

to defer.” He argues that the slippage of power to the executive has worsened in recent decades. The consequences are felt well beyond the realm of foreign policy by disrupting the checks and balances vital to the health of American constitutional democracy. He describes specific, detailed measures in a broad program of structural reform to restrain the president and correct the passivity of the other two branches.

Western Europe

ANDREW MORAVCSIK

Indulging Kleptocracy: British Service Providers, Postcommunist Elites, and the Enabling of Corruption

BY JOHN HEATHERSHAW, TENA PRELEC, AND TOM MAYNE. Oxford University Press, 2024, 328 pp.

This crisply written, deeply researched, and clearly argued book examines what the authors dub the United Kingdom’s “corruption services industry.” Three knowledgeable scholars detail exactly how “enablers” in a variety of industries in the United Kingdom quietly provide essential services to foreigners with ill-gotten gains. These enablers help the foreigners hide cash, re-list companies to protect assets, quietly purchase real estate, burnish reputations on the Internet, gain status by arranging gifts to charities, buy friends with contributions to political parties, track and investigate enemies, and silence critics by threatening expensive lawsuits. Most enablers act entirely within the law: they are respect-

able bankers and accountants, lawyers and real estate brokers, public relations and media professionals, university fundraisers and political activists, bodyguards and concierges. Yet their activities make the United Kingdom a major force in sustaining global networks of corruption closely linked to violent and repressive autocrats, especially in Russia and other former communist countries. The book is a model of relevant academic research and is essential reading for anyone who seeks to understand how money moves around the world in the twenty-first century.

The New Politics of Poland: A Case of Post-Traumatic Sovereignty

BY JAROSLAW KUISZ. Manchester University Press, 2023, 376 pp.

This book seeks to explain the rise of Law and Justice, the populist far-right party that ruled Poland from 2015 through 2023. Its conservative social values, its anti-EU sentiments, and the democratic backsliding that it presided over sparked international controversy and opposition. Kuisz, a policy analyst and scholar, argues that Poland suffers from a “post-traumatic” relationship with its own history, owing to its being conquered repeatedly by larger neighbors. This legacy encourages Poles to defend their sovereignty with particular ferocity. Yet Kuisz does not attempt to show that this tendency influenced voters or politicians who recently supported the far right. The book’s real strength lies in the detailed and even-handed way it reviews the wide array of factors that contributed to the success of the extreme right: robust economic

growth, poverty-reducing redistributive policies, the support of the Roman Catholic Church, the generally conservative social values of many Poles, and divisions within an opposition that still had links to the communist era. The authors completed the book before the 2023 election brought an opposition coalition led by the liberal Donald Tusk into government, but this remains the best English-language guide to the last decade of Polish politics.

Out of the Darkness:

The Germans, 1942–2022

BY FRANK TRENTMANN. Knopf, 2024, 816 pp.

This rich history traces the “moral transformation of Germany” from the depths of Nazism to its liberal present. Germans, Trentmann argues, turn “all social, economic and political problems into moral ones.” The book begins in 1942 with a description of how individual Germans resisted the growing sense of their culpability for World War II by insisting on their personal innocence. After the war, many Germans recounted their suffering through fascist rule, Anglo-American bombing, and Soviet occupation and “ethnic cleansing.” Through the 1960s and 1970s, Germans reversed course, taking public responsibility for the Holocaust. German foreign policy exhibited an uneasy combination of ethical consciousness (including eschewing war and providing assistance for refugees and poorer countries) and a willingness to stake a central role in the Cold War and support military action in the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Ukraine. As he reaches the present,

Trentmann seems less sure whether the absence of a single compelling narrative today marks a lack of moral imagination or the rise of a more modest and mature political sensibility.

Putin's Exiles: Their Fight for a Better Russia

BY PAUL STAROBIN. Columbia Global Reports, 2024, 126 pp.

Russia has produced waves of exiles: liberal Decembrists fled in the early nineteenth century, Marxists and anarchists in the early twentieth century, and anti-communists through much of the twentieth century. Since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, over one million Russians have left the country, including tech workers and Orthodox priests. This slim volume paints an evocative portrait of their varied motives and attitudes, based mostly on colorful interviews conducted in Tbilisi, Georgia; Yerevan, Armenia; and remote Central Asian posts. Starobin tries hard to depict these exiles as idealists akin to the young Germans who fought for public acknowledgment of their compatriots' complicity in Hitler's crimes during World War II, and to the American antiwar protesters of the 1960s. But his admirably even-handed account does not banish the suspicion that many of today's exiles left to avoid the draft, protect their assets, or evade a crackdown on independent media and arts. Still more difficult to accept is Starobin's core argument that such dissidents could bring about the demise of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The more likely outcome, he finally acknowledges, is tragedy: like Russian dissidents in previous eras, many may

well end their lives in a prison camp or in distant exile.

*The Natural Border: Bounding
Migrant Farmwork in the Black
Mediterranean*

BY TIMOTHY RAEYMAEKERS.

Cornell University Press, 2024, 240 pp.

Written after five years of ethnographic research in the Italian regions of Basilicata and Puglia, this book is hampered by its chatty, jargony, self-referential prose—yet the underlying story is important. It describes a southern Italian rural world defined not by vibrant traditional family and communal life but by the exploited labor of West African migrants. The downward pressure on prices through the concentration of wholesale distribution and supermarket chains means large-scale commodity production, such as tomato growing, is today possible only under conditions few European workers would tolerate. But the public will not accept spreading migrant workers throughout the countryside, never mind affording them the same rights as Italian laborers. Instead, violent gangs and ethnic networks have organized the lives and work of these migrants. The Italian state and nongovernmental organizations also jointly run some more formal agricultural camps with the aim of both ensuring the humane treatment of the workers and surveilling and restricting their behavior to the satisfaction of politicians and employers. Migrant workers receive low wages and must endure racial discrimination and fraud. Their experience reflects the dark underbelly of food production not just in Italy but in many wealthy democracies.