Welfare Markets in Europe: The Democratic Challenge of European Integration, by A. Crespy (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, ISBN 9781137571038); xv+263 pp., US\$100.00 hb.

The social investment paradigm is nowadays the dominant mode of policy-making in Europe. A central tenet of social investment is that welfare states need to become more service-oriented and less transfer-oriented. The importance of social services in equalizing life chances is emphasized, preferably targeted at human capital accumulation starting at a young age. Although it is not easy to gauge the influence of social investment ideas on actual policy implementation, it is telling that after the recession, in many European welfare states child cash benefits were cut, while in the majority of countries expenditures on childcare services increased. As a matter of fact, services are part and parcel of the European social model and spending on services such as healthcare, childcare, elderly care, education and training is usually on par with spending on cash transfers such as pensions and unemployment benefits in developed welfare states. Similar to income and fiscal measures, services are redistributive and contribute to lower levels of inequality.

The redistributive effect, the quality and affordability of ‘social services of general interest’, to use EU-speak, however depends on how they are funded and provided. How funding and provision changes over time, then, reflects political and ideological choices. These choices are centre stage in Amanda Crespy’s new book *Welfare Markets in Europe*. How social policies and welfare provision took shape in European welfare states has always been a compromise between the state and the market. The book convincingly argues that the European Union (EU) has played a major role in shifting these boundaries towards a neoliberal process of greater marketization in an increasing number of policy sectors. Although neoliberal tendencies in social service provision worries many commentators, in particular from the political left, and despite the much mediatized resistance against the ‘Bolkestein Directive’ in the beginning of the 2000s being successful, Crespy demonstrates that the liberalization agenda has been going forward ever since (chapter 3). Particularly illuminating is chapter 6, in which the author shows that the 2008 recession and the subsequent responses by the European Commission and the Council of Ministers have led to a schizophrenic situation in which fiscal austerity is enforced while at the same time more investments in services such as childcare are called for. As a result, budgetary constraints have paved the way for more private involvement in the realm of service provision. Chapter 5 offers a global angle to the debate, arguing that political mobilization against trade agreements such as GATS has prevented the opening of sectors like water distribution and education to market forces within the EU. Despite this, however, liberalization of services instead piggybacks on recent bilateral trade agreements. That is a recurrent theme throughout the book: the role and success of political contention and mobilization against marketization on the one hand, and the continuing processes of market liberalization on the other.

The book ends with an overview of recent debates and of how marketization will continue to shape the EU integration process. Although the book was finished before Brexit happened, the closing sentences now seem prophetic: the degradation of welfare services and the potential backlash of the people against (perceptions of) misuse due to EU rules

will determine the fate of European integration. The book makes for a fine read for students, political scientists and social policy scholars alike.

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Democratic Accountability, Political Order and Change: Exploring Accountability Processes in an Era of European Transformation, by J. P. Olsen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780198800606); xiv+208 pp., £55.00 hb.

Johan P. Olsen's book offers an insightful analysis of accountability. The author explores interrelations between democratic accountability, political order as well as orderly change and contributes to the theorization of accountability. The book is a timely addition to the literature, which increasingly focusses on mainstream approaches, such as principal-agent approaches. As a result, Olsen's book fills this gap in the literature by providing an extensive focus on democratic accountability in the case of Europe.

The aim of the book is to contribute to the theorization of accountability and to explore accountability processes in contemporary Europe. Its central argument is that theorizing democratic accountability 'brings political science back to its roots by calling attention to the kinds of activities democratic politics and governing are, the institutional contexts within which they typically take place, and the role of ordinary citizens'. The author argues that mainstream approaches are not useful in capturing accountability in contemporary Europe and also in other transforming polities. Therefore, Olsen provides an institutional perspective for that.

The book is organized in seven interrelated chapters. The first chapter establishes the framework providing the basis to the following chapters. The next two chapters develop an institutional approach on democratic accountability and focus on the organizational-institutional basis of accountability. The fourth chapter considers the link between accountability and decision-making. The fifth chapter examines the conditions under which accountability processes are likely to produce demands for further consistency in rhetoric and practice. Chapter six explores the variation in public attention to accountability processes and the use of institutionalized opportunities for participation. The final chapter addresses accountability processes on the European continent in an era of discontent.

Overall, Olsen has written a comprehensive and highly convincing book. This book should be regarded as an important contribution to political science and to studies on democratic accountability, and therefore is highly recommended to those interested in democratic accountability as well as European studies.

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Exploring the EU's Legitimacy Crisis: The Dark Heart of Europe, by C. Schweiger (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2016, ISBN 9781784717841); x+296 pp., £85.00 hb.

Legitimacy is not just a problem facing the EU. Political leaders and parties everywhere must confront it. Obviously, the dishonest and perverted rhetoric around Brexit has