
This article examines clientelism in Iraq as a case study of one form of corruption. Iraq is an unusual case of corruption, because a key feature of Iraq’s corrupt environment is an institutionalized factional political system based on sectarian quotas. The article explores the many links between clientelism and political factionalism, discussing whether clientelism arose because of factionalism, or whether factionalism merely determines the ways that clientelism currently operates in Iraq. Using fieldwork data, the findings show there are two distinct levels of clientelism in Iraq: the individual level and the organizational level. First, clientelism at the individual level. Second, clientelism at the organizational level. [R, abr.]


This article draws on in-depth fieldwork in Lagos, Nigeria, to explain the changing role of motor-park touts (agberos) in urban transport. Situating the emergence of agberos within the insecurity and radical uncertainty caused by the structural adjustment programme of the 1980s, this article explains the transformation of agberos in the light of their tacit incorporation into the National Union of Road Transport Workers, which politicized and altered their role in urban transport. It further argues that current efforts to rid motor-parks of agberos is inspired by the post-1999 urban renewal project of the Lagos State Government to transform Lagos into a “world class” megacity. [R, abr.]


By a comparative case analysis of the Northern Ireland conflict and the Kurdish conflict in Turkey, this article aims to make a contribution to the (de)secularization literature. It raises two interrelated questions. First, under what conditions are states more likely to desecuritize minority identities? Second, what does desecuritization entail? The conventional wisdom about desecuritization, especially among the Copenhagen School scholars, is that it is the shift from emergency politics to normal politics within which the security speech act becomes absent. In turn, desecuritization is assumed to be an agency-driven process. This article underlines some of the problems and insufficiencies of this approach and pushes forward an interpretation based on structure-driven processes along with agency-driven acts in the desecuritization of minority identities. [R, abr.]


There is a lively debate on the relative impacts of Islam, oil wealth, and Middle Eastern institutional legacies regarding democratization and the spread of liberal values. We examine this issue using religious repression. We argue that oil-wealthy rulers use religious monopoly to control dissent. Our results show that oil wealth increases religious repression above the effects of Muslim dominance and a host of sundry controls. The Middle East and North Africa region is positive on religious freedom. The data suggest that several Gulf monarchies have more religious freedoms than other Muslim dominant states, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, or even Israel and Jordan. The worst religious repression is among oil producers in Central Asia. [R, abr.]


In the 1990s, judgments in the European Court of Human Rights concerning state surveillance forced many West European countries to introduce new parliamentary bodies and formal systems for accountabil-ity. Promising both greater transparency and lawful intelligence, these frameworks were then energetically rolled out to Central and Eastern Europe. Although officials boasted about their effectiveness, these formal accountability mechanisms have failed to identify serious abuses over the last decade. Moreover, the security regime in much of Central Europe still remains largely unreconstructed. The article argues that a robust culture of accountability cannot be construed into existence merely by introducing new laws and regulations, or indeed by the increasing tide of media revelations about intelligence. However, it suggests that we are now seeing the rise of a more complex pattern of “ambient accountabil-ity” which is at last challenging the secret state across Europe. [R] [See Abrast. 68.6806]


Concepts such as democracy and accountability rely heavily for their normative framing on scholarship originating in Europe and America. While these theories of democracy are useful for setting up frameworks with which to engage, it is important to assess the actually existing practices of everyday state-society engagement in informal locations and economies of the global south. Practices of everyday democracy may differ in contexts such as South Africa’s and it is important to assess what this tells us about reconceptualizing democratic theory in our region. While not uncritical of the power imbalances inherent in clientelism, this article attempts to provide a clear conceptual definition of clientelism and then investigates how this practice may fulfill democratic tasks such as increasing participation and accountability at the local level of governance. [R, abr.] [See Abrast. 68.6241]


Proponents of Scottish independence often foreground the claim that Scotland forms a democratically relevant and underrepresented community that would function better as an independent state. This argument casts the nation in cultural rather than ethnic terms, and thus implicitly draws on forms of both liberal nationalist and multicultural political theory. We argue that any plausible articulation of such a “cultural nationalism” ultimately reduces to a series of interrelated claims about the nature and effects of culture, identity and meaning. We provide a post-foundational account of culture and identity as fluid, contested, and overlapping, which we argue renders the cultural nationalist position unsustainable. We argue that cultural nationalism is really constituted by multiple cultural currents, political identities, communities, and democratic structures, which suggest tractions for post-nationalisms such as political liberalism and cosmopolitanism. [R, abr.] [Part of a special issue on “Multiculturalism in contemporary Britain: policy, law and theory”, edited by the authors. See also Abrast. 68.6711]


Nationalism theory has long acknowledged that in its relation to nationalism, “religion” can refer both to a reflexive identity attached to a people group, and to a reasoned value-based position articulated by an elite. Even this bifurcation remains insufficiently precise. Religio-nationalisms reasoned ex patria — that is, beginning with the nationalist and proceeding from there to incorporate religion — tend toward values of exclusivity and animosity toward “the other”. They have been charged with hijacking religion as an identity while being at odds with those who actively prac-tice that religion or lead its practicing community. The exploratory case of the relationship between Russian Orthodox and Russian nationalism allows a comparison of ex patria religio-nationalism with its ex religio counterpart. [R, abr.]


Kinetic operations — either overt, covert, or clandestine — should be employed only with ample forethought as to what they are intended to achieve and whether the costs are worth the benefits. Notwithstanding their advantages and disadvantages, ISIS will not be defeated through