In a newspaper article in August 2000, I dismissed Kiraitu Murungi, the author of the text under review, as one of the most nuisance politicians to appear recently in Kenya. Reading through this book, which is his autobiographical reflection on recent democratisation trends in Kenya, I notice just how hasty my dismissal was. The text is rich in detail about the internal dynamics of opposition politics in Kenya, details that could never be gleaned from the newspaper reports I used to pen the dismissal. However, there is no reason to recant my summary dismissal of Murungi and his recent politics. Rather, the text makes it clearer that opposition politics in particular and Kenyan politics in general has moved into greater morasses of nuisance and selective blame, a direction that makes the struggle to institute fairness, justice and reasoned dialogue at the national level more difficult.

*In the Mud of Politics* is divided into eight chapters plus a preface authored by Prof. Peter Anyang Nyong'o. The book tackles the problems of Kenyan politics as seen by Kiraitu Murungi. Given that Murungi has been an able, active and formidable participant in the democratic struggles in Kenya, the text is written from an informed perspective and speaks to many of the problems Kenyans experienced and continue to experience. This review interprets Murungi's perspective as stemming from political society, albeit an opposition one. It recognises differences within political society; those in and those out of government and the nature of their struggles for power. It also recognises the differences between the political society in general and civil society. By adopting this interpretation, the review raises the questions of how these various realms operate, speak to and against each other in their struggle to connect with and win the support of a wider public that bears diverse ethnic, religious, racial, and, more importantly, political orientations and persuasions.

The orientations and persuasions of the wider public are crucial to the politics of democratic transition in Kenya and need to be used to critique the process and participants in the struggles. Ultimately, it is this public that installs members of the political society in power. They therefore form a crucial reference point for understanding the trials, travails and tribulations of democratisation in Kenya. The notion of the ‘politics of selective blame’ is deployed to identify one reason why the Kenyan democratisation process stalled as the opposing groups and factions degenerated into reactive rather than proactive politics. The story Kiraitu Murungi tells approvingly speaks to such a politics of selective blame, this being a politics of vilification and unbridled regime demonisation, a politics of a particular instance in the changing global geopolitics that criminalises one regime or practice and vindicates the other. This politics is particularly biased and discriminatory. It expediently employs selected factors to push for the democratic agenda in Kenya, thereby driving invidious wedges between people and groups.
Murungi sets out his study with a one-chapter background of how he became involved in Kenyan politics. In very broad strokes, he jumps from Meru North where he was born in the heat of the colonial state of emergency and repression of Mau Mau to the authoritarian politics of the Moi regime. Though he inadequately tries to make up in very few concluding pages (see pages 196-198), the unexplored gloss here is the connection between colonial autocracy, presidential authoritarianism in the Kenyatta era and worse forms of repression under the Moi regime. The authoritarianism of the Moi regime did not drop like manna from heaven, rather it was carefully created and nurtured through the post-independence construction of Kenyatta’s presidential authoritarianism. This gloss is both telling and politically expedient. It is also a common strategy of writing among some recent analysts of the democratisation process in Kenya. Many of these analysts are closely associated with the battery of non-government organisations working to reform the state and achieve a society that respects human rights, allows for freedom of speech, press and movement. The contradiction lies in the need to achieve democracy, fairness and justice based on an intellectual and political tradition of selective blame.

Having glossed over a whole history of presidential authoritarianism before 1978, Murungi details in chapter two how arbitrary detentions and torture under Moi led him into self-imposed exile in the USA. This is followed with his involvement in the struggle for political pluralism and entry into parliament in chapters three to five. These chapters engage his experience as the Member of Parliament for South Imenti, the struggle for constitutional reform in 1997 and work as a parliamentarian. Murungi states his position as a fighter against rural poverty and the rights of the rural folk in Imenti through a critical review of the agricultural and human rights policies that have worked to further entrench poverty and maintain conditions inimical to the total human development of Kenyans.

In part II of the text, the author revisits the question of human rights arguing that it involves a total focus on the economic and social being of citizens. His focus is on the grassroots, seen largely as rural Kenya, a grassroots constituted largely by peasants, a nebulous category that Murungi fails adequately to characterise. With a specific focus on agricultural policy, the author articulates the plight of rural people in relation to state policies on coffee and tea marketing. The analysis of the plight of farmers is closely related to the question of participation in decision-making, freedom of expression and participation in electing their leaders at various levels. Again, Murungi is keen to blame colonial policies for initiating such unresponsive policies and the Moi regime for perpetuating them. In chapter seven, Murungi discusses his views on the contentious issues of ethnicity and multi-party politics; land and ethnicity; on lawyers and politics, political defections in Kenya’s politics of pluralism and the role of women in Kenyan politics. This is a highly opinionated chapter and likely to provoke some reasoned debate with the author. Certainly, Murungi has a right to dismiss ethnic clashes as ‘artificial creations’ by a few self-centred politicians (p. 161), but this does not address the instances of historical injustice and poor social relations among communities living in the areas where such clashes were engineered and evidenced. And though Murungi discusses ethnicity in relation to the land question (pp. 166-70), a more candid interpretation must analyse the way communities in Rift Valley and related areas co-exist. This will establish other sources of conflict apart from the economic one that Murungi succinctly describes. As David Ndii has correctly cautioned, pinpointing specific politicians as the inciters of ethnic violence ‘does not explain why, in the absence of a perceived historical injustice for the politicians to exploit, the hordes of young men who perpetrate these heinous crimes are so readily gullible to every other opportunistic politician’s ploys’.3
Generally, the text is refreshingly frank and candid on many issues. Murungi’s focus on agriculture clearly bears out his contribution as a fighter for the thousands of Kenyans who have bore the brunt of bad politics, mismanagement and authoritarianism under the Moi regime. Murungi articulates his arguments against Kenyan politics designed around harambees, dismissing this approach as promoting a culture of dependency and handouts. He shows how parliamentarians have become crudely involved in this culture, parading as democrats while remaining crude power brokers, political entrepreneurs and turncoats who believe in nothing but their personal egos. For Murungi, hard work and just returns are prerequisites if rural constituencies are to be developed. He argues that development should be a holistic initiative from bottom-up, not top-to-bottom. Murungi derides parliament as a ‘house of shame’ where rubber-stamping is rampant because the ruling party remains in control. He reproduces sections of his contributions in parliament on various issues in pages 97-128. He dismisses both fellow politicians and political parties as inept, mediocre and visionless in his conclusion. Murungi maintains that the nature of the work of a parliamentarian does not allow him to remain steadfast as a critique of government. Overall, Murungi paints a pessimistic picture of Kenyan politics which raises a question of what options Kenyans have.

Murungi gives scant attention to the challenges and failures of the democratisation process in Kenya as stemming from a combination of causes within and beyond the Moi/KANU government. Where he does, these factors are hardly explored in detail. Most of the text blames the stalled democratic initiatives on KANU’s intransigence and Moi’s authoritarianism. However, one would wish broadly to include the inherent unfairness, inequality and inequity of the global system, internal ethno-regional socio-economic differences, the obstinacy of the sitting KANU government, plus the dishonesty, greed and lack of vision and strategy in the opposition as an alternative government. Murungi is more interested in blaming KANU for all the democratic ills, economic problems and social upheavals bedeviling Kenya. This marks out his perspective as stemming from an opposition political society that has adopted a political and intellectual strategy of ‘selective blame’ to unseat the Moi regime. Clearly, this strategy has not worked over the years. This raises questions about the appeal opposition political society commands among the wider voting public.

What crops up when Murungi’s perspective is identified with selective blame is the opposition’s fixation on raw power, a fixation recently articulated by Murungi through the GEMA ethnic caucus, a grouping of ethnic bossmen/women from the related Kikuyu, Embu and Meru ethnic communities. Those involved believe that the only way to halt the problems afflicting Kenya is to get rid of Moi. Indeed, such fixation on raw power led opposition politicians to degenerate into ‘Moi Must Go’ sloganeering. Backed by no concrete strategy for power takeover, this sloganeering has convinced Murungi and others of the need to form ethnic forums and use ethnicity to get rid of Moi from power. Recently Murungi articulated this ridiculous thinking in both electronic and print media, the same ethnic canvassing that opposition politicians continually accuse Moi/KANU of adopting.

It must be remembered that political society depends for its success in assuming power on marshalling the support of the generality of citizens to whom they articulate an alternative and better program of human betterment than the incumbent. However, due to the abnormal fixation on raw power and sloganeering, all opposition groups in Kenya have not produced any better democratic and developmental program than the sitting KANU government. For a while, during the early multi-party days in 1990, the opposition groups rode on the wave of public hate for...
KANU. They squandered their chances by reproducing within their microcosms divisive and overtly undemocratic tendencies. Such tendencies have not marked them out as any different from the KANU government. Indeed, though the opposition parties have benefitted from the positive presence of articulate and better minded politicians like Peter Anyang Nyong'o and Katama Mkangi, others still hang onto the illusory thinking that the hate Kenyans nurture against KANU must remain the only reason for a power transfer in their favour. The nuisance of such thinking is that gone are the days when something became bad simply because it was owned, aligned or associated with KANU or Moi. The days of ‘Moi Must Go’ sloganeering are over and every party must distinguish itself through its vision, national agenda and pragmatic strategy for national betterment. Ironically, as is evident in this book, Murungi does not even attempt to put his vision for Imenti in the context of the national policies of his sponsoring party.

Nowhere is the assumption that KANU is bad and the opposition good better illustrated than in Murungi’s discussion of political defections in chapter seven. Apart from erroneously assuming that defections only occur from the opposition to KANU, the author also suggests that these occur only after inducement by KANU. Murungi derides those who defect as weak and unprincipled politicians who, for one reason or another, are easily swayed by such inducement because ‘they were committed to themselves, and their personal advancement’ (p. 179). While many of the defections in Kenya are clearly motivated by personal gains and inducements, there are certainly many exceptions. For instance, the changing nature of Raila Odinga’s politics does not cohere to the conjectural pattern of inducement Murungi pens. A contributory factor to political defection in Kenya is the nature of opposition politics that rotates around sloganeering, the big man who bank rolls the party and ethnicity. The ethnic card was better illustrated by the 1997 Ngilu wave. It entailed a strategy of fielding ethnic bossmen/women in every province to deter Moi from gaining the mandatory 25% of the votes in at least five provinces. Apparently, there was a perceived calculation to catapult Mwai Kibaki into a run-off with Moi, a calculation that hinged on the demographic strength of Kibaki’s ethnicity, the Kikuyu. Other than hoping to get rid of Moi, this calculation lacked any other legitimate vision for the betterment of Kenya. Thus, even if Raila Odinga defected for personal gain, numerous other precipitating factors can be observed.

Further, it ought to be pointed out that the political opposition in Kenya today is a product of defections from KANU. Even if there are numerous well-meaning politicians within the contemporary opposition, it is also true that many like Mwai Kibaki are relics of KANU in the opposition diaspora. Some of them have reproduced within the opposition tendencies that they carried from KANU. Apart from Odinga’s National Development Party, for instance, all the other opposition parties have been unwilling to hold internal elections for their top offices periodically and remain extremely intolerant of internal debate and dissent. Further, the same parties have treated with alacrity attempts by some politicians to defect from KANU. In so doing, these parties have demonstrated a willingness to overlook the corruption records of potential defectors. Thus, some allegedly corrupt politicians like Cyrus Jirongo have been openly welcomed into the opposition fold while allegedly corrupt opposition politicians like Paul Muite continue to occupy important positions without recourse to the same rules applied to admonish the sitting government. Consequently, the main problem for the voting Kenyan public is that this very political opposition continues to accuse the sitting government of corruption without distinguishing itself as a viable and credible alternative worth their trust.

That the political opposition in Kenya hopes to unseat a regime associated with numerous ills
against the wider society is beyond doubt. But so far, they have been unable to effectively connect with the wider public whose vote they need to unseat KANU’s monopoly of power. To connect with the wider voting public, a strategy of convincing Kenyans to vote out KANU needs to be adopted and it must transcend the kind of selective blame dotted in the text under review. This alternative needs more rigorous attention than can be seen in this text. It must not only promise a better future, it must also identify the possible means of attaining this future. The challenge is evidently enormous, but anything other than a hypocritical mandate is a welcome start. The current opposition has been unable to produce such a winning strategy. It has allowed itself to become a reactive rather than proactive alternative. Murungi’s text illustrates clearly the nature of opposition politics in Kenya whose basic principle is unbridled regime demonisation and a narrow focus on raw power. With these as the baseline focus of political opposition, the wider voting public does not feature in the immediate vision of this political society. For Murungi, the focus is Imenti South while for the various parties, including KANU, it is their respective ethno-regional bases. What is needed is a wider cross-ethnic appeal for the opposition through a well-articulated program of reform. As things stand now, Murungi’s autobiography will remain a litany of complaints against KANU. Since KANU has a penchant for thoroughly letting Kenyans down, this autobiography will in the future contain encyclopedic data on the pitfalls of a KANU government. It does not have prospects for a chapter on an opposition government. Finally, a methodological point. If Murungi can afford to extensively read and quote texts he used in writing this book, he must certainly include endnotes and page numbers. This is basic enough and the editors should have insisted on proper footnotes and a bibliography. Footnotes and bibliographies are not a preserve of academics.

Notes


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The persistence of endemic crises in Western capitalism, despite the hegemony of over two decades of neo-liberalism, has led to renewed interest in institutional and evolutionary approaches to socio-economic theory. Yet, institutionalism is an extremely broad theoretical tradition,
encompassing critical development theories and paradigms primarily focused on the advanced societies. Amongst the latter, there is little doubt that one of the leading schools of thought is regulation theory, whose dominance is only now being challenged by an offshoot, business systems theory. However, regulation theory is considerably more explicit in its aims of developing a ‘critical political economy of contemporary capitalism’, albeit at the price of giving less heed to national particularities than the latter. Nonetheless, regulation theory is an extremely broad school of thought, with its basic analytical tools being deployed to explain issues ranging from work organisation to regional development issues. This has made for a somewhat diverse literature; there are few general works that fully encompass the breadth of this tradition. In an attempt to fill this gap, Bob Jessop has compiled many of the most important articles on regulation theory into a five volume collection; a monumental task, but, there is little doubt, also a labour of love. The first three volumes form the subject of this review.

Entitled *The Parisian Regulation School*, the first volume encompasses classic essays by, inter alia, Aglietta, Lipietz and Boyer. After a general series introduction, Jessop provides a brief but solid overview of the Parisian school. The latter was founded as a result of debates over Michel Aglietta’s (1974) doctoral thesis. In it, Aglietta posed an obvious question: it may be easy to explain why capitalism has periodic crisis, but how does it avoid them? (p. xxv). Aglietta argued that analyses of economic reproduction through market forces needed to be complemented by an understanding of the mechanisms of social regulation. Inspired by this, subsequent contributions focused first on explaining the periodic crises in post-war France, and, by the mid-1980s, on developing an understanding of the nature of the ‘Atlantic Fordist’ accumulation, and its associated, institutional ‘mode of regulation’. Whilst more explicitly radical than many overseas manifestations of regulation theory, the Parisian school is politically diverse. Aglietta’s work partially constituted a dialogue with Althusserianism; later Aglietta distanced himself from the regulationist mainstream (p. xxvii). Meanwhile, Lipietz has progressively flirted with Trotskyism, Maoism, and, more recently, green politics. Boyer represents one of the more pragmatic figures in the Parisian school, and, whilst affirming the Parisian school’s Marxist roots, has also drawn extensively on non-Marxist writers such as Keynes, Schumpeter, and Polanyi (p. xxvii). Boyer has also been the most open to a multi-disciplinary approach, and this may partially explain his current status as the doyen of the Parisian school (p. xxvii).

As Jessop notes, the Parisian approach centres on four key concepts. Firstly, an *industrial paradigm* is about the institutional and social regulation of labour. Secondly, an *accumulation regime* is ‘the complementary pattern of consumption and production’ that is reproduced over time. Thirdly, a *mode of regulation* is the configuration of institutions that stabilises an accumulation regime. Finally, when the above three complement each other for a enough time to create the conditions for a long-wave of growth, this can be described as a *model of development*. (pp. xxvi-xxvii).

Part One of the volume, entitled *Background and General Presentation*, provides a solid overview of the foundation and central principles of the Parisian school. The opening chapter is an interview with Alain Lipietz, by Jane Jenson. Lipietz stresses that regulationism, rather than a holistic paradigm, is about models of development in terms of accumulation and regulation. The complexity of social relationships (e.g. surrounding wage labour) makes crisis inevitable. A mode of regulations is simply a set of *habitus* (Bourdieu’s term for a particular mindset, associated with a particular culture and willingness to play by the rules of the game) and a set of evolving institutions. Intriguingly, Liepitz refers to regulation writers as the ‘rebel sons of Marxism’,
differing from the tradition in that they reject the neutrality and non-social character of the forces of production, in other words, the notion that particular forces of production will pull behind them relations of production, politics, ideology, etc. To Lipietz there are so many possible forms of compromise under capitalism that the issue of socialism ‘is not on the agenda’; contemporary capitalism is no longer working, but the outcome is open-ended. Lipietz argues that the way ahead is a ‘new form of compromise’, that may – given the persistence of patriarchal relations, the nature of citizen-state relations, etc. - take decades to work out. Classical Fordism is in crisis, but this may ultimately result in hyper-Taylorism rather than a benign flexible specialisation; progressives need to push for a new compromise that places a premium on increasing leisure time. The Lipietz interview is of particular interest in that regulationists have often been criticised for having little to offer in the way of progressive alternatives. Lipietz’s solution is the broad ‘rainbow view’ echoed, inter alia, by members of the anti-globalisation movement.

Chapter 2 consists of Boyer’s introduction to the English translation of his work, The Regulation School. What Boyer has to say is most welcome in terms of his efforts to link together trends in scholarship in history, economics and labour studies. Unfortunately, the reader’s path is occasionally obscured by the cobblestones of his characteristically opaque prose, in this and other essays by him in this collection. In Chapter 3, Lipietz provides further detail on regulationism’s debt to classic Althusserianism, and its critique thereof. In the current rush to discard Althusserianism as wholly mistaken, it is indeed useful to highlight some of the issues this perspective raises, at least as a starting point for debate.

Part two, entitled Some Early Works, contains a number of classic papers, most notably Aglietta’s ‘Phases of US Capitalist Expansion’. With seminal brushstrokes, Aglietta links major developments in the emergence of modern America: the drive westwards, the civil war, and mass immigration to the development of a set of institutions supportive of capitalist growth, and subsequent crises. In what was originally a 1978 article in Review, Mike Davis laments the dead hand of rational choice neo-classicism over the disciplines of economics and economic history, and the possibilities of the regulationist alternative. Unfortunately, whilst rigor mortis has palpably set in, rational choice economics remains dominant some twenty years later, and for at least a decade has been shamelessly haunting the disciplines of sociology and politics. Davis’s article is thus still of great relevance, even if his understanding of regulationism now seems somewhat mechanistic. Whilst by no manner light bedtime reading, Boyer’s paper on historical patterns of wage formation in twentieth century France is empirically rich, and concludes with some valuable insights on unemployment and wages during the 1970s recession. Boyer’s chapter is followed by one by Robert Delorme on theories of the state, and two consecutive chapters by Liepitz. The first is entitled ‘Towards Global Fordism’. Particular insightful is Liepitz’s critique of the war Keynesianism of the Reagan years and its inherent contradictions; again, this chapter makes most timely reading given the gradual drift of the current Bush administration towards similar remedies. Many of the themes raised are picked up again in the subsequent chapter, entitled ‘Accumulation, Crises, and Ways Out’. Here Lipietz is prophetically dismissive of high-tech solutions to the crisis of capitalism of the 1980s.

Part three, Commentaries and Critiques, contains a number of useful debates, including the regulationist/post-Fordist contestation, the latter the subject of a paper by Michael Barbrook. Associated with the magazine, Marxism Today, post-Fordist thinkers highlight the obsolescence of the old class struggle, and the need for new coalitions working for a better life for all, in a reformist manner. In contrast, Liepitz argues for a more radical - but rather vaguely delineated -
red-green alternative that conscientiously distances itself from reformist neo-liberalism. Some of the issues raised are echoed in Brenner and Glick’s overview of regulationism; again, they stress the need to move beyond the politics of amelioration. The closing chapter of this volume by Tickell and Peck, argues that regulationism focuses too much on accumulation and too little on regulatory mechanisms and processes. Indeed, they suggest that the latter can be studied independently of regulationism; regulation theory provides some interesting insights, but represents an incomplete start to a new critical path of social enquiry.

Volume 2, entitled *European and American Perspectives on Regulation*, introduces five further schools of regulationism that are offshoots of the original Parisian school. The first, the Grenoble school, actually predates classic regulationism in its focus on the relationship between two tendencies suggested by Marx: the tendency for profits to fall, and the tendency towards the equalisation of profit rates. More squarely within orthodox Marxism, Grenoble theorists eschew the terms Fordism and Post Fordism (p. xxiv). The opening chapter of this first section of this volume, by Gerard de Bernis, highlights the central concerns of Grenoble thinkers, namely the structural conditions that sustain inherently unstable processes of accumulation. They see regulation not as simply a set of institutions but rather what can be loosely referred to as the social and structural aspects of capitalist accumulation. Again, in the following chapter, De Bernis further elucidates some of these points. Here, De Bernis closely examines the nature of the concept of crisis, concluding with a brief – but now very timeous look – at the problems posed by the re-emergence of deflation; there is little doubt that, to date, no satisfactory way of regulating out of the crisis has been found.

Part 2, entitled *Social Structures of Accumulation*, looks at the radical American regulationist school, associated with the analysis of social structures of accumulation (SSAs). The opening chapter is David Gordon’s seminal piece on ‘Stages of Accumulation and Economic Long Cycles’. Gordon seeks to provide some theoretical tools for understanding the widely noted - although still contested - pattern of economic long waves (Kondratieff waves). Economic crises are likely to trigger crises in SSAs and vice versa. Gordon provides some exciting insights into the nature of this relationship, but, regrettably, pulls his punches: his conclusion is in his own words, ‘modest and tentative’, leaving the reader somewhat dissatisfied. This paper is followed by one by Michael Reich, looking at the origins and growth of SSA analysis. Reich concludes by an assessment of recent trend in US capitalism: it is suggested that it may either remain locked in a period of unsustainable short term profit seeking, or entering a new era, where expansion is fuelled by profit led, rather than wage led growth.

Part three contains papers on the Amsterdam school, a loose-knit body of thinkers that explore the centrifugal tendencies in contemporary capitalism. Kees van Pijl looks at the implications of hegemonic neo-liberalism: above all, severe economic shocks may shake political structures, in turn producing outcomes hostile to the existing order. Henk Overbeek looks at the decline of British capitalism. He concludes that the remedies it imposed shattered the fractional compromises that made Thatcherism possible. However, this has yet to result in a new unity around really meaningful alternatives.

In some ways more sociological than economic, the German regulation school - the subject of part four - focuses on social institutions and the state from a regulationist perspective. To German regulationists, the state ‘helps exemplify the complex connection between relation of production, accumulation regime, mode of regulation and social action’ (p. 108). Progressive politics should operate within and against specific ‘modes of socialization’, a distillation of much of what
regulation theory is about, a questioning of the order of things, and attempts to define better ways forward with the imperfect material at hand. The following two chapter in this section, by Joachim Hirsch, with Josef Esser and Juergen Haeusler respectively, provide a critique trends and alternatives in contemporary German politics.

Part five looks at Nordic models. Close to the Parisian school, the Nordic tradition seeks to accord more attention to national modes of growth, focusing specifically on the Scandinavian countries. Consisting of two chapters by Lars Mjoset, this section accords specific attention to theories of corporatism. Mjoset argues that the performance of corporatism is partially about shifts in the domestic balance of power, and the relative position of export led versus protected sections of the economy. Again, the closing section of this volume deals with commentaries and critiques. The opening chapter by Bob Jessop looks at the methodological foundations of regulationism, and its specific approach to theory building. Particularly useful is Jessop’s detailed dissection of the distinction between the primarily economically focused Parisian school, and the more societally focused SSA and German traditions. Regulation is founded on a realist methodology and ontology, is rooted in the political economy tradition and is concerned with shifting forms and mechanisms for securing the reproduction of capital as a social relation (p. 356). In his chapter, David Kotz argues that Parisian regulationism is in the scientific Marxist tradition, and SSA theories in the critical Marxist one. He concludes by suggesting that the one is too structuralist and the other too voluntarist; there is a need to find a middle ground between these two traditions. In critiquing Bob Jessop’s interpretation of regulationism, Werner Bonefield argues that he has veered too strongly into the scientific Marxist camp, and has left little room for critical theories of action. In the following chapter, Colin Hay enters the lists on behalf of Bob Jessop. Hay argues that Jessop leaves room for both the ‘optimism of the soul’ and ‘the pessimism of intellect’; the struggle for social transformation is partially about recognising the limited parameters in which it is possible to operate. The final chapter, by Michael Webber and David Rigby, provides an overview of competing theories of economic change in the post-war period. This is a very general overview, but helps locate regulationism within broader debates in the humanities.

Entitled Regulationist Perspectives on Fordism and Post-Fordism, Volume 3 explores the dynamics of the crisis of Fordism, and the search for alternative forms of work organization. There are, of course, many edited collections dealing with this subject. However, this volume is unique in its explicitly regulationist orientation. Nonetheless, a few of the included essays do not seem regulationist at all, most notably some of the those included in the forth part of the volume; it seems that coherence may have been sacrificed on the alter of comprehensivity. Part one, Introduction and Key Issues, is opened with an essay by Mark Elam on ‘The Post-Fordist Debate’. This provides a very nice overview of the subject area, and helps locate regulationism with broader debates. This is followed by a masterful overview by Bob Jessop, who provides a very capable dissection of the concepts ‘Fordism’ and ‘Post-Fordism’, so widely deployed and so little understood. Part two looks at The Origins of the Fordist Labour Process. Karl Dasbach looks at the origins of Fordism at Ford itself. This empirically rich account is marred only by a rather cursory treatment of Taylorism. Whilst Dasbach does acknowledge Ford’s debt to the latter, he tends to give Taylor less credit than he deserves in mapping out a comprehensive - yet so repressive - structure of work organisation. Rather different is Bruce Pietykowsk’s account of ‘Fordism at Ford’, which focuses exclusively on two plants, Highland Park and the Rouge, and accords more attention to processes of employee resistance and unionisation.
Part three, *The Crisis of Fordism*, is opened by a general overview of the literature on flexibility, supplemented by some empirical evidence, by Boyer. Boyer concludes that ‘flexibility’ remains a contested concept, and open to a number of different interpretations; however, the debate is open-ended, and there remains a vital need to identify new organisational forms that are both viable and humane. These themes are taken up again in a subsequent essay by Boyer, who argues that current trends are contradictory. Moreover, organisational forms currently being experimented with will not always prove the most viable in the long term. He concludes that a composite model is most likely, with particularly high degrees of concentration in high-tech industries. An essay follows this by Andrew Glyn, in which he evaluates the regulationist notion that the crisis of Fordism reflected concerns over productivity. He concludes that slowdowns in technical productivity were often the most severe in industries not normally associated with Fordism; rather they seemed to reflect the social problems encountered when increasing work intensity. This is followed by a review article of Piore and Sabel’s ‘The Second Industrial Divide’ by a team of scholars led by Karel Williams. They conclude that the book is largely an exercise in futurology and meta-history than a sustainable account, a critique that provides a useful starting point for regulationist perspectives on work organisation.

Entitled *Beyond Fordism to...?*, Part four is opened by an account by Horst Kern and Michael Schuman on trends in work organisation in Germany. In practice, this article tells more about the dynamics of German politics than a detailed review of trends in work organisation. This shortfall is somewhat redressed by a subsequent account by Schuman (writing alone this time) on the German car industry. In a paper entitled ‘The Japanization of Fordism’, Stephen Wood provides an interesting critical account of the concepts of neo- and post- Fordism from an alternative perspective. Rather different is the Leborgne and Lipietz essay on post-Fordism. They conclude that there is a start choice between unsustainable development, ecologically destructive and short-term growth, or an ecologically and macroeconomically stable alternative.

The final section of this volume, *General Reviews*, is opened by an essay by Andrew Sayer, in which he explores the institutional prerequisites for growth; in the end, this is more than through techniques of work organisation, encompassing education, the social and institutional form of capital and state-capital relations. There is a provocative account by Jamie Gough, on the importance of assessing value relations when evaluating post-Fordism. Gough’s conclusion’s are very much more in the critical Marxist than orthodox regulationist traditions. The final essay in this volume, Paul Hirst and Jonathen Zeitlin, explore the barriers to flexible specialisation, which, they conclude is only possible through an active industrial policy.

There is little doubt that this series provides a valuable resource not only to those interested in regulation theory, but to all concerned about contemporary trends in work organisation, macro-economic policy and politics. In the interests of ‘facilitating’ cross-referencing, the various contributions are reproduced in the format and layout in which they were originally published. Indeed, an unprincipled scholar could quickly amass an impressive reference list of sources, without venturing beyond a single volume of this series! Unfortunately, this also means that most pages have double pagination (that of the original journal and the current edited volume), which can be rather confusing at times. Also, some of the typefaces employed by the various journals have reproduced more clearly than others. Finally, whilst there is a name index at the back of each volume, there is no subject index. This is a serious omission, and marginally impairs the worth of this collection. Nonetheless, there is little doubt that it constitutes an invaluable contribution to the literature.