

**Popular politics and the path to durable democracy.** By **Mohammad Ali Kadivar**. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 2022. 192pp. £100.00. ISBN 978 0 69122 913 3. Available as e-book.

Why do some new democracies survive and others fail? The Arab Spring led to an exponential increase in the scholarship on the power of civil resistance and how mass mobilization can end authoritarian rule. In *Popular politics and the path to durable democracy*, Mohammad Ali Kadivar uncovers the building blocks of durable democracies, elegantly bringing together insights from sociology and political science. The book pays close attention to the significance of civil society actors in sustaining mass mobilization, particularly when autocratic regimes are undergoing democratic transition.

To illustrate, contrast and challenge the main argument of the book, Kadivar combines statistical analyses, of original data on mobilization and democratic transitions, with five case-studies. From the quantitative chapter, readers learn that mobilization over time is associated with democratic survival; that democratic transitions with lengthy mass mobilizations have led to the emergence of democratic systems of higher quality; and that civil society is comparatively stronger post-transition. One of the book's main strengths lies in the author's attention to alternative explanations. After establishing statistical correlations that support the main argument, Kadivar takes readers through two successful examples of building durable democracy (Poland and South Africa), one failure without popular mobilization (Pakistan) and a comparison of the dynamics and outcomes in a failure (Egypt) and a partial success (Tunisia). The author effectively highlights the similarities between the presences of the Solidarity movement in Poland and the Congress of South African Trade Unions in South Africa during periods of mass mobilization. In particular, Kadivar points to how their relative presences shaped the civil society and the institutional structures as the democratic systems were taking shape.

At a time when democratic backsliding—sometimes referred to as the global wave of autocratization—is on the rise, this systematic and detailed account of transitions is a crucial reminder of the power of the people and of united campaigns. For instance, recent anti-democratic efforts in Poland, such as the weakening of the judiciary and continuous attacks on independent media, 'have faced serious resistance from civil society' which 'has slowed down the erosion of democracy ... to the extent that Poland has not experienced a full democratic breakdown like its neighbor Hungary' (p. 62). In contrast, Pakistan's 1988 top-down democratization process occurred in the absence of a grassroots-driven civil society. Without the involvement of civilian actors in shaping the democratic society, the country quickly relapsed to military rule.

The comparison of Arab Spring-prompted transitions in Egypt and Tunisia showcases the power of Kadivar's theoretical contribution. The longer the transition time, the more likely it is that a durable democratic system will be established. The quantitative analyses in the second chapter suggest that the chance of democratic survival in cases where the mobilization period only lasted one or two years was 50 per cent. In the case of Egypt, there was an 'absence of a united revolu-

tionary movement with a clear transition plan' (p. 78). Hence, after President Hosni Mubarak was toppled, the country returned to authoritarian rule within just two years. In Tunisia, the Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail, the country's largest trade union, proved to be a key actor with longstanding roots, bringing together different segments of Tunisian society. The short mobilization in Tunisia 'liberated a co-opted civil organization from the tight control of the former regime and enabled that organization to play a pivotal role in the transition period' (p. 118). As is evident from the case-studies of Poland and South Africa, unions that formed grassroots organizations during the periods of contestation had a better chance of resisting co-optation and maintaining relative autonomy, compared to the top-down government-formed unions.

The book successfully illustrates the importance of duration when understanding the consequences of mass mobilization. Bringing together multiple strands of research, including democratic survival and non-violent resistance, Kadivar demonstrates that political struggle is not an obstacle to newly established democracies. Instead, it plays a crucial role in solidifying the post-transition political environment. Without organized, unarmed grassroots support for democracy, even the most powerful nations will be unable to build functioning democratic institutions. This book will be of interest to scholars researching revolutions, uprisings and democratization, and it includes important lessons for pro-democracy activists. Importantly, Kadivar reminds readers that building a cohesive movement, which fights for overlapping goals in the interest of the people, is as important as toppling an autocratic leader.

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**Justice and international order: East and West.** By **Richard Ned Lebow and Feng Zhang.** New York: Oxford University Press. 2022. 304pp. £64.00. ISBN 978 0 19759 839 9. Available as e-book.

*Justice and international order* convincingly argues for combining eastern (mainly Chinese) and western (mainly American) discourses on justice to (re)construct the international order in the context of shifting relative power. This way, Richard Lebow and Feng Zhang push back against Samuel Huntington's prevalent 'clash of civilizations' wisdom, arguing instead that 'the most intense disputes over the meaning of justice [happen] within not between cultures' (p. 442). The book is bold and sweeping, presenting orders and 'pathways' to them, as 'something akin to ideal types' (p. 238). These ideal-type visions that Lebow and Zhang lay out offer important insights for scholars, practitioners and students.

Lebow and Zhang argue that disagreements over basic philosophical principles are a significant source of conflict in International Relations (IR). Namely, the authors state that the perceptions of the disadvantaged are critical to international relations and ordering. Here, Lebow and Zhang further contend that Chinese and western discourses on justice, for all their differences, argue similarly that 'it is in the true self-interest of people to adhere to norms and for elites to conform to their