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## In This Issue

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## In This Issue

Understanding processes of change is an important feature of political science research and is the common thread uniting the articles in this issue. The authors reflect on attitudinal, institutional and policy changes in particular national and cross-national contexts, exploring the political implications of these changes. The issue begins with Steel and Kabashima comparing attitudes towards gender equality in Japan with those found in other East Asian countries (*Cross-Regional Support for Gender Equality*). They challenge the thesis that economic modernization brings with it a convergence in social attitudes and values towards a Western, liberal democratic “norm.” They suggest that the processes of modernization experienced in East Asia and the national ideologies supporting these processes were very different to those experienced in other industrialized countries. The policies and practices resulting from East Asian modernization contributed to deepening gender segregation, and these processes of change resulted in significantly lower levels of support for gender equality than is found in Western countries. For Steel and Kabashima, the political-ideological context of modernization is a critical factor in any discussion of attitudes towards gender equality, producing different effects in different parts of the world.

Gel'man examines the process of regime change in three post-communist countries, Russia, the Ukraine and Belarus (*Out of the Frying Pan into the Fire? Post-Soviet Regime Change in Comparative Perspective*). His core question is one that sparks considerable discussion in political science – why do some countries become democratic while others do not? As with Steel and Kabashima above, he is critical of the explanatory power of modernization, and also finds path dependency theories unsatisfactory in accounting for the survival and development of new institutions. He develops an analysis of regime change focusing on political elites and their relationships, the resources available to them and the relative costs for elites of pursuing various strategies. He addresses other contextual factors such as the legacy of the past and the present institutional framework to explain why the opportunity for democracy in the Ukraine is more positive than in Belarus and Russia. Gel'man's model invites further application in the study of regime change.

The third article in this issue, by Sanjay Gupta (*The Doctrine of Pre-emptive Strike: Application and Implications during the Administration of President George W. Bush*), also deals with change, this time in the context of international security. In a political-legal study, Gupta shows how the US asserted a right to take unilateral military action as a pre-emptive form of defence. While noting that the concept of

pre-emptive action in the pursuit of self-defence is not new, Gupta points out that the policy as practiced by the Bush administration does not differentiate between justifiable preemption and unlawful aggression. He also contrasts the US policy towards Iraq with its position on North Korea – arguably a more serious threat to the US than Iraq. He then applies the logic of the US policy on pre-emptive strike to India-Pakistan relations. While noting that, for the present, a strategy of diplomacy is being pursued, he indicates that there are views within Indian elites that favor a more robust, US-like, response to India-Pakistan relations. He concludes that the challenge for the UN is to counter the policy of unilateral preemption if it is to maintain a relevant role in addressing international conflict.

The international movement of capital and the role of politics in explaining international bank lending is the subject of the article by Javier Rodríguez and Javier Santiso (*Banking on Democracy: The Political Economy of International Private Bank Lending in Emerging Markets*). They begin by noting that international political economy decisions are now influenced by ethical, social and environmental concerns in addition to traditional financial criteria. In this new context, they ask if private international banks contribute to political development by investing in emerging democracies, using the political economy of Latin American countries to test their hypothesis. They find that banks are indeed willing to lend to emerging democracies, and that this lending is not solely based on the generally favorable investment climate that new democracies, with privatized economies, present. They find that bankers also prefer new democracies with stable economic policies, and are relatively indifferent to elite turnover, interest rate fluctuations or levels of human capital. In conclusion, Rodríguez and Santiso suggest that while there are good economic reasons for international banks to invest in emerging democracies, wider ethical concerns also bear on their evaluation of investment risk.

Finally, McLaverty and Halpin explore decision-making as a process of change through the concept of deliberative drift (*Deliberative Drift: The Emergence of Deliberation in the Policy Process*). Taking the theory of deliberation as a starting point, they discuss the necessary conditions for deliberative decision-making – inclusiveness and the willingness of participants to step away from pursuing their own interests – while remarking that deliberation does not imply that the context is one of deliberative democracy. They discuss the manner in which a process that begins as a negotiation can “drift” towards a deliberative mode as trust is built among the participants. Their theoretical insight is informed by a study of native vegetation management in New South Wales, Australia. In this case, a policy of conserving native trees and other vegetation was a concern of the government of New South Wales in a context where land clearances had threatened the survival of native species of vegetation. McLaverty and Halpin detail how a relatively standard negotiating configuration, comprising of representatives of the main interests involved (farmers, landowners, environmentalists, state agencies) drifted towards a deliberation as “people started to understand each other more”. The case illustrates a move from instrumental interest promotion to a “communicative rationality” resulting in an outcome acceptable to all interests.

Together, these articles illustrate some of the challenges presented to national and international democratic processes by a range of changing contexts, laws and practices.

Yvonne Galligan