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Weiss, Ruth. *Peace in Their Time: War and Peace in Ireland and Southern Africa*. London and New York: I.B. Tarus, 2000.

One of the classic analyses in the field of comparative politics is Roy C. Macridis' *The Study of Comparative Government*, published as a small monograph by Doubleday & Company in 1955. Now probably found only in larger university libraries and superseded by longer, more sophisticated critiques, his work evaluated the state of the subdiscipline at the time and heralded what could be called the golden age of comparative politics. Its message was starkly simple: configurative politics, not comparative politics, was the pervasive style in the literature. Parallel studies or studies of single polities (known as configurative studies) were necessary but hardly sufficient, especially if scholars were to generate any meaningful (and testable or non-falsifiable) theories in the subdiscipline. Configurative became something of a pejorative term, and comparative works, if only in style rather than in name, became *de rigeur*.

Ruth Weiss, a German-born journalist who was brought up in South Africa, has followed Professor Macridis' advice – without ever mentioning political science or political scientists – and has sought to write in the comparative vein without becoming self-conscious about theorizing. The topic is a challenging one and intrinsically interesting to both scholars and lay readers. Yet the problem is how to organize the material and how to document the sources, on the one hand, and how to cater to the needs of the novice without boring the expert, on the other hand. Not all readers will be familiar with either South Africa or Ireland – or both. Moreover, the two societies are not necessarily at the same stage in the conflict resolution process nor have they moved at the same pace. Nevertheless, Weiss deftly explores a remarkably intriguing aspect of the two societies, namely, that some of the citizens of the one society drew parallels with those of the other society and, in some instances, helped their opposite numbers to cope with their own challenges. This was particularly the case with Irish Republicans and Africans, as well as with Protestant Ulstermen and Afrikaners. This was a variant on the adage that misery loves company, and resembles, to a lesser extent, the parallels that have been drawn between the Francophones of Quebec and the Afrikaners of South Africa (although this topic has not attracted too much academic attention to date). This relationship between Irish and South African political elites and conflict brokers is the greatest strength of the book, and the author demonstrates her fingertip feeling (as the Germans so aptly express it – *Fingerspitzengefuhl*) for South African politics and personalities, an intuition that she adroitly applies to the Irish case study. Both the leaders of the Irish Free State (Republic) and the Afrikaner nationalists espoused visions of a grander, extraterritorial future, and Prime Minister Jan Smuts was not alone in his wish for a greater South Africa, intimations of which were found in the Schedule to the 1909 South Africa Act that created the Union of South Africa following the Second Anglo-Boer War. Afrikaners eventually backed away from their design to

expand their territorial holdings by the incorporation of the three British High Commission Territories of Basutoland (now Lesotho), the Bechuanaland Protectorate (now Botswana), and Swaziland. Similarly, the Irish Republic, which had articulated a vision of a more inclusive, unified Ireland (including Ulster) in its 1937 constitution, backed away from this emotionally-laden goal as part of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement between the protagonists. A particularly appealing facet of Weiss' narrative and analysis is her treatment of political fractiousness among the Africans, the Afrikaners, the northern Irish, and the southern Irish. This was demonstrated early on, for instance, during the Anglo-Boer War, where the Irish fought on both sides and the Afrikaners, in turn, were unable to maintain a solid front against the British and were, to some extent, coopted by the British into loyalist auxiliary units. The 'true Afrikaners' disparagingly called the others "hands-uppers" and heaped scorn on those they regarded as turncoats.

Later on, some Africans were partners of the apartheid system, and, as African majority rule became imminent, the Afrikaners, in turn, divided on whether to negotiate their political (but not necessarily economic) demise or to lapse into a type of nihilism (possibly imitating those termed Afrikaner "bitter-enders" in the Anglo-Boer War). The Irish, both Catholic and Protestant, had clashing perceptions of the utility or symbolism of violence, arms caches, and British (civil and military) intrusion into what might simplistically be regarded as yet another Irish family feud. Irish peace was a complicated, if not elusive, goal requiring consummate political, negotiating, and symbolic skills, for it entailed the fashioning of intramural and extramural consensus, for instance, between the British and Irish governments (London and Dublin), between the two truncated parts of Ireland (Northern Ireland and Eire), and between the Catholic and Protestant subpolities in Ulster itself.

A skilled, graceful writer, Weiss is able to guide the reader through the political convolutions of both peace processes, moving smoothly back and forth between the two polities to point out similarities and differences and to show, for example, how the South Africans served to some extent as role models and consultants for the Irish. Both groups had their share of Nobel laureates, the prize often being shared by protagonists (Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams in 1976, Nelson Mandela and Frederik W. de Klerk in 1993, and John Hume and David Trimble in 1998) rather than by a single individual (as was true for Chief Albert J. Luthuli in 1960 and for Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu in 1984). The author provides a very useful parallel chronology, showing the major political events in southern Africa and in Ireland, and she does, usually in passing, refer to other nations in southern Africa, such as Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, and Mozambique, where violence was an integral part of displacing white minority by African majority rule. For the novice, though, her principal oversight is the absence of a glossary which would explain, particularly, Irish terms (such as *Taoiseach*), and her footnote citations are not consistently full and complete.

These points aside, Weiss has made a significant contribution to the literature, especially in terms of insight and imagination, that beginners and old hands can appreciate and to which others can subsequently add more elaborate theoretical constructs and more meticulous documentation.

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Wood, Elisabeth Jean. *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

There is a growing challenge to the assumption that opposition moderation is a necessary if not sufficient condition for negotiated transitions to democracy to succeed. In her analysis of the El Salvadoran and South African transitions Elisabeth Jean Wood makes an important contribution to this challenge. These cases present two puzzles: first, why did transitions take place when they did, after decades of authoritarian resistance to democratic challenges, and second, why were these conflicts resolved through negotiation whereas ending other civil wars has proven more intractable? The answer to the first, Wood argues, is sustained mobilization by economically and socially marginalized insurgents both created an "insurgent counter elite" as a potential negotiating partner and transformed the economic interests of economic elites such that their preferences shifted from supporting oligarchic regimes that had once protected those interests to political democracy with substantial property rights guarantees. These political and material foundations of the "democratic bargain" together account for the second puzzle: it was the economic interdependence of the antagonists that supported a negotiated solution in which both sides stood to benefit from cooperation under a mutually acceptable set of political and economic institutions.

While the insurgent model is clean and powerful and the data linking mobilization to the transformation of elite interests impressive, especially in South Africa, the argument is unevenly applied. Wood does an excellent job documenting the interdependence of the two classes in South Africa and how the civil war in El Salvador generated enormous costs for landlords and provided great incentives for the booming commercial sector, but does not spell out the interdependence of commercial elites and their labor force (pp. 62-70). Similarly, the semi-formalization of the argument in the appendix emphasizes the importance of third parties in helping the two players both view their interaction as an assurance game and not a prisoners' dilemma and, given this belief, switch their strategies to "compromise-compromise" from "fight-fight." Third parties are