



Volume 14 ∞ 2016-2017

Democracy & Society

A PUBLICATION of the CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY and CIVIL SOCIETY

Corruption and Institutions in Democracy

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 **Corruption and Institutions in Democracy**
Jennifer Raymond Dresden
- 6 **Can International Conventions against Corruption Influence National Policy? Initial Evidence from Latin America**
Jay Coombs and Gerardo Berthin
- 10 **Evaluating India's Democracy: A Political Party Perspective**
Sameen Zehra
- 12 **Developing Programmatic Parties and Combatting Corruption: Political Party Aid as a Remedy to the Institutional Roots of Tunisia's Instability**
Cabell F. Willis
- 16 **(Re-)Examining the "Jasmine Revolution": Tunisia's Youth and (Re-)Activated Citizenship" Post-Ben Ali**
Matt Gordner
- 20 **Presidential Elections in Russia: Running for the status quo**
Paul Bochtler and Theresa Lütkefend
- 23 **Analysing Quick Impact Projects: Democratization, Corruption, and the Quick Impact Culture**
Eric Thomsett
- 26 **Book review • Thieves of State By Sarah Chayes, Review by Renu Singh**

Democracy and Governance Studies in an Era of Democratic Crisis: A Letter to Students

BY MA DIRECTOR DR. DANIEL BRUMBERG

Dear Students,

I am writing to offer my thoughts on the current state of politics in the United States and how we might respond in our own Master's program. I am particularly worried, as I am sure many of you are, about the genesis, nature, and direction of the Trump Presidency. I should say at the outset that I have pondered for many days whether or not I should write this letter. As Director of Democracy and Governance Studies at Georgetown University, I have worked to foster rigorous academic standards, objective inquiry and fact-based analysis. My job, along with that of our Associate Director Jennifer Dresden—and all of our talented faculty—is not to promote a political agenda or ideology, but to impart the analytical tools necessary for you to make *your* difference in a vast range of fields and endeavors. Your capacity to make your mark depends in part on having professors who do not preach but rather teach. I have tried to remain loyal to that proposition, and it is precisely for this reason that I hesitated to write this note.

But in recent weeks I have come to realize that I cannot avoid addressing the Trump issue. Indeed, I have to re-think my approach not only to teaching

and my role in our program, but to the entire mission of Democracy and Governance Studies. We are not living in ordinary times; the challenges are different and so must be our strategies. As Trump himself stated in his inaugural address, we are in a moment of profound change. We are at a rare turning point in the evolution of a political system. How each of us proceeds will, in small but not unimportant ways, help determine the direction of the US (and in many ways the world) for decades to come. Under such potentially revolutionary circumstances, we must look beyond the everyday roles that we play in our universities, professions, and society and envision new approaches to our endeavors in the classroom and beyond. We must take a stand and imagine how to adapt our professions—and in this case our MA program—to a new and perilous challenge.

We are at a rare turning point in the evolution of a political system.

[Cont'd, Page 3]

CORRUPTION AND INSTITUTIONS IN DEMOCRACY

• From the Associate Director •

Welcome to the latest issue of *Democracy & Society*. This publication reflects the hard work of editor-in-chief **Tom Williams** and assistant editor **Manuel Ayulo**, with support from former editor **Sundar Ramanujam**. It has been a busy year here at the Democracy and Governance Program.

You will have noticed already that our former Associate Director, **Yonatan Morse**, is not the author of this issue's letter. Dr. Morse left Georgetown to join the faculty of the University of Connecticut in August 2016. He remains a good friend of the program and we continue to be grateful for his hard work over the years.

This year we welcomed our **11th incoming class** to the Democracy and Governance M.A. program. They have enriched our community with a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives. We are particularly proud to continue the international character of our program, with students joining us from Peru, Colombia, and Indonesia. We also bid farewell to **13 graduating students**, who are beginning or continuing exciting careers in the sector.

We welcomed two new faculty members to the program this year. **Molly Hageboeck** of Management Systems International came on board to teach program design and evaluation. **Meir Walters**, an alumnus of the Georgetown Ph.D. program and a recent hire at the U.S. State Department, took over our course on hybrid regimes. Both bring extensive experience and expertise to the classroom and we have been pleased to have them.

You can find more about the many events and developments of the 2016-2017 academic year in the **Program Highlights** section of this issue.

We have also made some changes to *Democracy & Society* itself. In keeping with the times, we have launched a blog, **Democracy & Society Online**, featuring timely commentary from students, faculty, alumni, and friends of the program. The site provides thought-provoking analysis of interest to students and professionals across the democracy, human rights, and governance sector. Check it out at www.democracyandsociety.net and contact the editors if you are interested in becoming a contributor.

As part of this reorganization, we will also be shifting the print edition of *Democracy & Society* to a single, annual issue. This will enable our editorial team to ensure that the blog remains an active space with high-quality content.

This issue of *Democracy & Society* opens with a special contribution from our Program Director, **Professor Daniel Brumberg**. His essay, originally crafted as a letter to our

students, offers reflections on what recent political events in the United States mean for American democracy and how our program might begin to respond.

The remaining contributions to the issue focus on the central theme of **Corruption and Institutions in Democracy**. As the development community increasingly shifts its attention to the ways that governance failures impact its work, questions of corruption and institutional strength become increasingly central to the work of our sector. This issue focuses particularly on the intersection of corruption, institutions, and democratic quality.

An insightful analysis from **Jay Coombs** and **Gerardo Berthin** evaluates the ability of international efforts to effectively improve anti-corruption initiatives in Latin America and identifies some of the shortcomings of these programs.

Several of our contributors focus on political parties as key mediating institutions in democracy, as well as the institutional challenges that they face in many countries. **Sameen Zehra** offers an analysis of political parties in India. The analysis reveals that while political parties have served to deepen democracy in important ways, they remain subject to some serious institutional shortcomings related to campaign finance and informal dynastic trends.

Two additional contributions shift the focus to Tunisia and its struggles to build viable and competitive politics after the Ben Ali regime. **Cabell Willis** offers an assessment of the main political parties in Tunisia, identifying them as important opportunities for institution building and economic and political stabilization. **Matt Gordner** discusses several remaining challenges to democratization in the country, including a failure to address many members of the prior government's history of corrupt practices.

The theme of political parties continues in the contribution from **Paul Bochtler** and **Theresa Lütkefend**. These authors examine the absence of major coalitions among opposition parties in Russia, considering a number of contributing factors.

Finally, **Eric Thomsett** offers a critique of quick impact projects in post-conflict contexts. He identifies several ways in which this approach to development and stabilization may be under-evaluated at best and counter-productive or even corruption-promoting at worst.

The issue concludes with a review of Sarah Chayes' *Thieves of State: Why Corruption Threatens Global Security* by **Renu Singh**. The book offers insights into the role of corruption and governance failures in sparking instability.

We hope that you enjoy this issue and we invite you to continue to be part of the conversation by following our blog at www.democracyandsociety.net. You can find more information about the Democracy and Governance Program at <http://government.georgetown.edu/democracy-and-governance>.

JENNIFER RAYMOND DRESDEN, *Ph.D.*, is the Associate Director of the *Democracy and Governance Program*.

 BRUMBERG, *Continued from Page 1*

I must emphasize that this challenge and how we meet it is not a matter of party politics. I do not care a fig whether those who answer my invitation to rethink and re-imagine our MA program are Democrats, Republicans or Independents. This is not a partisan agenda. Nor is it a political effort simply to discredit Trump or the diverse groups who have embraced his agenda. Indeed we need to understand the roots of the movement for which he claims to speak. But understanding must also be a part of a larger project of insuring that the solutions proposed by our new President strengthen rather than undermine - or even destroy - our political system. A utopian campaign to reject or eliminate the “establishment” used to be part of the New Left. It is now part of the new or “alt-right,” a movement whose most vocal advocate now sits very close to the Oval Office. While this ideology is clear in what it seeks to destroy, it offers little coherent vision of what it will build. And it is an ideology carried into the White House on a torrent of organized and well directed resentment and hate—even as it claims to speak in the name of national “unity.” We can’t sit by and pretend that this is just another chapter in US political history. In his zeal to “Make America Great Again,” Trump would burn to a crisp every law, norm and precept; he would impose his grand mission on our parties and institutions, transforming or even obliterating anything that stood in his way. We can and will continue to debate a thousand policies, but the real threat is to the institutions of democracy. This is an unrivaled domestic challenge that must be addressed in ways that transcend partisan politics or narrow political agendas.

Before turning to what I think are some of the key elements—and dangers—of Trump’s project, and suggesting how we at Democracy and Governance Studies might respond, I want to offer a few personal words as to why I find Trump’s vision so dangerous. As some of you who have taken my courses know, I am the son of a Polish Jewish immigrant who, on September 1, 1939—the day the Nazis invaded Poland—fled with his parents from Warsaw. On their perilous journey they came within feet of Nazi planes whose bullets struck some unfortunate souls just across the road. After living and hiding in Lithuania, their escape took them through Russia, on to Japan, and finally to the US. In his adopted country, my father—Abraham Brumberg—attended high school, mastered English, served in the army (albeit as a corporal behind a typewriter), and then attended Yale on the GI Bill. In the ensuing decades he again served his adopted country as chief editor of a major US Government journal on Soviet affairs. But more than this, he became a chronicler of the ravages of totalitarian movements, ideologies and leaders. And, in his own very pragmatic but thoughtful manner, he was an advocate of the imperfect liberal democratic order and the country that had given him and his parents refuge—thus making it

possible for his own two children to grow up and prosper as American citizens.

In light of this saga—which is a typical American story in so many ways—I have wondered how my father might respond had he lived to watch the sudden and relentless growth over the last few months of a movement that would seem to him so deeply and sadly familiar. Did he and my grandparents come all this way to live through the rise of yet another politician promising to save those who felt cheated and scorned by the system and its “elite?” Did they come all this way to see the scapegoating of minorities—and to see, among other things, the Jewish community suddenly feeling like this is not home? Perhaps he would simply despair in the face of all this. Or perhaps he would struggle to put his fears and memories aside and focus on the task ahead. Pointing to the spate of hate crimes directed over the last six months at mosques, synagogues and Hispanic churches he would surely get angry, but he would also insist that the time had come to take a stand and forge a strategy. Indeed, those who took the streets in the millions on January 21, in

*While this ideology is clear
in what it seeks to destroy, it
offers little coherent vision of
what it will build.*

dozens of US cities and around the world, would encourage him in the thought than rather than giving in to anguish we should focus on saving (and perhaps rebuilding) a political system that is in crisis and under dire threat.

And so I’d like to imagine my father giving me a pat on the back and even some fatherly (if critical) advise about an old question: “what is to be done?” And, as I try to think about the most effective response, my thoughts pivot around these two axes: First, we must understand the new political challenge we are facing, where it comes from, what its key components are. Second, we must collectively discuss and imagine how an MA program like ours—to my knowledge the only Democracy and Governance Program in the entire US—should evolve and adapt—and in ways that allow our students to sustain their diverse interests and goals while grasping and responding to the unprecedented challenges facing our country.

On the question of understanding, I would suggest that the current political crisis is a consequence of a perfect storm of several factors and events, many of which you are familiar with. They include but are not limited to the following three factors:

First, an eight-year process of economic recovery that in the aggregate has been a remarkable success story, but by

other measures has lifted some boats while leaving others barely afloat. Current disparities are not a consequence of shipping US jobs abroad. Rather, they are rooted in the relentless growth of the high-tech sector, the automation of industry, and increased globalized trade that is itself part of the post-industrial transformation of economies around the world, including our own. Collectively, these dynamics have shrunk the middle class and, perhaps more importantly, punished those who lack the education and global networks needed to prosper in the new environment.

Second, a parallel process—unfolding for at least two decades—whereby US society has become divided into distinct socio-cultural and political sub-cultures that do not know each other and have little reason or incentive to reach across boundaries. The participants in these divided worlds experience life in very different ways, encountering

*Now it is a majority—
however slim—of the
electorate that fears
exclusion.*

globalization as either foreign and hostile or familiar and friendly, and reap the benefits or paying the costs according to whether they participate in this great transformation or are left out. The growth of new social media has only sharpened these divisions. It has done so by allowing each group to remain in its own world, especially through “news” programming and on-line forms of communication (and propaganda) that comfort and thus reinforce each group’s assumptions, values and prejudices. The resulting divide is not just huge, it is *existential*.

Third, there is a growing dysfunction in our local and national politics that has institutionalized these divides. Part of this dynamic is “structural,” i.e. shifts over time in residency and location that were then reflected in and reinforced by decades of electoral “redistricting.” But the latter was not wholly determined by population shifts. Instead, our national representatives pushed redistricting, and their efforts have much to do with the death of bi-partisanship in Washington. In its place, we now have a zero-sum political culture. Perhaps the most dramatic manifestation of this was the effective declaration of war against President Barack Obama by his opponents—beginning on day one of his presidency.

But the icing on this cake is how the above dynamics worked in concert with our electoral system to create an outcome that not only mirrored our country’s deep divisions but make it possible for the “forgotten” sector—as Trump called his supporters in his inaugural address— to win the November 8 presidential election *even though Trump lost the popular vote by nearly 3 million*. This is because Electoral

College voters are awarded proportionally *and* disproportionately: i.e. every state gets electors chosen according to its population, but each state also gets an additional two electors regardless of size (as they do with Senators). In our most recent election, this allowed sparsely populated states—where many of the “forgotten” are concentrated—to have a vastly disproportionate impact on the electoral outcome. Thus, *even if a significant majority of the US voting populace utterly rejects his entire worldview*, Trump’s decisive 306 Electoral College votes may have given him the means to impose a revolutionary agenda.

This then is double crisis. On the one hand it is a crisis of legitimacy. By this I want to make clear that I am *not* suggesting that Trump is an illegitimate president, not certainly in the legal or constitutional sense. But as my students who have read studies of “divided societies” well know, in democracies that make it possible for electoral winners to simply shut out their opponents—or to use electoral victories to take away the opponent’s hard won rights— those who lose elections will eventually see their democracy as illegitimate. Indeed, because democracy only works when today’s electoral losers have some reasonable hope of being tomorrow’s winners, democracy ceases to secure the loyalty of all when and if it raises the possibility of permanent political exclusion or disenfranchisement.

Now, to be fair, we should note that the fear of electoral (and socio-cultural) exclusion was one that powerfully motivated many of *Trump’s followers* to vote. But having won, the shoe is now on the other foot, and in ways that seem uncomfortable if not intolerable. *Now it is a majority—however slim—of the electorate that fears exclusion*. And it is this fear that brought millions into the streets on January 21 for the “Women’s March.” Despite all the smiles and good feeling, the marchers surely knew that their rights might now be endangered. These rights could be obliterated by a president bent on avenging estranged sectors of our society that have indeed suffered. These sectors constitute a large and important plurality—but one that contains within its sub-groups that do that does not share many of the values, hopes and dreams of the different groups and sectors who collectively constitute the majority. If key groups within this majority, such as Muslims, African Americans, Hispanics, Jews, LGBT, secular urban male and female professionals conclude that our democracy is moving in a direction that threatens their most precious values and interests, the entire US system will have a legitimacy crisis, not merely Mr. Trump.

This brings us to the second crisis afflicting our political system: *the crisis of autocratization*. Trump understands that the window for achieving his as yet unclear socio-political transformation will be short. What is more, he knows that the “majority” that supposedly backs him faces another America—one that has a massive voice and huge numbers. And it is for this reason, I would argue, that Trump feels he must not only achieve his aims quickly, but forcefully and in a way that by-passes if not violates the basic institutional

norms and rules of our system. For these purposes Trump is relying on two levers: first the lever of populist mobilization focused on communities who feel most *ideologically* afflicted by, and thus opposed to, an East-coast/West-coast or “elite” status quo that supposedly favors immigrants, ethnic and religious minorities, feminist urban activists and liberal professionals. The second lever is an assault not merely on independent media *but on the very notion that there is an objective truth*. The notion of an “alternative fact”—as Trump Adviser Kellyanne Conway has put it—that exists by virtue of the President’s assertion of such a “fact,” could be as dangerous—perhaps more—than even the white nationalist ideology that helped carry him to the White House. As George Orwell once noted, the very idea of a rational, pluralistic democratic politics is based in part on the premise that political power cannot determine truth itself. Jettison that idea, and you create the foundations for arbitrary power and even despotism. Trump’s threat to expel the White House correspondents, his browbeating of CNN, his insistence, despite clear and massive evidence to the contrary, that 1.5 million people attended his inauguration; and most recently, his outrageous assertion that Hillary Clinton won the popular vote because 5 million “illegal immigrants” voted—all of these lies suggest that Trump intends to turn the White House into a vehicle of state propaganda. This constitutes a crucial—if insufficient—step on the path to autocratization.

The second lever is an assault not merely on independent media but on the very notion that there is an objective truth.

What then is to be done? What can we, students and faculty in this country’s only full Masters program in Democracy and Governance Studies, do in the face of these challenges, and the potentially massive political change happening on our own doorstep? I honestly am not sure, but I would offer, at least to get the discussion started, a few ideas.

First, we need a course, or a series of special lectures, that highlight problems of—and the nexus between—democratization and autocratization *in Western democracies*. The rise of Trump has historical precedents that our students need to understand. Such a course, or lecture series, would begin with a discussion of the breakdown of Western democracies in the 1930s, but would then focus on present challenges to democracy, not merely in the US, but in the wider global arena (Western Europe in particular).

Second, we should give more prominence in our curriculum to the crucial link between conflict and political

change. As students who have taken my courses know, this is an issue I spend a lot of time discussing. We need to do more of this, perhaps by working more closely with the Conflict Resolution Program to focus on how social and identity conflicts can be managed—or magnified—by different democratic institutions.

Third, we need classes, readings or lectures that address the phenomenon of “globalizing authoritarianism,” and its many social, institutional, ideological and strategic facets. The much discussed role of Russia in the 2016 elections is only one example of a global dynamic that began to unfold at least a decade ago but which now may be reaching its zenith. The genesis, nature and most of all impact of this dynamic should be of interest to all our students.

These are just some initial ideas. What we need now, before anything, is a discussion about how our own MA program might engage the current political crisis in the US. I would like to hear your ideas, and thoughts from our faculty. Let us consider a meeting around this topic in mid-March, when the sun begins to reappear and can sustain our work and discussions.

Best to all of you.
Daniel Brumberg

Can International Conventions against Corruption Influence National Policy? Initial Evidence from Latin America

BY JAY COOMBS AND GERARDO BERTHIN

Introduction

International conventions against corruption establish common standards and practices that signatory countries should aspire to achieve. These conventions facilitate cooperation among countries and they promote the ideals of harmonized law enforcement, legal and institutional frameworks. However, they are not sufficient to promote and strengthen national anti-corruption policy development. Initial evidence from five cases in Latin America provide valuable lessons, since each has been “building policies” and implementing anti-corruption measures for over two decades but with divergent results. Overall, there are no clear examples of drastically improved anti-corruption policies. We argue that though countries sign and ratify international anti-corruption conventions, this is insufficient to build robust national anti-corruption policies and strategies.

The evidence from Latin America reflects the complexity of political and policy interactions and the role of human, organizational, and institutional capabilities in each country. It also points out that conventions do provide a referential regulatory framework but without clear direction and leadership at the national level, their influence to effect efficient and enduring anti-corruption policies is limited. In this paper, we examine some of the factors that affect the extent to which national anti-corruption policies intersect with international commitments to anti-corruption. We begin with a brief literature review, followed by a discussion of the theory of change that guides this study. Finally, we draw on the evidence from five Latin American countries to highlighted policy interventions in practice.

with two key questions when complying with international anti-corruption conventions. First, they need to answer what types of *structural reforms* are necessary to comply with these conventions? Second, countries must answer which types of *processes* are likely to be successful to enact such reforms? Common suggestions to the former are often to create new or strengthen existing legal institutions, which are considered paramount to control corruption. Research and analyses have mainly focused on the first question,² while ignoring the second about approaches and strategies.³ Increasingly however, an adaptive approach to anti-corruption strategies, which the second question suggests is gaining salience.

An emerging trend is to treat corruption as a multi-faceted phenomenon.⁴ Indeed, international conventions have themselves not confined corruption to a singular definition because this narrows the universe of what can be considered as unethical, illegal and criminal practices.⁵ And while there have been efforts to generate a taxonomy of corruption,⁶ any strategic policy response to corruption will be contingent on how the problem is understood, and the policy and political options that are available within the national context.⁷ The conventions point states toward an aspirational ideal to address corruption, but they cannot prescribe how this is to be achieved.

Anti-corruption conventions can be useful tools to build political and technical capacities.⁸ They can help state parties to strengthen institutions, promote measures to prevent corrupt practices, and address breaches. However, no one anti-corruption convention “is likely to be the silver bullet” that can solve the many manifestations of corruption.⁹ Furthermore, the corruption context is ever changing and governments increasingly have to be more dynamic and organic in their policy responses.¹⁰

The commonly used “principal-agent” approach attributes the paucity of measurable successes in fighting corruption to a “collective action problem.”¹¹ The argument is that, in an environment where corruption is deeply embedded, it is irrational to eschew corruption. Thus, corruption can only be solved, with a “big bang” approach, in which diverse actors commit to changing their behavior. But the prominence of the principal-agent approach also points to the insufficient analysis of anti-corruption national policy frameworks. The few studies that have been carried out demonstrate the difficulty and challenges of building anti-corruption policies. Corruption still is a highly sensitive and complex subject. Moreover, anti-corruption efforts must be multi-sectoral in approach; they must also simultaneously address elements of prevention, management, governance, and criminal sanctions.¹²

The brief literature review established that anti-corruption conventions identify the locus of corruption risks in government, and most have review mechanisms in place. However, they do not provide guidance to state parties on how to prevent and/or manage corruption domestically. This paper argues that along with international conven-

A Brief Literature

Corruption risks remain a serious challenge for all countries, but in particular for transition and developing countries, including in Latin America.¹ Despite numerous national and international efforts designed to prevent and sanction corrupt practices, countries still struggle to manage risks in the public sector. Countries are confronted

tions, purposeful, informed domestic action can facilitate a comprehensive response to corruption.

Theoretical Framework

States that commit to international anti-corruption conventions are additionally expected to create and implement endogenous theories of change to address this issue. The definition of a theory of change that this paper adopts is a practical tool to understand a successful transformation effort. In seeking to understand “what works and why,” particularly for complex governance and anti-corruption policies, one needs to unpack distinct elements of processes, such as design, implementation, tools, and constraints. The Theory of Change approach involves making explicit a set of assumptions in relation to preventing and/or reducing the risk of corruption. It could help states move beyond static indicators, such as perceptions of corruption, and into a more reflective and adaptive anti-corruption processes.¹³ This approach could shed light on the recurrent problem with analyzing anti-corruption – that reform revolves around institutions and the exchanges between organizational and individual actors. In this approach, principals and agents are *some of* the actors that facilitate or hamper the anti-corruption policy structure.¹⁴ Anti-corruption conventions set goals for state parties, but ultimately domestic actors, institutions and policy frameworks drive processes towards achieving these goals.

As illustrated in Table 1, the path to anti-corruption policy implementation include a number of variables, many of which are also preconditions.

When countries sign anti-corruption conventions, they do so most often due to external pressures than to domestic factors.¹⁵ Even so, for many signatory countries, these conventions *are* the only anti-corruption roadmap they have, and the only compliance review mechanisms by which their efforts can be evaluated. A theory of change

framework allows for a comprehensive mapping of national anti-corruption processes. Furthermore, states can use this reflective space to identify critical factors and junctures that can influence their policy outcomes. They can then assess what is actionable and possible and locate the boundaries of anti-corruption conventions in the domestic policy space. Strategically, this can help states in the short-term to tackle “low hanging fruits,” which they may leverage to address grand corruption issue in the long-term. A theory of change framework actively prompts policy-makers to make explicit their assumptions about expected performance, and ensures that no critical preconditions for success are ignored. This can support the realism of policy design by focusing on relationships and interactions that affect the anti-corruption policy process. Adopting theories of change for state-level anti-corruption policy development could provide states with stronger evidence-based evaluations and impact assessments. More importantly such an approach could provide critical analyses about the practicalities of implementing subsequent strategies.

Evidence from Latin America

Since transitioning from authoritarian and totalitarian regimes to more democratic systems, several countries in Latin America have been “building policies” and implementing anti-corruption measures for almost two decades. Generally, studies of anti-corruption policies are recent to Latin America. Where these studies have been conducted, they elucidate the challenges to build effective and influential anti-corruption policies. The Latin American countries we review do not have a unique or uniformed formula for developing and implementing anti-corruption policies.¹⁶

The evidence from the five Latin American countries show that developing and implementing anti-corruption strategies/policies is not linear. The experiences from Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Argentina and El Salvador show that anti-

Table 1. Theory of Change (Authors)

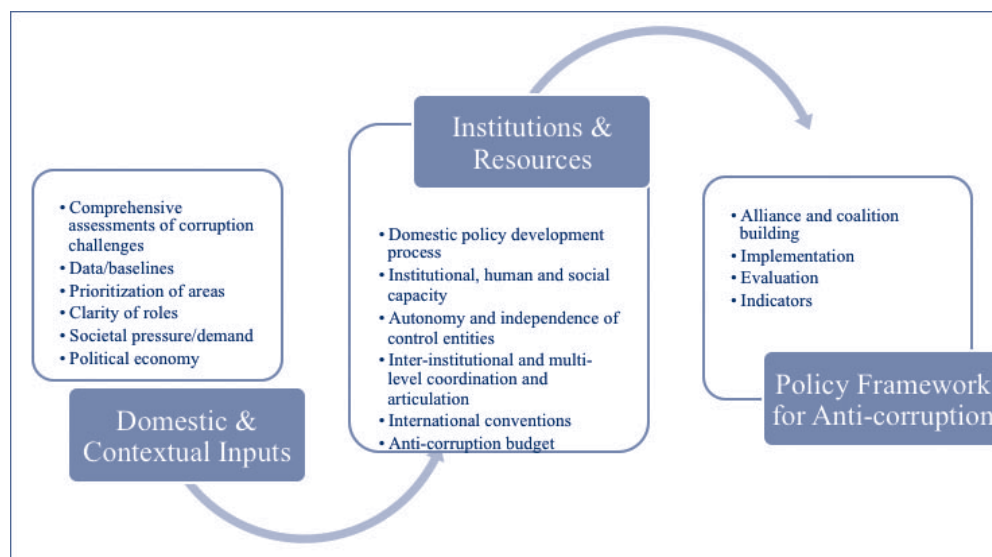


Table 2: Drivers of anti-corruption policies and strategies in Latin America

| Domestic Drivers | International Drivers |
|--|--|
| Political scandals | Demands from the business and/or economic sector to attract foreign investment to participate in regional and/or global free trade agreements. |
| Changes in government | Conditioning by international financial organizations |
| Policy reform processes and/or democratic governance | Pressure from international, regional and national, networks of NGOs, media and/or research centers. |
| Broader strategies (drug trafficking, organized crime) | The adoption of conventions and/or other international anti-corruption instruments, and their compliance |
| Demand from political leaders and civil society | Availability of Anti-corruption funding through donors. |

corruption efforts emanate from different political and policy motivations. These include: establishing a constitutional and reform process (Mexico); responding to recommendations of a national report (Chile); post ratification of Inter-American Convention against Corruption (Argentina); consolidating a broad anti-corruption agenda to address drug trafficking, and reform of national anti-corruption statute (Colombia); and responding to extensive social demand for transparency (El Salvador).

Each of the five countries we focus on has responded divergently to the need for preventing and dealing with corrupt practices. Though each country faces distinct challenges and corruption risks, being party to international conventions have not been the main driving force to drive anti-corruption efforts. In fact, the countries have not all decided to make use of institutional approaches in order to comply with these conventions. Similarly, each government chose various approaches to prevent and address corrupt practices. Still, a number of common features can be observed across the cases. For example, some countries have chosen to develop comprehensive national anti-corruption strategies, containing hundreds of measures while others have adopted more targeted policies aimed at improving the integrity, transparency and accountability in certain key public administration areas. Other have preferred to integrate anti-corruption measures in broader public sector reforms. Some countries have promoted transparent legislative and anti-corruption agendas with the goal of improving systemic weaknesses in their legislation.¹⁷

As is illustrated in Table 2, all five cases introduced anti-corruption policies and strategies to meet international economic and political expectations as well as domestic preferences and governance concerns. Countries generally identify with ideational values associated with anti-corruption conventions, this may be indicative of a certain willingness to commit to conventions for their associated outcomes. However, state parties to the convention often chose what aspects they wish to address and make prominent from each of the convention. This was the case of the five countries. Ultimately however, they embarked on processes

that turned out to be broad in scope and vague in the articulation of intended outcomes and results.

Another feature that emerged from the five cases is that they deployed varied anti-corruption mechanisms. These mechanisms were located across different entities and had an assortment of functions which generally lacked coordination and integration. In all the cases, there was no clear indication of policy coherence within mechanisms, with some being separate from the overall reform policy framework. This resulted on the one hand in the dispersion of efforts, and on the other, in the absence of compliance with most conventions' goals and recommendations.¹⁸

Conclusions

Despite some progress, few countries in Latin America have concluded a thorough analysis of corruption risks and attributed any significant success to international anti-corruption conventions. The limited assessments that are available, and which are mostly sponsored by international organizations, are not updated, and lack specific and measurable anti-corruption policies and outcomes. Notably, all of the five cases reviewed did not have clearly articulated change processes that were established at the outset. Available evidence points to the conduct of ad hoc actions that may not have directly contributed to integrated anti-corruption efforts at the country level.

To this extent, committing to international anti-corruption conventions provide signatory states with tools and frameworks to design strategies to address broad matters of corruption. These conventions however, are not a panacea for preventing and/or reducing corruption. This shows that countries should use them in conjunction with other, technical, institutional, and financial resources as well as societal commitments to directly address corruption.

Beyond identifying the constraints for anti-corruption policies in Latin America, our concern has been to identify other contextual factors that should link the development and implementation of domestic anti-corruption policy and the aid of anti-corruption conventions. Policy-making and politics are means not ends to design, articulate, implement

and assess anti-corruption policies. While more research is needed to explicate these links, the available evidence from Latin America shows that addressing corruption requires states to define and adopt measurable and context specific policies and strategies. At the same time, states must acknowledge the temporal dimensions of anti-corruption efforts and be open to adjust such strategies accordingly. This is the added value of embedding national commitments in the ethos of the international conventions.

JAY CROOMBS is a Ph.D. candidate in the Politics Department at the University of York, UK. She received an MSc in Development Policy and Planning from the University of Wales, Swansea.

GERARDO BERTHIN graduated from Georgetown University with a M.A. in Latin American Studies and is now a Senior Associate of the Democracy and Governance Sector at Tetra Tech.

ENDNOTES

1 Susan Rose-Ackerman & Bonnie J. Palifka. *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform*, 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 2016; and, Gerardo Berthin. "Democratic Governance and Corruption in Latin America," in Richard L. Millet, et al, *Latin American Democracy: Emerging Reality or Endangered Species?* 2nd, ed., Routledge, 2015, pp.244-263.

2 See e.g. Ophelie Brunelle-Quraishi "Assessing the Relevancy and Efficacy of the United Nations Convention against Corruption: a Comparative Analysis," *Notre Dame Journal of International & Comparative Law* 2012, 2(1): 101-166; Hannes Hechler, et.al, *Can UNCAC address grand corruption? A political economy analysis of the UN Convention against Corruption and its implementation in three countries*. Norway: CMIU4, 2012; and Bryane Michael, "The Effective Implementation of the Anti-Corruption Conventions. *Journal of European Union Criminal Law* (EUCRIM 2008) 3(4): 128-133.

3 Jesper Johnsen, et.al. "Mapping evidence gaps in anti-corruption. Assessing the state of operationally relevant evidence in donors' actions and approaches to reducing corruption." U4 Issues Paper No. 7, 2012; James H. Anderson, and Cheryl W. Gray, "Policies and Corruption Outcomes" in *Anticorruption in Transition 3. Who is Succeeding...and Why?* The World Bank, 2007, pp. 43-77; and Michael Johnston, *Syndromes of Corruption: Wealth, Power, and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

4 See e.g. Heather Marquette and Caryn Peiffer. "Collective Action and Systemic Corruption." Paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, University of Warsaw 29 March-2 April, 2015; Francis Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014; Arne Disch, et.al. *Anti-Corruption Approaches: A Literature Review*. Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), 2009; and Johnston, Ibid.

5 Brunelle-Quraishi, Ibid; Hechler, Ibid; and Michael, Ibid.

6 Jennifer Bussell, "Typologies of corruption: a pragmatic approach, 2015; Berthin (2015), Ibid; Fukuyama, Ibid; and Johnston, Ibid.

7 Mark Philp and Elizabeth David-Barrett, "Realism about political corruption." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 18 (2015):387-402.

8 See e.g. Brunelle-Quraishi, Ibid; and Florencia Guertzovich, "Effectiveness of International Anticorruption Conventions on Domestic

Policy Changes in Latin America, Open Society Foundation/Transparency International, 2011.

9 Guertzovich, Ibid.

10 Rose-Ackerman & Palifka, Ibid; and Berthin (2015), Ibid.

11 Anna Persson, et.al., "Why anticorruption reforms fail – Systemic corruption as a collective action problem,"

Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions, 26 (3) (July 2013), pp. 449–471.

12 See e.g., Gerardo Berthin, ed., *An Initial Reflection of Anti-Corruption Policies: Selected Inputs for the Implementation of The United Nations Convention Against Corruption from the Latin American Experience*, UNDP/ UNODC, 2014; Karen Hussmann and Hannes Hechler "The Construction of Anti-corruption policies in practice: Implications to Implement the UNCAC," U4 Brief No. 19, August 2008; and Karen Hussmann, "The Construction of anti-corruption policies in practice: What can be learned to implement Article 5 of the UNCAC? Comprehensive Study of Six Cases: Georgia, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Tanzania and Zambia," U4 Report, 2007.

13 See e.g., James Connell and Anne Kubisch. "A Theory of Change Approach to Planning and Evaluating Complex Community Initiatives," in *New Approaches to Evaluating Comprehensive Community Initiatives*, Vol 2, edited by Karen Fulbright-Anderson, Washington: Aspen Institute, 1998, pp 1-30.

14 Persson, Ibid.

15 Brunelle-Quraishi, Ibid; Guertzovich, Ibid; and Michael, Ibid.

16 See e.g., Berthin (2014), Ibid; Hussmann and Hechler, Ibid.

17 Berthin (2014), Ibid; Hussmann and Hechler, Ibid.

18 This in particular related to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. UNDP. *Anticorruption Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean*, UNDP, 2011.

Evaluating India's Democracy: A Political Party Perspective

BY SAMEEN ZEHRA

Political parties act as key building blocks of democratic polities. Through their effective functioning, candidates have the ability to highlight central policy issues, mobilize various cleavages of society, and directly affect outcomes of economic growth and public goods provisions. Pakistan and Bangladesh have experienced oscillation between periods of democracy and authoritarianism, due to contingent factors such as: the interfering role of the military, weakness of party organization, little internal democracy, factionalism and patronage. Although Sri Lanka is deemed a longstanding democracy in comparison, ethnic civil war and majoritarian politics have bred highly illiberal trends at the national level. In the contemporary era, India remains no exception to a lack of democracy-enabling conditions. Yet, despite impediments in development and social inequality, it remains an exception to prevailing class-based and modernization-centred theories of democratization. For this reason, India will be the focal point of this analysis, which calls for a more nuanced evaluation of the role political parties play in consolidating democratic trajectories in post-independence South Asia. By deconstructing three distinct politically driven trends related to electoral competition, public accountability and corruption, it will be argued that while some political party practices have contributed to the decline in the state's quality of democracy, other attributes have strengthened it.

I – Competition and Representation

The levels of contestation present within Indian electorates directly indicate the extent to which the state has successfully consolidated democratic principles and norms. This feature in electoral politics, which allows for opposition and marginalized parties to credibly compete, has been shifting in India since the hegemonic decline of the National Congress in the late 1960s.¹ After losing power in eight of the then sixteen states in 1967, politically mobilized, language and caste based cleavages emerged in northern India and Tamil Nadu. By forming intra-state alliances, they pooled votes to oust the Congress from its dominant seat.² After various periods of centralization under Indira Gandhi and the rise of the Janata Party, the National Front coalition supported by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and other left wing and regional parties, came to be in 1989. That year, it was responsible for Congress historically losing 39% of its share of the election vote.³

When evaluating the nature of India's democracy, the rise in multi-party coalitions and fragmentation in the system is significant for many reasons. First, the National Front coalition of 1989-90 marked the first time distinct parties formed a movement based on a common platform, while including explicitly regional groups like the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Telugu Desam and Assam Gana Parishad.⁴ Scholars M.V. Rajeev Gowda and E. Sridharan point out it was also the first "spatially compatible inter-state alliance of parties" where competition did not occur on one another's claimed territory.⁵ The Indian political system's ability to include smaller parties in power-sharing arrangements further strengthened democracy, having a domino effect on institutions such as the Election Commission, judiciary and legislative opposition, which have managed to remain independent of the executive branch's influence.⁶ As a by-product, not only has horizontal accountability increased, but democratic freedoms have been bolstered through a decline in government monopoly on television and print media.⁷

Perhaps the most notable democratic function of political parties in India has been their role in acting as a vehicle for greater lower-caste representation. The 1990 Mandal Commission formed by the Janata Dal-led National Front, sparked this transformation in lower class politics through a controversial call for affirmative action. The "Silent Revolution" emerged in this context, and became known as India's second democratic upsurge. The movement led to a shift away from vertical, patron-based mobilization and toward caste-led parties gaining key positions in government, particularly in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Bihar. Much of this diversity has been triggered by affirmative action; however, the representation of women in India's parliament has continued to remain weak in contrast to other developing countries. Nonetheless, the decline of one-party dominance has ensured that elections are vigorously contested, while fostering a trend of accommodative politics that has become a norm in India's inclusive conception of the state.⁸

II – Accountability and Development

In the realm of responsiveness and provision of public goods India's political parties fare less well, however there is regional variation that has led to mixed results in the state's democratic performance. John Harriss and his colleagues argue, in many ways India is a "flailing state", where despite its effective instruments of economic policy at the centre, is unable provide high quality delivery of services to its vast population.⁹ Much of this has to do with the fact that India is a patronage democracy, which despite fair elections has a state monopoly over resources that are subject to individual discretion. Street level bureaucrats continue to control access to water, public sector credit, loans, and essential commodities.¹⁰ As Pradeep Chhibber, Irfan Nooruddin and Tariq Thachil suggest, this phenomenon has trickled down

to the level of party politics, influencing the degree to which officials comply with democratic norms of accountability and responsiveness.

This mixed performance in expenditure on public goods is related to the varying party systems and mobilization strategies across states within India.¹¹ Political and economic data collected by Chhibber and Nooruddin show that two-party competition provides more public provisions than states with multiparty competition, since the former requires broad-based support from greater social groups.¹² This support can only be attained by providing services to a larger section of the citizenry and building cross-cleavage coalitions.¹³ Multiparty systems however, need only use club/private goods to mobilize smaller segments of the population, as their focus is on narrower voting blocs of ardent supporters rather than the vast majority.¹⁴ State governments of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan provide a clear example of this when contrasted with Bihar and UP. Although they are all considered part of the Hindu heartland with similar economic levels, Bihar and UP, the multiparty states, have spent more on personnel, and less on development and public goods related to electricity and education since 1971.¹⁵ The link between electoral strategy and service provision is also present in India as a basis for appealing to poorer

However, there is no doubt that fraudulent fundraising and dynastic politics have entangled citizens in corruption and paved the way for the decay of democratic institutions.

voters, without compromising elite interests.¹⁶ The BJP has employed this tactic by relying on its grassroots affiliates in Sangh Parivar to reach out to lower-caste communities, while maintaining patronage flows of traditional elite circles and reassuring rich supporters.¹⁷ These cases indicate that there is variation where the democratic criteria of accountability and development are concerned, as the positive or negative actions of Indian political parties are largely subject to their competitive climates.¹⁸

III – Finance and Internal Party Politics

The greatest volume of democratic weakness in India arguably stems from internal party politics related to corrupt campaign finance and dynastic trends. These aspects play a heavy hand in impacting the state's rule of law and barriers to candidate entry. The trend of various parties appointing corrupt and criminal candidates has become increasingly salient, as one third of the members in the Lower House recently had criminal charges pending against them. Due to weakness in monitoring mechanisms, political parties

use informal brokers in their local networks to influence communities and “buy” individual votes. Voters have no qualms about disclosing these door-to-door campaigning sessions and backdoor bargains, which tend to increase during village power-cuts. The ambiguity of campaign finance arose in large part during the 1960s, when Indira Gandhi banned company contributions to internal parties as a result of dissent with the Syndicate. Although her son, Rajiv Gandhi, overturned this law, and a backlash from civil society led to legal proceedings at the level of the Supreme Court in 2002, self-correction mechanisms have struggled to consolidate trends of transparency within the system.¹⁹

Furthermore, the extent to which parties have become individual-centred and dynastic has led to barriers to leadership, linked directly to deterioration in democratic values. The logic behind this strategy lies in keeping challengers from emerging from within the party, attracting political funding, or having trusted family members manage unaccounted funds for campaigns as they might be less likely to oust them.²⁰ Dynastic politics are a post-1970s phenomenon in India, legitimated by the rise of Rajiv Gandhi's administration, which was then succeeded by his wife, Sonia Gandhi.²¹ Since then, charismatic leaders of regional and caste-based organizations, such as the BSP's Mayawati have followed suit, choosing to run highly personalized parties.²²

Conclusion

After analyzing various trends within India's political sphere, this essay aimed to show that political party practices have had wide-ranging effects on the quality of the state's democracy. It is problematic to deem party systems the sole drivers of illiberal trends in the region, as they have contributed to higher levels of contestation, diversity, and to some extent development, where electoral interests are concerned. However, there is no doubt that fraudulent fundraising and dynastic politics have entangled citizens in corruption and paved the way for the decay of democratic institutions. For these reasons, a more nuanced evaluation of political parties should be adopted, to better understand their impact on the region's democratic trajectory.

SAMEEN ZEHRA graduated from the University of Toronto with a major in Peace, Conflict and Justice and a double minor in Political Science and Contemporary Asian Studies.

ENDNOTES

1 M.V. Rajeev Gowda and E. Sridharan. 2007. “Parties and the Party System 1947-2006.” In *The State of India's Democracy*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. <http://www.iimb.ernet.in/sites/default/files/u181/Gowda%20Sridharan%20Parties%20and%20the%20Party%20System.pdf>.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 John Harriss et. al. 2013. "Is Government in India Becoming More Responsive?" In *India Today: Economics, Politics and Society*, 158–76. Cambridge: Polity Press. https://portal.utoronto.ca/bbcswb/dav/pid-4700186-dt-content-rid-28438587_2/courses/Fall-2015-POL328Y1-Y-LEC0101/corbridge_et_al_week9_201510131235-1.pdf.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Pradeep Chhibber and Irfan Nooruddin. 2004. "Do Party Systems Count?" *Comparative Political Studies* 37 (2): 152–87.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Tariq Thachil. 2011. "Embedded Mobilization: Nonstate Service Provision as Electoral Strategy in India." *World Politics* 63 (3): 434–69.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Pradeep Chhibber and Irfan Nooruddin. 2004. "Do Party Systems Count?" *Comparative Political Studies* 37 (2): 152–87.
- 19 M.V. Rajeev Gowda and E. Sridharan. 2007. "Parties and the Party System 1947–2006." In *The State of India's Democracy*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. <http://www.iimb.ernet.in/sites/default/files/u181/Gowda%20Sridharan%20Parties%20and%20the%20Party%20System>
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid.

Developing Programmatic Parties and Combatting Corruption: Political Party Aid as a Remedy to the Institutional Roots of Tunisia's Instability

CABELL F. WILLIS

Strengthening political party institutionalization offers the key to stabilizing Tunisia's nascent democracy. Institutionalized market inefficiencies have perpetuated opportunities for corruption and rent seeking in Tunisia, contributing to continued economic stagnation and social and political instability. Yet rather than proposing policy action to address the roots of this instability, the country's dominant political parties have established populist linkages with their constituents. By ignoring the roots of instability, these linkages perpetuate it, threatening Tunisia's democratic future. To break this endogenous relationship, politicians and parties must actively choose platforms and policies that implement real economic reform and structural change. Even as the International Monetary Fund and other international organizations provide financial assistance to support such reforms, the democracy promotion community must make a necessary and significant contribution to the future of Tunisian democracy in the form political party aid that strengthens the political institutions charged with implementing these reforms.

The Institutional Roots of Economic and Political Instability

The greatest challenges to the stability of post-revolutionary Tunisia are economic. In particular, Tunisia's economy since the transition has demonstrated a low-level of structural development and private sector paralysis. These characteristics have contributed to ongoing popular economic frustration, a concurrent disenchantment with politics, and corresponding susceptibility to populist appeals. A 2014 World Bank report highlights the endurance of expansive high barriers to entry and competition in the market as well as the regulations and restrictions that characterized the post-independence interventionist economic policies of Tunisia under Habib Bourgiba.¹ These policies—especially barriers to competition—facilitate the survival of underpro-

ductive firms, opening the door to cronyism and rent seeking.² Indeed, a system of rent seeking and privilege thrives in Tunisia on the foundation of the old regime's economic structures: "the policy infrastructure inherited from the Ben Ali era perpetuates social exclusion and invites corruption."³

To combat the obstacles to political institutionalization in Tunisia, political parties must develop and implement programmatic platforms that provide for decisive structural and economic institutional reform. Such structural reforms must remove barriers to market entry and reduce the room for regulatory discretion. These will create a more level playing field, enhance political transparency, and remove incentives for corruption. As the World Bank report warns, however, these reforms will require political determination, as those elites with vested economic interest in a system that facilitates corruption will likely resist changes that threaten their interests.⁴ It is the economic choices of the political actors—first and foremost in the development of programmatic commitments to institutional reform—that will free them from the political constraints of popular dissatisfaction with lagging economic performance.⁵

Yet Tunisia's two principal political parties—secularist Nidaa Tounes and Islamist Al-Nahda—and their political leadership have so far failed to enact the economic reforms necessary to stabilize the country. Rather than developing programmatic platforms to promote economic growth, both Nidaa Tounes and Al-Nahda have attempted to mobilize electoral support through an appeal to populist fears associated with the opposing party. These populist strategies are a symptom of poor party institutionalization. Both parties need to develop stronger platforms based on programmatic commitments, transcending the heated ideological rhetoric of populism. International party development aid must focus its efforts on the achievement of this goal.

Political Party Institutionalization

Institutionalization is "a process by which a practice or organization becomes well established and widely known, if not universally accepted."⁶ Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully stipulate four necessary conditions for party system institutionalization: First, there must be a stable set of rules that normalize interparty competition. Second, political parties must demonstrate stable roots and linkages in society. Third, political actors and elites must accord legitimacy to the political process and to the parties. Finally, political parties must be independent from rather than subordinate to the interests of ambitious leaders.⁷

Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond classify party types in a framework along three dimensions: party organization, programmatic orientation, and political tolerance. Party organization considers the relative thickness of parties, and their roots in society in terms of whether or not they are elite-based or mass-based. Programmatic orientation weighs the political platform commitments and linkages of the party: whether they appeal to voters through broad

programmatic pledges, clientelistic linkages, or ideological promises. Finally, the tolerance or ambition of a political party reflects its commitment to democratic and pluralistic systems in contrast with hegemonic or anti-system designs.⁸

The Rise and Recession of Al-Nahda

Following Al-Nahda's political success in 2011, its secular opponents questioned the party's tolerance for democracy, especially in light of its ties to the Muslim Brotherhood after the Brotherhood's undemocratic abuse of its electoral victory in Egypt.⁹ Al-Nahda's accommodation of Salafi political parties drew further criticism from secularists, especially in the wake of Salafi violence and threats of terrorism, but also with regard to the future role of Shari'a in the Tunisian political system.¹⁰ Despite these fears, the Islamists of Al-Nahda have thus far proven their tolerance for democracy and political pluralism: following a public outcry surrounding the assassination of two leftist opposition politicians, Al-Nahda concluded a national dialogue with opposition parties in an agreement to cede power to a neutral technocratic government in early 2014.¹¹

Despite its good intentions, Al-Nahda struggled to over-

*Indeed, a system of rent seeking
and privilege thrives in Tunisia on
the foundation of the old regime's
economic structures.*

come the combined pressures of secularist fear-mongering and continued economic stagnation. Together, these pressures contributed to popular dissatisfaction and opposition pressure that forced Al-Nahda to relinquish its power. This economic stagnation reflects both the endurance of Ben Ali-era economic institutions—including an intrusive state, insufficient property rights, unequal enforcement of taxation, and official corruption—and, more pointedly, Al-Nahda's failure to devise programmatic policy responses to reform these institutions.¹²

The Division of an Undemocratic Nidaa Tounes

Even as Al-Nahda has lost momentum, Nidaa Tounes has also floundered. Internal conflict and crisis has characterized the party since its inception. In early November of 2015, thirty-one Nidaa Tounes parliamentary deputies resigned from the party, returning the power of the legislative majority once more to Al-Nahda.¹³ The fragmentation of Nidaa Tounes reflects its weak organizational structure: a product of the party's emergence from a shared fear and desire to counter the political domination of Islamism. The party is the product of political cooperation between leftists—who oppose any form of political cooperation with

Al-Nahda—and political figures with ties to the old regime, including party founder and current president Beji Caid Essebsi.¹⁴ The alleged attempt to establish a political dynasty through Essebsi's son Hafedh, coupled with allegations of corruption, illustrate the lack of an internal democratic governance structure within Nidaa Tounes, and the party's lack of independence from elite interests.

Playing with Populism

As Anouar Boukhars observes, Nidaa Tounes has played upon the dangerous conflicting desires of the Tunisian people “to reunite the old social template with present aspirations for change.”¹⁵ Despite Al-Nahda's demonstrated commitment to democracy since the political transition, secularists continue to develop their political strategy on the basis of anti-Islamist rhetoric and the cultivation of popular fear of Islamism. As Anne Wolf argues, “relying on anti-Islamist rhetoric reflects not only [secular] parties' detachment from the populations' needs and expectations but also their lack of a strong unifying vision and strategy.”¹⁶ However, it is not Nidaa Tounes alone, but also Al-Nahda that has played upon populist fears, stirring popular concerns about the looming potential of a return to authoritarianism.¹⁷ In light of the political structure and internal affairs of Nidaa Tounes, this fear may not be so misplaced.

Developing Programmatic Politics Through Party Aid

Structural reforms that address institutionalized economic inefficiencies are the key to Tunisian political stability. Yet it is the political parties that are responsible for developing and implementing such reforms. Nidaa Tounes and Al-Nahda must abandon their current populist and ideological orientations—as well as, in the case of Nidaa Tounes, the vested interests of party affiliates in an economic structure that facilitates rent-seeking and cronyism.

Political party aid that aims to strengthen party institutionalization can potentially affect real political and economic change in Tunisia. Certainly, foreign aid in the form of direct investment and security support in the face of terrorism and radicalization may help maintain the stability of the political situation in Tunisia. However, the perpetuation of a system that facilitates corruption and rent seeking limits the incentives for such foreign investment. Political party aid, on the other hand, addresses the Tunisian problem of party institutionalization as a source of instability.

Organizational development aid for Nidaa Tounes must address its structural weaknesses as a relatively nascent and increasingly fragmented party. Yet as Thomas Carothers observes, the age of a political party does not determine its democratic structure and function.¹⁸ The organizational problems of Nidaa Tounes relate directly to its origins as a largely elite party with ties to the corruption of the Ben Ali regime. Party aid that focuses on organizational development with an aim to promote more internal democratic

structures may offer an easy solution, but value-infusion in and internal restructuring of a developing political party is not a granted result of such party aid. Party aid that seeks to strengthen Nidaa Tounes's legislative capacity—particularly with regard to the drafting of anti-corruption and economic reform legislation—may also have a limited impact.¹⁹ Such legislation may prove to be markedly contrary to the interests of rent-seeking elites with ties to the party and the old regime. Legislative capacity-strengthening aid may therefore find more useful application in Al-Nahda.

Ultimately, the choices of the Tunisia's political parties and its political elites will determine its future stability. To be effective, party aid must encourage the development of programmatic orientations and platforms that address the country's economic challenges. The decision to enact the economic structural adjustments necessary to ensure future political stability, however, rests with the political leadership of Tunisia's political parties—and their role in government. As John Aldrich observed, “Political outcomes result from actors seeking to realize their goals, *choosing* within and possibly shaping a given set of institutional arrangements, and so choosing within a given historical context.”²⁰ In Tunisia, it is the political actors in Nidaa Tounes and Al-Nahda that must choose to shape the future political institutional arrangement.

A Note from the Editor: This paper was written in the fall of 2015 and spring of 2016 as part of a larger project on political party institutionalization.

CABELL F. WILLIS is a 2016 graduate of the Masters of Arts program in Democracy and Governance and a 2014 graduate of the Virginia Military Institute.

ENDNOTES

- 1 “The Unfinished Revolution: Brining Opportunity, Good Jobs, and Greater Wealth to All Tunisians,” *Tunisia: Development Policy Review* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, May 2014): 110. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tunisia/publication/unfinished-revolution> (accessed December 2014).
- 2 *Ibid.*, 110.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 127.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 127.
- 5 For a discussion of political choices about institutional structural adjustment in democratic contexts, see Joel Hellman, “Winner Take All: The Politics of Partial Economic Reform in Post Communist Transition,” *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (Jan. 1998): 203-234; and Adam Przeworski, “Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy” in *Transitions from Authoritarian Perspectives*, ed. Guillermo O'Donnell, 47-63 (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 60.
- 6 Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully, “Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America,” in *Building Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*, ed. Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 4.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 4-5.

- 8 Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond, "Species of Political Parties: A New Typology," *Party Politics* 9, no. 2 (March 2003): 171.
- 9 Kamran Bokhari and Farid Senzai. *Political Islam in the Age of Democratization*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, 78; Anthony Dworkin, "Tunisia's Elections and the Consolidation of Democracy." European Council on Foreign Relations, October 2014, 3. http://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/tunesias_elections_and_the_consolidation_of_democracy321
- 10 "Countries at the Crossroads 2012: Tunisia," Freedom House, 2012, 2. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/countries-crossroads/2012/tunisia> (accessed December 2015).
- 11 Dworkin, 2.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 13 Zeineb Marzouk, "Thirty-One Deputies Resign as Nidaa Tounes Loses Majority," *Tunisia Live*, November 9, 2015. <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2015/11/09/thirty-one-deputies-resign-as-nidaa-tounes-loses-majority/> (accessed December 2015).
- 14 Ezzeddine Abdelmoula, "Analysis: The identity crisis in Tunisia's ruling party," *Al-Jazeera*, November 7, 2015. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/analysis-identity-crisis-tunisia-ruling-party-151107080841744.html> (accessed December 2015).
- 15 Anouar Boukhars, "The Reckoning: Tunisia's Perilous Path to Democratic Stability" (Washington, D.C.: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2015): 5. <http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/04/02/reckoning-tunisia-s-perilous-path-to-democratic-stability/i5cj>; "2014 Parliamentary Elections," Tunisia Election Data, Mourakiboun. <http://tunisiaelectiondata.com/#/stories/par> (accessed December 2015).
- 16 Anne Wolf, "Can Secular Parties Lead the New Tunisia?" (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 2014): 3. <http://carnegieendowment.org/2014/04/30/can-secular-parties-lead-new-tunisia> (accessed December 2015).
- 17 *Ibid.*, 6.
- 18 Thomas Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), 50.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 95-96.
- 20 John Aldrich, *Why Parties?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 7.

Elect to receive the electronic version of Democracy & Society



■ To sign up, email us at democracyandsociety@gmail.com

(Re-)Examining the “Jasmine Revolution”: Tunisia’s Youth and (Re-)“Activated Citizenship” Post-Ben Ali

MATT GORDNER

The present analysis builds upon a 2012 article by Francesco Cavatorta entitled “Arab Spring: The Awakening of Civil Society, A General Overview” written for the European Institute of the Mediterranean. In what follows, I first summarize Cavatorta and offer confirmatory evidence of his main findings with research and interviews that I conducted in Tunisia between 2012 and 2016. I then offer a brief elaboration on the role of Tunisian youth in pursuing the stated goals and aims of the “Jasmine Revolution” to the present with respect to some of the notable “legacies of authoritarianism” remnant from the Ben Ali period, including *inter alia* rampant high-level political and economic corruption, the continuation of unwanted neoliberal policies, and the discourse of “security” as a smokescreen for delaying or curtailing the advancement of civil liberties.

In his article, Cavatorta suggests that, despite some theoretical and empirical shortcomings, both the transitions paradigm of the 1990s and the persistence of authoritarian literature of the 2000s remains relevant to studies of civil society and democratization today. One useful insight to come out of this inter-paradigm debate, he suggests, is Heydemann’s introduction of “authoritarian upgrading,” or, in Heydemann’s words, the process by which “authoritarian learning” has entailed various hybrid models of authoritarianism by “reconfiguring authoritarian governance to accommodate and manage changing political, economic, and social conditions”¹:

It combines tried-and-true strategies of the past—coercion, surveillance, patronage, corruption, and personalism—with innovations that reflect the determination of authoritarian élites to respond aggressively to the triple threat of globalization, markets, and democratization. These efforts are aimed at creating and sustaining an emerging “authoritarian coalition,” one that hinges on preserving existing bases of institutional and social support while strengthening ties to or at a minimum buying off, groups that have been regarded by regimes as unreliable, if not potentially antagonistic.² (Ibid, 3)

Where regimes’ attempts at “upgrading” fails, Cavatorta writes, is in its unintended consequences—namely “new spaces of activism” that lie outside of traditional forms of civil society and associational life typically characterized by horizontal structures of organization. Cavatorta thus calls for a rethink of the definition of civil society to take these new spaces of activism into account, and he introduces the concept of “activated citizenship” as a useful analytical tool to apply to some of the “Arab Spring” case studies. Activated citizenship recognizes that, “individual citizens with little open access can mobilise on their own and then use their social networks, both on- and offline, to live a reality of opposition...³” From social movements to non-social movements,⁴ “activated citizenship” describes the many modes of opposition available outside of formal organizations that become “activated” by events like Bouazizi’s self-immolation.⁵

Noting the absence of established liberal and Islamist groups from civil-society activism during the Arab Spring, Cavatorta offers three general observations, or “features,” of the uprisings: (1) a specifically youth-led movement that combined (2) online forms of activism and mobilization, and (3) the resurgence of (local) trade union politics against the backdrop of social and economic grievances: corruption, workplace injustices, and the negative impacts of globalization.⁶

A loose and previously unconnected coalition of protesters emerged from communities of lawyers, students, and the unemployed

The Tunisian case—the only positive case of procedural democracy to come out of the Arab Spring transformations to date—was the result of a conjuncture between two movements that predated the onset of the Jasmine Revolution: a freedom of the Internet movement that began as early as 2000, and labor protests in the interior that had, especially since the Gafsa mining protests of 2008, voiced repeated grievances over unjust hiring practices and other forms of cronyism. Upon Bouazizi’s 17 December 2010 suicide protest, Tunisians from the interior regions flooded the streets, and Tunisian General Labor Union (UGTT) locals began organizing apart from the directives of the central bureau to remain loyal to the regime. A loose and previously unconnected coalition of protesters emerged from communities of lawyers, students, and the unemployed to call for greater economic opportunities, an end to corruption, and basic political and social rights across Tunisia’s interior regions. Despite regime efforts to stymie the free flow of information across the Internet through phishing expeditions and website shutdowns, images of Ben Ali’s brutal repression percolated through government filters. A “bitter cyberwar” broke out,⁷ but journalists and

bloggers were ultimately successful in disseminating videos and blogs to international news outlets through the Internet and smuggled USB keys, thereby helping many to overcome the collective action problem commonly associated with demonstrating against tyranny.⁸ A nation-wide revolt thus led, on 14 January 2011, to the ouster of longtime dictator Zine Elabidine Ben Ali.

As Cavatorta points out, this youth-led and tech-savvy brand of activism had three paradoxical advantages over their established, elder generation of politicians and protesters: apolitical affiliations, diffuse leadership structures, and a difficulty to suppress or counter this type of activism. The youth-led movement that culminated in the Jasmine Revolution rallied around a number of slogans, perhaps chief among them “dignity, bread, and freedom”—a master frame that is, at face value, hardly contestable. The movement entrepreneurs of the freedom of the Internet campaign likewise rallied around a common goal that was widely applicable to its supporters and leadership. The movement brought together individuals with disparate motivations and conflicting political leanings that sought to use the Internet as a medium, to convey, discuss, and address political, social, and economic grievances. Some began as “observers” of the early tidings of the movement, only to become more involved as the regime cracked down on any and all forms of dissent—whether freedom of Internet online or labour protests in the streets. Others began as bloggers of pop-culture. And still others were deeply political only to become more so.⁹ But “... all of us, from the very leftists to the very right wing were with a common goal. Some of us were radical and against the regime and Ben Ali, and people like myself were like that’s your call: I just want freedom of information, and no censorship.’ One thing united all of us... censorship.”¹⁰

*(..)the shapes and contours of
this democracy remains uncertain,
spotted, and even bleak. This is
especially true for the youth of Tunisia
who comprised the mainstay of the
activists(...)*

One of the small albeit significant achievements of this movement was a protest called *Tunisie en Blanc*, or The White Tee Shirt Protests. On May 17, 2010, Slim Amamou and Yassin Ayari created the Facebook page *Nhar Ala Ammar* (Day Against Ammar), which drew 5,000 supporters, in the lead-up to the 22 May nonviolent anti-censorship *Tunisie en Blanc* protest, calling for two actions: a protest by the Ministry of Technology, and dressing in white while having a coffee on the main avenue in downtown Tunis. Though the Tunisian authorities detained the organizers, a small coterie of supporters met downtown dressed in white in spite

of this. News of the event, and of the debate surrounding it, went public. “Only seven months later, *Tunisie en Blanc* activists were able to help propel the Jasmine Revolution by encouraging similar debates on the thousands of Facebook pages of Tunisians involved in the January 2011 protests.”¹¹

Today, the Tunisian example is heralded as a success relative to other Arab Spring states, as the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Quartet suggests. The drafting of a constitution following heated debates over the roles of religion and the state during the period of the National Constituent Assembly (NCA); the willing step-down of the Ennahda-led government and its replacement with a caretaker, technocratic one; expanded press laws under the Independent High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA); and freedom of expression and assembly are positive signs. Tunisia’s transition may therefore lead to a stable democratic form of governance in the long term. With that said, the shapes and contours of this democracy remains uncertain, spotted, and even bleak. This is especially true for the youth of Tunisia who comprised the mainstay of the activists who first ventured out onto the streets to call for the “downfall of the regime.”

For them, the “values” and “goals” of the revolution are in jeopardy. As Sami Ben Gharbia, co-founder and director of the watchdog organization *Nawaat.org*, asseverated:

There was a failure of the grass-roots movement to push for non-partisan politics. Now elections are based on party politics. Trade unions and the business elite developed a consensus to agree to ‘go smoothly’ and avoid being radical, which works against transitional justice and the reform of the media... This is all against HAICA’s Independent Committee and the Truth and Dignity Commission that I think are pillars of the revolution.¹²

Some analysts thus refer to the current government as a “neoliberal consensus”¹³ or “rotten compromise.”¹⁴ While vitriolic in their campaigns against one another, the Islamist Ennahda and old-guard Nida’a Tunes discourses upon forming the current coalition government quickly turned to one of “national unity” that has since demonstrated general concert over the country’s social, economic, and political future despite internal conflicts within and between them. In a recent Carnegie Report, Maha Yahya’s findings indicate decades of failed neoliberal policies and a Tunisian public that is overwhelmingly against the continuation of this economic system.¹⁵ Indeed, the policies that followed from this “unity” arrangement saw an extensive subversion of the revolutionaries’ aims: the undermining of transitional justice with an “Economic Reconciliation Plan” that grants virtual amnesty to those who consorted with Ben Ali and the ruling family in carrying out widespread corruption, not to mention the detention, torture and exile of opposition figures; a “Counterterrorism Bill” that threatens due process, permits the death penalty, and allows for extended detention of suspected terrorists; the application of a 1978 Ben Ali-era “Emergency Law” that enables the government to monitor

the press, quash protest, and close restaurants, mosques, and civil associations; and a campaign of limitations on the freedom of movement, harassment, detention, and arrest for youth and unmarried couples, Islamists, LGBTQ, artists and dissidents. Following the Bardo and Presidential Guard attacks the extension of the Emergency Law is further sign that the discourse of “security” will take explicit precedence over substantive reforms of “democracy” in the medium term. Indicative in this regard, the local elections promised for late 2016 have been pushed back to sometime in 2017, thereby delaying the decentralization plan laid out in the constitution even further. The disorganized, inept, and highly corrupt government and bureaucracy refuses much needed institutional and policy reforms—including notably the Ministry of Interior and a dismantlement of the apparatus of the “parallel state.”¹⁶

Youth—and especially impoverished and unemployed youth in the interior regions—remain particularly vulnerable demographics. But youth across Tunisia face a common set of political, social, and economic challenges for complete formal participation in Tunisian society. In addition to being particularly hard hit by economic and political disenfranchisement,¹⁷ like many other countries of the Global South young Tunisians also experience social stigmatization as persons in “waithood,” a period wherein “young people are no longer children in need of care, but... they are still unable to become independent adults.”¹⁸ Many youth are thus denied the social status of adults despite reaching biological maturity. “Aspirations of the youth have not been fulfilled... the gesture of Bouazizi was a claim for social justice, economic justice, and dignity,” Nadia Marzouki argues. “And the protests of the young people today demonstrate the need for a cultural revolution, a youth revolution that is still not taken into account by political officials.”¹⁹

The January 2016 protests in Kasserine that spread to Sidi Bouzid and parts of the capital brought thousands of Tunisian youth back onto the streets to demand “work, freedom, and dignity.” In a move that harkened back to the Ben Ali period, President Beji Caid Essebsi palliated concerns with a dedication to create thousands of new jobs, but that promise has yet to come to fruition—nor is it likely to. In an already bloated public sector, Tunisia’s public pensions are strapped, and the promise of a return of blue-collar Europeans to the south Mediterranean shores of Hammamet and Sousse are highly unlikely. It must be noted that violence was kept to a minimum following the recent January protests, though a curfew was quickly instated that lasted for weeks. It remains to be seen whether a third revolution may materialize in the face of continued corruption, lack of employment opportunities, and insecurity. Equilibrium appears to be holding, however uneasily. Yet it might not

take much more for Tunisia’s youth to become re-“activated” towards mass, nation-wide mobilization once more.

A Note from the Editor: This paper was written in the fall of 2016.

MATT GORDNER is a PhD Student of Political Science at the University of Toronto.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Steven, Heydemann. “Upgrading Authoritarianism in the Arab World.” *The Saban Center for Middle East Policy of the Brookings Institute Analysis Paper* 13 (2007): 1-38, accessed 08 March 2016, <http://www.brookings.edu/~l/media/research/files/papers/2007/10/arabworld/10arabworld.pdf>.
- 2 Ibid
- 3 Francesco Cavatorta. “The Arab Spring: The Awakening of Civil Society, A General Overview.” *IEMed Yearbook* (European Institute of the Mediterranean, 2012), accessed 12 March 2016, http://www.iemed.org/observatori-en/arees-danalisi/arxijs-adjunts/anuari/med.2012/Cavatorta_en.pdf.
- 4 Asef Bayat. *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.
- 5 Vincent Durac and Francesco Cavatorta. *Politics and Governance in the Middle East*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- 6 Francesco Cavatorta. “The Arab Spring: The Awakening of Civil Society, A General Overview.” *IEMed Yearbook* (European Institute of the Mediterranean, 2012), accessed 12 March 2016, http://www.iemed.org/observatori-en/arees-danalisi/arxijs-adjunts/anuari/med.2012/Cavatorta_en.pdf.
- 7 Yasmine Ryan. “How Tunisia’s Revolution Began.” *Al Jazeera*. 26 January, 2011, accessed 9 August 2015: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/01/2011126121815985483.html>
- 8 Anita Breuer, Tom Landman, and Dorothy Farquhar. “Social Media and Protest Mobilization: Evidence from the Tunisian Revolution.” *Democratization* 22.4 (2015): 764-92.
- 9 Haythem El Mekki, interview with Matt Gordner, Tunis, 7 March 2016
- 10 Houssein Aoudi, Interview with Matt Gordner, Tunis, 3 June 2014
- 11 Laryssa Chomiak. “Architecture of Resistance in Tunisia.” *Taking to the Streets: The Transformation of Arab Activism*. Ed. Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 2014. 2-51.
- 12 Sami Ben Gharbia, Interview with Matt Gordner, Tunis, 22 July 2015.
- 13 Corina Mullin and Brahim Roubaha. “Requiem for Tunisia’s Revolution.” *Jadaliyya*. 22 December 2014, accessed 03 October 2015, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/20334/requiem-for-tunisia-s-revolution>
- 14 Nadia Marzouki. Interview with Folly Bah Thibault. “Has Life Changed for Tunisia After the Revolution?” *Al Jazeera*. 18 December 2015, accessed 19 December, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2015/12/life-changed-tunisia-revolution-151217203705727.html>



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY MASTER OF ARTS IN DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE

THE MASTER OF ARTS IN DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE offers rigorous preparation for individuals interested in professional or scholarly careers in the field of democracy assistance and governance reform.

GEORGETOWN'S M.A. PROGRAM IN DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE is the most comprehensive degree of its kind in the United States.

• **FOCUSED AND RELEVANT TRAINING**

The program prepares student to understand the complexities of democratization and achieving accountable government.

• **INSTITUTIONAL EXPERTISE AND REPUTATION**

Georgetown University is recognized around the world as a leader in educating and training students in research, public service, and the non-profit sector.

• **OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE**

Washington, D.C. is an ideal location to study how the theories of political change translate into the policies crucial to realizing it. Students gain first-hand experience through relevant internships, lectures, and conferences with leading policymakers and scholars in the field, and close interaction with a wide range of individuals working at the forefront of democracy assistance and political reform.



Visit us at <http://cdacs.georgetown.edu>

3520 Prospect Street NW, Suite 110
Washington, D.C. 20057
202.687.0596
democracystudies@georgetown.edu

- 15 Maha Yahya. "Great Expectations in Tunisia" *Carnegie Middle East Center*. 31 March 2016. <http://carnegie-mec.org/2016/03/31/great-expectations-in-tunisia-pub-63138>
- 16 Nicholas Noe. "Another Middle Eastern State Could Collapse, and More Cash and Weapons Won't Save It." *Tablet*. 22 September 2015, accessed 12 December 2015, <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/193723/tunisia-refugee-crisis>
- 17 Malika Drissi. "Tunisia: Breaking the Barriers to Youth Inclusion." *World Bank* 2014, accessed 03 December 2015, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tunisia/publication/tunisia-breaking-the-barriers-to-youth-inclusion>
- 18 Alcinda Honwana. "Waithood: Youth Transitions and Social Change." *Development and Equity*. Leiden: Brill. 2014. 28-40.
- 19 Nadia Marzouki. Interview with Folly Bah Thibault. "Has Life Changed for Tunisia After the Revolution?" *Al Jazeera*. 18 December 2015, accessed 19 December, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2015/12/life-changed-tunisia-revolution-151217203705727.html>

Presidential Elections in Russia: Running for the status quo

The determinants of preelectoral coalitions in presidential elections in Russia 2012

PAUL BOCHTLER AND THERESA LÜTKEFEND

Why did the opposition parties not support one single person competing against Putin, instead of putting up four individual candidates for the presidential election in Russia in 2012? Several scholars have already shown quantitatively that pre-electoral coalitions (PECs) can be relevant for the transformation from an authoritarian to a democratic political system. However, the literature still lacks qualitative, in-depth country studies on the question what determines pre-electoral coalitions in authoritarian regimes. Our research paper especially focuses on why this form of cooperation between opposition parties did not take place in Russian presidential elections in 2012.

In two parts, one theoretical and one empirical, we will try to understand what is at the center of our research – oppositional cooperation and elections. We begin with a short analysis of the Russian political system and argue that electoral authoritarianism is currently its most appropriate

description. As a "root concept", we have chosen Wolfgang Merkel's embedded democracy which allows us to examine the "firmness of [Russia's] democratic basis" as stated in the preamble of the Russian constitution of 1993.¹ This concept goes beyond rather minimalistic definitions of democracies that solely focus on elections, but is still simplistic enough to serve as the basis for a short qualitative analysis of a country's political system.^{2 3} Whereas Merkel is still undecided about whether the Russian political system under Putin in 2012 should be defined as a highly defective democracy or as electoral authoritarianism,⁴ many scholars use the latter definition. Gel'man sums up the logic of the political system quite well when stating that the Russian regime "not only preserved the façade of democratic institutions ... but notoriously and vigorously increased their visibility while emasculating and perverting their substance."⁵ Subsequently we examine the characteristics of elections in authoritarian settings in contrast to democratic ones. Understanding elections as a type of institution, means that on one hand, elections can be meaningful in strengthening authoritarian rule and the durability of the regime, and are interesting for the incumbent. On the other hand, they can become "tipping games" that lead to a regime transition from incumbent to opposition, highlighting their "ambiguous" nature.^{6 7 8} Once the ruler has established elections, they pose "problems of coordination" under circumstances of "informational uncertainty" for the incumbent and the opposition.^{9 10 11}

Pre-electoral coalitions (PEC) then will also take place under the above-mentioned conditions. We define PEC's as based on a contract between all participating actors resulting from the cost-benefit calculation by each party.¹² The advantages of such an oppositional cooperation seem obvious. First, it may reduce the costs of running candidates, both in human and financial terms, for the individual parties. Second, and more importantly, it increases the capacity for mobilization and thus for electoral success. There are several real-life examples, some of which have even led to electoral success. In 2002, for instance, all opposition leaders in Kenya united and formed the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC).¹² However, these success stories are only the exception to the rule. Oppositional parties often do not want to cooperate.

We will subsequently propose our assumptions concerning the determinants of such cooperation and have divided these in three thematic areas: The Institutional Environment, the Structure of the Opposition, and the Relation between Government and Opposition. All three dimensions are relevant for the behavior of oppositional actors towards coalition building, but in different ways. The Institutional Environment concerns a certain set of rules or procedures that actors must take into account when acting. Structure of the Opposition will take into account the configuration of the actors themselves that are important in the collective action in question. In contrast, the third factor we want to elaborate on is the Relation between Government and Opposition. This last factor is more agency related, as it touches

strategies of the actors that are based on assumptions on the relation of strength between them, but mostly it concerns variables that mutually constitute each other in the relation government-opposition.

For the Institutional Environment we have taken into account two variables, the electoral system and the presidential powers: There are three ways in which autocrats can use the electoral system to their advantage. First, the incumbent has the advantage of being able to choose the rules that are most convenient for his election, such as high entry barriers for small parties or gerrymandering of electoral districts. Second, autocrats do not always stick with their institutions, and rules can be broken—with a certain political cost of course.¹³ A third way of taking advantage of the electoral system is the ongoing change of those legal rules that candidates have to master in order to register for elections or to develop strategies according to the perceived effects of certain legal mechanisms. The extent of presidential powers is important concerning the respective benefits each participant could have in the coalition. This can lead to the conclusion that “the office of the presidency [is] a prize too large to give up.”¹⁴ Strong presidential powers have a negative effect on the inter-oppositional cooperation.

For the Structure of the Opposition, we have taken into account three variables: a possible regime divide, ideological unipolarity and trust. Anna Grzymala-Busse introduces the concept of regime divide in her work on government formation in post-communist countries. She asks which constraints are most important when parties are excluded from being considered as coalition partners. She concludes that the regime-divide between parties that originated from

Strong presidential powers, a low level of trust, co-optation and a stable regime all contributed to the non-cooperation among oppositional parties(...)

the Communist regime and parties that originated from the former opposition is the most important determinant for coalition formations.¹⁵ In contradictory findings, several scholars have recently pointed out that ideological unipolarity is an important precondition for cooperation.^{16 17} In the context of PECs, this means that parties will agree to cooperate only if they share similar policy positions and at the same time distinguish themselves clearly from the government. The last variable, trust, is based upon an understanding of oppositional cooperation as a zero-sum game if they fail to comply after the election. This bargaining process on political positions requires trust so that every actor can count on

his/her promised gains. However, authoritarian regimes are characterized by a lack of trust between parties.¹⁸

For the Relation between Government and Opposition we have taken into account the two variables co-optation and regime stability. One of the reasons why we understand co-optation as connected to the relation between government and opposition, is the fact that the success and form of cooptation depends on the relative size and strength of the two groups.¹⁹

Bertocchi and Spagat offer a description of co-optation: “Group 1 co-opts some people from Group 2 by creating a new group, Group C, that is newly empowered in the system and does not support revolutionary measures.”²⁰ The creation of a “Group C” is also the ultimate mechanism to cause “disunity among oppositional parties”²¹ and inhibits cooperation that could harm the incumbent leader—a “divide-and-rule” strategy.^{22 23} Opposition and incumbent fragmentation are often inversely related and have to be seen as intertwined.²⁴ The one crucial prerequisite for oppositional cooperation in terms of the government’s structure is the regime stability/prospects of electoral success. Schedler writes: “As long as a regime looks solid as a rock, authoritarian governments have few reasons to make concessions, and opposition actors have weak motives, to get themselves into trouble.”²⁵

For the empirical analysis of our hypotheses we have chosen a qualitative content analysis of interviews conducted with experts of the Russian political system as well as a former member of the Duma. To validate our preliminary hypotheses, we have first interviewed the four experts on Russia and its political logic. We conducted those interviews consciously as “expert-interviews” hoping that, through this type of interview, we might access knowledge that is “explicit” in contrast to practical, so-called “implicit” knowledge.²⁶ After a first assessment of these expert interviews, we finally interviewed Ilya Ponomarev face-to-face, who was member of the Russian Duma from 2007 to 2016 as a deputy of Just Russia.

We will now come to the results of the analysis: a possible regime-divide did not inhibit coalition building in Russia in 2012. The KPRF is indeed different from the other parties, but not so much that it would trigger a regime-divide. The electoral system is relevant, but it is not its instability that inhibits cooperation, but its design. The exact effects of different features of the electoral system on presidential elections in authoritarian settings could not be determined. Furthermore, our initial hypotheses concerning parties’ ideologies were not entirely decisive. Differences or similarities in opposition parties’ ideologies can both hinder and promote the formation of effective pre-electoral coalitions.

All other hypotheses can be confirmed: Strong presidential powers, a low level of trust, co-optation and a stable regime all contributed to the non-cooperation among oppositional parties in the 2012 presidential elections in Russia. Libman and Grishin confirm that strong presidential powers and the indivisibility of the office make it harder to bargain for equal benefits in a possible cooperation.

Concerning trust, Gel'man ascribes this with the lack of reliability to Russia's history: "Actually the whole experience of two decades of Russian politics after communism is about not keeping promises, so there is no wonder that politicians could not invest into a risky venture of trusting each other."²⁷ According to Ponomarev it is a common tactic of the presidential administration to use UR in their attempts to co-opt the opposition and channel benefits. In recent elections, they supposedly conceded 18 seats to influential opposition leaders. Ponomarev gives very strong evidence that the prospect of electoral success is a necessary condition for pre-electoral coalitions in presidential elections, but it is not a sufficient criterion, partly because the causal direction is not entirely clear. The non-competitiveness and stability of the regime explain the absence of this type of cooperation and make presidential elections a secondary playing field for the opposition.

However, the most interesting finding was the factor "willingness of the opposition parties to oppose the regime". Most theories and frameworks that we used for building our initial hypotheses took for granted that the opposition in authoritarian elections aims to win the presidency, establish a democracy or at least partly change the system. This is not the case in Russia, and a fundamental flaw in many quantitative studies, which might be falsifying interpretations. Those studies miss the most important precondition for cooperation between opposition parties, which is the will to cooperate in the first place. We want to bring back the differentiation between Opposition with a capital "O", as the institution of non-government parties in the system framed by Allen Potter in 1966 and opposition as a determined behavior of opposing the government.

This last aspect leads to the question: why do the systemic opposition parties participate in elections if they want to maintain the status quo? One simple reason is that the opposition parties profit from the status quo which elections are part of. These elections, as Schröder as well as Libman point out, are primarily held in order to uphold the legitimacy of the Russian political system, which is claimed by its ruling powers to be democratic. In order to keep the democratic image alive, the Kremlin needs parties to play the game. Those parties are well advised to obey because if a party ceases to be perceived as necessary or fitting by the Kremlin, it will be replaced and lose any influence it wields for moment.

As for the next presidential elections, all indicators that were shown to influence pre-electoral coalitions point towards a likely repetition of the 2012 elections. Future research should extend the scope of the investigation to the non-systemic opposition. Libman pointed out that the theoretical constructs are more applicable in the context of the non-systemic opposition in Russia. According to him, trust, ideological differences, as well as co-optation have a significant influence on the political incompatibility of parties. All interviewees brought up the extra-parliamentary opposition as the only meaningful player in opposing the

regime in Russia, making it a highly relevant subject for further research about failures of cooperation on the road to democracy.

PAUL BOCHTLER and THERESA LÜTKEFEND are pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Social Sciences degree at the Humboldt-University Berlin

ENDNOTES

- 1 Wolfgang Merkel, "Embedded and defective democracies," *Democratization* 11, no 5 (33-58).
- 2 Joseph Alois Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976).
- 3 Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- 4 Wolfgang Merkel, "Embedded and defective democracies," *Democratization* 11, no 5 (33-58).
- 5 Vladimir Gel'man, "The rise and decline of authoritarianism in Russia" *Demokratizatsiya*, 22 no 4 (504)
- 6 Nicolas Van de Walle "Tipping Games: When Do Opposition Parties Coalesce," in *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, ed. Andreas Schedler (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 78
- 7 Andreas Schedler, *The Politics of Uncertainty: sustaining and Subverting Electoral Authoritarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press), 6
- 8 Vladimir Gel'man, "The rise and decline of authoritarianism in Russia" *Demokratizatsiya*, 22 no 4 (505)
- 9 Nicolas Van de Walle "Tipping Games: When Do Opposition Parties Coalesce," in *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, ed. Andreas Schedler (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 85
- 10 Andreas Schedler, *The Politics of Uncertainty: sustaining and Subverting Electoral Authoritarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press), 21
- 11 Jennifer Gandhi, "The Role of Presidential Powers in Authoritarian Elections," in *Constitutions in Authoritarian Regimes* ed. Tom Ginsburg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)
- 12 Michael Wahman, "Offices and policies – Why do oppositional parties form pre-electoral coalitions in competitive authoritarian regimes?" *Electoral Studies*, 30 no. 4 (642-657)
- 13 Harley Balzer, "Managed Pluralism: Vladimir Putin's Emerging Regime," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 19 no. 3, (191)
- 14 Jennifer Gandhi, "The Role of Presidential Powers in Authoritarian Elections," in *Constitutions in Authoritarian Regimes* ed. Tom Ginsburg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 206
- 15 Anna Grzymala-Busse, "Coalition Formation and the Regime Divide in New Democracies: East Central Europe," *Comparative Politics*, 34 no. 1 (87)
- 16 Jennifer Gandhi, "The Role of Presidential Powers in Authoritarian Elections," in *Constitutions in Authoritarian Regimes* ed. Tom Ginsburg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 202

17 Michael Wahman, "Offices and policies – Why do oppositional parties form pre-electoral coalitions in competitive authoritarian regimes?" *Electoral Studies*, 30 no. 4 (642-657), 645

18 Jennifer Gandhi, "The Role of Presidential Powers in Authoritarian Elections," in *Constitutions in Authoritarian Regimes* ed. Tom Ginsburg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 203

19 Graziella Bertocchi and Michael Spagat, "The Politics of Co-Optation," *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 29, no.4, (591-607)

20 Ibid, 593

21 Michael Wahman, "Offices and policies – Why do oppositional parties form pre-electoral coalitions in competitive authoritarian regimes?" *Electoral Studies*, 30 no. 4 (642-657), 643

22 Ellen Lust-Okar, "Divided They Rule: The Management and Manipulation of Political Opposition," *Comparative Politics*, 35 no.2 (161)

23 Jennifer Gandhi, "Coordination Among Opposition Parties in Authoritarian Elections," Emory University, =

24 Nicolas Van de Walle "Tipping Games: When Do Opposition Parties Coalesce," in *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, ed. Andreas Schedler (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 87

25 Andreas Schedler, *The Politics of Uncertainty: sustaining and Subverting Electoral Authoritarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press), 2

26 Michaela Pfadenhauer, "Auf gleicher Augenhöhe. Das Experteninterview - ein Gespräch zwischen Experte und Quasi-Experte." In A. Bogner, B. Littig, & W. Menz (Eds.), *Experteninterviews - Theorien, Methoden, Anwendungsfelder* (pp. 99–116). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

27 Vladimir Gel'man, "The rise and decline of authoritarianism in Russia" *Demokratizatsiya*, 22 no. 4 (504)

manders of military forces that these projects will impress the local populations, garnering goodwill and cooperation.² In reality, the practice of quick impact projects results in a multitude of unintended consequences.³ The following is a discussion of four of the unintended consequences of quick impact projects.

Measurement and the connection between Theory and Practice.

In Afghanistan, infant mortality rates are exceptionally high; 165 per 1,000 live births, as is maternal mortality; 1,600 per 100,000 live births, much higher than the mean rate for other developing countries which average 80 per 1,000 infant mortality per live births and 671 per 100,000 maternal mortality per live births respectively.⁴ Therefore one potential measure of the efficacy of quick impact projects would be observable rapid improvement in these mortality rates. If such trends were found following the implementation of quick impact initiatives – such as basic medical or hospital infrastructure – in Afghanistan, then there would be grounds for concluding that such projects achieve the stated ends attributed to them; however, this is not the case. Even if a positive measurement of improvement through infrastructure existed there still remains a problem; the place infrastructure occupies in the theoretical argument in both post-conflict peacebuilding and with democratization. The prevailing argument is that infrastructure improvement – along with other security initiatives - leads to stability, entrenched peace, and eventually democratization. Unfortunately, there is a gap between the theorized and realized outcomes. There is no actual data that can assert that a relationship between short term, local level infrastructure improvements and entrenched peace and democratization exists,⁵ yet the problem of measurement allows individuals and organizations to claim success without quantifiable results.

The multiplicity and prevalence of quick impact projects.

The second reason to critically evaluate quick impact projects is their prevalence. Many government agencies, private companies, and non-governmental organizations undertake quick impact projects. Within Afghanistan, ten separate United States agencies, at least three separate United Nations Commissions, and the development agencies of numerous coalition countries such as the United Kingdom are all engaged in quick impact projects.⁶ There are also multiple private organizations involved; Fluor (United States company) and AMEC (United Kingdom company) were awarded contracts to conduct quick impact projects and provide infrastructure support.⁷ To a lesser extent, non-governmental organizations like the Red Cross and the Red Crescent conduct humanitarian assistance and undertake some limited infrastructure and capacity building projects.

The involvement of multiple agencies engaging in quick impact projects within the same region creates a specific

Analysing Quick Impact Projects: Democratization, Corruption, and the Quick Impact Culture

ERIC THOMSETT

There is a phenomenon in the post-conflict, peacebuilding enterprise called 'quick impact projects' (QIPs). These are projects undertaken to visibly and quickly improve some aspect of a local community's infrastructure.¹ Some identifying traits of a quick impact project would be that these initiatives are almost always funded by the third party intervening force, contracted to vendors, limited in scope, limited by time, and driven by military doctrine which informs the com-

problem; an environment where agencies work in a vacuum, independently from other organizations, without any central control, and without adherence to any strategic framework or grand architecture. This leads to conflicting messages, perceptions of favouritism, and in some cases, redundancy of effort.

There is wide variation in the method, discretion, and scope of quick impact projects across agencies. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) described quick impact projects as short-term projects, 90 percent of which cost less than 350,000 dollars.⁸ United Nations organisations such as United Nations Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) describe quick impact as 50,000 dollars or less and limited in duration to six months or less.⁹ As of 2005, quick impact projects in Iraq averaged 100,000 dollars and were limited in scope to one year.¹⁰ After the Iraq invasion was complete and the military transitioned into stability operations in 2003, the United States Department of Defence instituted a Commander Emergency Response Program (CERP) which grants military commanders discretionary funds to engage in localized quick impact projects, there were over 2,800 such projects in Iraq by May 2005.¹¹ There is no widely accepted, uniformed threshold for what constitutes a QiPs besides the limitation of scope, time, and expense. Therefore, any organization conducting these projects determines its own thresholds for scope, time, and cost by internal criteria.

Local discretion, multiple agencies, and a lack of central coordination led to the Government Accountability Office of the United States recommendation (to the United States Congress) that USAID reform its development strategy in both Iraq and Afghanistan. With no one central agency providing oversight and direction, infrastructure initiatives have never been integrated into an overall response strategy. No one agency is responsible for directing traffic, prioritizing efforts or de-conflicting the organizational goals of competing agencies. This brings us to the last two, important and intertwined, primary factors making the analysis of quick impact projects important: accountability and the quick impact culture.

Accountability in quick impact projects.

In 2003 in Afghanistan alone, USAID spent 508 million dollars, the US Department of State spent 254 million dollars, and the US Department of Defence spent 64 million dollars¹² on quick impact projects. The total United States budget for non-security expenses for 2002-2003 was 3.7 billion dollars, 75 percent of which was used for limited duration, discretionary quick impact projects.¹³ With this scale of funds pouring into conflict zones ascertaining accountability mechanisms is challenging. This is arguably the greatest challenge to evaluating quick impact projects. For example, USAID keeps no account of this type of spending.¹⁴ With only a total dollar amount to evaluate there is great difficulty understanding what the potential impact, or lack of impact, this money has bought. Billions of dollars have been spent

and there is no central record of what has been bought or built, nor a record of whom has been paid and what services they have provided. There is also the problem of hidden costs or funds that have been mixed with the budgets of several other departments.¹⁵ A general lack of clear budgetary pathways leads to poor total cost estimates. A lack of clear, itemised, and transparent details of how money has been spent almost completely prohibits analysis of the aggregate effects of quick impact infrastructure projects. The funding for these projects are also not attached to any strategy and are not reviewed at regular intervals.¹⁶ This lack of accountability confounds the notion that this type of non-security-based spending will lead to effective, transparent, and democratic governance; core principals of peacebuilding doctrine.

Another issue affecting accountability is corruption as some funds earmarked for reconstruction ends up being spent on something other than infrastructure. Stiglitz and Blimes estimate that in 2003, almost 17 billion dollars were siphoned away from Iraq reconstruction funding into military activities or never spent at all. The lack of accountability and corruption, in conjunction with weak contracting procedures and poor contracting oversight, results in agencies requesting (and receiving) funding multiple times for the same infrastructure projects and reconstruction initiatives.¹⁷

The problem of quick impact culture.

The scale of money available to finance quick impact projects has an identifiable effect on the organizations conducting this work. A 'spend to zero' mind set along with institutionalized systems of evaluating individual and organizational performance creates, in essence, a *quick impact culture*. With the scale of budget and the presence of multiple agencies conducting similar work, intense competition to access a share of the largesse develops. This competition creates an institutional norm that encourages each agency to spend every cent that it is allocated for the sole purpose of justifying a larger budget in the future as well as to provide quantifiable metrics for personal and organizational performance.

Combined with the lack of accountability for spending, this environment creates an opportunity for systematic corruption at all levels. This pattern is on display in any type of governmental agency; particularly the military, where organizations spend their budget to zero before the end of the fiscal year in order to be able to argue for an increased allocation the following year. Organizations that do not spend their entire budget might not be seen as effective or providing a vital utility; therefore, they spend to zero to avoid ill perceptions that might lead to them becoming irrelevant and replaceable. This can lead to fraudulent and wasteful spending.

With a quick impact culture that emphasises spending to zero and a general lack of accountability there is also the potential for other specific types of corruption. If we set aside cases of outright theft and acts of blatant fraud we can acknowledge that some activities undertaken overseas

may be viewed as corrupt if done within western nations. There is a reality in post-conflict environments that compromises are made in order to achieve what the military calls the 'end state'. This phenomenon is difficult to describe in words to anyone who does not have first-hand experience in this type of environment; however, the real, material cost of a quick impact project is less, perhaps far less, than the amount of money paid-out for the project. Besides legitimate governmental expenses, skimming and bribes are common costs of using local labour and local contractors. These local companies often include the price of paying local officials in their quotes resulting in an inflated articulated cost for any given project. This reality, in combination with a spend to zero mind set means that the majority of contracts are paid-out in full regardless of actual cost or services provided. Besides the reality of corruption, there is also an institutional incentive for the military to pay contracts in full. The amount of effort to pay less than full quote on a contract is extensive and subject to objection and protest from the contracted company. Essentially, the justification to pay less than full price on a contract is so extensive that it is prohibitive. This is a type of institutionalized corruption and is another conflict between the practice of quick impact initiatives and the theorized outcomes of doctrine. The reality of this corrupt process runs in opposition to stability, peace, and eventual democratization.

To Conclude.

Greater accountability and greater scrutiny to the quick impact process is needed. Removal of negative incentives such as paying full quotes for projects that were substandard would reduce the prevalence of corruption. A central strategy with an emphasis on accountability and transparency would allow tailored approaches with upfront measures of effectiveness to be provided. These are common sense criticisms that, if corrected, could potentially produce better results at a substantially lower cost. At the very least, these changes would allow for the comprehensive study of the relationship between infrastructure improvement and peacebuilding, which have not truly been substantiated.

While developed and well-functioning infrastructure is a characteristic of peaceful, democratic countries, the link between building infrastructure and producing stability and entrenched peace is unproven. The current method of quick impact infrastructure projects is a fractured doctrine and an expensive idea that has failed to produce any real, tangible results. The practice itself has created the opportunity for corruption, both from individual opportunists and through institutionalized procedures. Finally, it is only through a broken system of measurement and evaluation that individuals and organizations alike can claim success from failure.

ERIC THOMSETT is a PhD Candidate in Politics at the University of Oxford. Eric has a Master of Science from Northeastern University in Global Studies and International Affairs with a concentration in

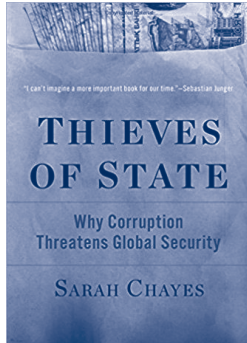
Conflict-Resolution and a Master of Arts from American Military University in Intelligence Studies. Eric is also a United States Army Veteran, having served for over a decade as a Military Officer with deployments to the Middle East and South Asia.

ENDNOTES

- 1 United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR). "Quick Impact Projects (QIPs): A Provisional Guide." Geneva, 2004.
- 2 John Baker, "Quick Impact Projects: Towards a 'Whole of Government' Approach," *Paterson Review - A Graduate Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 8 (2007), pp. 1-21.
- 3 Aoi, 2010, p. 126.
- 4 United States Government Accountability Office. "Afghanistan Reconstruction: Deteriorating Security and Limited Resources Have Impeded Progress; Improvements in U.S. Strategy Needed." June 2004. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d04403.pdf>
- 5 Gary King, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
- 6 United States Government Accountability Office. "Afghanistan Reconstruction: Deteriorating Security and Limited Resources Have Impeded Progress; Improvements in U.S. Strategy Needed." June 2004. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d04403.pdf>; United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR). "Quick Impact Projects (QIPs): A Provisional Guide." Geneva, 2004. ; Department for International Development (DFID). "Quick Impact Projects: A Handbook for the Military." Ministry of Defense, United Kingdom. 2002.
- 7 United States Government Accountability Office. "Rebuilding Iraq: U.S. Water and Sanitation Efforts Need Improved for Assessing Impact and Sustained Resources for Maintaining Facilities." September 2005. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05872.pdf>
- 8 USAID. "PRT Quick Impact Projects." 2013. Internet, Retrieved from <https://www.usaid.gov/node/51861>.
- 9 United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali" *United Nations*. 27 March 2015. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/219
- 10 United States Government Accountability Office. "Rebuilding Iraq: U.S. Water and Sanitation Efforts Need Improved for Assessing Impact and Sustained Resources for Maintaining Facilities." September 2005. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05872.pdf>
- 11 Ibid
- 12 United States Government Accountability Office. "Afghanistan Reconstruction: Deteriorating Security and Limited Resources Have Impeded Progress; Improvements in U.S. Strategy Needed." June 2004. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d04403.pdf>
- 13 Ibid
- 14 Ibid
- 15 Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Blimes. *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict*. (New York: Penguin Books, 2008), 9
- 16 Ibid, 189
- 17 Ibid, 15

Book Review: *Thieves of State* by Sarah Chayes

REVIEW BY RENU SINGH



A recurring theme in world affairs in the last decade has been the rise of violent extremism, often tied to so-called “failed states” and radicalized religion. From the ongoing conflict with the Syrian Civil War, to recent political protesters in Macedonia, to the armed ethnic conflict in Myanmar, there are numerous cases of violent extremism and social breakdown world-

wide. What is the cause of such threats to domestic and global security? Sarah Chayes’s *Thieves of State: Why Corruption Threatens Global Security* finds a common thread in the political, social, and military turbulence

that many such countries have experienced—corruption.

Chayes’ analysis and policy recommendations for how to deal with the rise in violent extremism stem from her experiences living in Afghanistan for nearly a decade, beginning in December 2001. Starting as a reporter for National Public Radio focused on economic reconstruction after the US-led invasion, she soon put her journalism career aside to help the Afghani people more directly by first running an NGO, followed by a soap business, and eventually serving as an adviser to the US military.

A dominating view of the international community when dealing with designated failed states is to establish security before working towards peace and political stability. Chayes asserts that prioritizing good governance and tackling chronic corruption is just as necessary as military action. She even goes so far as to say that “[a]cute government corruption may in fact lie at the root of the world’s most dangerous and disruptive security challenges—among them the spread of violent extremism.” As such, a normative claim is put forward about how the role of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and numerous other multilateral and bilateral relations created in the context of instability should prioritize anti-corruption policies.

For Chayes, kleptocratic governance is at the heart of the corruption problem. Such governments are set up to extract resources from their citizens, who eventually grow frustrated and fight back and end up in a world of violence, terrorism, human rights violations, and the rest. In addition to Afghanistan, the author connects this theme to a variety of cases ranging in time and space. Going back to the

sixth century through Machiavelli’s time, the “Mirrors for Princes”—historical advice literature written by numerous authors to princes on how to reign—explain the danger of stealing from subjects. The symbiotic relationship between corruption and violent extremism is then spelled out in the context of Egypt, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, and Nigeria in detail. Thieves within the state of each of these countries have pulled money up from their people to national governments via military complexes, extensive bureaucracies, post-Soviet autocracies, and resource revenues.

Two of the most striking features of the book are Chayes’s ability to connect the past and the West to what often is misunderstood to be a problem of the Global South. This gives much needed perspective on how the development of corruption-fueled violent extremism existed before the modern era and also has existed and continues to do so in developed countries. The case of the Netherlands, England, and America, in Chapters 11 and 12 underscore this.

Two of the most striking features of the book are Chayes’s ability to connect the past and the West to what often is misunderstood to be a problem of the Global South.

Overall, *Thieves of State* reads as a hybrid of a narrative of a development worker turned military adviser’s travails and a cross-national comparison case study. The author’s ability to connect various national episodes of extremism to government-enabled corruption is insightful, providing fodder for further evidence-based research to support the claims made. The policy recommendations provided also provide a general guidebook that the international development and security communities could learn from and build off of.

RENU SINGH is a PhD Candidate at Georgetown University in the Department of Government. Renu received a BA in Political Science and a BS in Microbiology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She also has a MS in Public Policy and Administration from the London School of Economics and Political Science and an MA in Government from Georgetown.

Program Highlights

❖ Our 11th incoming class joined the Democracy and Governance M.A. program during the 2016-2017 academic year. Welcome to **Manuel Ayulo, Kathryn Kizer, Emerald Litke, Catalina Martinez, Ahmed Mohamed, Dessy Pramita, Allison Schlossberg, and Laura Sinclair.**

❖ This year we welcomed **Molly Hageboeck** and **Meir Walters** to the program as adjunct faculty. Professor Hageboeck is a Technical Director in monitoring and evaluation at Management Systems International and has over 30 years of experience as an evaluation specialist. Dr. Walters holds a Ph.D. in Government from Georgetown and recently joined the U.S. State Department.

❖ On October 20th, 2016 the Democracy and Governance Program hosted its annual career panel. This year's program featured **Eric Goldstein** (Deputy Director, Middle East & North Africa Division, Human Rights Watch), **Liza Prendergast '12** (Director of Business Development, Democracy International) and **Imara Crooms '12** (Senior Program Design and Monitoring Specialist, International Republican Institute).

❖ The Democracy and Governance Program hosted two book talks during the Fall 2016 semester. On October 6th, 2016 Program Director **Daniel Brumberg** discussed his recent book *Power and Change in Iran: Politics of Contention and Conciliation* (edited with Farideh Farhi, Indiana University Press, 2016). On October 17th, 2016 **Irfan Nooruddin** and **Thomas Flores** presented findings from their book *Elections in Hard Times: Building Stronger Democracies in the 21st Century* (Cambridge University Press, 2016) in an event co-hosted with the Mortara Center for International Affairs.

❖ On February 23rd, 2017 DG co-hosted an event with the African Studies Program entitled "Working for Democracy and Governance in Africa" and featuring **Glanis Changachirere** and **Stanley Ibe**, both Reagan-Fascell Fellows at the National Endowment for Democracy.

❖ On March 23rd, 2017 DG and the Conflict Resolution program co-hosted **Fara Hached**, Director of Labo' Démocratique in Tunisia for an event on "Security and Democratic Consolidation in Tunisia."

❖ On April 18th, 2017, the Democracy and Governance Program and the Fundação Luso-Americana Para o Desenvolvimento co-hosted a half-day conference on "The Rise of Populism in Europe." The conference featured speakers

from both academia and the policy community in the United States and Portugal.

❖ Students in the DG program also had some fun this year! The DG program held its annual bowling night at Pinstripes in September 2016 and in May 2017 students and alumni had a day out at the ballpark cheering on the Washington Nationals.

Faculty Awards and Publications

❖ **Prof. Jennifer Dresden** was awarded a research grant from the Alma Ostrom and Leah Hopkins Awan Civic Education Fund of the American Political Science Association to support her work on the effects of the Ebola crisis on civil society and social capital in Sierra Leone.

❖ In February 2017, Palgrave Macmillan published *Great Powers, Weak States, and Insurgency*, a new book by **Prof. Patrick Quirk**.

Call for Contributions: *Democracy & Society Online*

Democracy & Society Online, the new blog hosted by the Georgetown University Democracy and Governance Program, is seeking contributions on an ongoing basis.

For more information on the blog and submission guidelines, or to contact the editors, visit us at www.democracyandsociety.net.

We welcome post proposals from students, faculty, and practitioners in all fields related to democracy and governance, regardless of specific topic or geographical focus.



Center for Democracy and Civil Society
3520 Prospect Street NW, Suite 110
Washington, D.C. 20057
Phone 202 687 0593 | Fax 202 687 1112
<http://cdacs.georgetown.edu>

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Washington, D.C.
Permit No. 3901

Democracy & Society

Democracy and Governance
Program Director

Daniel Brumberg

Associate Director

Jennifer Dresden

Staff

Justin Harried
Program Coordinator

Laura Sinclair
Webmaster

Journal Editors

Tom Williams
Editor-in-Chief

Manuel Ayulo
Assistant Editor

Sundar Rmanujam
Editor Emeritus