The Academy of Political Science

475 Riverside Drive · Suite 1274 · New York, New York 10115-1274

(212) 870-2500 · FAX: (212) 870-2202 · aps@psqonline.org · http://www.psqonline.org

POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY

Volume 116 · Number 2 · Summer 2001

No part of this article may be copied, downloaded, stored, further transmitted, transferred, distributed, altered, or otherwise used, in any form or by any means, except:

- one stored electronic and one paper copy of any article solely for your personal, non-commercial use, or
- with prior written permission of The Academy of Political Science.

Political Science Quarterly is published by The Academy of Political Science. Contact the Academy for further permission regarding the use of this work.

Political Science Quarterly
Copyright © 2001 by The Academy of Political Science. All rights reserved.

wan, to surface in this objective recounting of the process that resulted in the TRA. However, Lee makes it clear that the forceful assertion by Congress of an American interest in Taiwan's continued security and prosperity was the critical factor that overcame the administration's reluctance to risk Beijing's ire. Predictably, Chinese Communist leaders viewed and continue to view TRA as unwarranted American meddling in what they deem Chinese internal affairs.

Lee's concluding chapter assesses the impact of the TRA from the vantage of twenty years later, during which time the cold war ended, China emerged as a global power, and Taiwan underwent a remarkable transformation from authoritarian state to multiparty, pluralist democracy. Keenly aware of the challenges that Taiwan faces, Lee sees the TRA as a core element in the Asia Pacific security equation that has allowed Taiwan to prosper in the face of unremitting PRC hostility and Beijing's refusal to accept Taipei as an equal partner in negotiating the long-term reunification of China. Lee calls TRA a triumph of political realism that demonstrates the "virtues of moderation and prudence . . ." (p. 179). Within an American political context, it is certainly remarkable that legislation created under pressure has withstood the test of time and continues to provide an effective framework for governing the relations between the United States and Taiwan even in the absence of formal relations between the two states. Lee's study also serves as a pointed reminder of the need to keep U.S.–Taiwan relations in good repair at a time when they are likely to sustain new assaults from impatient PRC leaders determined to bring Taiwan under their control despite the contrary political will of the overwhelming majority of Taiwanese.

STEVEN I. LEVINE
University of Montana

After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars *by G. John Ikenberry. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2001. 293 pp. Cloth, $55.00; paper, $19.95.*

This book seeks to explain the creation of international institutions in the postwar settlements of 1815, 1919, and 1945, and the scope and durability of the last of these. Ikenberry argues that the dominant state's military and economic lead and the prospective partners' democratic qualities are key. Hegemony provides both resources and incentives for leading states to establish binding multilateral institutions, which lower the enforcement costs of maintaining a favorable order. Institutional restraints on the hegemon's power appeal to lesser states too. Democracies are better able to commit to institutions, due to their decision-making transparency, policy-making hurdles, and accessibility to foreign lobbying.

In a series of case studies, G. John Ikenberry shows that the overall patterns of institution building in 1815, 1919, and 1945 are broadly consistent with these expectations. The predominant state's lead was far greater in 1945 (the United States) than in 1815 (Britain) or in 1919 (the United States), and democracy was more prevalent in 1945 as well. Accordingly, the post-1945 alliances and economic regimes were far more extensive and binding than the consultative arrangements established in 1815 and 1919. A final chapter on the 1990s shows that the institutions forged during the cold war show no signs of weakening despite the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Ikenberry gives some attention to competing explanations, though he does so rather intermittently. He acknowledges that the post-1945 order was bolstered by the cold war rivalry, but points out that certain plans preceded recognition of the Soviet threat. Lessons of the recent past are also invoked to help explain American officials' post-World War II views of European order. The author argues that institutional persistence after the Soviet collapse contravenes the predictions of realist balance-of-power theory, while acknowledging that a single decade may not pose a critical test. (A realist hegemonic theory of order, though, would predict institutional persistence while the United States remains a predominant power.)

Ikenberry uses process-tracing evidence about the assumptions and causal mechanisms of his theory, but with mixed success. He nicely shows how Britain in 1814 and the United States as early as 1941 used allies' wartime dependence to extract commitments to their preferred visions of postwar order. But little evidence is produced to show that democracies have favored each other as partners because of their facility with international institutions, rather than, say, their common foreign policy goals.

The book is also more persuasive on the value of institutions for committing the hegemon's power than for restraining it. Institutions may restrain lesser states. Tying up German power in European integration and NATO after 1945 made it more palatable to France and Britain. Ikenberry argues Soviet leaders felt the same way when confronted with the prospect of German reunification in 1990, though the evidence here is weaker and mixed. But the postwar orders of 1815, 1919, and 1945 called for expanding the hegemons' power and commitments, not curtailing its power or ambitions. As Ikenberry acknowledges, Britain and the United States were reluctant hegemons for reasons outside their interest in order.

This undercuts the book's central policy conclusion—American power must remain harnessed to institutions to avoid frightening and provoking other states. One might surmise alternatively that reducing American commitments and power would achieve this goal just as well, whatever the consequences might be for stability among lesser powers. All in all, however, this is a thought-provoking and elegantly written book and an important contribution to our understanding of postwar orders and institutions.

PETER LIBERMAN
Queens College, City University of New York