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## CONTENTS

- Political Regimes and the Extractive  
Capacity of Governments: Taxation in  
Democracies and Dictatorships *José Antonio Cheibub* 349
- Why Do Formal Amendments Fail:  
An Institutional Design Analysis *Christopher P. Manfredi*  
and *Michael Lusztig* 377
- Federalism and Central Bank  
Independence: The Politics of German  
Monetary Policy, 1957–92 *Susanne Lohmann* 401
- Mobilization, Social Networks, and  
Turnout: Evidence from Japan *Gary W. Cox, Frances M.*  
*Rosenbluth, and*  
*Michael F. Thies* 447
- REVIEW ARTICLE
- Democracy and Dictatorship in Interwar  
Western Europe Revisited *Thomas Ertman* 475
- The Contributors ii
- Abstracts iii

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# ABSTRACTS

## POLITICAL REGIMES AND THE EXTRACTIVE CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENTS TAXATION IN DEMOCRACIES AND DICTATORSHIPS

By JOSÉ ANTONIO CHEIBUB

Recent political and economic transformations in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe have brought about a renewed interest in the incentives and capabilities of different types of political regimes to implement policies that are deemed necessary for economic development, in particular, policies aimed at increasing tax revenue. One central question is whether democracies can collect as much in taxes as dictatorships. This article addresses this question by examining whether regime type, classified as democracy or dictatorship, has a causal impact on a government's capacity to mobilize resources through taxation. On the basis of data gathered for 108 countries for the period between 1970 and 1990, the article concludes that observed differences across countries regarding the level of taxes collected by the government are not due to the fact that some are under a democracy and others under a dictatorship. Concerns about the inability of democratic regimes to collect taxes are, therefore, unfounded.

## WHY DO FORMAL AMENDMENTS FAIL?

AN INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN ANALYSIS

By CHRISTOPHER P. MANFREDI and MICHAEL LUSZTIG

Given the increasing importance of constitutional modification in Eastern Europe, Latin America, South Africa, Europe, and Australia, it is imperative to study systemically the conditions under which formal constitutional amendments are likely to fail. In this paper, the authors isolate conditions whereby the instrumental objectives of participants in the politics of constitutional modification threaten to overload the institutional capacity of the amending process. The proximate cause of amendment process overload is indeterminacy regarding the redistributive impact of the proposed change. Redistributive indeterminacy is a function of a rigid amending process, an institutional structure that encourages a large number of constitutional players and amendments which provide broad scope for judicial interpretation. The authors isolate two critical factors: the intensity of mass and elite preferences surrounding constitutional proposals and the structure of the amending process itself. They next trace these factors back to institutional variables to create a model to explain and predict constitutional failure in a range of contexts. Finally, they apply the model to highly visible recent constitutional failures in the United States and Canada.

## FEDERALISM AND CENTRAL BANK INDEPENDENCE

THE POLITICS OF GERMAN MONETARY POLICY, 1957–92

By SUSANNE LOHMANN

Two channels of political control allow elected politicians to influence monetary policy. First, political threats to the status, structure, or very existence of the central bank may force central bankers to comply with politically motivated demands on monetary policy. Second, politicians may use their powers of appointment to ensure that central bank appointees share their electoral and party-political goals. This paper derives the monetary policy outcomes obtained as a function of the degree of central bank independence (zero, partial, or full) and central bankers' types (partisans or technocrats).

Based on a case study of the 1957 and 1992 institutional changes to the German central banking system and a regression analysis covering the period in between, the author argues that the *formal* independence of the system is protected by its embeddedness in the institutions of German federalism and by the federalist components of its decentralized organizational structure. The *behavioral* independence of the German central bank fluctuates over time with the party control of federalist veto points. The Bundesbank is staffed with nonpartisan technocrats who are partially insulated from political pressures.

## MOBILIZATION, SOCIAL NETWORKS, AND TURNOUT

EVIDENCE FROM JAPAN

By GARY W. COX, FRANCES M. ROSENBLUTH, and MICHAEL F. THIES

The strategic elites model of turnout argues that elites mobilize more when the probability of their effort deciding the electoral outcome is greater. Although the literature assumes that this probability depends solely on how close the election is, logically it depends jointly on how many votes are needed to affect the outcome (closeness) *and* on how many additional votes elite efforts are likely to garner (vote yield). Because the vote yield of mobilizational effort varies with the social capital of the district that elites face, the level of elite mobilizational effort (hence turnout) should depend *interactively* on closeness and social capital. The authors test their predictions using data from Japanese lower house elections for the years 1967–90. Japan is an interesting test case both because its (former) electoral system differs from that for which the model was first developed and because the literature clearly stresses the role of elite mobilization through social networks but does not examine the particular hypotheses advanced here.

## DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP IN INTERWAR WESTERN EUROPE REVISITED

By THOMAS ERTMAN

Almost none of the conditions that, according to the latest research, favor democratic durability were present in Western Europe between the world wars. Yet only four Western European states became dictatorships during this period, whereas the others remained democratic despite economic crisis, an unhelpful international system, and the lure of nondemocratic alternatives. Several recent works offer new explanations for this pattern of interwar outcomes. Insofar as these works analyze the entire universe of Western European cases, they represent an important methodological advance. However, they remain too wedded to a class-coalitional framework to provide both a parsimonious and a historically accurate account of why democracy collapsed in some states but not in others. This article proposes an alternative explanatory framework that focuses on how political parties can shape associational life in such a way as to support or undermine democracy.