relationship to the United States. If one reaction to the celebrants of globalization has been to point out (as has been done in this volume, and quite correctly) that the world is considerably more complicated, then another has been to point to the construction of regional blocs. The project of the European Union continues to move forward and the talk of an Asian bloc continues, most recently, in the form of renewed consideration of an Asian Monetary Fund. The point here is that if globalization is read as an essentially political project, then it is clear that effective replies are being made.

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***The Super-Rich: The Unjust World of Global Capitalism*. By Stephen Haseler.** London: Macmillan Press, 2000. Pp. 208.

Stephen Haseler's catchy and easy to read volume is one of a number of recent publications that deals with the ugly side of a globalized world — the extremes of wealth and poverty. Haseler, a disciple of famous British socialist, Tony Crosland, and a self-described "political scientist" is concerned that, to modify the cliché, the rich are not just getting richer, but getting "super-rich", while the poor are getting poorer. At the heart of his argument is that in the post-Cold War era the government has lost its ability to "constrain", "civilize", and "calm … down" capitalism (p. xiii). Third Way politicians, such as Bill Clinton and Tony Blair are seen as putting a respectable sheen on capitalism, which is in reality completely unrestrained. Furthermore, the modern "super-rich" rely on capital flows to generate their wealth, thus this exploitation is worse than that of traditional industries because the latter are at least involved with the working class. The super-rich that Haseler refers to are not mere millionaires (or the "poor cousins" (p. 2)), but, for example, the 500 individuals which the UN cites as owning 50 per cent of global wealth. Haseler provides the reader with a myriad of statistics to demonstrate how filthy rich a small proportion of the global population are — in fact the book is crammed full of examples. In short, the increasingly globalized world is creating the conditions for the "return to aristocracy" (p. 79) but without the "noblesse oblige" of the old aristocrats who were tied to locality and nation. (A familiar theme of the Old Left is that the old capitalists were not as bad as they seemed at the time *vis-à-vis* the new breed of globe trotting financiers.)

Haseler saves his real venom for massive inheritance of money and property. Polemically impressive, he demonstrates the inherent unfairness of money passed through the generations: "Grossly unjust and deeply unfair — rewarding lineage not merit or work, and undermining the enterprise culture so beloved by neoliberals — support for inheritance, appears contradictory if not hypocritical." (p. 74). Far from pursuing family and traditional values that conservatives and neoliberals support, it is posited that those who are dependent on inheritance engage in terrible family infighting and "are likely to transmit non-productive, idle and dependent values. And they [inheritors] are likely to experience poor social relationships" (p. 75).

While this book is an interesting read, and it is to be recommended, there are a number of points, particularly in the latter half, that may not stand up to scrutiny. The author seems in two minds about what the state can do with regard to capitalism. Should the state control capitalism as the author wants? Or has the state lost all power to even contemplate controls as the author also suggests? The idea that politics is "little more than a branch of the entertainment industry" sounds like good rhetoric (in which Haseler excels), but is this a fair statement? While many, including this reviewer, are concerned by the direction of many modern democratic election campaigns, governments still have an enormous degree of power over the market. Social welfare spending in Western countries is hardly favoured by economic rationalists but persists nonetheless. Bill Gates of Microsoft, one of Haseler's bogeymen, failed to turn his massive wealth into a favourable court room decision. The state could reverse globalization and go into isolation, if this were given some legitimacy at the ballot box. But then again, Myanmar and North Korea are not attractive role models.

But in fairness to Haseler, he is not advocating a retreat into total isolation. This reviewer deliberately read this book with a view to finding solutions for the problems that the author identifies. There is not really a systematic attempt to offer solutions to the super-rich problem, but a few ideas can be gleaned if the reader looks carefully. First of all, the European Union, with its worker protection and generous social services, is seen as an alternative vision of the future to those who promote unrestrained free markets. Second, the author laments the decline in death duties, although he fails to suggest appropriate levels. Haseler argues convincingly that inheritance is undeserved, but does he think that the state has a role in preventing all inheritance? The author fails to say where he stands on this point. Third, he criticizes the control of inflation as being a policy designed to assist profits from interest rates. And fourth, Haseler promotes a Tobin Tax, or a small levy on all international currency transactions (which is, incidentally, used by Chile on short-term capital).

Aside from ideological disagreements that the potential reader may have with the volume, there are two major problems with this book. The first is the way in which "evidence" is presented. In particular, there are a lot of "evidences" in the form of a quotation from an authority, which is often simply left to stand as evidence in itself (particularly statements by George Soros). The author is also guilty of selecting his quotations carefully to back up his arguments. James Goldsmith, industrialist and critic of the unrestrained free market, is quoted here and there, but his role as a virulent Euro-sceptic is conveniently pushed to one side. Malaysia's Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir, is also cited throughout as criticizing international capital and calling Soros "a devil" (p. 6). While it may be fashionable to tell one's side of the story in academia these days, leaving out half the story in this case is misleading. Haseler declines to inform the reader that Mahathir portrayed Malaysia's financial crisis as not only a punishment by international financiers seeking to bring Malaysia back into the free market fold, but that this was a Jewish conspiracy designed to punish a Muslim nation for having a high growth economy. The second major problem is that this book, and the overwhelming weight of examples, are Anglo-American-centric like much of the literature that claims to be making a statement about the world. Where the author does try to make comment on the outside world, mainly a few examples from Asia, he may be over-reaching. Singapore is described as a tax haven (p. 22), he seems to hint that ASEAN could become a super-state (p. 165), he suggests that in time China could seemingly defy culture and geography and become a "Western" nation (p. 36), and portrays the Asian financial crisis purely in the terms of Dr Mahathir, that is, the fault of foreign investors, but denying the role of domestic weaknesses.

While there is much to recommend this book, in the final analysis it does not provide the reader with comprehensive solutions to the problem of the wealth gap. Haseler presents us with the problem, but does not provide many workable answers (except the idea of a Tobin Tax which remains the only concrete policy suggestion). Non-Europeans may take exception with the EU as a "solution" to inequality, as many African, Latin American, and Asian nations cannot get access to the affluent European market in primary commodities (which is what many of them produce). Furthermore, the EU has played a major role in suppressing agricultural commodity prices as it sells off subsidized products to third markets. Haseler also completely downplays the role of the free market in wealth creation. He claims that the Smoot-Hawley tariffs of the 1930s did not cause the Great Depression; this is technically right of course, but they were responsible for the depths to which the global economy contracted (by two-thirds). The European Union was founded on the ideals of free trade between member states believing that competition will strengthen commerce and improve overall welfare.

Controlling inflation not only favours the rich: rampant inflation has often hit the poor far harder by increasing consumer prices, reducing the real value of savings, and pushing up interest rates on loans (who can least afford these expenses?). While the author is right to point out that Bill Gates works less than a "junior hospital doctor", which is to say that wealth does not necessarily come from hard work, Haseler cannot provide an alternative to pay differentials just as Lenin could not either. The final section of the book is entitled "Come back Marx: All is almost forgiven" (p. 186) in which Haseler argues in a few brief paragraphs that social democrats underestimated the power of the market and that Marx's analysis remains powerful. Once again Haseler fails to define the implications of this statement. Is he advocating Marxist solutions? Again he does not say, and this remains the overriding frustration of this book.

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Globalization of Japan: Japanese Sakoku Mentality and U.S. Efforts to Open Japan. **By Mayumi Itoh.** New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. 224.

This book examines political and social issues in Japan using *sakoku* as a key word. *Sakoku* is a Japanese word for "self-imposed seclusion". Japan experienced a long period of *sakoku* (1639–1868) during the Tokugawa era, when its interaction with foreign countries was restricted. The author argues that the *sakoku* mentality still lingers among the Japanese, which underlies modern Japanese thoughts and behaviour.

Emphasis on this *sakoku* mentality is a distinctive feature of this book, and it is frequently mentioned as a factor responsible for the "parochial", "exclusive", and "insincere" attitude of the Japanese people. Japan's public policy-making is also influenced by this *sakoku* mentality, especially in the area of its foreign relations. You identify an issue that Japan has *vis-à-vis* foreign countries; then simply scratch its surface and you find the *sakoku* mentality at its root. If a reader can accept this proposition, this book can present a very comfortable reading experience. In fact, the repeated reference to the *sakoku* mentality at the end of an individual issue's analysis forms a nice rhythm, by which a reader can tell that the topic is coming to a close.

Apart from the *sakoku* argument, this is a useful guidebook for those who would like to be familiar with contemporary issues confronting Japan. Part 1 of the book is titled "The Japanese *Sakoku* Mentality" and discusses Japan's relationship *vis-à-vis* the United States, Korea, China and ASEAN member countries. Part 2 offers "Japan's *Sakoku* Policy: Case Studies" and covers a wide range of topics that include: Japan's policies on immigration and guest workers; U.S. military facilities in Okinawa; rice market liberalization; the Japanese Constitution; and Japan's bid for the United Nations (UN) Security Council Permanent Seat and the UN Peacekeeping Operations.

The stated objective of this book is, however, beyond cataloguing those issues mentioned above. Its Introduction says that this book attempts to examine correlations among perceptions, national interests, and foreign policy. Two areas of interests are specifically mentioned for this inquiry: first, how the psychological predispositions of foreign policy decision-makers (input), such as their individual beliefs, ideology, and other cultural, societal, and national characteristics, affect the decision-makers' views of national interest and the formation of foreign policy (output); and second, how foreign policy élites' perceptions or views of a country (such as their dislike of that country) affect foreign policy towards that country. The author presents the following hypothesis — foreign policy decision-makers do not always see a situation or the operational environment objectively because subjective factors in the psychological environment, such as their perceptions of another country, prevent them from seeing the operational environment correctly. Objective foreign policy decision-making is