

cut points separating democracies from dictatorships when using continuous measures of democracy. Their analysis of institutional determinants of democratic transitions and survival present estimates from a large number of cut points so readers can make their own conclusions about the findings. Finally, while path models are subject to strong model specification assumptions, the editors make a convincing case for using them more frequently to model endogenous relationships.

The volume also has several important weaknesses. In some cases, hypotheses are dismissed without sufficient evidence. For instance, Hicken, Baltz, and Vassalai dismiss the hypothesis suggesting party system fragmentation discourages democratic transitions. However, their findings come from using the share of seats held by the largest party in the legislature as a proxy for fragmentation. While they argue that the concentration of power, not its fragmentation, decreases the risk of democratic transitions, this evidence is quite consistent with party system fragmentation arguments. Where opposition parties fail to form coalitions in electoral autocracies, ruling parties are able to dominate elections and maintain the regime.

Also, while the tests of Coppedge et al. stand out for their methodological sophistication, their predictions of contagion effects from neighbors raise questions about their findings. The predictions for Zimbabwe suggest that neighbor contagion effects increased before the transition between the Rhodesian regime and Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. It is unclear how the level of democracy in neighboring countries during the Rhodesian regime increased its level of democracy. There is also another increase in the neighbor contagion effect in the 1990s, presumably because of South Africa's democratic transition. However, it is difficult to imagine that Zimbabwe would have been less democratic in the late 1990s and 2000s without South Africa's transition to democracy.

Finally, the volume fails to test arguments linking authoritarian institutions like regime type and legislatures to democracy outcomes. While data coverage on some of these variables is limited relative to V-Dem's democracy measures, their important role in the literature on democratization seems to merit their inclusion. Nevertheless, this volume, with its rich findings and theoretical framework, is certain to become a go-to reference for scholars of democratization and democratic survival.

Protecting the Ballot: How First-Wave Democracies Ended Electoral Corruption. By Isabela Mares. Princeton:

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While the moment of democratization is typically tied to the adoption of universal suffrage, administering elections

is only the first step toward building a full democracy. Elections signal that political leaders are, in theory, open to competition and accountability. But candidates and politicians often manipulate elections, using tactics that include vote buying, coercion, threats, and outright fraud to secure victory.

As Isabela Mares explains in her new book, *Protecting the Ballot*, democratization of the electoral process is distinct from the transition to democratic elections. It requires new laws that define and penalize electoral corruption, new values that orient voters against corruption, and new campaign approaches that emphasize policy differences rather than material inducements. The technology of elections also changes in this process, toward ballot secrecy and voter autonomy. The politics of these reforms is little understood; Mares notes that “electoral integrity reforms have been an important but overlooked dimension of the process of democratization” (p. 209). There are ongoing and significant debates over why leaders embrace elections, but these may not explain why they later propose, or acquiesce to, electoral reforms.

Mares is interested in the “democratization of electoral practices” in the first-wave democracies of the French Third Republic, Imperial Germany, Britain, and Belgium across a period covering roughly the half-century between 1870 and 1920. *Protecting the Ballot* expands upon Mares's extensive body of work that has examined electoral malfeasance in early democratizers (i.e., Imperial Germany) as well as late democratizers (Eastern Europe). Here, Mares surveys a wide set of reforms that include sanctioning corrupt exchanges like vote buying and treating, curbing the use of state resources in campaigns, providing for voter autonomy through ballot envelopes or isolating spaces, and limiting the instance of fraud during ballot counting.

Theories of democratization emphasize macro-level structural variables to explain why leaders transition to democracy. Mares departs from modernization theorists, who argue that rising levels of economic development should reduce corruption, as well as from redistributive approaches, which emphasize elites' perceptions of future redistribution based on levels of inequality. She advances instead a microhistorical institutionalist account that emphasizes the resources and incentives of *legislators* as the primary political actors who initiate and pass reforms (p. 20). In particular, she identifies the political factors that produce coalitions in favor of reforms, focusing on the resources—either private funds or public governmental resources—available to elected officials. Mares draws on a rich set of parliamentary archives and debates for her qualitative historical analysis, combining it with quantitative evidence about individual legislators and roll-call votes on reform legislation.

Noting that politicians who succeed in a corrupt environment are unlikely to support reforms, Mares argues that legislators will tend to support reforms either when

(1) they face a resource disadvantage relative to other candidates, or (2) when the electoral or economic costs associated with electoral malfeasance rises. These conditions explain political alignments in favor of reform both in countries with stable party competition (Britain and Belgium) as well as in countries with dominant parties (Germany and France). For the latter set of cases, elite splits are particularly important in creating new coalitions in favor of reform. These splits produce fragmentation, and new factions may cooperate with one another against corrupt incumbents, or may differentiate themselves programmatically—rather than rely on illicit tactics (p. 47). Legislators are more likely to support reform when they lack access to resources, or when they face electoral costs from voters or members of opposing parties who object to corruption.

Mares's analysis proceeds with chapters devoted to each type of reform. This deeply historical account first describes the extent and variety of electoral malfeasance across the four cases—for example, treating and vote buying were prevalent in Britain, while misuse of state resources was widespread in Germany. It then elucidates the theory across the cases. Occasionally, reforms arose because parties were relatively similar in their access to resources, and the costs of reform were low. But in the cases of Germany and France, the economic conditions within districts, the strategic considerations in election runoffs, and new factions and parties campaigning on programmatic promises all facilitated coalitions in favor of reforms. Mares's quantitative analysis uses an impressive dataset on the French Third Republic, which includes personal attributes of legislators (partisanship, resources), campaign platforms, district characteristics (party competition, economic development, electoral brokerage), and votes on reform proposals. This allows her to go beyond structural factors, and to test competing hypotheses against one another to show how strategic electoral considerations change the reform landscape.

While Mares's historical analysis is meticulously detailed, providing us with an account of the people and issues at the heart of reform debates, it would have been interesting to hear more about some of the broader political developments of the era. For example, her argument about access to state resources echoes Martin Shefter ("Party and Patronage: Germany, England, and Italy," *Politics & Society*, 7(4), 1977; *Political Parties and the State: The American Historical Experience*, 1994), who posited that the timing of bureaucratic development and franchise extension explained whether parties relied on patronage. Where the state is protected by a "coalition for bureaucratic autonomy" prior to suffrage expansion, parties will be more likely to develop policy-based campaigns. Shefter also theorized that outsider parties, lacking access to state resources, will rely on programmatic appeals—and in doing so, will pressure patronage-dependent parties to

adapt. This aligns with Mares's findings about reform coalitions reflecting "extremes against the center" (pp. 65, 205), and with politicians campaigning on programmatic appeals facing cross-pressures when they also used illicit strategies.

In her conclusion, Mares draws implications for contemporary democracies. She notes the importance of moving beyond theories with few causal chains—theories that link inequality and democracy, for example—and instead developing causal pathways that link electoral conditions to reforms. Parties and legislators are likely to embrace reforms that equalize the playing field or penalize corrupt parties with monopolies over resources. But reforms can only succeed when these illicit practices are publicized, denounced, and penalized by law. Mares could have delved into the way party-building and programmatic politics change the party system, perhaps by substituting policy competition for illicit strategies. Democratization, particularly the move toward free(r) and fair(er) elections, implies some degree of policy responsiveness that might have affected when and how parties considered electoral reforms.

Protecting the Ballot is a significant contribution to our understanding of democratization, and to the way the electoral environment shapes, and is shaped by, norms about procedural democracy. It is essential reading for anyone concerned with corruption, clientelism, and fraud, both historically and today. Mares brings historical detail and analytical clarity to these debates, building on—and improving—a scholarly tradition that uses history to shed light on contemporary problems. Her account encourages us to look beyond the macro, slow-moving factors that shaped democracy in the long run, and instead to pinpoint the political conditions that propel incremental efforts to modernize and strengthen our democratic institutions.

Settling for Less: Why States Colonize and Why They

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Lachlan McNamee's short book on settler colonialism, *Settling for Less: Why States Colonize and Why They Stop*, is nothing short of excellent. In just 163 pages, excluding appendices, notes, and such, it gives us the theoretical tools to make sense of one of the macro-political processes that has shaped the contours of the modern world: settler colonialism. Although it is naturally associated with European colonization overseas, the Tibetans in China, the Rohingya of Myanmar, the Kashmiris in India, the Darfuris of Sudan, the Palestinians in Israel, and the Kurds in Iraq can testify that the practice of settler colonialism persists to this day. McNamee,