particular rights of minority cultures. In its defence of secession, however, such interests might well be sparked. This is certainly a timely intervention, and deserves to be widely read amongst all those concerned with moral and political thought.

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In recent years Michael Freeden has succeeded in re-invigorating the study of political ideologies through his *Journal of Political Ideologies*. In the succinct volume *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction*, Freeden has managed to encapsulate some of the contemporary debates on political ideology in a way that should appeal to both experienced and novice students of the genre.

The genealogy of ideology is presented by Freeden through chapters that overlap and complement each other. Within these chapters the author elucidates the morphology of ideologies and explains how they are ‘complex combinations and clusters of political concepts in sustainable patterns’ (p. 51). Showing how our thoughts are constrained by external events, and how vagueness and ambiguity are ever-present within the realm of ideology, Freeden takes the reader on a journey in which notions such as logical and cultural constraints, permeability, and core and peripheral concepts are discussed. Behind all of these introductions and explanations, however, Freeden is clearly attempting to entice students of political ideology into recalculating their own ideologies, or ‘thought-practices’ (p. 51), as Freeden would term it.

Though the conceptual questions that are posed by this volume will undoubtedly be appreciated by those wishing to extrapolate the philosophical angles to ideology, possibly the most interesting aspect of the book is the way in which Freeden acts not only as narrator and historian of ideology but how many of the ideas contained within *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* actually emanate from the mind of the author. Hence, this is no conventional academic assessment of a certain political field. Over the last decade or so, Freeden has initiated a dialogue with other writers on ideology and with the advocates of certain ideological positions themselves so that the versions of ideology espoused by Marxists, functionalists or relativists have all been challenged and subsequently debunked by Freeden through his writings. *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* is thus a work that would not have been possible without this dialectical engagement. It is therefore not surprising that it is all the more potent as a volume due to this process having taken place. Having noted this, however, Freeden is never viciously dismissive as he acknowledges the role that different ideologies and the multitude of political theorists who have tried to construct political visions have played in the flowering of ideology and political
thought. With this in mind, nevertheless, it is fair to say that the book never strays too far into the arena of total polemic.

To supplement the writing, fourteen illustrations appear in the book ranging from a political cartoon of Marx and Engels through M.C. Esher’s ‘Concentric rinds’ to a photograph of the Nazi Nuremberg Rally. These illustrations enhance the dialogue by bringing in the fields of media, psychoanalysis and perception, and symbolism; all major contributors to ideological formation. While this is a plus point the space given over to an assessment of the macro-ideologies (chapter 6)—Liberalism, Socialism and Conservatism—should have been expanded as it is to these three that most of the world looks for their political reasoning. A couple of pages to each does scant justice, and while Freeden has covered these in greater depth in other volumes that he has authored, such as Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), a little more information on these three giants would have proved useful.

Arguably the most contentious sections arise at the end with Freeden’s conclusion and its subtitle of ‘Why Politics Can’t Do Without Ideology’ (p. 122). Advocates of conservatism, who advance the notion that conservatism is a disposition or innate reaction as opposed to an abstract theory, will doubtless dispute Freeden on this point. Where Freeden would counter any criticisms is by his statement that the study of ideology is ‘the study of actual political thought—the concrete thinking of political communities and within political communities’ (p. 123). If this is so, conservatives cannot retract from the political communities and thus have to involve themselves in the ‘thought-practices’ circulating within. This is a debate that is ongoing, and as the study of ideology progresses so, it would appear, the arguments around what is and what is not ideology or political thought will develop. Freeden’s book, however, adds to our understanding of ideology and for that it needs to reach a wide audience.

Steve Bastow and James Martin’s Third Way Discourse: European Ideologies in the Twentieth Century is a more contextualized look at recent advancements in third way thinking from Italy to Britain. In its pages neo-fascism, green political theory and the ‘social democracy’ of New Labour are all extensively and engagingly analysed. As the expression ‘third way’ is widely used but little understood, the book commences with an explanation of why this mode of thought and action has made an impact across Europe in recent times. Fascinatingly, the authors chose to label this introductory chapter as ‘A Politics Beyond Antagonism?’. By choosing this terminology Bastow and Martin show how, though controversial, those favouring ‘third wayism’ have attempted to place their views as beyond left and right and to argue that they have the solution—the synthesis indeed—to the dialectical struggle that has created the ideological spectrum in the modern world. The tune that appears to be played most of all by these ‘third wayers’ is that of social democracy, and it is this renewal of social democracy that Anthony Giddens—probably the most famous intellectual spokesman for the values of the ‘third way’—has outlined, and from which Bastow and Martin commence their investigations of this strand of ideological thinking.

As with Freeden, Third Way Discourse analyses the macro-ideologies of Liberalism, Socialism and Conservatism in an intriguingly titled chapter ‘Ideology in Crisis: The “Repertoire” of The Third Way’ (pp. 21-45). What the authors are attempting to uncover is how this era of the third way has arrived and by seeking