Teaching Marianne and Uncle Sam: Public Education, State Centralization, and Teacher Unionism in France and the United States. By Nicholas Toloudis. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012. 230p. $64.50.
doi:10.1017/S1537592714000590

— Michael Callaghan Pisapia, *Wake Forest University.*

Nicholas Toloudis makes a compelling argument in this engaging book. The political solidarity of public school teachers, and the legitimacy of their claims upon the state, unfolds through a two-stage historical process: First, the centralization of public schooling shapes teachers' professional identity and leads to their political mobilization (Part II); Second, how teachers influence the state depends on a dynamic of "selective engagement," as officials legitimate the claims of moderate teachers who support centralizing reforms and marginalize radical teachers who challenge them (Part III).

To make this argument Toloudis draws upon public documents, teachers' letters, and professional journals, among other sources, to trace the administrative centralization of primary schooling and teacher activism in France and New York City, from the nineteenth century until 1968. First, he examines how successive governments in France forged a teacher corps in the rural countryside that, despite officials' aims, developed anti-clerical sentiments against local authorities in the Catholic Church. By the 1880s, French officials used normal schools and teachers' conferences to shape the values of teachers and to enlist them in an overhaul of primary schooling. However, the ability of state officials to use teachers in pursuit of their aims became limited over time, as teachers developed an autonomous professional identity that moved them to consolidate their power against a "tyranny of the state" which they believed might replace the "tyranny of the church" (p. 40). During the first half the twentieth century, after education had become effectively centralized and teachers had formed unions, the French government tolerated only moderate teachers, the *amicales*, while isolating more revolutionary teachers, the *syndicalistes*. Ultimately, the state legitimized the collective claims-making of teachers' unions – an outcome that officials a century earlier had not anticipated.

Toloudis's analysis of New York City traces familiar ground to historians of Progressive Era education reform, which he then extends up to 1968. During the earlier period, teachers mobilized against administrators who sought to take power away from ward-based school boards with communal ties to teachers. By 1920, however, centralizers who tried to mobilize teachers to support their goals, were faced with a "politically fragmented teachers' corps" with diminished political effectiveness (p. 67). Later on during the interwar period, as the ideology of professionalism increased its hold over teachers and moved most of them to support the moderate Joint Committee of Teachers Organizations, the more radical Teacher's Union experienced a split in 1935, as some of its leaders, who rejected the increasing power of communists within the Union's ranks, left it to form the Teacher's Guild. By the late 1950s, federal, state and city officials had so effectively weakened the influence of communists that the rest of the teachers, now freed from the communist stigma, began to assert a semi-militant tone, and to employ disruptive tactics in order to win concessions from officials.

The ambition of *Teaching Marianne and Uncle Sam* is to bring two national cases together to unpack causal relations between the key variables of centralization, mobilization and selective engagement. Comparative studies of political development between the U.S. and other countries is rarer than it should be in political science, and Toloudis's empirical study is welcome in this regard, especially given the intellectual weight of de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America,* whose insights are echoed throughout the book. The richest payoff of the comparison is to show how political centralization intersects with the formation of collective political identities, and how timing can structure the kinds of mobilization and political strategies that collective actors employ. Whereas in France, the teacher corps that state officials created to use in their state building project became a creature they could no longer control, in New York, where teachers already had a strong associational life prior to political centralization, contentious politics emerged at the moment the centralization project took off. This significant contrast, which Toloudis carefully brings to light, has broad implications, for it means that relationships between professions and the state – and how conciliatory or disruptive they are – will turn on just how much political power the state exercises over a given policy field, as an emerging occupational class develops a collective political consciousness. Furthermore, since the extent of centralized power, on the one hand, and the solidarity of any association, on the other, varies over time, scholars will be encouraged to map how state power intersects with professional interests within other national contexts and across time.

However, the analytical value of the second link in the causal chain – that mobilization leads to selective engagement by political elites – is less clear. Given the nice causal sequence laid out in Part I of the book – that centralization leads to mobilization, and mobilization leads to selective engagement – one expects that the variation across cases in the politics of "selective engagement" during the second stage will be significantly explained by variation across cases in how centralization unfolded during the first stage. While Toloudis clearly unpacks how contentious politics became organized strictly along moderate-radical lines in France, whereas in New York, the situation was more complex because of gendered hierarchies and ideological disagreements between radicals, the book lacks a clear explanation, though it does offer suggestions, of how the

earlier centralizing developments shaped the later processes of selective engagement. Instead, one is left with more of a descriptive rather than an explanatory conclusion that conservative political officials prefer to collaborate with moderate factions of workers over radical factions—a process that no doubt happens in politics.

Nevertheless, Toloudis's main argument that state efforts to "secure central control over primary schooling . . . triggered the contentious activism and subsequent political struggles that yielded teacher' unions" (p. 159) is a laudably precise formulation. Of course, just how far the thesis would extend to other cases requires further investigation, and it is likely that scholars pursing similar inquiries would find causal paths other than the one Toloudis has traced in this book. For example, one might find in some cases that decentralization, rather than centralization, mobilizes teachers. Alternatively, in other cases, one might find that teachers' associations are the primary force behind centralization, playing an active rather than a reactive role in the process. This alternative path is certainly plausible in the United States writ large, where the largest teachers' organization, the National Education Association, has tended to seek out an increased role of political officials located higher up in the legislative and executive branches of the state and national governments. To return to a general hypothesis, it may be that contentious teacher activism is greater in nation-states with fewer political venues for teachers to make claims upon "the state," and lesser in nation-states where multiple venues are open, at various levels of government, for teachers to press their claims.

Ultimately, this book is a valuable contribution to comparative studies of political development, and its focus on a policy field that has been insufficiently researched in political science makes it worthwhile read. The books calls for more treatments of public education as a major component of nation-state formation, and such studies would certainly reward scholars who are generally interested in the centralization of state power; in the formation of collective consciousness among public sector workers; and, in policy feedback, through which state policies may generate new political identities that, in turn, lead to new public claims being made upon the state in ways that officials earlier had not anticipated.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Making of Southeast Asia: International Relations of a Region. By Amitav Acharya. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013. $25.95.
doi:10.1017/S1537592714000607

— Mark Beeson, *Murdoch University*

Amitav Acharya is one of the most knowledgeable and influential observers of the region, and this book illustrates why this reputation is deserved. *The Making of Southeast Asia* provides an introduction to an increasingly important part of the world and the way it has come to be thought of, and to act as, a region. Not only does it provide a useful and readable primer on the region's distinctive development, but it also offers a sophisticated, theoretically informed reading of Southeast Asia's evolution in the process.

As one might expect from the title, these pages contain a good deal of history. Although some of this discussion necessarily covers well-worn ground, it is admirably done nevertheless. What sets Acharya's work apart, of course, is that he places this historical narrative in a distinctive conceptual framework that allows us to see how this region has been actively constructed by successive generations of regional policymakers. In addition, the framework helps to explain why the region has consequently assumed a more prominent position in debates about comparative international relations and development than we might otherwise have expected.

Many readers will probably come to this book with some idea of what to expect in this context since Acharya's "constructivist" interpretation of Southeast Asia's development has been very influential. One of the principal attractions of this second edition of the book in this regard is the inclusion of a new chapter on "imagined communities and socially constructed regions," which sets out his ideas about the conceptual significance of the region in more detail.

One of the more important contributions of this book in particular and Acharya's work more generally is that the author highlights how parts of the world that have often been dismissed as "peripheral" by realist scholars are at times capable of exercising a surprising amount of policy autonomy and influence. While there will always be a debate about just how extensive such influence is, the discussion of events such as the Cambodian crisis, which the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) played a prominent role in resolving, are quite persuasive examples of the region's polities "punching above their weight."

The idea that regions anywhere can be brought into being by the social practices of their members—or by the actions of elite policymakers, at least—is an important one and central to Acharya's explanation of Southeast Asian development. Indeed, the "quest for identity" is, he argues, one of the key drivers of the region's distinctive international and intraregional relations. As he observes, "Just as the nation-state cannot be viable without a sense of nationalism, regions cannot be regions without a sense of regionalism" (p. 26).