

call for human rights, equality, and freedom for everyone is a good reminder of what so much of democratic theory is about. But his prescription—democracy as emancipation through securing human rights—leaves as many quandaries as it provides answers. Within the state, democratic theory's rich tradition has also been about who rules and how, about governmental limits, and, importantly, about the role of law. It has spoken to means as much as ends, maybe more so. Yet, Goodhart addresses these concerns by implying that they are only instrumental to the final goal. And his solution is not based on the recognition of emerging institutions and habits of communal life but on the herculean task of transforming existing political culture globally.

At the international level, the author's prescriptions seem far from the reality. To his credit, he gives lengthy attention to the promotion of democracy at the United Nations and to the human rights agenda of that institution and of other intergovernmental organizations (pp. 182–90). However, in the case of the UN and most democracy-promotion actors, the mantra has not been “democracy as human rights,” but rather “democracy is a human right” (see Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Democratization*, 1996, and Kofi A. Annan, “Democracy as an International Issue,” *Global Governance* 8 [April–June 2002]: 135–42). The current trend is to prop up “failed” territorial states and introduce Lockean models of democratic practice.

As for global civil society, Goodhart overstates what its advocates claim. Most of its supporters see global civil society as a movement toward a more democratic and ordered international system, not as accomplished fact (Mary Kaldor, *Global Civil Society*, 2003; Michael Edwards, *Civil Society*, 2004). Probably the best interpretation of the interconnections among global civil society, international organizations, and the construction of rights and democracy in the new era can be found in the works of Jürgen Habermas, but Goodhart does not address Habermas and his theories. Like Goodhart, Habermas argues that the legitimacy of democratic decisions in a society or organization arises from popular sovereignty exercised within the Rousseauian constraints of equality and freedom (“Popular Sovereignty as Procedures,” in James Bohman, ed., *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*, 1997). Unlike Goodhart, Habermas maintains that the surge in transnational organizations encouraged by the porosity of globalization allows for an emergent participatory democracy through civil discourse about serious issues on an integrated global/local network, leading to democratic will- and policy-formation (Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*, 2004). International organizations are not yet at the center of a developed cosmopolitan democracy, but they are increasingly people centered rather than state centered. The plethora of transnational actors today in global civil society provide what

Habermas calls the “nodal points” in the international communications network, providing a vibrant democratic process that is then transformed into legitimate democratic policy in the public sphere of global governance, encouraging global consensus on the fundamental rights about which Goodhart writes (*Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discursive Theory of Law and Democracy*, 1996, p. 373).

If, as Goodhart asserts, political theory's value lies in providing a reasonable explanation of political realities as we find them, it seems that Habermas's rendition of democracy and human rights in the era of globalization more nearly matches the nascent realities of globalized politics at the beginning of the twenty-first century. That does not mean, however, that the author's reasoned argument for emancipatory politics should be taken lightly. The broadening of human rights, both in meaning and application, is at the center of a democratic global agenda. Goodhart makes a strong case for pushing that agenda to its limits.

#### **Digital Formations: IT and New Architectures in the Global Realm.**

Edited by Robert Latham and Saskia Sassen.

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This is an interesting collection of essays about what the editors call “digital formations.” A social formation is something in society that is emerging without a single founding event, in its early stages of development, and tending toward a variable structure and nature (p. 9). Despite this, “you should be able to identify a coherent configuration of organization, space, and interaction” (p. 10). Several of the social formations studied by the authors in this volume are only partly digital: that is, they combine digital and nondigital elements. They are all, however, subject to “digitization,” which involves the “rendering of facets of social and political life in a digital form” (p. 16). One important reason for studying digital formations is that some are potentially “destabilizing of existing hierarchies of scale and nested hierarchies” (p. 19), while others reinforce them. An example of the former is the open-source software movement (as chronicled here by Steve Weber); an example of the latter is what Dieter Ernst in his chapter calls the “global flagship networks” created by large multinational corporations.

The introductory chapter of this volume does an excellent job of providing a theoretical underpinning for the rest of the volume. The second chapter, by Jonathan Bach and David Stark, focuses on the growing presence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the international system as an example of a networking style of organization in contrast with and sometimes in opposition to the

territorially based system of nation-states. The third and related chapter by Saskia Sassen compares global capital markets with global electronic activist networks, arguing that global capital markets reproduce preexisting power structures while activists generally work to undermine them. The explanation for the difference is mainly in how results are obtained in the two systems: In capital markets, deep financial knowledge is often concentrated in a limited number of urban locations, whereas in activist networks, global political goals are achieved by means of the “knowing multiplication of local practices” (p. 83). The latter lends itself to distributed and parallel social processes, while the former does not.

Dieter Ernst's essay on global flagship networks in Chapter 4 argues that economic globalization has led to a type of international competition in which multinationals create and maintain alliances of suppliers internationally through digital information systems. The latter are used by global corporations to diffuse certain types of knowledge “to gain quick access to skills and capabilities at lower-cost overseas locations that complement the flagships' core competencies” (p. 91).

This is a useful insight consistent with a growing number of empirical studies of international collaborations in high-technology industries. My only complaint is that it overly emphasizes the continued dominance of global firms like IBM, Microsoft, and Intel at the expense of an analysis of new corporate challengers like Samsung in Korea or Acer in Taiwan or Lenovo and Haier in China. The long-term consequences of short-term strategies of knowledge diffusion need also to be considered.

In Chapter 5, Linda Garcia does a good job of summarizing the implications of digital networks for the rural-urban divide. She calls for a “deliberate rural strategy . . . to assure that rural communities [have] equal access to critical infrastructure” (p. 141).

Robert Latham provides a brief historical summary of the rise of the Internet in Chapter 6. He correctly reminds readers that there was nothing inevitable about the triumph of the Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol protocols that resulted in the creation of the Internet. Many firms and national governments supported more closed-networking architectures such as Open Systems Interconnection (OSI). He argues that the key to the success of TCP/IP was the ease with which it allowed users to interconnect with others who had informational resources that were highly valued. Lower costs, efficiency, and faster interconnectivity were not sufficient; there also had to be an information payoff.

Steven Weber's Chapter 7 on open-source software does an excellent job of summarizing the arguments presented earlier in his book *The Success of Open Source* (2004) and of extending them for the purposes of this volume. Toward the end of the chapter, he speculates about whether it is possible for firms and governments based on hierarchical

organizational principles to compete effectively with groups of engineers and terrorists organized on networking principles.

In Chapters 8 and 9, respectively, Hayward Alker and Warren Sack describe their efforts to provide software tools for the representation of complex verbal data. Alker's chapter is focused on early warning systems for transboundary conflicts, while Sack's is directed at analysis of very large-scale conversations on the Internet. Both approaches are interesting, but these chapters seem to be a bit peripheral to the central point of the volume.

The last two chapters deal with the implications of the Internet for democracies (Chapter 10) and for authoritarian regimes (Chapter 11), and China specifically in the case of the latter. Lars-Erik Cederman and Peter A. Kraus assert that “information technology plays a prominent role in the debate about how to promote a closer union of Europe's peoples” (p. 283). They argue for a logic of bounded institutionalism, in contrast with national substantialism and civic volunteerism, in conceptualizing democracy in the European Union, in order to put the role of the Internet in its proper perspective. They posit that cyberdemocracy alone will not help “the demos and democracy . . . to develop in tandem” (p. 305), especially since most Europeans still get much of their information about Europe from television and not from the Internet. Apparently their target is a thesis put forward by some Europeans, that technology alone may be sufficient to build a sounder foundation for democracy in Europe.

Similarly, in his chapter on China (Chapter 11), Doug Guthrie argues that “information technology holds at once promise and peril for the Chinese government” (p. 313). The government needs information technology to continue to pursue its economic development goals, but it wants to limit the use of that technology by its citizens for the purpose of organizing opposition to the one-party system. Guthrie, like Cederman and Kraus, is skeptical about claims that the diffusion of information technologies will upset existing political arrangements in the short term. Nevertheless, he states that “on the micro level, IT does appear to play a role in the evolution of new types of social networks and in creating opportunities for newly emerging sectors of society” (p. 314).

Thus, with the possible exceptions of Chapters 8 and 9, all the chapters in this edited volume have a common theme consistent with the theoretical framework provided by the editors in Chapter 1. It is disappointing that these editors do not provide a conclusion; still, the first chapter does a good job of summarizing the content of the rest of the volume. The writing is generally clear and the arguments are well presented. I would recommend the volume for use in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses on the politics of information technology.