

leaders of the French Revolution, can be understood in terms of moral purity and pollution. Indeed, if anything, the corruption of virtue, which was a revolutionary trope from Robespierre to Lenin, points to recognition of agency and intentionality (of inwardly processes and of choice) as critical to politics in a way that a more general concern with collective boundaries and ordering principles, which we find in the politics of purity and pollution, does not convey.

Even in this short book Moore does well at that in which he excels: explaining the structural and material conditions of politics and of elite and popular action. His speculative incursions in these realms, especially with the Huguenots, are convincing. Beyond this, we must note that the symbolic realm, especially that organized in terms of transcendent meanings (not just monotheistic ones), adds an intransigence and grimness to politics that was often lacking in pagan religions. In many ways, this is but the tragic and necessary concomitant of an equally uncompromising (yet salutary) ethics also bequeathed us by religion. This is a point the author does not make.

All collectivities strive to maintain their boundaries—even the West Roxbury Numismatic Society. When these boundaries are seen as coterminous with truth claims, the struggle often becomes brutal. This in itself does not make of every such struggle one over moral purity and pollution.

**Organizing Democracy in Eastern Germany: Interest Groups in Post-Communist Society.** By Stephen Padgett. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 200p. \$57.95 cloth, \$21.95 paper.

Christian Soe, *California State University, Long Beach*

Stephen Padgett is highly regarded for his scholarship on parties and other aspects of politics in the Federal Republic of Germany. In the present work he focuses on the “hesitant” emergence of associational activity in the postcommunist societies of eastern and central Europe, with particular emphasis on economic interest groups in eastern Germany. His tightly written book seeks to document and, above all, explain this state of affairs. The retarded growth of interest groups in the region is an important and relatively neglected topic, at both the theoretical and empirical levels aimed for here. It is also a development that has run counter to the once widely expected emergence of a vigorous pluralist civil society that would accompany the region’s transition to market economics and democratic politics.

Padgett delivers a series of important new empirical findings on the peculiarities of interest group development in eastern Germany, but the book is primarily marked by a strong theoretical thrust from beginning to end. It draws systematically on associational theory in trying to explain the pattern of group formation and interaction in former communist societies. A long introduction explores several theoretical approaches that are later applied in the analysis of postcommunist interest group formation and activity: pluralism, corporatism, and rational choice theory, along with concepts of social capital and civic culture. Padgett draws insights from each approach but finds the logic of collective action as developed by rational choice theorists particularly useful in illuminating some business, labor, and professional group problems of development.

Chapter 1 discusses the democratic transition and the early setbacks for a pluralist civil society in these countries. It also establishes the general format followed in the rest of the book by first reviewing the topic in its broader central and eastern European context and then focusing on eastern

Germany as the major case study. Padgett underscores the exceptional circumstances of the German situation, above all the wholesale institutional transfer from the “old” western Federal Republic into the “new” eastern states of Länder. Yet, he sees eastern Germany as an advanced case of postcommunist development that may provide us with clues about what to expect elsewhere. He is also careful to emphasize the contextual differences for interest group politics in Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia, and other former communist-ruled societies, even as he makes general observations about their shared experiences.

In the remaining five chapters, the author systematically examines the weak social and economic foundations for new interest groups in eastern and central Europe, their underdeveloped organizational framework, their declining level of membership coverage and participation, the special role played by leaders and professional staff, and the often tenuous relationship among interest groups, the state, and public policy. In seeking to explain these matters, he emphasizes the influence of both the communist legacy and postcommunist transitional problems in the economy and polity. These have inhibited the emergence of the kind of socioeconomic formations that could have spawned autonomous and relatively stable business, professional, and labor associations with a greater and more predictable role in the articulation of interests. He shows that although postcommunist societies in Europe have seen the rise of many economic interest groups, these are relatively weak organizations in which elite domination, membership losses, and mass passivity appear to have become the rule, along with an often marginal role in the public policy process.

In eastern Germany, Padgett finds that the indigenous interest groups have been unable to compete successfully with some better resourced organizations transferred from western Germany. He also documents a general condition of fragmentation and individualization in private economy relations that bodes ill for the rise of any stronger and more stable associational order. For the future he postulates “a pervasive process of social dealignment” (p. 166) and concludes that we should not expect a delayed convergence with the more concentrated patterns in the longer established European democracies. Instead, he sees postmodern tendencies in eastern Germany that may point to a future pattern of interest group dynamics in the “older” parts of the Federal Republic and the rest of Western Europe as these societies become more “fluid” and “atomized.”

In addition to the theory-driven discussion of economic interest groups, which form a part of associational life that is often missed in more general reflections on the condition of civil society, Padgett provides new empirical data and insights. In particular, he draws repeatedly and skillfully on his qualitative interviews with around 45 interest group officials in eastern Germany, conducted in 1994–95. They were chosen for having a strategic overview of their group’s activity and constituted a relatively broad sample that included business and employer’s associations, trade unions, and professional groups. It should be stressed that the book brings the discussion up to the end of the 1990s.

Padgett deals in an impressive manner with a very important and, at least in this form, hitherto relatively neglected subject. His compressed work is defined by its focus on economic interest group dynamics in postcommunist societies and the theoretical frameworks that can help explain them. He also realizes, even if he does not explore at any great length, a deeper significance of his topic. This is apparent early in the book, when he approvingly applies another author’s evocative reference to “the strange death of

civil society” to much of eastern and central Europe. This valuable book will inform future discussions of these subjects. One hopes for a companion study of the current state of party politics in eastern Germany, where at least some of the findings might modify Padgett’s conclusions.

**States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran, Nicaragua, and the Philippines.** By Misagh Parsa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 326p. \$54.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

Jack A. Goldstone, *University of California, Davis*

This intriguing volume is a direct challenge to Theda Skocpol’s *States and Social Revolutions* (1979); by inserting “ideology” into the title, Parsa claims that Skocpol left out something important. He makes good on his effort to demonstrate the importance of ideology in recent Third World revolutions, but the book offers far more than that.

Several authors have compared the Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions, which occurred in 1979, but to my knowledge this is the first book-length treatment to add the Philippines revolution against Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. The comparison is especially useful because the mass-mobilizing radical revolutionary movement in the Philippines—the communist New People’s Army (NPA)—failed, even though a reformist urban revolution toppled the old regime. In contrast, in Iran and Nicaragua, the middle classes were at first overwhelmed by the more radical mass movements led by the Iranian clergy and the Sandinistas. Why these radical revolutions succeeded and the Philippine events left class structures largely unchanged is one of the puzzles that Parsa seeks to resolve.

The author begins by stating that structural factors weakened all the ruling regimes, setting the stage for revolutionary conflicts. These factors included an increasingly centralized, exclusionary, and interventionist role of the regime in the economy; periods of economic difficulty or crisis; and international pressures. The characteristics of the regimes were such that they received the blame for economic problems but provided no legitimate means for those outside the regime to correct them. Foreign pressure regarding human rights issues from the United States, hitherto a major supporter of these regimes, led to reduced repression of the opposition. Together, these conditions left the dictatorial government vulnerable to concerted attacks.

Parsa goes much farther and uses his comparisons to show that one cannot understand the course of these revolutions without closely examining the leadership, organization, participants, and ideology of the opposition, and how these interacted with the actions of the old regime. Based merely on organizational strength, the Philippine NPA, which had tens of thousands of armed and organized supporters in the countryside and the cities, should have dominated the revolutionary process. Indeed, if Marcos had shut off all peaceful means to reform, as did the shah in Iran and Somoza in Nicaragua, then the middle-class opposition might have been forced into an alliance with the NPA in order to change the regime. In such a coalition, the NPA probably would have dominated due to its popular support and organizational strength.

Instead, Marcos sought to outflank opponents and regain U.S. approval by calling a snap election, and the moderate opposition organized urban workers and rural farmers on a platform of peaceful electoral change. The NPA reacted by boycotting the election and refused to ally with the moderates, with the result that it was reduced to a bystander in

subsequent events. When Marcos lost the election and tried to overturn the results, a portion of the army defected, forcing him out of power. The middle-class moderates were credited with the overthrow, and popular support shifted away from the NPA.

In contrast, in both Iran and Nicaragua the mass-mobilizing radicals initially played the role of moderate and subversive allies in an antiregime coalition with the reformist bureaucrats and bourgeoisie. The Sandinistas and Khomeini gathered broadly based followings and wholly isolated the regime and its small circle of supporters. Once in power they adopted a more radical line and distanced themselves from their erstwhile middle-class allies. In sum, variations in the use of ideology and in leadership played a crucial role in steering these revolutionary episodes on distinct paths.

It is one pleasure of this book that, rather than present a thin account of the cases tailored to his theory, Parsa provides unusually rich and detailed information, sufficient for readers to weigh his arguments against the extensive evidence. This very readable volume also casts welcome light on Cardinal Sin and the role of the church in the later stages of the anti-Marcos movement. Moreover, there is an arresting section on the importance of university students to revolution in Third World countries, where their numbers and prestige have been expanding far more rapidly than the number of professional jobs to which they aspire.

Parsa offers a fine combination of careful, nuanced empirical case studies and theoretical propositions regarding key factors omitted from structural theories of revolution. Along with other recent work influenced by the “new institutionalism,” this volume points the way toward a new and richer synthesis of structure and agency in our understanding of revolutions and revolutionary processes.

**Organizing Women in Contemporary Russia: Engendering Transition.** By Valerie Sperling. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 303p. \$59.95 cloth, \$22.95 paper.

Rebecca Kay, *University of Glasgow*

In the introduction, Valerie Sperling notes that “Russia’s transition from communism toward capitalism and a more democratic political arrangement has been both good and bad for women, presenting both obstacles and opportunities for organizing” (p. 7). She goes on to produce an engaging and thought-provoking analysis aimed at broadening the scope and explanatory power of social movement theory, which, she argues, has been developed by scholars who focus primarily on social movements in the “contemporary core democracies” (pp. 52–3). In contrast Sperling develops “a cross-cultural model of social movement organizing and development that explores five interrelated opportunity structures: socio-cultural or attitudinal, political, economic, political-historical, and international” (p. 53). In each subsequent chapter she tackles one of these opportunity structures and offers a number of fascinating insights into the world of post-Soviet social movements, based on the experience of her sample of women’s organizations.

The book demonstrates a genuine concern to highlight the importance of a broader and more inclusive understanding of social movement organizing and practice. Sperling places much emphasis on the importance of cultural heritage and political history as well as contemporary social and political contexts in order to understand the different approaches and tactics employed by Russian women’s organizations in the post-Soviet 1990s. The penultimate chapter presents a critical discussion of the effect of international influence; the poten-