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Article:

Honeyman, V (2023) Brexit and its aftermath. *International Affairs*, 99 (1). pp. 395-396.
ISSN: 0020-5850

<https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iac309>

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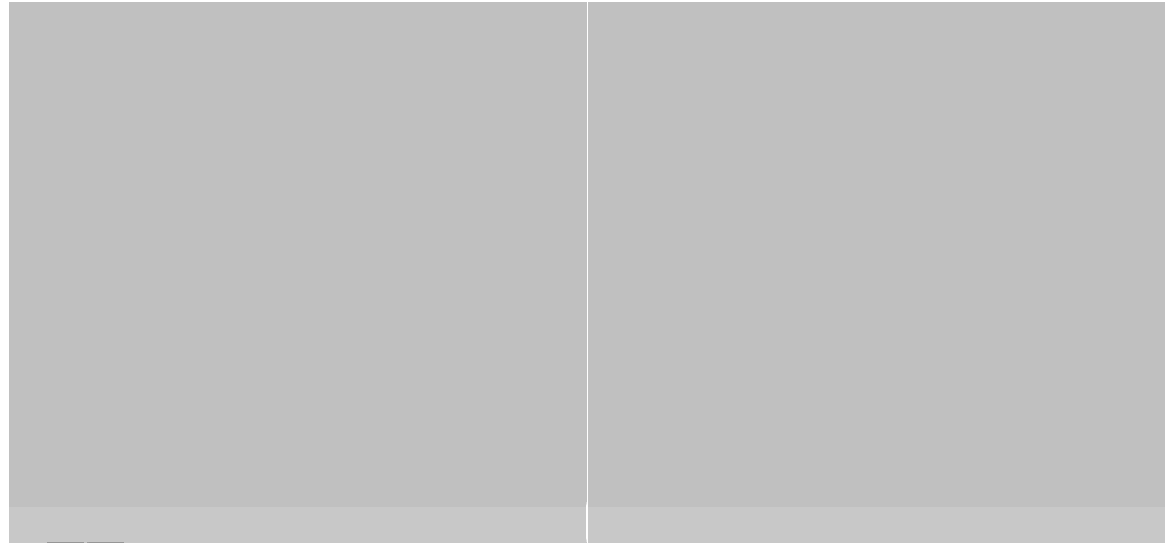
Brexit and its aftermath. Edited by Sophie Loussouarn. London: Bloomsbury. 2022. 232pp. £65.00. isbn 978 0 75564 079 9. Available as e-book.

Brexit is a tricky topic to write a book about, for a variety of reasons. First, the entrenched partisan nature of the issue makes authors a target for criticism, not for their knowledge or skill, but because some interpret a critical appraisal of a particular policy as a personal attack aimed at supporters of that policy. Second, the sheer scope of the European Union (EU), and the impact it had on Britain, can be intimidating. Third, the changing debate means books can quickly become out of date. This cannot be avoided, and does not make those books irrelevant, but it does make them less likely to be written. This is a shame, as a snapshot of the Brexit period can be valuable. I am pleased that Sophie Loussouarn's new edited volume has filled this gap, providing analysis of what has happened and what the future holds for post-Brexit Britain and the EU. This book brings together an excellent range of contributors and features a mix of academics and practitioners, from John Curtice and his work on Brexit and Scotland, to Lord Robin Renwick's writing on Brexit and the 'special relationship' with the United States.

As each chapter has a different author, there are stylistic differences and variation throughout. Consequently, different chapters will appeal to different audiences, and some may be more popular than others in terms of subject-matter. However, there are no bad chapters in this book—all are well written and well researched. Indeed, Loussouarn should be congratulated on bringing together such a collection of insightful material. Vernon Bogdanor's introduction sets out the different

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Book reviews

chapters and the aims of the edited volume. Bogdanor describes the book as ‘a comprehensive, recent and student-friendly overview of Brexit’ (p. VI). Indeed, it is a very readable academic book with clearly defined topics, which will allow readers to quickly obtain information. The contributions are divided into two sections exploring the impact of Brexit: the first focusing on the domestic dimension and consequences for the UK, and the second examining the implications for Britain’s global relationships. Within the former, contributors analyse the impact of Brexit on the UK’s constitution, the party system, Scotland, Ireland and the financial services.

While these are all interesting topics, they are also very substantial issues, and the chapters, while very good, do leave some considerable gaps. For example, Alan Wager’s chapter on the party system is very strong, but he aims to cover both main parties and key Brexit elections in 13 pages. This is an almost impossible task, even for a talented writer such as Wager. Within each chapter, more detail would have been useful; this expanded analysis would provide a greater resource for students. Additionally, there is an issue of scope. For example, there are useful chapters on Britain’s post-Brexit relationship with France, Germany and the US, but the book only touches superficially on the UK’s post-Brexit relationships with other key allies, such

as the Commonwealth nations, Australia or India. It can be difficult to cover all aspects of such a major debate, but the unintended result is to give the book a rather Europe-centric feel. This is understandable but limiting.

Overall, this book is excellent for students wanting to cherry-pick the issues they are researching. I will certainly be recommending it in my own teaching. For those seeking a more comprehensive account of the impact of Brexit, this might not be the best bet, although it would provide a good introduction. The calibre of the contributions shines through and certainly helps readers grasp some fairly complex issues. I would have liked the contributors to expand on their thoughts, and more chapters for greater coverage. But as a student-friendly, current account of Brexit, this is a very good addition to any reading list.

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