

Engelcke begins with the argument that an analysis of contemporary legal change requires an understanding of structural foundations laid during the French (in Morocco) and British (in Jordan) colonial periods, as well as institutional arrangements and political compacts made at the moment of independence and thereafter. Family law, in this historical analysis, was part of a larger project of state power, underwritten less by logics of tradition and religion than by questions of the type and degree of autonomy apportioned to judicial fields. A discussion of both national legal systems, in terms of legal reform and cultural capital, is followed by their contextualization within an increasingly loaded international legal climate. Here, Engelcke considers the impact of the Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on domestic laws in Jordan and Morocco, as well as divergent political responses to CEDAW. The book then goes into rich detail on the fate of law reform efforts in each case, paying attention not simply to codes but also to the work of legal and social actors, to state efforts at implementation and enforcement, to mobilization by NGOs, and back to engagements with the international.

Engelcke presents a remarkably rich, detailed, and context-laden account of continuity and change in both legal systems, made more admirable by its clarity of structure and narrative. In addition to its empirical matter, which is impressive, its particular analytic contribution is modeling an approach to the study of law that takes seriously its complexity. In this treatment of law, the text is neither the start nor the end of the analysis, but one component of a dynamic system with a range of actors, institutions, logics, languages, and effects, both domestic and international. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "field," Engelcke posits that interactions between the field of (executive) power and the juridical field explain the timing and nature of legal change. Thus, legal reform should be understood not simply as progress in a normative direction, but as change based on reconfigurations within and between fields. Engagement with CEDAW might also be read in terms of reconfigurations of cultural and political capital that did not routinely lead to the increased legal provision of gender equality.

In addition, Engelcke points out that the inclusion of a greater diversity of voices in the debate on law reform, beyond those of Islamic religious elites, similarly did not translate into policy impact in either case. In both cases, family law reforms achieved a greater degree of state control and intervention in social and family life, and both the process and texts of recent reform processes consolidated—and extended—the normative reach of Islamic terms and hierarchies, reaffirming the identification of family not merely as state law but also as Islamic law. Drawing on Talal Asad (*Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam*, 2003), Engelcke observes that the same process might be seen with regard to other religious

communities, resulting in the equation of family law with religious law. For Engelcke, this has consequences not only for the content of the law and its institutional instantiations but also for cultural capital. "Multi-religious societies with family law systems that are institutionalized along communal lines are not more socially conservative by default...these systems have become bastions of conservatism because they link communal privileges to a specific type of family law system" (p. 227).

Yet the legislative and textual picture is complicated by what happens when laws hit the ground, revealing the limitations of authoritarian states and normative hierarchies in light of competition between agencies of the state, multiple interpretations of the law text, and contestations by different women's groups and social movements. "The state is not a unified actor that simply contests norms within society that are at odds with the state's statutory law. Instead, different state agencies emphasize different aspects of the law" (p. 223). The same is true for different nonstate actors and groups.

The overall narrative raises important questions about the expansionism of the state into the field of Islamic law and the limits of that expansion, but here, a reader might have wished to see more of Engelcke's rich material to further illuminate the ways in which the ambiguity of law and its complex social and political dynamics might facilitate or forestall efforts to achieve better outcomes for women. Perhaps a closer engagement with growing debates on the ability of legal change coded as "liberal" or "progressive" might have provided more insight into the practical and normative ambiguities of legal reform and of conservatism. This in turn might have allowed for more exploration of the critical questions that Engelcke raises in her concluding chapter about the complex links between the normative content of law, political and economic concerns at the national level, authoritarian negotiation, desires for stability, and interconnections with the international.

Engelcke concludes by making the case for further comparison beyond the MENA region, arguing against the prevailing exceptionalization of Islam and the Middle East in the study of family law. This study, by providing a clear methodological model that also delivers theoretically, makes clear the payoff for such work and raises a range of important questions to investigate.

The Private Sector in Public Office: Selective Property Rights in China. By Yue Hou. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 204p. \$99.99 cloth, \$34.99 paper.
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How does China's private sector manage to thrive under incomplete property rights? This puzzle is of great importance to deciphering China's growth formula, in which the

private sector has played a pivotal role in fueling the economy. Earlier research has provided two answers. One is *unbundling*: since property rights consist of a bundle of rights (e.g., the rights to possess, use, exclude, and transfer), the state can provide economic agents with some rights but retain others. The other is *substituting*: to secure property rights, private entrepreneurs leverage political connections and informal interactions with government officials as substitutes for formal institutional support. As such, partial property rights can also foster growth, at least to a certain degree.

Yue Hou's elegantly written book, *The Private Sector in Public Office*, provides an alternative, insightful answer to this question. She argues that China's formal institutions, in particular the legislative system, provide a system of *selective and predictable property rights* through which private entrepreneurs can advance their interests. Hou first challenges the conventional wisdom by arguing that property holders do not necessarily demand universal property rights, because universal protection benefits all parties equally. Asset holders instead may prefer selective and predictable property rights, which benefit themselves but disadvantage their competitors, even to the extent that they drive the competitors out of the market (pp. 18–19). Hou further contends that China's legislative system, although often regarded as ineffective, helps build such a system of selective property rights for entrepreneurs. By securing seats in the local legislatures, private entrepreneurs can deter local officials from expropriating their assets. Importantly, this system of selective property rights can provide a "first-best" institution for both entrepreneurs and autocrats, with the former enjoying exclusive property protection and the latter ensuring rents. As noted by Hou, "if this group (under selective protection) happens to be the most productive sector of the economy, this selective property rights system could be relatively efficient as a whole" (p. 19).

The theory of selective property rights generates three observable implications, which Hou tests using cutting-edge empirical strategies and an impressive set of anecdotal, observational, and experimental data. Chapter 4 establishes that private entrepreneurs seek legislative seats mainly to secure property rights. Hou draws on interview data to show that expropriation, which is a prevalent problem in China, motivates entrepreneurs to join politics. Chapter 5 further demonstrates that holding a legislative seat indeed helps private entrepreneurs protect their property. Exploiting evidence from a national survey, Hou finds that entrepreneurs who serve in the local legislatures on average make fewer informal payments to local governments than those who do not.

Chapter 6 then examines the mechanism for why holding a legislative seat helps protect private property. The key is the ability to signal political capital: joining the legislature credibly signals the entrepreneur's strong

political connectedness, which deters low-level officials from demanding bribery. The mechanism is tested by two original audit experiments. These experiments send information requests to a local mayor's online mailbox, randomly altering the identity of the request sender. They find that local officials are more responsive to information requests from entrepreneurs with legislative connections than those without them. One may question, however, whether these experiments are realistic: connected entrepreneurs usually have superior channels to contact local governments, including formal channels only for legislators, and informal connections with officials. It seems less likely that an entrepreneur-legislator would use a local mayor's mailbox, a public website overwhelmed by requests from ordinary citizens. Another caveat is that these experiments do not directly test officials' selective protection for private property, but rather selective provision of information to entrepreneurs. But to Hou's credit, the book openly acknowledges the limitations of the experiments (p. 146). It is also worth noting that, because of the tremendous difficulty in conducting field experiments in China, scholars often have to compromise research design. Despite some imperfections, the audit experiments do demonstrate a core hypothesis of Hou's theory: there is a "selective treatment" in the state-business relationship.

This book makes several fantastic contributions. Theoretically, the book situates itself in a central inquiry of political economy research: the nexus between institutions and growth. It joins a decades-long effort among scholars to address a startling anomaly: If institutions are crucial for growth, why have some countries grown so fast under weak rule of law? Many studies on private sector development focus on how formal institutions constrain private businesses. Hou instead shows that formal institutions, even if weak, can be used as resources to enable growth. This theoretical insight enriches our understandings about authoritarian institutions in China and other countries. Beyond that theoretical contribution, the book features a rich variety of methods and an impressive collection of data. Rigorous large-N analysis is interwoven with vivid anecdotes and examples, which never bore the reader. The book is also pioneering in introducing audit studies into the analysis of Chinese politics. These studies open up opportunities for investigating various sources of discrimination in China's political and economic systems.

The Private Sector in Public Office raises interesting questions for further thought. For example, what are the boundary conditions under which the theory of selective property rights applies? As the book implies, "small enterprises are not the main focus" (p. 74). Entrepreneurs who are capable of securing legislative seats generally have businesses that are relatively large and competitive. Small businesspeople, on the contrary, do not have the resources to run for public office and are vulnerable to expropriation.

This boundary condition raises concerns about the overall efficiency of the system of selective property rights. Given that large businesses can secure property rights whereas small ones cannot, the system of selective property rights is likely to favor incumbents, enhance market concentration, stifle competition, and hurt long-term growth. These drawbacks will be even more pronounced as the Chinese economy becomes increasingly reliant on small and medium-size enterprises, which lack property protection. Even for those who now gain from this system—the large, connected businesses—the system did not always benefit them. These businesses probably had suffered much expropriation before they become sufficiently large to eventually leverage public office to deter expropriation. In this sense, selective property rights do not seem to be more efficient than universal rights. Therefore, it might be too early for Hou to suggest that the system of selective property rights is a “first-best” institution. The system is in place not because of its superior economic efficiency but because of political feasibility (i.e., closer to what Dani Rodrik calls the “second-best” institution). After all, granting universal property rights requires a full-fledged judicial system that China does not have. This logic of trading off efficiency for political expediency is at the heart of many institutional arrangements in China, so it is not surprising to see it in the case of selective property rights.

Winning Hearts and Votes: Social Services and the Islamist Political Advantage. By Steven T. Brooke. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019. 234p. \$39.95 cloth.
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In *Winning Hearts and Votes*, Steven Brooke asks a fundamental question in comparative political economy: How does welfare provision by nonstate actors translate into effective political mobilization for the organizations providing the services? He addresses this question in the context of authoritarian regimes where space for political competition is constrained and where allowing opposition actors the opportunity to generate support through welfare provision is risky. This question is examined through an important specific case—that of medical welfare provision by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The book makes significant contributions both to our understanding of the politics of welfare services and of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood as an organization.

The book seeks to address three related puzzles. First, why would autocratic regimes allow potential challengers to develop extensive social service networks? The answer Brooke provides is that, under conditions of state fiscal weakness, service provision can be tolerated or even encouraged in autocratic regimes, because it provides

“shock absorbers for a vulnerable citizenry” (p. 11). This could be initially attractive because it lowers the chances of public protest, but it also makes it difficult for the state to reclaim the ceded social service space later on, as Hosni Mubarak discovered in Egypt.

A second, and central, puzzle of the book is this question: Under what conditions does social service provision lead to electoral support for the organization that sponsors the service? In the case of the Muslim Brotherhood, one might assume that religious or ideological affinity motivates those who both provide and benefit from the service. Therefore, clients of the Brotherhood’s services would share the religious affinities of the political movement and thus also provide political support based on that affinity. Alternatively, the poor beneficiaries of social services might become political clients of the Brotherhood in exchange for their care, effectively paying back the Brotherhood with votes during elections.

Brooke does an effective job of complicating both of these common assumptions by demonstrating that service providers were more professionals than ideologues, that services were not provided based on religion, and that the paying middle classes (not the poor) were the Brotherhood’s clients. He provides evidence that the Brotherhood received significant electoral support from non-ideological, middle-class voters who benefited from its medical service provision. These are the voters who are more likely to feel like they have political choices in an autocratic regime, because they are less financially dependent than poor voters on established patterns of state clientelism.

This leads to a third puzzle: Why do beneficiaries of those services actually cast their votes in support of the Brotherhood? After an examination of the client experience at Brotherhood medical facilities and through the use of a survey experiment, Brooke argues that they vote for the Brotherhood because their experience with the professional care at the organization’s medical facilities serves as a proxy with which to make political judgments about Brotherhood electoral candidates. This medical care was effective because it targeted primarily those who could pay for it, thus ensuring a revenue stream that could be reinvested into the quality of care. Paying clients voted for the Brotherhood because “high quality and compassionate care” (p. 20), without implied political obligation, translated into positive judgments about the effectiveness of Brotherhood-affiliated candidates.

In sum, Brooke argues that authoritarian governments will allow for nonstate service provision when they are under fiscal duress, that this service provision leads to opposition political support in middle-class districts, and that it does so because it serves to enhance the reputation of opposition politicians among voters there who have the flexibility to choose whom to support at the ballot box. This argument reframes “the Islamist political advantage”