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In This Issue

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In This Issue

Often our efforts to bring you a selection from the best articles recently approved by peer review that are, collectively, both geographically- and gender-representative, surprise us by producing five articles that have affinities unsuspected at first. Although we have long ago ceased doing thematic issues, themes sometimes emerge nonetheless – and we have enjoyed bringing this to your attention. However, not this time. This issue, assembled according to the usual criteria, remains stubbornly – and we think very interestingly – eclectic. Assassinations, the Europeanization of a complex not yet European nation, child care policies, expenditures on the military, and the political impact of IMF loans in Latin America are all good topics that fall well within our “scope and aims.” It would be disingenuous to look for closer resemblances.

In Lebanon, Robert Bosco finds an example of an assassination – that of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri – that permits him to explore one way issues of foreign policy sometimes intersect with the work of international organization and law and can, as a result, shift the work of the latter away from its supposed purposes. Analyzing the debates taking place in and around the international tribunal formed to investigate this particular act, he points out that we do not really have strong and unquestioned norms regarding the criminality of political assassinations nor regarding the procedures for determining who is culpable and what to do about it in a court of law.

The task Kivanç Ulusoy takes on in “The Challenge of Europeanization to Turkish Politics and Political Structures” is to convince us that the Europeanization of Turkey has a longer history, and a more complex present, than is commonly understood. The conditions set by the European Union for Turkish membership are of a revolutionary character in that they require a transformation of both basic governing structures and mentalities. This time the change must also come from below: it cannot be simply a matter of bureaucratic rule-changing in order to join a larger regional entity.

“Explaining Differences in Child Care Policy Development in France and the United States” by Linda A. White is a remarkable demonstration of how to use a combination of theories and methods – studying the evolution of norms, frames, and programmatic ideas over more than a century – to solve an interesting problem in comparative study, in this case how it has happened that the United States, a nation with strong participation of women not only in political movements but also in the work force, has lagged so very far behind France, a nation that has

neither, when it comes to providing low cost quality child care. Her answers are complex, detailed, rooted in history, and, we would argue, convincing.

It may seem only commonsense to expect that democracies will spend less on military expenditures than military regimes. However, in “Do Soldiers Compete for Expenditure in Brazilian Democracy?” Jorge Zaverucha and Flávio da Cunha Rezende show that it simply is not so for Brazil, where military spending has continued to increase since 1995. In this probably controversial piece, the authors posit that in some cases democracies have greater need of military protection than regimes actually ruled by the military – and are willing to pay for it.

Finally, in “Democracy’s Friend or Foe? The Effects of Recent IMF Conditional Lending in Latin America” Chelsea Brown explores the *political* impact of the conditions under which loans are granted by the International Monetary Fund in the Latin America. Does meeting these conditions have negative effects on democratic progress? If the answer varies, as she shows it does, then what other variables make the difference? This careful study explores how and when it makes a difference how many and what kinds of reforms are demanded and offers useful recommendations for more thorough examination of the likely political consequences of specific reforms in specific nations when negotiating loans.

In sum, here we have no common theme. Just a common determination to call our attention to puzzles that are too often not identified as such – even though leaving them unexplored permits the continuation of policies that have serious consequences for human lives – and to try to find the answers. Sometimes the nobility of our discipline lies in just that kind of stubborn pursuit where others may have given up with half answers, or never even noticed the problem at all. Call it bone-in-teeth political science. Be glad it exists.

Kay Lawson