

Yeltsin was president. On the whole, however, the data suggest great diversity and variation in respondents' political views over time. Citizens remain divided on significant issues.

Within these overall arguments, the authors offer some intriguing findings, which are certain to inspire debate among specialists in Russian politics. For example, most people favour democracy in the abstract, but the average survey respondent saw the current political system as very close to the middle of a continuum between democracy and authoritarianism (128–30). Interesting too, is that citizens' perceptions of the amount of corruption in Russian government, are found to be relatively consistent over the period of study (169), as are high levels of citizens' discontent with their own standard of living (160). However, Russian individuals are less likely today than previously to tolerate a corrupt government (180) and, since 2000, they have overall become more optimistic about the country's long-term economic prospects (160, 173). The popular approval rating of President Putin is much higher than that of the Russian government (142–45, 181). While ethnic Russians are more likely than non-Russians to approve of the political status quo, the differences are only slight (109).

The book does show some weaknesses. Although the authors offer some insight into the role that variables such as age, ethnicity and region play in influencing political attitudes, it is disappointing that there is not more discussion of the degree of variation in political attitudes shown by different social groups. A second critique is that the authors, while they apply various political science approaches (such as path-dependency) to their work, they spend relatively little time reviewing the existing literature on post-communist political attitudes in Russia. Instead, they claim, with little elaboration, that much of the survey research completed by other scholars tends to rely too heavily on Western notions of democracy and on leaders, rather than analyzing the grass-roots views of Russian citizens on their own terms (see, for example, pp. 12 and 72). Such claims are open to debate, given the range of quality survey research that scholars have completed in Russia, and the great sophistication of some of these works (notably, Timothy J. Colton's *Transitional Citizens: Voters and What Influences them in the New Russia*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000). *Russia Transformed* would be stronger if the authors had more firmly anchored their results within a richer, even if critical, discussion of the content of other relevant works. Finally, the book, while clearly and carefully written, suffers at times from a somewhat dry writing style: given the intriguing nature of the findings, the research results at times could have been presented more boldly.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the book will be of value to readers who are Russian specialists as well as those interested in learning more about the country. The work's conciseness (there are few, if any wasted words here) enhances its potential attractiveness to students. More than a work on Russian political attitudes, *Russia Transformed* provides a good overview of Russian post-communist politics as a whole, and dares to offer insights into Russia's future prospects.

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Escaping the Resource Curse

Macartan Humphreys, Jeffrey D. Sachs and Joseph E. Stiglitz, eds.

Foreword by George Soros

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Escaping the Resource Curse provides economic and political analysis of resource curse theories as well as practical policy advice to governments on managing oil

and gas developments. Twelve chapters by natural resource specialists from multiple disciplines discuss a broad range of oil and gas development issues in three sections, “Dealing with Oil Corporations,” “Managing the Macroeconomy,” and “Handling the Politics.” Beyond the specific policy advice elaborated in detail throughout (relating primarily to transparency), the book succeeds in its accessible analysis of resource curse theories and state-industry tensions as well as its reinterpretation of oil wealth.

The resource curse, the text’s theoretical frame, acknowledges a basic paradox: countries strongly dependent on natural resource exports experience slower or poorer economic and political development. Research in this vein originated in the 1970s, and the theory has recently been synthesized and significantly revived through contributions such as Michael Ross’s 1999 “The Political Economy of the Resource Curse” (*World Politics* 51 (2): 297–322) and Andrew Rosser’s 2006 “Escaping the Resource Curse” (*New Political Economy* 11 (4): 557–70). The early literature which emanated from economics departments emphasized a negative correlation between resource dependence and economic growth. Political scientists were then encouraged through contributions like Terry Lynn Karl’s 1997 *The Paradox of Plenty* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press) to broaden the work by considering links between resource dependence and authoritarianism, weakened state capacity and civil war. Following this political turn in the literature, contributors to *Escaping* understand policies or political institutions as mediating what was originally considered a deterministic relationship between resource dependence and political economy outcomes.

One of *Escaping*’s most valuable theoretical contributions is Karl’s specification of the political nature of resource curse outcomes. Karl summarizes the curse’s political dynamics which she understands as a combination of the plundering of oil wealth by non-state actors and the disintegration of the state-society relationship. First, the oil state becomes a “honey pot” myopically ravaged and contorted by both domestic and foreign actors. At the same time, the “fiscal social contract,” binding government and citizens and established through the state’s taxation of citizens and citizen’s concomitant demands for elements of democracy, is broken. Oil revenues permit the government in power to be financially independent from citizens; therefore, instead of being accountable to and gaining power from citizens, the power of petro-governments is primarily dependent on oil companies. Freed from public scrutiny, the government in power frequently becomes a corrupt “kleptocracy” and development potential is thereby wasted.

Equally important is the book’s treatment of tensions in state-industry relations and the clash of public-private interests, a point which subtly questions the possibility of a fair state-industry “partnership.” Where a state seeks the maximization of benefits and minimization of socio-economic and environmental costs, oil corporations seek maximum profits, minimum payments and oil reserves accumulation—and, as Karl observes, they do so “in large part by shaping the regulatory environment in their own interests rather than for the long-term benefit of people living in oil-exporting countries” (262). For Stiglitz, this is “a natural and inevitable conflict of interest” (24) between private and public interest.

Beyond these theoretical contributions, *Escaping* is most provocative and fresh when it redefines and disaggregates standard notions of oil wealth and development. Heal addresses this most directly in his chapter “Are Oil Producers Rich?” Here he argues that if oil producers are using this non-renewable, finite asset and if the resulting revenue is not transformed into another form of income, the state is *worse off* after oil production. Increasing a state’s income through oil extraction is “like augmenting the family income by selling the family silver: It cannot last and is really a form of asset disposal—not a source of income”; it is “a sure road to poverty in the long run” (170). To more accurately ascertain the “long-term welfare potential” of an

economy, Heal considers losses in natural capital and the social costs associated with the development in his equations. Based on his calculations, he concludes, "All resource exporters appear to be depleting natural capital faster than they are building up other forms of capital, and so are becoming poorer, whatever their income levels" (158).

While *Escaping* comprehensively addresses central oil policy issues and provides provocative resource curse arguments, it leaves several methodological and theoretical questions unanswered. First, with regards to theoretical applicability, does the theory speak only to developing states or does it travel further? Second, relating to appropriate levels of analysis, why is analysis exclusively undertaken at the level of the nation state and would it not be useful, particularly in federal states, to consider subnational cases? Finally, on the subject of the dynamics of change, through what precise mechanisms can an oil state transform its oil management? Nor does the book overcome two obvious limitations of resource curse theories: the longstanding inadequate discussion of social equity and environmental outcomes. Nonetheless, *Escaping* bravely cuts through arcane debates in the literature to do the hard work of offering practical oil management advice. Simultaneously, it serves as an accessible framework to compare and evaluate our governments' management (or mismanagement) of oil. Given the intensification of oil and gas developments across Canada, this appraisal is urgently needed.

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Parole d'historiens. Anthologie des réflexions sur l'histoire au Québec

Éric Bédard et Julien Goyette (dirs)

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Cette anthologie de réflexions sur la pratique historique au Québec est issue du désir de faire connaître les essais, les bilans et les réflexions théoriques sur l'historiographie au Québec depuis le dix-huitième siècle. Deux historiens québécois, Éric Bédard et Julien Goyette, en sont les tributaires. Par ce projet de publication de textes d'historiens de chez nous s'échelonnant sur près de trois siècles, les présentateurs de l'ouvrage voulaient aussi faire réfléchir sur la théorie et la pratique historique actuelle. Comme le souligne Bédard dans l'introduction de l'ouvrage, il s'agit de «nourrir [les] réflexions sur l'écriture de l'histoire au Québec et les finalités de la recherche» (11). En outre, bien que la discipline historique soit traditionnellement rattachée au domaine des Arts et Lettres, les historiens se sont toujours interrogés sur l'histoire en tant que discipline des sciences humaines et ils ont tenté de répondre aux grandes questions sur le sens et le rôle de l'histoire. L'histoire est-elle une science ou un grand récit ? L'historien doit-il être attentif aux enjeux présents ou tenter d'en faire abstraction ? L'historien est-il un chercheur en quête de vérité ou un critique des grands mythes de la nation ? Ces questions, et bien d'autres, se retrouvent dans les textes des historiens réunis dans cette anthologie.

Dès le départ, Bédard et Goyette nous avertissent que le choix des textes est arbitraire, mais qu'il s'est imposé de lui-même. Le choix des deux historiens nous fait (re)découvrir des classiques de l'historiographie québécoise et ouvre la voie au lecteur curieux d'en apprendre davantage grâce à une bonne bibliographie et à des notes biographiques des auteurs des textes choisis. La série de 48 textes est divisée en quatre parties plus ou moins chronologiques : Le temps des Anciens (1744 à 1960); Le moment de la modernisation (1943–1992); L'ère moderniste (1981–1991) et Le paradigme de l'éclatement (1973–2000).