

for democracy in hard places. In India (Chapter 2), Varshney argues that elite *values* at the time of independence subsequently shaped elite *interests*, allowing the world's largest democracy to sustain itself. Similarly, comparing Benin and South Africa (Chapter 4), Reidl shows that historical conditions produced a set of elites who preferred to avoid redistribution, making them more interested in negotiated compromise and inclusive power-sharing agreements than hegemonic control. Meanwhile, Slater (Chapter 3) finds that the development of robust institutions and a preference for egalitarian nationalism during the authoritarian period have facilitated stable democracy in Indonesia. Likewise, Way (Chapter 5) argues that weak but persistent ruling parties from the communist period combined with robust media institutions enabled democratic “moments” in Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine that have nonetheless experienced contradictory effects from Russian influence. In Timor-Leste, Bermeo (Chapter 6) concludes that violent conflicts weakened authoritarian actors, created an inclusive nationalism, facilitated a competitive party landscape, and professionalized the military, all of which have helped democracy endure. Finally, Mainwaring and Simison (Chapter 7) find that the harrowing failures of Argentina's military dictatorship from 1976–1983 led to a decline in extremist parties and encouraged actors to mobilize for democracy, which explains Argentina's robust democratic institutions despite its long history of military rule.

Taking these two factors together—history and preferences—Mainwaring concludes the volume by providing a norms-based theory to explain why democracies survive in hard places (Chapter 8). In the cases with the strongest track records of democracy—Argentina, India, South Africa, and Timor-Leste—the failures and abuses of the previous authoritarian regimes encouraged actors to embrace democratic norms. This “repudiation of the past” did not occur in Benin, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, where we see more fluctuation in democratic quality over time. Drawing on evidence from the Varieties of Party (V-Party) dataset, Mainwaring provides empirical support for this argument, showing that in the cases with higher democratic resilience, parties exhibit lower illiberalism scores. This does not mean that democracy is “easy” in cases where actors have embraced democratic norms. For example, Varshney (Chapter 2) shows that India's democracy is primarily *electoral*, with severe deficits in *liberal* components. India's democratic quality also tends to deteriorate during periods of Hindu nationalist rule when elites in power are more illiberal in their orientation. Slater (Chapter 3) also warns that illiberalism poses the greatest threat to democracies “because it is the easiest for a single irresponsible elected politician to bring about” (p. 74).

This raises important conceptual questions about democracy and liberalism. Democracy remains a contested

concept, despite the abundance of attention it receives. Scholars disagree about what role attributes of liberalism should play in our definitions of democracy (see Varshney, Chapter 2, for example). The rising prominence of the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project, combined with the recent wave of scholarship on democratic backsliding, has reinvigorated these debates. Despite the importance of these concepts for core arguments in the text, *Democracy in Hard Places* does not attempt to provide conceptual clarity on the relationship between democracy and liberalism (e.g., Varshney in Chapter 2, Slater in Chapter 3, and Mainwaring in Chapter 8). As a result, the volume exhibits a certain degree of ambiguity about what democracy means and how we should measure it. While the contributors have commendably made efforts to speak to one another across chapters, the use of multiple measures of democracy (V-Dem, Polity, Freedom House) without addressing their conceptual implications muddles the findings somewhat. Of course, achieving conceptual and operational consistency is a common challenge for edited volumes.

Overall, *Democracy in Hard Places* is a welcome addition to the literature and expands our knowledge about the emergence and survival of democracy. As the contributors to this volume demonstrate, explanations of democracy based solely on structural conditions are woefully incomplete. While structural conditions may provide a more or less fertile ground for democratization, accounting for history and how this shapes actors' normative preferences allows us to understand better why democracy takes root.

**The Politics of Immigration Beyond Liberal States: Morocco and Tunisia in Comparative Perspective.** By

Katharina Natter. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

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The point of departure for this study of the impact of regime type on immigration policy is a puzzle the author came upon early in her research. Morocco, an authoritarian monarchy with a long history of restrictive immigration, introduced a liberal set of immigration reforms, including two regularization campaigns, in 2013. Tunisia, on the other hand, during its post-2011 “democratic transition” decade, was experiencing a flowering of political freedoms and of citizen involvement in politics, yet it hardened its already restrictive immigration policies. As Katharina Natter discusses, the existing literature suggests that liberal democratic states are expected to have more open and humane policies toward migrants than authoritarian regimes like that of Morocco. Hence, how can we explain what she terms this *illiberal* paradox—recalling

James Hollifield's *liberal paradox* (*Immigrants, Markets and States*, 1992)—that an authoritarian regime may enact more open migration policies than a democratic or democratizing one, like that of Tunisia?

Her argument is that autocracies (represented by the Moroccan case) are able (if they so choose) to implement open immigration regimes more easily than democracies (represented by post-2011 Tunisia) because of the relative freedom they enjoy from the legal constraints and domestic demands that characterize democracies (p. 10). Thus the primary focus of her study is the understudied explanatory power of regime type or the “regime effect” on immigration policy in the Global South (and to be clear, her focus is only on immigration, not on policy toward the emigration of Moroccan or Tunisian nationals abroad). To structure her inquiry she develops a three-fold typology of immigration policy *processes*: generic processes (the various roles of the bureaucracy); issue-specific processes (the challenges that immigration poses to sovereignty over people and borders as well as to national identity); and regime-specific processes (the centrality of the executive, the role of political parties, the importance of the judiciary). She then devotes five empirical chapters—two to each country plus a single chapter on historical background—to presentations rich with detail about the respective national histories and post-colonial development, a range of state institutions and functions, civil society advocacy, the role of individual policymakers and activists, the impact of international norms and reputational concerns on policymaking, and the gap between announced policies and implementation.

Natter's research spanned a decade, with extended periods of time spent in the field engaged in archival work, participant observation, and interviews with a range of policymakers, civil society activists, as well as international and diplomatic actors. The result is a work that not only offers a wealth of new empirical detail, but which also provides fascinating insights into the many-faceted roles of the bureaucracy and bureaucrats, civil society institutions and their activists, as well as national identity in the construction and implementation of immigration policy in these two North African states.

That said, a number of elements deserve discussion. First, I think the author overstates the argument for why these two North African countries constitute a particularly good choice or pairing for this study. By the author's own admission, the number of immigrants in Morocco has been and remains quite small (some 86,200 in 2014), raising questions about the actual domestic stakes involved in immigration policy and reform, regardless of regime type. In Tunisia, the numbers have also remained small (only 53,500 in 2014), unless one counts Libyans, some 500,000—5% of the Tunisian population (p. 153)—many of whom fled in the wake of the disintegration of the

Qaddafi regime. Yet, as Natter explains, for politico-historical reasons, these Libyans were not formally considered immigrants and were welcomed. Might this not then count as evidence of a more liberal policy in a democratizing Tunisia, thus challenging her characterization of its policy as more restrictive?

In addition, it is perhaps understandable in a work that has as its starting point the “regime effect” that external variables would receive less attention than domestic ones, but the coverage that is included of international organizations, international norms, and foreign policy makes clear the problem of attempting to attribute so much explanatory value to regime type alone. More striking is the almost total absence of economic variables whether domestic, regional or international.

Further, while Natter's treatments of the multifaceted political processes that affect the formulation and implementation of immigration policy are carefully researched and extremely rich empirically, they are also quite dense. This density, combined with a general lack of weighting of the examples to make clear what is most important for our understanding and for the building of her argument, can lead a reader to occasionally lose her way.

Nowhere is this clearer than in Chapter eight, where Natter summarizes the many important insights the comparison has generated. Her overarching conclusion is that it is not really regime type, but instead security imperatives—the need to legitimate the regime and protect state sovereignty—that largely dictate immigration policy. However, she then presents the many variables she has explored in the course of her research and which she has determined to have some impact on the formulation and implementation of immigration policy, but without a discussion of an order of hypothesized or demonstrated importance. Thus, even for someone who has never been a fan of parsimony, the list of variables is quite long: the size of the immigrant presence in comparison to the overall population; the degree of domestic politicization of the immigration issue; the various categories of immigrants and the role that racism may play in their reception and treatment; the symbolic rather than actual weight of policy changes; the fluidity in implementation at the margins that often exists as a result of lack of clear directives from the center. She also considers multiple variables associated with historical legacy, regime reputation, and national identity.

Finally, and to return to the initial categorization of Tunisia as a democracy as opposed to the authoritarian Morocco, more attention in a study focusing on regime type should have been devoted to hypothesizing the difference between immigration policy in a consolidated democracy versus a state involved in an apparent democratic transition. While no study can cover events up to the date of publication (in this case, 2023), since

mid-2021 Tunisian President Kais Saied has in fact been gradually dismantling the democratic gains of the 2011 Tunisian revolution. Natter could not have been expected to anticipate all of this, but she could have included an update or reconsideration of the initial puzzle and her argument the light of Tunisia's clear and increasing authoritarian turn.

These concerns notwithstanding, the author has provided wonderful insights into the functioning of the Tunisian and Moroccan states, exposed a host of potential drivers of immigration policy, and problematized the place of regime type in the hierarchy of variables shaping this policy. Just as important, she has challenged the usefulness of the Global North-Global South binary in thinking theoretically, not only about immigration policy, but also about broader challenges to state sovereignty and security.

**The Modern British Party System.** By Paul Webb and Tim Bale. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. 416p. \$115.00 cloth, \$40.00 paper.  
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One of the early signs of the outstanding quality of this book is how the authors Paul Webb and Tim Bale subvert and transcend the title of their own book during its first chapter twice over. First, they introduce not “the party system” but the multitude of party systems that developed since devolution in the late 1990s. Second, they move beyond talking about party systems in Britain and instead consider the entire United Kingdom, thus including Northern Ireland, which too often remains ignored in scholarly debates about UK party politics. Admittedly, the discussion on Northern Ireland is limited (pp. 28–37), largely because, except for the Conservatives’ “confidence and supply” deal with the DUP under Theresa May (2017–19), its altogether idiosyncratic party system is too much of an outlier to warrant much consideration in the wider field of UK-wide party politics.

In essence, this is a book about change, not just change in the British party system but also change in party politics more widely over recent decades. It looks at erosion of the traditional two party-system, the rise of new parties, and the changing electoral geography across the United Kingdom. It also covers the changing relationship between society and parties through processes of realignment and dealignment and the changing nature of party competition. It includes detailed treatments of the modernization of party machines and party communication, the decline in party membership, the increase in party funding and spending, and the remaining capacity of parties to fulfill their political functions in an age of discontent and dissatisfaction with party politics.

This is a second edition of a book by Paul Webb from 2000, adding Tim Bale, who previously coauthored a multitude of articles about party politics with Webb and is a renowned expert on comparative party politics who has written extensively on both the major British parties. It is a highly warranted second edition, given the considerable change in British party politics over the past two decades, first, through the processes of devolution in Scotland and Wales, and second, during the previous decade through the contentious and cross-cutting issue of Brexit—which does not take center stage but makes crucial appearances in every chapter of the book.

The first three chapters trace and explain changes in the party system and paint a picture of periodic realignments, most recently through Brexit; these changes were driven largely by the adaptive strategies of parties to the replacement of social cleavages and a more systematic gradual process of dealignment, an unmooring of the electorate from its erstwhile party loyalties. The latter is argued to have less to do with cognitive mobilization (pp. 90–95) or class secularization (i.e., “the process by which social classes are said to have lost their physical, ideological and cultural cohesion,” p. 95), and perhaps more with party strategies. Labour’s repeated shifting of its ideological position to the center has “released” traditional supporters from their loyalties and moved them into the pool of swing voters over whom parties now compete freely: “whenever the party has de-emphasized its appeal to the working class, this appears to have stimulated a degree of class and partisan dealignment” (p. 100).

The next three chapters show how parties compete in this changing electoral environment, focusing on their general ideological approach, their adaptive movements in the policy space to attract voters, and their embrace of modern communication and marketing approaches. Again, the parties are presented as agents rather than victims of (or mere response mechanisms to) change. Hence, although British party politics (mainly Labour vs. Conservatives) of the past 50 years or so does predominantly follow expected Downsian patterns of centripetal competition, the most recent decade especially has shown that under certain circumstances—Labour under Corbyn and Conservatives under Johnson—parties can deviate from this and manage to take considerable numbers of voters with them, however temporarily.

The next part of the book focuses on the changing patterns of internal party politics (chaps. 7–9). Although emphasizing some patterns of decline in party discipline and party membership, the authors reject the notion of “parties in decline” and argue that it is, just as within the electoral arena, rather a matter of parties having to adapt to changing circumstances. And they provide plenty of evidence of the past few decades being a period of professionalization and of the enhanced capacity of modern British parties in terms of campaign coordination and