

BOOK REVIEW:

“The Light that Failed: why the West is Losing the Fight for Democracy”, authored by Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes

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“The Brussels Effect: How the European Union Rules the World”, authored by Anu Bradford

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“The Light that Failed: why the West is Losing the Fight for Democracy”, Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes (Pegasus Books, 1st edition, January 2019).

This book by I. Krastev and S. Holmes is an attempt to explain the challenges faced by the ideology of global liberalism has been facing in the recent years. The authors try to explain why liberalism, that was proclaimed the ultimate winner in the race of ideologies after its victory in the Cold War, is now under attack from various directions in many parts of the world. They refer to the question reportedly asked by President Obama to himself on the day he was leaving the White House: “What if we were wrong?”. Indeed, the character of the crisis of liberal politics seems to be existential and puts the need to question its validity and efficiency to the very basics, as “public faith in democracy is plummeting and long-established political parties are disintegrating or being crowded out by amorphous political movements and populist strongmen” [Introduction].

The book is divided into three chapters. The first one, “the Copycat Mind”, tells the story of the disillusionment of Poland and Hungary, taken as the representatives of the post-socialist Central European countries, with liberalism and free market and the rise of populist illiberal political forces. The second chapter, “Imitation as Retaliation”, deals with Russia’s failure (and the apparent lack of willingness) to comply with the imagined ideal of Westernisation and its ingenious attempts to simulate being a working democracy in order to be better able to challenge and undermine the dominance of liberal principles. The third and final chapter, “Imitation as Dispossession”, touches upon maybe the most challenging problem of the book- explaining the U.S. revolt against its own status as a leader of the globalized world, embodied in the enigmatic figure of Donald Trump. The authors stitch these three seemingly dissimilar stories into one overarching narrative, not by simply repeating platitudes about populism or political correctness, but by arguing that they all stem from the politics of imitation- which, as they claim, has been at the heart of the post-Cold War liberal order (which they even call “the Age of Imitation”) and which is now coming to an end. Then Krastev and Holmes proceed to analyse the three cases separately.

The first chapter of the book explains the rise of illiberal regimes in Poland and Hungary (however, the authors imply that similar trends have been observed throughout the whole Central Europe). The major

challenge is to understand why, as they put it, “there rose conspiracy-minded majoritarian regimes where the political opposition was demonized, non-government media, civil society and independent courts were denuded of their influence, and sovereignty was defined as the leadership’s determination to resist any and all pressure to conform to Western ideals of political pluralism, government transparency and tolerance for strangers, dissidents and minorities”. They start their story from the fact that at the end of the Cold War, these countries have been the most passionate disciples of the liberal West and mention the unique features of the revolutions that swept aside the crumbling communist regimes there. These revolutions were largely nonviolent; they were led by intellectuals rather than charismatic heroes; and the general mood of the people was rather a desire to return to “normality” (understood as the Western way of living) rather than to achieve something completely new. German philosopher even named them “rectifying revolutions”. Unlike Russia or China, leaders of Central European democratic movements wanted their countries to undergo genuine “conversion” into exemplary members of the liberal world. What went wrong then that some societies of the region came to openly denounce the principle once so dear to them?

First of all, Krastev and Holmes argue that the process of wholesale imitation itself has a heavy downside and may invoke feelings of inferiority in the imitator. Being an imitator is a psychological drama. Discontent with the ‘transition to democracy’ was also “inflamed by visiting foreign ‘evaluators’ with an anemic grasp of local realities” [Chapter 1]. However, this is only a part of the story. The burden of the need to imitate and copy has been much exacerbated by the fact that the ideal of Western Europe cherished by the Central European elite was itself fastly changing and ceased to be accepted as an ideal as such. Conservative Poles in the days of the Cold War viewed Western societies as normal because, unlike communist systems, they cherished tradition and faith. Today most Poles- as well as people in other Central European countries- come to associate the West with secularism, multiculturalism and gay marriage, which causes severe frustration. In response, modern-day Western Europeans view the conservative attitudes as an assault on moral progress and anti-Western. This problem of value decoupling has been exacerbated by the refugee crisis that erupted in 2015: while the EU, represented by liberal Brussels bureaucrats, insisted that all EU members had to open their borders, many Central European member states expressed their fears that the arrival of millions of non-Europeans

would dilute and destroy the European identity and threaten their way of life. In 2018, Polish President Andrzej Duda even compared membership in the European Union to the country's previous periods of foreign occupation. Hungary's Prime Minister Orbán and Polish Law and Justice Party government seized an opportunity to pose as the last defenders of Old Europe from the "hordes" of refugees, also hinting at the Brussels conspiracy to punish them for their independence and refusal to accept all the EU commands. To prove their worth, they simply put the much-hated imitation story on its head and instead claim that it is Western European countries which should learn genuine "Europeanness" from their Eastern fellows.

The authors indicate to an underlying factor that made Central European societies so much receptive to the anti-immigration statements: the demographic crisis and its psychological consequences. This fear of nation-killing depopulation was caused by dropping birth rates and also the constant emigration of the most talented youth to the EU. Unexpressed dread of demographic collapse is exacerbated by an automation revolution that is gradually making obsolete the jobs for which the current generation of workers was trained. It is found the areas that have suffered the greatest shrinking of population in the last decades are the ones most inclined to vote for far-right anti-liberal parties. The unspoken but nevertheless pervasive thought of those failing to emigrate to the West as "losers" boosted their illiberal revanchist inclinations. This also brings us to the economic element of this story. East-to-West migration has done nothing to stimulate serious efforts at political and economic reform in Central Europe. On the contrary, the aspiration, after 1989, to have 'a normal political life' led only to a brain drain and the expatriation of the healthy, the skilled, the educated and the young. The general refusal of the West to invest heavily in the political stability of the new entrant states by supporting the economic importance of labour unions deviated radically from the Allies' basically pro-labour union policy in West Germany after the Second World War which created a developed and egalitarian welfare state. At the same time, in most of these countries new elite was primarily formed out of the various swaths of the communist one, as they simply switched sides and used their connections and know-how to become beneficiaries of the new order. Economic hardships and growing polarisation between the newly rich elites and the wider people sow the first seeds of disenchantment and resentment against the West. The lack of trust towards the allegedly new liberal elite entrenched them further and helped the populists easily

blame liberals in their inability to protect the simple people and the country from indebtedness and economic dependence.

Finally, Holmes and Krastev argue that the West also failed by trying to use, no matter deliberately or not, the German example as a blueprint for post-communist development of Central Europe. Postwar Germany is a unique case in a way that it happily abandoned nationalism, which helped her to regain prestige and influence in Europe and focus on socioeconomic development. The same trick could have never worked in Poland, Hungary or any other regional state since, first, their very existence as independent republics was inevitably linked to their nationhood and, moreover, nationalism had been a key element of anti-communist resistance throughout Central Europe. Hence, their societies and elites were not ready to trade nationalism for developed democracy, instead viewing them tightly interdependent.

In the **second chapter** the authors purport to explain the politics of post-Soviet Russia, particularly during Putin's presidency, as a series of simulations and anti-Western copying of some Western practices. They compare it to Germany after WWI, claiming that both countries viewed themselves as angry outsiders determined to undermine the European order based on their own defeat. In their view, the major mistake of Western liberals was to assume that Russians would be as happy with the collapse of the USSR as the Central Europeans were. In reality, most Russians cheered the end of communism and wanted liberties but not at the cost of the Soviet Union as a country; its dissolution was the first big blow to the hopes of Westernisation. In contrast to Central Europe, communism was not seen as rule from abroad. So, "conversion (understood as borrowing the values and goals) with the West was not an option for Russia" [Chapter 2]. The relatively peaceful collapse of the USSR without external blows actually made it psychologically even harder for Russians to digest as it engendered ubiquitous suspicions of treason and conspiracy that could have explain the otherwise inexplicable process.

In the 1990's, Russia acquired all the major features of a liberal democratic state: free (at least theoretically) elections, free market, independent media etc. However, as Holmes and Krastev argue, they were hollow and artificial, compared to their Western counterparts. What emerged out of this institutional mishmash, was an "imitation democracy" where politics is a constant struggle between democratic forms and non-democratic substance. Russian "imitation democracy" was embod-

ied in the distinctly Russian figure of a “political technologist”- an expert in manipulating politically dependent media. At the height of their influence, political technologists were tasked with maintaining the illusion of competitiveness in Russian politics. Democracy in post-communist Russia was primarily a technology for loosely governing a basically ungovernable society without resorting to excessive physical violence. Political technologists themselves viewed this structure as the only possible way of emulating the West for Russia. This system capitalized heavily on the Russian fear of separatism, exceedingly strong after the Chechen wars: the elections came to signify the unity of this exceptionally diverse political space. The capacity able to achieve high turnouts in very different and distant regions provided psychological reassurance that the country retained its territorial integrity.

That’s why the book doesn’t argue that President Putin brought Russia off the democratic path. What he really did was simply allowing Russians to stop pretending that ‘the transition’ was taking them to a better place. In his worldview, the post-Cold War’s Age of Imitation was actually an Age of Western Hypocrisy. The so-called ‘liberal international order’, Putin implied, was nothing nobler than a projection of America’s will to dominate the world, and universalism- just the particularism of the West.

It is important that under Putin, Russia never stopped imitating the West: but this imitation was not deferential at all. On the contrary, his imitative politics is essentially competitive and conflictual. The defeated may borrow the strategies, procedures, institutions and norms of the enemy, not to mention stealing their breakthroughs in nuclear weapons technology, with the long-term aim of acquiring the arts of victory and turning the tables. So, Russia shifted from simulating the West’s domestic order to parodying America’s international adventurism. Holmes and Krastev compare Moscow’s international behaviour to “holding up a mirror in which the enemy can observe the immorality and hypocrisy of its own behaviour” with the aim to rip off the West’s liberal mask and help undermine the Western-dominated global order. They argue that the primary motivation behind President Putin’s controversial foreign policy decision- Georgia in 2008, Ukraine in 2014, Syria in 2015 etc., was not pursuing rationally calculated Russian national interests but showing the world the hypocrisy and inefficiency of the liberal order. The Crimean annexation was thus simultaneously a bid to boost the legitimacy of the domestic system and undermine the credibility of the global one. Moscow did this by demonstrating

that she could defy the West with impunity. By insisting on Russia's cultural and political exceptionalism, this new approach also provided a moral basis for rejecting out of hand all the condescending lectures that the West had been giving Russians; it is subversion by emulation. For the West, by contrast, Russia has become the double the West fears it might become. The principal purpose of the Kremlin's meddling in American elections is "to reveal that competitive elections in the West resemble Kremlin-engineered elections more than Westerners would like to think" [Chapter 2]. This is how Putin is trying to kill the West's victory narrative.

Finally, the **third chapter** takes on the task of explaining the phenomenon of Donald Trump and Trumpism within the framework of "counter-imitation". The authors view Trumpism as part of the anti-liberal pattern, previously described in the examples of Russia and Central Europe. But it is indeed hard to understand why so many citizens of the most powerful country in the world view themselves as global losers, and why "they come to distrust countries that have traditionally seen America as an exemplar nation and long viewed liberal democracy as the political model most worth imitating" [Chapter 3]. The contrast between Trump's iconic "America first" slogan and his de-facto rejection of American exceptionalism is particularly puzzling.

In fact, as the book goes, "America first" and American exceptionalism represent totally different views as to America's role in the world. What Trump meant is rejecting what constituted the basis of the post-Cold war world- the perception of Washington as the "shining city on the hill" worth imitating and copying. "America First" means caring nothing for the welfare of other countries while angling to best them in international trade negotiations. "Winning" is the opposite of "leading by example". The latter, for Trump, is worse than a waste of time: It means training others to overtake you. That's why one of Trump's harshest critics remarked shortly after his election that "America may once again start behaving like a normal nation" [Chapter 3]. In this framework, traditional American willingness to serve as an example was a liability rather than an asset for Americans themselves: it diverted a lot of resources and served to raise and nurture global rivals for U.S. (primarily economically). It is very symptomatic that Trump-like ideas, though always lurking in the American society, gained ground exactly as de-industrialization of inner states and progress in automation took heavy jobs on working-class America. These problems came to be strongly associated with the liberals' economic policies: Trump openly

castigated previous American administrations for their role in the rise of Germany and Japan and, later, China. The examples of self-defeating American generosity are not limited by assisting the economic development of foreign countries: U.S., in Trump's view, is the architect of global security and dispute resolution mechanisms which now often work to constrain American foreign policy; it also shared American-invented internet and got nothing in response. As a businessman determined not to be outplayed, he instinctively hates being imitated, and this is the core reason his ideology reverberated with the millions of people distressed by America's global rivals successfully competing with it in the global market. Trump wanted U.S. to embrace its lack of innocence and reject moralistic illusions exactly in order to be able to compete as fiercely as other powers do.

The most striking thing about this kind of populism is that it derives a lot of its theses exactly from the playbook of radical liberalism which considerably gained in popularity with American failures in Afghanistan and Iraq and the 2008 economic crisis. One of them is that globalization favours business over labour and that regime change and nation-building are beyond America's capacities and not in America's interest. That "the system" is not fair, is a liberal platitude. The same can be said of his claim that democratic politicians are in the pocket of lobbyists and donors. So, Trump is cynically parroting liberal talking points with the key difference that while liberals meant them to rectify the American politics from corruption and bring it to the imagined ideal, populists use them as a proof that such ideal is a myth and doesn't exist in reality.

So, the authors conclude, America's version of illiberal populism has something in common with both Russian and Hungarian/Polish ones. Like their Russian counterparts, American populist voters believe that liberal global order is hostile to their national interests and undermines their country's place in the world- while it also emphasizes socioeconomic and cultural threats to the "true" national identity stemming from globalization and immigration. Trump never hesitated to make openly divisive statements and portray his political rivals in evil expressions. The key to understanding Trumpism is the way his frequent resort to half-truths and full-fledged lies did not affect his popularity despite the liberals' disgust with these excesses. In fact, his supporters draw a clear line between "accuracy" and "sincerity" and it is enough for statements to be "sincere" to be classified as truth. In this logic, "every statement of fact dissolves into a declaration of membership or allegiance" [Chapter

3], and believing them wholeheartedly served Trump's supporters to feel moral superiority over liberals who value accuracy over sincerity, and deliberately distance from them. The feeling of being, on one hand, outsiders, and on the other, bearers of a genuine identity unites Trump supporters with the Polish and Hungarian anti-liberals and creates strong resentment against entitled cosmopolitan elites.

In conclusion, Krastev and Holmes also quickly upon the case of China and the development path its leadership chose back in 1989. They describe it as deliberate technical imitation of the Western institutions and mechanisms that were deemed to be capable of helping China develop and get more competitive without any degree of attachment to the norms and values that stood behind them; instead, the Chinese Communist Party elite was determined to keep its firm grip over the Chinese society and put goals and targets exclusively based on China's needs and interests as they understood it. The book ends with the verdict that globalisation, while bringing all the world together, also undermined the Enlightenment's faith into the humankind's gradual progress towards a future where all nations will be bound by common interests and values. This faith inspired ubiquitous imitation and borrowing of institutes, norms and practices in very different spheres of human live aimed at arriving at this shining future- but the seemingly ultimate triumph of liberalism in 1989 spelled the delayed end of this process and re-introduced disagreements and conflicts over basic normative issues and destroyed the belief in common aims.

To sum up, this book is a very bold and inspiring attempt to establish a common pattern under the complex mishmash of various strains of illiberal and revisionist reaction to the alleged triumph of global liberalism. The authors have managed to dig deeper than commonplace explanations more or less limited to the talks of the desperate uprising of the older generation, economic grievances or temporary deviation out of sheer weariness with political correctness and mainstream truths. They go into the depth of political psychology and show that the success of illiberal forces in very different places of the world has been a thing to expect and will hardly vanish in the near future; moreover, they make one of the most ingenuous attempts to investigate the concept of imitation in politics not in its technical aspects but down to the effects it leaves on political discourse and thinking. The finding that the lack of the "genuine" has been the Achilles' heel of global liberalism and the analysis of illiberal revolt must necessarily take into account the concept of the genuine in earnest, is simply brilliant.

Krastev and Holmes, in quite a Hegelian fashion, reveal the complex dialectics of the historical ascent and current crisis of global liberalism, which encouraged imitation as the best way towards triumph only to be undermined from inside by imitators and their interplay with the imitated, which actually hollowed out the essence of liberal ideology on the both sides. Their guess that the rise of Trumpism has not been due to idiosyncratic internal problems of U.S. but primarily to her precarious position of the hegemon outplayed by the very rules she introduced and moreover, being expected to accept this state of affairs as natural.

The book has a few downsides of course. The biggest one is the continuation of its advantage: handling an incredibly complex and wide-ranging process in a relatively short book, the authors had to squeeze too many thoughts and paradigms into its pages each of which is potentially worth a monograph of its own. The authors sometimes introduced totally distinct topics, such as China's role in the crisis of liberalism, only passingly, which makes it impossible to develop an argument in a sufficiently detailed manner and leaves more questions than answers. And while making myriads of brilliant observations, and establishing unexpected common patterns in the series of anti-liberal revolts of 2010's, the authors stops short of making the single major conclusion out of the plot; the ultimate verdict remains somehow diluted it and leaves a sense of the theme not revealed to its fullest and some detachment remaining between the three big stories of the book. However, the book is a definite must-read for anyone who wants to understand where the world is heading and be able to see into the near future as well.

reviewed by Murad Muradov

“The Brussels Effect: How the European Union Rules the World”,
Anu Bradford (Oxford University Press, March 2020)

The systemic position within which the European Union finds itself today and its implications for future geopolitical developments in world politics has been the subject of intense debate among students of international relations and expert community in recent years. The narrative is mainly built on depicting the EU as a diminishing force in the so-called shared neighbourhood where Russia militarily outmanoeuvres the Western countries in general and the EU in particular. Economically, the EU has been losing global market share to rising powers in Asia, China and India as the main challengers. Strategically, the American unilateralism especially under the recalcitrant presidency of Donald Trump pushed the EU to seek strategic autonomy in international affairs. In this context, Anu Bradford’s recent book, *The Brussels Effect: How the European Union Rules the World* offers an alternative perspective that puts special emphasis on how the regulatory dominance affords the EU the ability to shape global politics in its own image. Despite formidable challenges it faces in the domestic and external arena, the author believes that the EU successfully retains its status as the “global regulatory power” through unilateral actions, facilitated by markets and private businesses. What makes Bradford’s argument more interesting is the observation that the regulatory power will be one of the few areas where the EU can go it alone in the newly-emerging multipolar world order.

Bradford structures her arguments in three main sections: theory (Chapter 1-3), case studies (Chapter 4-7), and assessment (Chapter 8-9). The theoretical part of the book describes in detail the evolution of a European regulatory state and puts forward scope conditions under which the Brussels Effect occurs on a global level. Accordingly, ensuring the functioning of a single market has historically been the primary driver behind the EU regulations. Minimum harmonization of member-state standards has not only led to unprecedented growth in cross-border trade but also advanced consumer and environmental protection across the EU. Bradford goes on to explain how the EU achieved to harmonize the most burdensome regulatory standards while it would prove costly for poorer member states, individual consumers and multinational companies. According to the author, the qualified majority voting system in the Council as opposed to unanimity and strong backing from member states who have more stringent regulatory systems made it easier to pressure regulatory laggards to opt for the

highest standards. At the same time, the Commission frequently agreed to provide compensation in the form of structural funds and package deals where low-regulation member states would support the adoption of EU-wide regulations in return for more favorable treatment in other policy areas.

Bradford identifies two main ways in which the Brussels Effect unfolds. *De facto* Brussels Effect happens when multinational corporations adjust their worldwide operations to conform to the EU standards and advocate further externalization of the single market to the third country jurisdictions. Harmonized standards make them competitive in those markets and help them to expand their economies of scale as the same technologies can be used to produce certain goods sold in different countries. *De jure* Brussels Effect takes it a lit bit further and leads to the adoption of EU regulations by foreign governments. As in the case of the internal regulatory expansion, here too, the main question is why multinational corporations and even economically advanced countries choose to emulate the costlier EU standards. Bradford suggests five mechanisms through which the EU emerged as the global regulatory agenda-setter: market size, regulatory capacity, stringent standards, inelastic targets, and non-divisibility.

The *market size* has always been one of the main instruments great powers leveraged externally to maximize relative gains vis-à-vis peer competitors. Bradford's hypothesis rests on the argument that the greater the ratio of exports to the EU relative to sales in the third-country markets, the more likely that the EU regulations will have a spill-over effect globally. For example, Facebook has more customers in the EU than in the United States or Google's share of the search market in the EU (90%) is bigger than in the United States (67-75%) which makes them more amenable to EU standards. Secondly, Bradford provides a detailed account of the EU's *regulatory capacity* and shows how the EU institutions evolved to promulgate and enforce the European norms in a wider geography. In this regard, sanctioning companies that fail to meet regulatory standards to offer their services on the EU soil and imposing significant fines for not obeying the regulations proved to be the defining features of the EU regulatory capacity. Google faced a \$9 billion fine in total in the last 3 years for failing to meet the EU regulations on market competition and data protection.

According to Bradford, market size and regulatory capacity should be supplemented with a political will to accept *stringent standards* for the

domestic market. Europeans' historical distrust of markets and pro-government ideological preferences opened up certain avenues for the EU to come up with regulatory mechanisms to facilitate single market and protect the customer interests at the same time. Moreover, stringent regulations could be successfully externalized mostly when they covered *inelastic targets* – products that are tied to a certain regulatory standard. Consumer markets are inelastic targets as one cannot move, for example, the European population to a different jurisdiction. What matters most is the location of consumers and their purchasing power capabilities rather than the places where companies produce goods and services. Therefore, as long as a company wants to sell its products to the EU, it has to comply with its regulatory requirements. Finally, Brussels Effect occurs when multinational corporations apply the EU regulations in the home or third-country markets due to the non-divisibility of global operations. Tailoring its production to meet divergent regulatory systems is most of the time a costly business. Not surprisingly, these companies obey the EU standards to benefit from economies of scale emanating from the single global production process.

Brussels Effect is not, however, the only manifestation of the EU's normative power projection outside its borders. The author compares market-driven harmonization (Brussels Effect) to treaty-driven harmonization where the EU unilaterally expands its regulatory jurisdiction to other markets through various legislative techniques such as international treaties and institutions. Drawing on Ian Manner's "normative power Europe" concept, Bradford reveals how the EU's normative attractiveness contributes to its persuasion capacity and "ability to shape what is normal in international relations" (p.81). The author is not, however, optimistic about the unilateral effectiveness of the treaty-driven harmonization as it is getting harder to conclude and enforce international treaties in the newly-emerging world order.

Bradford goes on to empirically support the Brussels Effect's theoretical underpinnings through 4 case studies: market competition, digital economy, consumer health and safety, and environment. Each case study discusses in detail the major legislation in the field and further elaborates on political economy implications of the EU regulations. Referring to the five scope conditions mentioned above, the author presents comprehensive empirical findings on how multinational companies' global operations have been shaped by the EU regulations and hence, led to the realization of de facto and de jure Brussels Effect in these 4 economic sectors. In this context, it is especially to be

noted that Bradford keeps providing an insightful self-critique of her arguments throughout the chapters. For instance, in all case studies, the author repeatedly emphasizes how difficult it is “to link the various domestic reforms to the de facto Brussels Effect given the various additional channels, such as consumer and NGO activism, which also drive domestic reforms in this area”. (p.231)

In the assessment part of the book, Bradford is on shakier ground when she offers mostly subjective and value-driven assessments to engage broad strands of criticism leveled against the Brussels Effect. The discussion revolves mainly around two questions: whether the Brussels Effect is beneficial and to whom and whether it will retain its transformative influence in the rapidly-changing international relations system. Firstly, even if the author admits the Brussels Effect’s normative deficiencies in the case of multinational companies (costly and hinders innovation), nation-states (protectionism), and third-country citizens (regulatory imperialism), she still believes that it is a force for good that generates net benefits for many if not all. Bradford at some point concedes that the EU’s unilateral regulatory dominance can be characterized as “soft coercion” as it (indirectly) uses different economic and bureaucratic tools to build asymmetric relations with the countries that are dependent on access to its vast consumer market. Yet she insists that the EU can hardly be accused of imperialism when it simply asks other countries to play by its rules, even if it proves costly for the non-EU citizens who do not have a say in the adoption of EU rules and standards. Of course, one may not agree with Bradford’s pro-EU bias about the costs and benefits of the EU regulations worldwide, but it does not change the fact that Brussels Effect exists and matters in the contemporary global political economy.

Finally, the author examines potential external and internal challenges to the EU’s regulatory dominance in the future. China appears to be the main challenger in different categories of the Brussels Effect. Its expanding market size has come at the detriment of the EU’s global market share that would provide multinational companies with an option to shift more of their exports away from the EU. At the same time, Chinese leadership embarked on various programs to increase the state’s regulatory capacity in areas such as consumer law, environmental protection, food safety, etc. Nevertheless, Bradford believes that with excessive debt accumulation, unsustainably high investment rate, aging population, and increasingly autocratic political system, China may not realize the “Beijing Effect” in the foreseeable future. Moreover, new

developments in the technology world such as additive manufacturing (e.g. 3D printing), geo-blocking, or cultivation of GMOs may usher a new era in industrial processes that would render non-divisibility meaningless as multinational companies would easily choose to exploit lower standards in various markets while meeting the European regulatory requirements. Lastly, the EU will have to deal with a host of internal challenges from Brexit – which will diminish its market size by 15% - to migration, terrorism, and burgeoning anti-EU sentiments. Despite these risks, the author claims that the EU will emerge largely unscathed from the crises surrounding it and the Brussels Effect will continue to extend the EU's regulatory hegemony in the near future.

In sum, Bradford's analysis provides alternative and stimulating views on less-explored dimensions of the EU's global influence. There is no doubt that this book will be of interest to scholars of European Studies, international relations, postcolonial studies, as well as policymakers and practitioners of foreign policy.

reviewed by Mahammad Mammadov