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The Political Economy of International Shipping in Developing Countries

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The Political Economy of International Shipping in Developing Countries

overview of the struggle for reproductive choice and the necessity that it becomes an international priority.

Melanie A. Gilbert

OKECHUKWU C. IHEDURU, THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES; Associated University Presses, Inc.; London (1996); (\$45.95); ISBN 0-87413-552-4; 300 pp. (hard cover).

Through the context of the international shipping industry, this book presents the ongoing conflict involving the industrialized states' struggle to maintain global hegemony and the lesser-developed states' futile attempts to implement change in the regimes that govern its international relations. Specifically, evidence of the Southern states' failed demand for a new international economic order (NIEO) has been seen through their quest for a new international maritime order (NIMO), which emerged soon after the 1974 United Nations Convention on a Code of Conduct for Linear Conferences. In relations between the North and South, trade has been acknowledged as the major contributor to this asymmetry. This book emphasizes the role of shipping as the channel through which trade has occurred.

Consideration of three African states (Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria) and four states in southeast Asia (Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea) provide examples of the South's fruitless experiences. Through these specific models, the author analyzes empirical generalizations and strident attempts by the South to restructure the liberal order of world shipping. In this respect, numerous tables, charts and graphs are included to illustrate the relevant figures. The book combines this data with such related issues as technological changes, the skewed distribution of power in world shipping, and the role of agency and intragroup politics in development. All of these issues contributed to the retardation of the shipping industry in the South.

The book's main argument is that the frustrations of "late-industrialization," as experienced individually and collectively by the South's developing states, played a leading role in the failure of the South to establish a NIEO or its derivative, the NIMO. The author explores other factors leading to the South's inability to affect change, including underdeveloped national merchant fleets, an inability to keep pace with developments in the maritime industry, a significant head-start by the traditional maritime powers, arrogant nationalism and a foolish and costly unwillingness to engage in regional cooperation.

Throughout, the book pays a balanced emphasis to all aspects of international shipping. The first few chapters introduce the reader to some key historical issues, whose stubborn presence continues to affect the contemporary shipping industry. Here, an attempt is made to articulate the essential elements of the NIMO. Had the South succeeded

in their challenge, Iheduru posits, the NIMO might have replaced today's liberal shipping order. The next few chapters consider the destructive impact of the decline of the shipping conference system, the growing threats from independent shipping operators and the hobbling nature of intraregional maritime competition. It is in this section that the author notes the African states' catch-22: remaining united in their struggle against foreign shipping lines while independently pursuing nationalist shipping policies and objectives. Finally, the book focuses on the timeliness of the issues of maritime order and international inequality, as they coincide with current political economy scholarship.

Through the course of the past century, economic inequality has come to gain status as an inevitable given in the international arena. Iheduru's book approaches this issue through the global shipping industry and its all too often over-looked, ultra-competitive nature. To the South, it is a very serious issue; one upon which the importation of food, clothing and other essential goods relies. In his work, the author effectively highlights a problem whose waters, without full international attention, will only get rougher before they calm.

David J. Katalinas

HUGH POTTER, *PORNOGRAPHY: GROUP PRESSURES AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS*, The Federation Press, New South Wales, Australia (1996); ISBN 1-86287-215-5; 180 pp. (paperback).

Contrary to its title, this book is not an in depth analysis of what "pornography" means or a straight-forward answer as to whether it is a good or bad thing. Rather, the author, Dr. Hugh Potter, chooses to examine the variety of definitions different social groups choose to attach. For some groups, pornography may mean any depiction of non-marital sexual relations, while other groups may see it as depictions as violent non-consensual sex. The book is not about individuals and their relationship to pornography, but rather how the issue of pornography is used as a tool to promote self-interest.

The author's analysis throughout concentrates on an organizational level. References to the works of individual writers are used, but only in the context of various group perspectives on pornography. Potter uses the case of Australia and the X-rated video industry, consumers and regulators as his starting point which to compare the various positions of argument. Throughout the text, Potter uses data from surveys of Australian X-rated video purchasers and those who regulate the industry as further foundation into these perspectives.

In the early chapters of the text, Potter outlines the Functionalist and Conflict approaches to the study of deviant behavior and social problems. In examining the Functionalist approach, Potter examines the Christian Critique of pornography. As an example of the Conflict approach, Potter analyzes the radical Feminist case against pornogra-