

The focus of Part III is upon the present and likely future of the state: assessing 'globalisation' and whether the 'state of exception' has become the new 'normal'. A final chapter speculates about whether we are living in the era of the 'permanent austerity state'.

Overall, this is a compelling account of the morphology of the contemporary state. It is hard to think that anyone knows more about state theory than Bob Jessop, and here he applies this encyclopaedic knowledge with great forensic skill. Although it self-describes as 'accessible', this is not an easy read. But it generously rewards the concentration and discipline that its content commands.

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Historical Dictionary of Marxism (Second Edition) by Elliott Johnson, David Walker and Daniel Gray. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014 (2007 for the first edition).
lvi + 549pp., £85.00 (h/b), ISBN 9781442237971

In more than 500 alphabetical entries, this reference book includes concepts, works, names of persons and countries apprehended according to the Marxian perspective. What makes this book important are the numerous terms included, for example, 'Korea (Democratic People's Republic of)' but also 'Korean Marxism' and 'Korean Workers' Party'. We find, as well, entries for expressions not to be found in standard dictionaries such as 'Berlin Wall', 'Frankfurt School' or 'Liberation Theology'. Definitions are usually clear and useful. Most entries are about one page long, which is sometimes frustrating, for example, in the much too brief presentation of French theorist Louis Althusser that eludes his salient writings on *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1970).

The general tone is neutral, although some entries are accurately critical, for example, when discussing 'Korea' or 'Stalinism'. In other words, there is no systematically negative approach to Marxism, but neither an overwhelmed vision. Totalitarian regimes are presented as such,

without complaisance. For example, former President of Benin, Mathieu Kérékou, is defined as 'more pragmatically nationalist than ideologically socialist and more authoritarian than democratic' (p. 226) and 'increasingly incompetent and corrupt' (p. 226). Some of the most rewarding entries are dedicated to theoreticians like Marx and Engels (of course) but also TW Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Frantz Fanon, Antonio Gramsci, Jürgen Habermas, Georg Lukacs and, more recently, Slavoj Žižek.

Inevitably, each new dictionary implies the haunting question: 'Who is missing?' In this case, the absence of British theoretician Stuart Hall is difficult to explain because he relied much on Marxist concepts to enhance Cultural Studies from the 1970s. However, we do find a detailed entry on Hall's main influence, EP Thompson, the author of essential books including *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963) and a catalyst of the renewal of Marxism in Great Britain from the early 1960s, through the influence of his journal, *The New Left Review* (p. 428). More inexplicable is the absence of the great Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm. Among fundamental Marxist concepts, one would have liked to find 'False Consciousness', which has no entry. These essential elements will have to be added if there is someday a third, augmented edition of this nonetheless instructive reference work.

Compared to the previous version, this second edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Marxism* has 100 additional pages, which makes it a significant improvement and a necessary addendum, even for libraries that already own the 2007 version.

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The Symbolic Representation of Gender: A Discursive Approach by Emanuela Lombardo and Petra Meier. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2014. xii + 210pp., £65.00 (h/b), ISBN 9781409432364

Rarely has a publisher selected such a relevant cover for a scholarly book. On its front cover, Emanuela Lombardo and Petra Meier's *Symbolic Representation of Gender* features Spain's Defence Minister, Carme Chacón, inspecting 'her' troops in 2008. Not only was she the first elected woman to do so in such a position, but also her maternity blouse subtly indicated she was obviously pregnant, which was significant in terms of gendered political symbols: this woman was obviously 'invading space that tends to be associated with men' (p. 2).

The 10 chapters study such symbols, adopting Hanna Pitkin's theory of the symbolic dimension of representation, understood here as 'the representation of a group, nation or state through an object to which a certain representative meaning is attributed' (p. 2). Hence, the most familiar symbol is probably 'Marianne', a feminine figure that encompasses France as a whole nation. Evidently, symbolic representations are salient for the construction of identity for every nation (pp. 31 and 55). Paraphrasing Harold Lasswell's famous model of communication 'Who says What to Whom', Lombardo and Meier argue that political symbols matter for gender studies since they can frame our perceptions over the long term: 'the construction of symbols is ultimately a question of power, namely of who has the power to construct who, in which way, and through which symbols' (p. 36). Even though it uses many cases from Spain, France and Italy, *The Symbolic Representation of Gender* can be appreciated from almost any national perspective.

The most rewarding chapters theorise political control through the use of selected symbols following various strategies and goals, ultimately the political control of men and women within their respective gendered roles: 'Although political actors normally use symbols intentionally to influence public opinion in a way that benefits the politicians and their party or ideology, shaping people's perceptions in political processes of symbolic representation also has an implicit and unintentional dimension' (p. 99).

Rigorous, innovative, theoretically grounded, clear and nuanced, *The Symbolic Representation of Gender* is an important book for various disciplines, from gender studies to citizenship studies and social theory; it is the kind of work that renews its discipline. Its wide documentation

will make every page relevant, even for scholars already familiar with gender and politics. Graduate students of women studies will particularly benefit from reading this book because it reconfirms the importance of the symbolic in the social sciences.

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Gramsci, Materialism, and Philosophy by
Esteve Morera. Abingdon: Routledge, 2014.
146pp., £85.00 (h/b), ISBN 9781138013841

Marxism as a critical theory has largely been founded on the type of historical materialism that very much ascended from the works of a generation of writers in the early half of the twentieth century, where Antonio Gramsci no doubt was a very prominent figure. Therefore, Gramsci's philosophical insights found in his prison diaries are considered a cornerstone of today's materialist philosophy. In that vein, with *Gramsci, Materialism, and Philosophy*, Esteve Morera makes an original contribution to the critical literature on Gramsci. Although (let the reader not be mistaken) this is not a book on Gramsci or an interpretation of his writings. As much influenced by Gramsci as the author is, this volume above all contains a *critique*, a challenge to Gramsci's philosophical conception of his historicism, which was aimed at avoiding the consequences of vulgar materialism and what Gramsci ultimately saw as the main problem for the philosophy of praxis. It is in this sense that the arguments that Morera brings forward are concerned with Gramsci and those under the influence of his historicism who, according to Morera, have abandoned materialism altogether. Hence Morera's aim to bring the two estranged traditions in materialist philosophy – *historical* and *naturalist* – into a much-needed dialogue.

Overall, the author has lived up to his well-deserved reputation as a leading interpreter of Gramscian philosophy, which is demonstrated