

physics of traditional and static realism but realism influenced by Einstein's relativity. Consequently, different actors and systems will simultaneously be at different points on the time-space continuum and will evolve at different rates of speed; and the behavior of actors will be largely determined by their position in systemic schisms along with their place on the rise-decline curve.

Like other realists, Liska does not regard history as equivalent to progress and believes it is folly for leaders to try to channel history in particular directions. But instead of simply denouncing "utopians," who seek to deny the realities of structure, Liska describes what he calls "politicized poetics." Global politics is repeatedly characterized by one of two types of tragedy. The first is a two-power conflict in which the contestants destroy one another "in casting out imagined or exaggerated evil" (p. 189). The second, which Liska calls "the tragic hero in interstate relations," is the actor who seeks hegemony in defiance of structural and normative impediments. Such an actor is doomed because it tries "to abrogate the laws of the relevant nature by escaping not only the chain of conflicts with equal powers but also and mainly the next turn in the cycle of rise and decline deputizing for birth and death among mortal states" (p. 190).

What is it that enforces the iron laws of history and so limits the potential for political genius? Unsurprisingly, it is that old realist standby, the balance of power. Liska's analysis of the balance is less original than his vision of a dynamic global structure; and that analysis leaves unresolved most of the logical and empirical issues associated with traditional balance-of-power theory. Nevertheless, he does admit that "perfect" equipoise is an ideal rarely met because of the dynamic nature of political systems.

The book first provides readers with the author's core concepts and typologies, then illustrates them with a galaxy of historical cases. Additional theoretical chapters follow; and the final section of the book applies the concepts and theories to a variety of issues in contemporary world politics. Although the book was completed before major events like the reunification of Germany and the war in the Persian Gulf, the analysis remains remarkably fresh. The Cold War, as the author interprets it, passed through the major cleavages characteristic of international systems (East vs. West, land vs. sea power); and the alternatives confronting the superpowers (e.g., a condominium of the two, the effort by one to create unipolarity, etc.) are, in Liska's view, those that great powers have faced many times before.

The Ways of Power is a genuinely original, timely, and important contribution to international relations theory. The influence and continued relevance of Aristotle, Thucydides, Machiavelli (theoretical chapters are labeled "discourses"), and other classics are repeatedly revealed in the analysis. Whatever one's view of the realist tradition, this volume is an authentic addition to it and extension of it. Ultimately, if the volume is not as widely read as it deserves, this will be largely a result of the author's unusually periphrastic style that obscures important points and renders virtually impenetrable whole paragraphs and pages.

Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America. Edited by Abraham F. Lowenthal. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. 422p. \$55.00 cloth, \$12.95 paper.

U.S. Policy in Central America: The Endless Debate. By Dario Moreno. Miami: Florida International University Press, 1990. 186p. \$26.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

The Ordeal of Hegemony: The United States and Latin America. By Guy Poitras. Boulder: Westview, 1990. 214p. \$34.95.

These three books share some common underlying political assumptions largely shaped by the fevered and prolonged debate over Central America policy in the 1980s. Hence, they are already dated, somewhat overwrought, a bit passé, and quite one-sided in a number of their assumptions and analyses. In all three, scholarship too often yields to polemics and partisanship.

Dario Moreno's *U.S. Policy in Central America* originated as a doctoral dissertation at the University of Southern California. While containing some valuable analysis, its subtitle, *The Endless Debate*, shows how the book has been overtaken by events. Central America is now largely out of the headlines; the vigorous policy conflict of the 1980s is over; and thanks to Secretary of State James Baker's skillful political maneuvering, Central America and its problems have been largely finessed (albeit not "solved"). In addition, Moreno's analysis of the assumptions and processes of Reagan administration policy on Nicaragua and El Salvador is often partisan and misleading.

Guy Poitras's *Ordeal of Hegemony* has its origins in a well-known article (Lowenthal, Abraham F. "The United States and Latin America: Ending the Hegemonic Presumption" *Foreign Affairs*. 1976.55:199-213). This was a Carteresque article that served as a basis for some of the thinking of the new president's Latin America advisers. But that view, which implies a unilateral reduction of the U.S. role in the world (particularly in this hemisphere) has been repudiated overwhelmingly by the voters in the last three presidential elections. Moreover, with the decline of the Soviet Union and with Europe and Japan showing little interest, Latin America has been thrown back more strongly than ever into the arms of the United States, whether or not we (or they) wish it or not.

Abraham Lowenthal's edited *Exporting Democracy* is disappointing. Well funded and with several reputable contributors, it is nevertheless weaker and more dated than one would expect. First, the book has no statement of themes, introduction, or discussion or definition of what Latin America means by *democracy* (often closer to a Rousseauian than a Lockean conception). Second, while most of the authors in the book are committed Democrats, now that the democracy-human rights agenda has largely been taken over by Republican administrations, they are forced to be more critical of it. Third, the historical approach employed in the book emphasizes Latin America's often unhappy past experiences with democracy and the frequently mixed motives of U.S. foreign policy but contains no information on what is new in Latin America to provide a more solid basis for democracy (greater affluence, larger middle class, rising literacy, greater institutionalization, etc.); nor does it come to grips with the changes in U.S. policy that led us finally to conclude that democracy is the best basis for promoting U.S. security interests. We should