to accommodate the growth of Egypt's national information infrastructure.

Finally, Chapters 10 and 11 (Part III) draw out the major findings and their relevance to cases like Egypt, of which there are many. The arguments from the final part provide critics and skeptics of popular technologically deterministic perspectives with a complex political-economic framework to question exactly how valuable or sustainable platforms like Facebook or Twitter might be in the future, particularly due to the regulations and cost structures being shaped and enforced by state powers and telecommunications providers both locally and internationally.

From Saleh's perspective, understanding the Egyptian experience requires starting by tracing the strategies of industrialized economies in the 1970s to expand their reach to new markets and customers. Of the several intellectual contributions in this book, Saleh's careful examination of the transformations that have taken place over the past 30 to 40 years in advanced democratic states is perhaps the most important move and will find enthusiastic readership in scholars, students, and critics from development and dependency studies. In the author's causal reading, if we are to understand what forms of agency technologies have given to citizens from developing economies, like Egypt's, it is necessary to understand the tactics and motives of advanced industrial economies from which most of these tools have been designed and developed. Several key debates have already been brewing in global and comparative politics surrounding the regulation of global telecommunications infrastructures, and whether or to what effect changes in regulatory definitions might include the Internet and, in turn, potentially shape its fundamental architecture and usage. With information infrastructures providing new avenues for civil-society groups and democracy promoters to operate, these high-level decision-making bodies do have an impact on the ground level, especially in developing markets and repressive systems.

*Third World Citizens* tells the important story of actors like the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and telecommunications industry providers from the 1970s onward. Given the most recent stakeholder conflicts at the international level, which were elucidated again most recently in December 2012 at the ITU's World Conference on International Telecommunications in Dubai, this book is also valuable for unpacking the entry of hitherto unexamined actors like Google, Microsoft, and so on, who have forcefully emerged as important influencers in the struggle to shape international policy frameworks affecting developing and nondemocratic societies.

One of the important refrains present in Saleh's argument is an explicit focus on the limited agency and autonomy of Egyptian citizens—a case that is convincingly applicable to those of other citizens of peripheral states and societies existing at the outskirts of international regime-shaping bodies. This particular aspect of her analysis is especially relevant for the new categories of tech-savvy activists and civil-society groups attempting to speak for and aid indigenous activists and democratization movements when decisions are made to shape technology policy from abroad. Saleh illustrates the ways by which peripheral citizens have been denied opportunities for meaningful input regarding the very information systems that have provided the scaffolding for enabling both economic development and political participation. Internet governance work is often highly technical and mired in legalese, but it is also the subject of critical debate that activists and citizens must pursue to secure their voices and interests, and this investigation is especially useful for outlining the challenges of doing so and why.

*Third World Citizens* is an important contribution that begins the necessary work of bridging the relationships between the forces and rules enabling globalization and the experiences of citizens and activists who have increasingly used technology infrastructure for political and social change. Skeptics of technology-enabled political transformations are right to criticize popular discourses surrounding Facebook and Twitter revolutions. It does not make much sense to develop theories of democratization or development around singular tools and platforms. The gaps between studies of political mobilization and telecommunication regulation are wide, but they must be bridged. It is precisely at this intersection that the book is most needed and beneficial. Although it does focus primarily on the politics of telecommunications regulation and economic development, it will also be a welcome addition to syllabi and studies of technology-enabled political change in developing economies and repressive regimes.

**Veto Power: Institutional Design in the European Union.** By Jonathan B. Slapin. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2011. 196p. $60.00.

**Resolving Controversy in the European Union: Legislative Decision-Making before and after Enlargement.** By Robert Thomson. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. 338p. $103.00.
doi:10.1017/S1537592713001916

— Daniel Finke, *University of Heidelberg*

Both of these books offer unique contributions to our understanding of the mechanisms that govern policymaking in the European Union. Both are characterized by high levels of scientific rigor. Both authors analyze unique data sets using state-of-the art methods that deliver highly robust results. Yet the two books have very different foci. Whereas Robert Thomson studies the making of 125 legal acts over a period from 1995 to 2004, Jonathan B. Slapin explains the reform of the European Union treaty in 1996—the so-called Treaty of Amsterdam. In other words, *Veto Power* studies the choice of institutions, whereas *Resolving Controversy in the European Union* studies the choice

within those institutions. From this perspective, the two books complement each other very well, since "it is simply impossible to analyze institutional choice without first understanding institutional consequences" (*Veto Power*, p. 13). In what follows I highlight both books' main contributions before turning to a synthetic discussion of their strengths and weaknesses.

The structure of *Resolving Controversy* follows an Eastonian approach. After an extensive but highly accessible introduction to the research design, Thomson offers four chapters that summarize the policy positions and conflict patterns among member states, the European Parliament, and the Commission. Overall, he presents us with a data set that contains information on governments' positions as well as the policy outcomes on 125 legislative proposals covering a total of 331 issue dimensions. These data have been gathered by means of expert interviews, following the very successful research design by Thomson and his coeditors in *The European Union Decides* (2006). Most importantly, Thomson finds no systematic cleavage separating new Eastern European states from old member states. Chapters 7 to 8 focus on the policymaking processes, where the analysis confirms the resilience of informal agreements against the reform of formal institutions. When studying the gains and losses that result from policy outcomes, he finds a well-balanced political system that does not systematically discriminate against individual member states. Overall, the book portrays the EU as a rather consensual political system in which the successful resolution of controversies does not only depend on formal rules and supranational delegates.

To a certain extent, these results are in contradiction to Slapin's analysis of institutional reforms. Specifically, *Veto Power* has its focus on the design of those formal institutions that Thomson finds to be of limited relevance to our understanding of EU policymaking. The empirical section builds on governments' reform positions on a total of 228 issues, gathered by document analysis. Both books apply spatial models that imply a set of identical research questions, such as identifying conflicts patterns, the origins of policy positions, and, ultimately, the identification of winners and losers. However, in *Resolving Controversy*, Thomson constructs policy scales that range between 0 and 100. By contrast, the data used in *Veto Powers* is dichotomous, asking whether governments favored either reform or the status quo. Both books share a positive outlook on the democratic foundation of the European Union: Thomson finds an unhampered chain of delegation and representation. Slapin finds that governments' reform preferences match those of their parliaments and voters. Following Slapin, this link is particularly pronounced in proportional electoral systems. In addition, the results presented in his book support earlier findings by Simon Hug and Thomas König ("In View of Ratification: Governmental Preferences and Domestic Constraints," *International Orga-*

*nization* 56 [May 2002]: 447–76), according to which governments with reform-skeptic parliamentary ratification pivots won at the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference.

At its core, *Veto Power* confronts the predominant "intergovernmentalist" with an "institutionalist" perspective on EU treaty reform. Following Slapin (Chapter 3), the major difference between "institutionalism" and "intergovernmentalism" is the source of power. While intergovernmentalists focus on monetary and economic resources, institutionalists focus on the voting power. From this perspective, governments can and will veto reform whenever they prefer the status quo. Slapin does a superb job of convincing us that this is indeed what happened when the 15 old member states renegotiated the Treaty of Maastricht and, eventually, agreed on the Treaty of Amsterdam. He presents an innovative operationalization and a fair comparison of the two theoretical approaches (Chapters 3 and 4). From a historical perspective, his argument appears convincing: During the last 20 years, almost all attempts to reform the Union's institutional design resulted in a compromise at the least common denominator. This changed once European political leaders agreed to change the rules of the game by adopting the Convention approach (see Daniel Finke et al., *Realizing the Impossible: Reforming the European Union,* 2013).

Nevertheless, I am not entirely convinced by Slapin's summary of intergovernmentalism. Do intergovernmentalists really assume that resourceful states can coerce others into accepting a treaty that leaves them worse-off? Andrew Moravcsik (*The Choice for Europe,* 1998) argues that losers get compensated by financial side payments. From this perspective, Slapin's approach (p. 69) to modeling governments' utility function lacks a dimension that captures such financial redistributions.

One of the most surprising results of *Veto Power* is the finding that small member states such as Luxembourg or Austria appear to be just as powerful as France or Germany. To some extent, this result echoes Thomson's finding that new member states (almost all of which are small) gain as much in EU policymaking as large member states. On closer inspection, both authors explain this surprising result by pointing to member states' policy or reform positions. Yet the crucial difference in *Resolving Controversy* is that Thomson does not specifically highlight governments' evaluation of the status quo. Instead, he points toward a balanced preference distribution, which, however, Slapin controls for in order to distinguish the powerful from the lucky.

Although the substantial empirical analysis in *Veto Power* focuses on one particular intergovernmental conference, the last chapter offers a historical perspective. Here, Slapin studies the conditions under which veto threats are credible and, accordingly, the veto power hypothesis holds. In short, veto power depends on the existence of outside

options. Counterintuitively, the author concludes that veto power exists in case exit is not an attractive alternative to any member (p. 145). Interestingly, he argues that the most recent changes in the European Union toward "flexible" or "multispeed" integration may indicate a weakening of this veto regime. At first glance, this finding appears counterintuitive to Thomson's portrait of a political system that favors all member states to the same degree. However, this tension could potentially be resolved by focusing on those policy areas subject to enhanced cooperation.

Slapin's book appears somewhat out of date with a focus on an intergovernmental conference that took place almost 20 years ago. This does not impair its significant contribution to the literature on multilevel and federal institutions. By contrast, Thomson focuses on EU legislation initiated over a period of 20 years, which covers legislative initiatives prior to and after eastern enlargement. This allows him to study the effect of enlargement and of the variation in the partisan composition of the EU's major decision-making bodies. Given this extensive period of observation, *Resolving Controversy* could have benefited from a stronger focus on the effect of institutional reforms on policymaking.

Both books are comparable in using an identical modeling approach and similar methods. Both are complementary because Thomson studies the choice within rules and Slapin the choice of rules. Nevertheless, *Resolving Controversy* does not motivate the study of institutional design in the European Union. Thomson's results downplay the importance of formal institutions, while stressing the relevance of informal mechanisms and rules. By contrast, *Veto Power* studies the reform of institutional design, which presumes that formal rules such as voting thresholds and weights, the composition of the Commission, and the legislative procedures affect the distribution of powers among member states and, ultimately, the resulting policies. This tension is not resolved easily. Thomson delivers the most extensive data set on policymaking in the European Union. However, the methodological follow-ups to the original Decision Making in the European Union project highlight the difficulties in identifying the effect of procedures and institutions (e.g., see Christopher H. Achen, "Evaluating Political Decision Making Models," in *The European Union Decides*; Dirk Junge, "Game Theoretic Models and the Empirical Analysis of EU Policy Making: Strategic Interaction, Collective Decisions, and Statistical Inference," in Thomas König et al., eds., *Reform Processes and Policy Change: Veto Players and Decision-Making in Modern Democracies,* 2010). Moreover, it appears unlikely that Europe political leaders invest tremendous time and resources in reforming an institutional design that eventually has a limited effect on policymaking.

In sum, I strongly recommend both books to anybody interested in European Union politics. Both offer cutting-edge research that combines rigorous theoretical arguments with state-of-the-art empirical analysis.

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## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**Looking for Balance: China, the United States, and Power Balancing in East Asia.** By Steve Chan. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. 304p. $50.00.

**Asian Rivalries: Conflict, Escalation, and Limitations on Two-level Games.** Edited by Sumit Ganguly and William R. Thompson. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011. 272p. $80 cloth, $24.95 paper.

— Jae-Jung Suh, *Johns Hopkins University*

The two books under review are serious intellectual works that ground an analysis of Asia's international politics in existing international relations theories and in so doing advance theoretical discussions in the field. They convincingly show that what is expected by some of the prominent IR theories is not observed in the region, and they offer alternative formulations that account for this nonoccurrence. Importantly, they insist that their discoveries are not necessarily sui generis phenomena limited to the region, but can be explained in terms of general theoretical frameworks that can be applied elsewhere. Thus, not only do they make precious contributions to our understandings of the fields of Asian politics and IR, but they also create an important dialogue between these fields, which, if developed further, would make their contributions even more valuable.

The dog that did not bark sometimes holds the key to an important puzzle, as Sherlock Holmes famously told a Scotland Yard detective. While it takes no active investigation to hear and see the dog that barks, it takes a fair amount of knowledge and imagination to recognize the one that did not. One of the most significant contributions that these two books make to the literature on Asian international relations and IR generally is that they have identified two dogs that did not bark: Steve Chan brings to the fore the nonexistence of "balancing" behavior by Asian nations against the United States and China, and Sumit Ganguly and William Thompson find that, despite expectations to the contrary, domestic politics did not help shape the course of rivalries in the region. As a discovery is framed, guided, and made within the context of a theory, so are their discoveries embedded in important IR theories. Chan engages balance-of-power theories head-on as he analyzes the nature of the United States–China relationship, while Ganguly and Thompson use a