

maintain its Jewish identity and character through segregation achieved through statutory and political means” (p. 10). As other scholars have argued, there are serious tensions between the country’s “Jewishness” and democracy, and between “ethnocracy” (Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine*, 2006) and “hegemony” (Peleg, *Democratizing the Hegemonic State: Political Transformation in the Age of Identity*, 2007). Yet, in reviewing different models that might be applicable to the Israeli case, the authors are far from clear as to which they believe fits this particular case.

After an extensive introduction that offers useful historical background (mostly for non-experts) and simultaneously adduces a somewhat unclear and underdeveloped analytical framework, the authors dedicate six chapters to issues that they believe substantiate the post-Oslo “politics of faith” among Palestinians in Israel.

Chapter 1 deals with the political aspirations of the Palestinian minority as a challenger to the country’s “hegemonic ethnocracy,” recognizing the diversity of opinions (from “integration” to the state of full autonomy). The chapter notes, correctly, that although a vast majority of Palestinians in Israel recognize the state’s right to exist and accept their status as Israeli citizens (p. 34), there has been a decline in the number of Palestinians who see themselves as Israeli without a Palestinian component as well (p. 35). Moreover, although Palestinians are satisfied with their level of individual advancement, they are dissatisfied with the progress made by their group (p. 39). Importantly, the chapter notes the rise of a new generation of Palestinian intellectuals who promote the discourse of indigenism.

Chapter 2 deals with political leadership among the Palestinians in Israel, noting that the new leaders are better educated, more eloquent, and charismatic than earlier ones, and deploy sophisticated tactics and strategies (p. 59). Yet, there is no attempt to assess the positions of the leadership versus that of the general Arab public. Chapter 3 is about Palestinian civil society, noting that there are thousands of Palestinian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Israel (2,200 in 2004). Yet, the authors recognize that Palestinian NGOs have not yet created an organized civil society that is legitimate and able to empower the minority (p. 96). Chapter 4 deals with Islamic activism in Israel, emphasizing the differences between various branches of the Islamic movement, particularly between the extraparliamentary branch that refuses to participate in the elections to the Knesset (viewing Israeli politics as a foreign environment, p. 118) and the more moderate branch that is working within the Israeli political system. Chapter 5 deals with the all-important “Future Vision” document, a 2006 manifesto published by a group of Palestinian politicians and intellectuals that has generated great national and international interest among Palestinians in Israel, Israel’s

Jewish majority, and beyond. The authors view “Future Vision” as a major step toward the “organization of the Palestinians in Israel as a national group with united goals” (p. 146). Chapter 6 deals with the establishment of the Joint List of Arab Parties in the 2015 Knesset elections, a list that included the Left, the communists, the nationalists, and some Islamists. The authors provide the historical, intellectual, and political context for this move. Although they view the establishment of the Joint Arab List as an important political event, they opine that it is merely “the start of the process of change and not its end” (p. 168), arguing that both the State of Israel and the Palestinian national movement need to seek a “fair historical solution that deals with the impact of the [1948] Nakba and not the [1967] occupation” (p. 168).

The concluding chapter to this useful, accessible book deals with the future of the Palestinians in Israel, lamenting that, in the post-Oslo era, “the question of the Palestinian minority remained marginalized” (p. 169) and “Israel’s ethnicization policies have intensified” (p. 170); both assertions are supported by other scholars. Realistically, the authors view the minority as having a complex identity as both Palestinian and Israeli and a unique Palestinian identity at that. They correctly argue that “the Palestinians in Israel must invest special effort in changing the Jews’ attitude toward them and their demands” (p. 172). Although this is sound advice, the domination of Israeli politics by the Right is not promising. Nevertheless, this book is a significant contribution to the academic and political debate on intercommunal relationships in Israel and could shed light on politics in other deeply divided societies.

Escaping the Energy Poverty Trap: When and How Governments Power the Lives of the Poor. By Michaël

Aklin, Patrick Bayer, S. P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018. 328p. \$90.00 cloth, \$35.00 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592719003062

— Elizabeth Chatterjee, *Queen Mary University of London*
l.chatterjee@qmul.ac.uk

Despite a flurry of interest from the international development community, political science has so far remained largely silent on energy poverty. Why do 1.1 billion people live without electricity and 2.8 billion without clean cooking fuels, while some governments have made rapid progress in providing virtually universal energy access? In this lucid and ambitious study, Michaël Aklin, Patrick Bayer, S. P. Harish, and Johannes Urpelainen aim to fill the gap and provide “a systematic, empirically falsifiable theory of energy poverty” (p. 59). In so doing, they open up a major new area of research in comparative political economy and energy policy.

Escaping the Energy Poverty Trap considers two dimensions of energy poverty that have particularly substantial

effects on the well-being of energy-poor (largely rural) households: access to electricity and to modern cooking fuels. Chapter 2 provides a flexible working definition of energy poverty and surveys the wide variation in countries' success in enabling energy access. Existing explanations of this divergence have tended toward economic or geographical determinism, seeing policy success as a function of country size, wealth, or resource endowments. Such theories, however, struggle to explain why China and Vietnam electrified precociously early or why resource-rich Nigeria and Indonesia have lagged behind.

Although it does not deny the significance of such factors, *Escaping the Energy Poverty Trap* persuasively argues that the ultimate determinants of this variation are political. Most crucial is government interest. Given the vast infrastructural investments required, the authors assume that the national government is the primary actor in alleviating energy poverty. As chapter 3 outlines, the government's level of interest depends on whether it has sufficient political and economic incentives to help rural households meet their basic energy needs. Where governments believe their political survival depends on the rural energy-poor, they will invest in improving energy provision, a thesis that echoes *The Logic of Political Survival* (2003) by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow. Because rural voters in democratic regimes can exercise influence through the ballot box, democracies are more likely to eradicate energy poverty. Nonetheless, authoritarian regimes may also rely on rural constituencies or expect similar economic benefits from improved agricultural productivity through electrification. If the national government determines that net costs of eliminating energy poverty outweigh the benefits to itself, however, such eradication is unlikely (p. 74).

Yet government interest is necessary but not sufficient; the degree of policy effectiveness is conditioned by institutional capacity and local accountability. If all three factors are present, the result is fast and sustained progress (as in the case of rural electrification in China). If interest is strong but institutional capacity or local accountability is weak, improvements will be slower and more uneven (as in Ghana and Bangladesh). A fourth factor, technological change, can open up new opportunities through decentralized energy provision, but cannot overcome a lack of government interest.

Given the paucity of existing comparative research on energy poverty, these bold conclusions are based on a careful research design that examines most-similar and most-different case studies in turn. Chapter 4 presents a longitudinal analysis of energy access in India since 1947, using subnational comparisons across five Indian states to build its hypotheses. This argument is then tested through 11 shorter case studies across Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. Chapter 5 explores

energy access success stories—China, Vietnam, South Africa, Ghana, Brazil, and Chile—leveraging regime change to examine the effects of democratization. Chapter 6 analyzes cases where universal energy access remains elusive—Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, and Nigeria—as well as the deviant case of Senegal. Together these chapters present a sweeping synthesis of recent research on energy access policies across the Global South.

The cases compellingly demonstrate the importance of government interest in minimizing energy poverty. As Indonesia and South Africa show, democratization often ushers in greater government interest in energy access for the rural energy-poor. Authoritarian regimes that consider rural electrification a matter of national economic and strategic concern, such as Maoist China and postwar Vietnam, may also invest heavily. Where governments are more interested in prioritizing urban and industrial constituencies or in outright graft, as in Nigeria and Kenya before the late 1990s, the outcomes are generally dismal. Policy-minded readers may find the practical implications persuasive but dismaying: energy access advocates and researchers are instructed to give up on governments uninterested in eradicating energy poverty (p. 251). Others may wonder precisely why there is such wide variation across regime type, especially in the degree of commitment to *universal* access for the most marginalized, something that deserves further elucidation. More optimistic is the exciting finding that local accountability has been foundational for energy access successes, from China's decentralized rural electrification to Ghana's demand-led programs. Future research might explore what kinds of local accountability mechanisms are most effective not only in sanctioning underperformance but also in shaping the concrete details of national policy implementation.

Across virtually all of the case studies, rural electrification has progressed more rapidly than access to clean cooking fuels. This aligns with the book's predictions. Governments have greater incentives to promote rural electrification than access to modern cooking fuels, because of the former's tighter link with economic productivity and pivotal constituencies like wealthy farmers (what the authors call "public service delivery by coincidence"). The apparent exception, Senegal, fits the deeper pattern: the threat of deforestation and desertification drove strong government interest in providing modern cooking fuels, unusually outpacing rural electrification. These nuanced findings prompt a valuable note of caution against the tendency of political scientists to discuss public goods and services in the abstract, rather than paying attention to the quiddity of particular goods. Institutional capacity is also domain specific, the authors argue—not something that can be measured at the aggregate level. The concluding chapter calls for political scientists to analyze concrete realities from the bottom up, rather than imposing preexisting analytical categories.

The book's own analytical categories are left somewhat underspecified, however. It is not clear how to measure government interest or why it varies over time. Institutional capacity is variously treated as synonymous with bureaucratic competence, technical expertise, interagency coordination, or even utility profitability. Local accountability is similarly used as a catchall term to refer to everything from community ownership to market signals and consumer voice in regulatory forums. These discussions also tend to sidestep the most popular explanation for poor utility performance in the Global South—political capture—and indeed political competition finds surprisingly little place in the analysis. Although the book concludes that clientelism is a side issue (p. 248), this downplays the problem that short-run benefits may undermine long-term sustainability; responsiveness to rural demands can lock energy sectors into financially and environmentally ruinous subsidies. As the authors themselves acknowledge, each of these categories deserves systematic measurement and further study.

These concerns notwithstanding, *Escaping the Energy Poverty Trap* provides a thrilling opening salvo in a nascent field of study. Political scientists, energy scholars, and development practitioners alike will find the book stimulating and provocative, as well as a rich repository of material on successes and failures across three continents. It deserves to kickstart a new wave of comparative politics research on sustainable energy access for all.

Uneven Social Policies: The Politics of Subnational Variation in Latin America. By Sara Niedzwiecki. Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 2018. 272p. \$99.99 cloth.
doi:10.1017/S1537592719003499

— Natasha Borges Sugiyama, *University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*
sugiyamn@uwm.edu

In *Uneven Social Policies*, Sara Niedzwiecki examines the political factors that influence the effective implementation of novel social policies. In recent decades Latin American countries have broadly expanded social programs, notably in the areas of health and social protection. Two policies—conditional cash transfers (CCTs) and preventive health programs—have been particularly effective for expanding access to benefits to previously marginalized and excluded groups. These highly regarded social policy approaches reflect important advances in many national governments' commitment to inclusion. Their policy features—nondiscretionary, broadly targeted, and noncontributory—are particularly notable for departing from previous social assistance models. For these reasons, Niedzwiecki takes on the crucial task of explaining why implementation of social policy varies within countries and shows how the complexities associated with federalism are at work.

To illustrate the existence of uneven outcomes, Niedzwiecki draws on the country cases of Argentina and Brazil. Both are decentralized and have subnational governments with significant fiscal, policy, and political authority over their own territories. In both countries, the national (federal) government needs subnational governmental cooperation for their CCTs and health policies to work well. The extent to which subnational governments cooperate, and why, is at the heart of this insightful book.

Uneven Social Policies makes important contributions to a growing literature in comparative public policy that examines the politics of expanded social policies in Latin America. The focus here is to uncover the conditions under which national policies are more successfully implemented across subnational units in decentralized countries (p. 2). Notably, the theoretical approach employed in the book broadly integrates scholarship from comparative politics, as well as public policy and public administration. Scholars of US state politics have long noted that federalism can severely complicate national social welfare policy delivery. In the United States, individual states resist national policies because of unfunded mandates, differences in ideology, and partisanship, among other reasons. This book offers many striking parallels with the politics of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Thus, it will be broadly appealing to scholars of federalism, US state politics, Latin America, comparative politics, and social welfare.

Turning to the specifics of the argument, Niedzwiecki argues that subnational implementation of social policies is driven by three general forces. First, there is the issue of political alignments associated with the policy. The author maintains that there are generally two kinds of policies: those that can be easily attributed as belonging to the national government and those for which attribution of responsibility is fuzzier. When policy attribution is clear, the incumbent president and his or her allies can reap electoral dividends from the electorate. In these cases, subnational politicians who are aligned with the president will facilitate implementation of the policy, whereas those who are nonaligned will obstruct policy implementation. Because CCTs provide tangible benefits to families with clear attribution, whereas responsibility for social services tends to be blurred, Niedzwiecki argues that the effect of attribution and political alignment only applies to CCTs.

Her second and third factors—institutional capacity and policy legacies—apply to both CCTs and health policies. Territorial infrastructure, which is part of her second factor, broadly relates to the importance of institutional capacity. Niedzwiecki argues that subnational governments that have stronger territorial infrastructure are better able to implement social policies. She draws on numerous indicators to capture the nuances associated with territorial infrastructure, including the spatial reach of