotspot Approach in Italy: Strengthening Agency Governance in the Wake of the Migration Crisis?," *Journal of European Integration*, 2022).

Finally, Micinski points to the crucial difference between "can't" and "won't" (pp. 144–45). He seems to blame Greece for not honouring its commitments but never questions the actions of its partners. Can we not justify Greece's (and to a certain extent Italy's) decision to free ride? Were other states (notably Germany) more credible when they regularly shifted positions on responsibility-sharing depending on whether it benefitted them or not, or when some (e.g., Viségrad) persistently refused to show solidarity toward frontline member states? Implementation is indeed a crucial stage of the policy cycle, but it is still largely dependent on the conflicts that precede it. EU coordination has failed because migration is increasingly politicized; therefore, these new forms of cooperation are not necessarily superior or more supranational (as implied in the idea of a cooperation "tree") but rather a pragmatic solution that aims to bypass deadlock in the coordination of responsibility sharing. In this sense, the book ultimately invites us to reflect further on the bigger questions of responsibility throughout the policy cycle: Who is responsible for ideas, decisions, and outcomes, and what are the implications for those most affected by them (i.e., migrants)?

Aid Imperium: United States Foreign Policy and Human Rights in Post-Cold War Southeast Asia. By Salvador Santino F. Regilme Jr. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2021. 294p. $80.00 cloth.

doi:10.1017/S1537592722001748

— Faisal Z. Ahmed, *Princeton University*
fzahmed@princeton.edu

Almost universally, foreign aid donors publicly proclaim that their assistance seeks to benefit recipient countries, and at minimum does no harm. Contributing to recent scholarship that raises skepticism to this proposition (e.g., see Jessica T. Darden, *Aiding and Abetting: US Foreign Assistance and State Violence*, 2019; Faisal Z. Ahmed, *The Perils of International Capital*, 2020), Salvador Santino F. Regilme Jr. provides a provocative account of how foreign economic assistance from the world's largest bilateral donor—the United States—has harmed human rights in Southeast Asia after the Cold War. *Aid Imperium* advances a novel conceptualization of foreign strategic support (i.e., foreign aid in conjunction with public diplomacy) and provides an impressively researched narrative of its effects in the Philippines and Thailand.

Aid Imperium is motivated by two trends about US foreign relations with developing countries. First, foreign strategic support, which combines foreign aid programs and public diplomacy ("strategic discourse"), varies over time. In periods of heightened security concerns (e.g., the Cold War, post-9/11 years), foreign strategic support emphasizes state security and militaristic priorities. When security concerns wane (e.g., after the Cold War until

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592722001682 Published online by Cambridge University Press