

dence, the author successfully demonstrates that class structure remains the most decisive factor determining the state and its relations with society in many parts of the contemporary world. Finally, Chapter 8 offers a brief conclusion of the entire discussion, highlighting the class basis of the contemporary state, power and politics.

Although this book is not designed to be a textbook, it is actually a must-read for all students of political sociology because very few, if any, other books are able to provide such a concise yet systematic examination of the nature and role of the modern state. Personally, though, I would appreciate more specific discussion on how class structures and class conflicts are getting (re)shaped by the ongoing globalisation process.

Yu Tao
(University of Central Lancashire)

The Holocaust, Religion and the Politics of Collective Memory: Beyond Sociology by **Ronald J. Berger**. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2013. 281pp., £27.50, ISBN 978 1 4128 5255 5

The programme which the Nazis called the 'Final Solution' is the darkest incidence in human history. Ronald Berger attempts to expand the boundary of studies in sociology by bringing in history and politics. As the title suggests, the book approaches the Holocaust through historical understanding of the social construction of the whole episode. In this, the idea of religion is invoked as a pretext for the formation of collective memory against the Jews.

In his larger project of going beyond the existing sociological understanding of such an incidence, Berger attempts to bring together 'a comprehensive synthesis of what one sociologist thinks is most important to know about the origins, implementation and postwar legacy of this archetypal genocide of human history' (p. ix). In this process of synthesis, Berger focuses on the reasons behind the selection of Jews for genocide through an 'introductory background on German history as the stage of incidence'. From here, the argument moves in the direction of causality in terms of roleplaying. Berger focuses on Hitler's role in the third chapter. The next two chapters provide a detailed examination of pogrom and cases of atrocity and survival recorded to illustrate the dark side of humanity. In the later part of the book, we find the

critical estimation of post-war arrangements initiated by international organisations. The last chapter rightly goes into the alienating social processes 'that deny the full humanity' to all of us.

Berger's book is an excellent attempt to explore the interface of religion, politics and the Holocaust. The way he brings in historical events along with the social construction of the Holocaust seems apt for going beyond the standard framework for studying the Holocaust within the discipline of sociology. The invocation of collective memory to unleash the terror of the Holocaust rightly indicates the possibility of such events happening in the future if we do not handle things carefully. This work thus innovates at the level of theory and method to expand studies about the Holocaust. Through empirical illustration and the logical interplay of arguments regarding the social construction of the Holocaust, the book offers a great deal to researchers and students in terms of a detailed examination of Nazi atrocities.

Shashank Chaturvedi
(University of Delhi)

International Politics and Film: Space, Vision, Power by **Sean Carter and Klaus Dodds**. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014. 126pp., £14.00, ISBN 978 0 2311 6971 4

Films and television productions have become frequent companions in political science classes, for obvious reasons. Not only do they illustrate subjects of relevance, be it the realities of war or people trafficking, but students also tend to appreciate movie-based discussions as they link leisure with academic interests. However, one may tend to look at film, as Carter and Dodds point out, 'as simply a representational medium, one that rather imperfectly represented the complex business of war, diplomacy, statecraft, intelligence' (p. 3). In contrast, the authors want readers to think of films as part of international politics, as a medium that can teach us to deconstruct geopolitical norms and categories.

The book explores this interplay of film and politics along four main topics: 'Borders', 'Exceptional Spaces', 'Distant Others' and 'Homeland'. Chapter 2 analyses how three films challenge the idea of definite borders, each taking on different border spaces. Carter and

Dodds effectively show how these films reveal borders to be mere 'human creation[s] that can be built, contested and undone' (p. 40). In contrast to highly regulated borders, states of exception eschew these very norms and have become a resort in the 'War on Terror' – a phenomenon which moviegoers learn to comprehend in their geographic dimension. States of exception tend to be legitimised through our 'Othering' reflexes, which are further explored in Chapter 4. With a keen eye on films such as the Turkish production *Valley of the Wolves – Iraq*, the authors reflect on the paradoxes of humanitarian intervention and its implications for Western diplomacy. Finally, Chapter 5 explores the 'geographies of both fear and security' (p. 98) mapped out by notions of home. Instead of sticking to the types of movies one would associate with 'Homeland', the book takes the readers beyond Hollywood by including, among others, the celebrated German movie *The Lives of Others*.

Overall, Carter and Dodds make a compelling case why film should be taken as more than just a distorting mirror of reality. In spite of its short length, the book provides many rich and enriching examples of movies that can contribute to teaching International Politics, with movies from different parts of the world. One might miss great classics that would have been similarly fruitful, in particular as contrasting visions of a pre-9/11 and an allegedly bipolar world. We can thus only hope that the publisher's 'Short Cuts' series may soon include additional volumes for political scientists.

Claudia Franziska Brühwiler
(University of St Gallen)

Confluence of Thought: Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr by **Bidyut Chakrabarty** (foreword by **Clayborne Carson**). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 269pp., £19.99, ISBN 978 0 1999 5123 9

According to Bidyut Chakrabarty, the goal of *Confluence of Thought* is to seek 'to support the argument that the moral politics of redemptive love and non-violence that Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. consistently pursued represents an appealing vision for the present century' (p. 189). Although this support is not explicitly unfolded in a substantive

manner, Chakrabarty does offer an informative survey that brings the careers of Gandhi and King into conversation in a manner that implicitly supports his stated goal. Chakrabarty's focus is on his two protagonists' systems of non-violent thought and action, with a particular concentration on what he characterises as the ideological features of those systems. The confluences that the author references in the title are the commonalities that remain between Gandhi's and King's ideologies after their quite different socio-political contexts are taken into account. Through these means, the readers of *Confluence of Thought* learn of the social, political and ideological underpinnings of key moments in the two men's lives, such as the salt *satyagraha* to Dandi and the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. These and other events are presented in a manner that supports a conclusion that Chakrabarty returns to on a number of occasions in the present volume – namely that King selectively draws on Gandhi's non-violence and mixes it with Christian ethics informed by Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, with potent effect and resonance in the struggle for racial equality in the US of the 1950s and 1960s.

There are a distracting number of breakdowns in editing and fact-checking in this volume. Additionally, the prose is at points somewhat convoluted. More substantively, the language used in *Confluence of Thought* is inconsistent. For example, reference is made at points to 'the blacks', 'blacks' and 'black people'. These variations are about more than grammar because the third term in this series represents an acknowledgement of the humanity of people belonging to minority groups that was central to the projects of both Gandhi and King. Additionally, it is somewhat surprising that Chakrabarty does not examine in any depth the influence of Christian ethics on Gandhi, which is undoubtedly a point of confluence that aided King in his adaption of the Gandhian method of non-violence aimed at positive social change. Such tensions noted, it must be emphasised that *Confluence of Thought* is overall a fine, creative and informative volume that will be of interest to political scientists and peace studies scholars working in a number of sub-fields.

Christopher Hrynkow
(University of Saskatchewan)