

These points aside, Weiss has made a significant contribution to the literature, especially in terms of insight and imagination, that beginners and old hands can appreciate and to which others can subsequently add more elaborate theoretical constructs and more meticulous documentation.

Richard Dale
Fountain Hills, AZ

Wood, Elisabeth Jean. *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

There is a growing challenge to the assumption that opposition moderation is a necessary if not sufficient condition for negotiated transitions to democracy to succeed. In her analysis of the El Salvadoran and South African transitions Elisabeth Jean Wood makes an important contribution to this challenge. These cases present two puzzles: first, why did transitions take place when they did, after decades of authoritarian resistance to democratic challenges, and second, why were these conflicts resolved through negotiation whereas ending other civil wars has proven more intractable? The answer to the first, Wood argues, is sustained mobilization by economically and socially marginalized insurgents both created an “insurgent counter elite” as a potential negotiating partner and transformed the economic interests of economic elites such that their preferences shifted from supporting oligarchic regimes that had once protected those interests to political democracy with substantial property rights guarantees. These political and material foundations of the “democratic bargain” together account for the second puzzle: it was the economic interdependence of the antagonists that supported a negotiated solution in which both sides stood to benefit from cooperation under a mutually acceptable set of political and economic institutions.

While the insurgent model is clean and powerful and the data linking mobilization to the transformation of elite interests impressive, especially in South Africa, the argument is unevenly applied. Wood does an excellent job documenting the interdependence of the two classes in South Africa and how the civil war in El Salvador generated enormous costs for landlords and provided great incentives for the booming commercial sector, but does not spell out the interdependence of commercial elites and their labor force (pp. 62-70). Similarly, the semi-formalization of the argument in the appendix emphasizes the importance of third parties in helping the two players both view their interaction as an assurance game and not a prisoners’ dilemma and, given this belief, switch their strategies to “compromise-compromise” from “fight-fight.” Third parties are

thus crucial, yet they do not appear at all in the presentation of the argument in chapter one. In her discussion of the El Salvadoran transition, Wood points to the importance of UN, US, and other third party intervention in getting the FMLN and the regime to shift to a cooperation equilibrium (pp. 92, 94-95, 101, 105ff). In contrast, third parties in South Africa have very little to do with helping establish the credibility of strategy shifts in the negotiation and implementation phases. The importance of third parties here is in the effects of financial sanctions on elite interests (pp. 157, 158, 168) and the collapse of communism on perceptions of ANC negotiating power (p. 181). Whether or not such effects are exogenous to the South African case (Wood claims they are not), they clearly are in the El Salvadoran case. Given the importance third parties played in propelling a negotiated transition to democracy in both cases, democracy may have been forged from below – and from the outside.

John W. Schiemann
Fairleigh Dickinson University

Lasater, Martin L., and Peter Kien-hong Yu, with Kuang-ming Hsu and Robyn Lim. *Taiwan's Security in the Post-Deng Xiaoping Era*. London and Portland OR: Frank Cass, 2000).

With the heightened threat of massive terrorist violence since the 11 September attacks, there might be some question as to why recommend a book on regional security in East Asia. The answer is two-fold. First, in addition to the ongoing violence in the Middle East and the nuclear confrontation in South Asia, the military tensions between China and Taiwan across the Taiwan Straits are the third most-serious global hotspot. And second, the four contributors to this book have provided very detailed studies. With almost a reference book attention to detail in their survey of key background factors to this East Asian regional confrontation, the book focuses on the issues of Taiwan's security, the Chinese military threat to the island, and the likelihood of American intervention into any future conflict.

Of the book's nine chapters, Martin Lasater, a private scholar at the Atlantic Council of the United States and author of several books on Taiwan security affairs, provides the majority of the studies. In his introductory chapter on "Critical Factors in Taiwan's Security," Lasater outlines Taiwan's value to China, the US interests in Taiwan and its future, the respective strengths of the militaries of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan, and the U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. He goes on to develop some of these factors more fully in his later chapters dealing with "Chinese