

the bloodlands. The next phase was Nazi-Soviet collaboration between 1939 and 1941, when over 200,000 Polish officers and professionals were shot by the two regimes in an attempt to decapitate Polish society. And the most murderous period came last, after Germany betrayed its Soviet ally and launched the largest offensive in military history.

At the centre of this narrative is the Holocaust. Snyder in no way downplays the singularity of Hitler's objective of exterminating Europe's Jews. He reconstructs Treblinka, Sobibor and Chelmno, and reminds us that three-quarters of the Nazis' Jewish victims were already dead by the time Auschwitz came online.

Beyond this sobering revisionism surrounding the Holocaust, however, what is most striking is Snyder's detailing of the use of food (or its scarcity) as a weapon. Roughly seven million people died as a result of starvation or illness brought on by malnutrition, primarily caused by Stalin's grain requisitions in Ukraine, and Nazi treatment of Soviet POWs. The pages devoted to the mass starvation are harrowing. Striking too are the personal vignettes Snyder furnishes, like the disbelief of Polish officers after observing their Russian captors in 1939 'eating toothpaste, using the toilet as sinks, wearing multiple watches, or bras for earmuffs'. These men, Snyder recounts, 'could not be made to live like Soviet people, at least not on such short notice, and not in these conditions' (139). So, they were simply shot.

Given the lasting repercussions and traumas of the violence perpetrated by the Third Reich and the Soviet Union in today's central and eastern Europe, the revisionism of *Bloodlands* is a welcome addition to our collective memory of the Second World War.

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Robert Bosch Stiftung

Notes on contributor

Will Cappelletti (BA, College of William and Mary) is a 2010–2011 Transatlantic Fellow at the Robert Bosch Stiftung. His research interests include US foreign and defence policy, European security policy and energy and resource security.

Andreas Rasche and Georg Kell (eds), (Foreword by United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon), *The United Nations Global Compact: achievements, trends and challenges*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010, ISBN10 0521145538, ISBN13 9780521145534 (pbk), ISBN13 9780521198417 (hbk), 472 pp

Among all the different standards, certificates and voluntary codes on corporate social responsibility (CSR), the United Nations Global Compact (GC) is probably the best known. Launched in 2000, the multi-stakeholder initiative 'asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labor standards, the environment and anti-corruption' (xxxi). However, as of January 2011, a total of over 2,000 participating businesses had been expelled 'for repeated failure to communicate on progress in integrating the initiative's ten sustainability principles into their strategies' (Global Compact 2011). This calls into question the usefulness of the voluntary initiative.

The edited book under review is therefore very timely. Ten years after the foundation of the Global Compact, Andreas Rasche of Warwick Business School—who has worked as a consultant to the GC—and Georg Kell, Executive Director of the GC, teamed up to provide an assessment of the initiative. They invited practitioners from the business world and civil society (including many from the GC itself) as well as academics from management, business ethics and political science to discuss the challenges, success and future of the initiative. The result is an interesting mix of insights, centred roughly on four themes: (1) achievements and challenges in the four key fields of human rights, labour rights, the environment and anticorruption; (2) how participants engage with the GC; (3) how firms produce progress reports; and (4) how local networks promote the initiative. Although all of these issues are crucial for understanding the relatively young initiative and its dynamics, two questions are most pressing: how well are the principles of the GC implemented by its business members? And how well does the instrument of mandatory progress reports work?

As several chapters show, there are still ‘implementation gaps’ (8). According to a survey among business members of the GC, 60–70 per cent have included human rights and specific environmental targets in their codes of conduct. But only half (or even fewer) provide operational guidance notes to their employees, or have tracking systems in place. Therefore, there is still a lack of ‘formal policies and programmes’ (122) and a need for a ‘deeper level of specificity and rigour’ (125).

Against this background, the book (in chapters 4 and 6) gives concrete success and failure stories on how GC principles have been implemented. Regarding environmental protection, many firms improved their policies in an attempt to follow the principles. For example, the Swedish textile retailer *Hennes & Mauritz* restricted chemicals in production operations and supply chains, and published lists of forbidden chemicals to implement principle seven of the GC (which states that businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges). Several other companies’ stories are also described in chapter 4, which concludes that: ‘[b]y signing on to the Global Compact environmental principles companies accept these responsibilities’ (79).

In contrast, the implementation of the anticorruption principle is ‘disappointing’: too often, individuals or firms ‘coopt or “capture” the regulators’ (109). The corruption scandal of the Germany-based company Siemens (a member of the GC since 2003) is just one example. Thus, the anticorruption principle of the GC has yet to become the ‘key’ in the ‘battle to maintain pressure on the private sector’ (110).

Although such accounts in the book are rather anecdotal, they are nevertheless crucial in assessing and illustrating the achievements of the GC, especially since a large comparative academic study on the impact of the GC is still missing from the literature.

What remains to be read between the lines in the reviewed book is an answer to the question *why* so many GC member firms fail to report their progress about the implementation of the GC’s principles every year (chapter 15). Chapter 16, written by a representative of the Brazilian energy company *Petrobras*, could have provided some answers. The author set out to discuss ‘reporting in action’ (281) but only described how more and more CSR commissions were created within the company. And there are no details on what worked and what did not, or how

those at the management level persuaded groups within the company that did not implement the GC principles at first, to eventually do so. Answers to these questions, especially in a chapter written by a company representative, could have revealed problems and challenges that companies face when trying to keep to the GC principles. This could have explained why 2,000 companies dropped out after failing to submit their annual progress report. Since the reporting system is the main mandatory requirement of the GC and its 'most important integrity measure' (265), the credibility and success of the initiative depends largely on that.

All in all, the book provides an extensive and diverse assessment of the Global Compact initiative, its history, dynamics and diffusion process. This makes it most useful for anyone interested in voluntary standards and initiatives, the effectiveness of CSR and the relationship between business and society in general. The combination of academics (some of whom sit on company boards) and practitioners (many of whom are also active in the academy) not only reflects the make-up of the multi-stakeholder initiative but also provides for a unique mixture of academic assessment and inside knowledge that is crucial for understanding how a global initiative can work and have an impact, or fail. After all, the Global Compact is only ten years old—it can still be shaped and its full potential is yet to be unfolded.

Reference

Global Compact (2011) 'Number of expelled companies reaches 2,000 as Global Compact strengthens disclosure framework', 20 January, <<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/news/95-01-20-2011>>, accessed 10 May 2011

Nicole Janz © 2011
University of Cambridge

Notes on contributor

Nicole Janz (Magistra Artium, Free University of Berlin) is a PhD candidate at the University of Cambridge. Her research interests include the moral and legal responsibilities of multinational corporations; foreign direct investment and human rights; drivers of corporate social responsibility; and American civil religion. Recent publications include '*And no one will keep that light from shining*': *civil religion after September 11 in speeches of George W Bush* (2010).

Eva Gross and Ana E Juncos (eds), *EU conflict prevention and crisis management: roles, institutions and policies*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2011, ISBN10 0415572355, ISBN13 9780415572354 (hbk), 192 pp

This slim edited volume offers a valuable contribution to theoretically informed EU security policy analysis. Since 2003, the European Union (EU) has mandated 24 crisis management operations with over 7,000 personnel currently deployed in 13 ongoing operations, and has invested considerable political and economic resources in conflict prevention. In aiming to offer 'a comprehensive view of the genesis and recent developments' of EU conflict prevention and crisis