

new knowledge or build counterintuitive theory. Its innovation lays in the thoroughness with which it probes and makes sense of violence in Syria as a system. In bringing together the multiple strands and manifestations of violence in one rich and erudite text, it is poised to stand as the most important reference on the topic. Anyone wanting to understand Syria and Syrians should grapple with this book.

**Megaphone Bureaucracy: Speaking Truth to Power in the Age of the New Normal.** By Dennis C. Grube. Princeton:

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In a context of polarization, political distrust, and the 24-hour news cycle, Dennis Grube explores the changing relationship between elected leaders and appointed bureaucrats in Western democracies. Focusing on the United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia, Grube's comparative analysis shows how today's civil servants have increasingly found themselves governing in public. In this new era, historic norms and conventions are being eroded as bureaucrats have greater opportunity to make public interventions that challenge the authority of elected representatives. *Megaphone Bureaucracy* makes an original and convincing case that these new opportunities should not only be welcomed but also embraced by civil servants so they can provide an authoritative voice in public debates that are increasingly being framed by "fake news" and misinformation.

By making this argument, Grube challenges the conventional wisdom that civil servants have been politicized and constrained by powerful governments. Instead, he suggests that new forms of social media afford civil servants a higher degree of agency than they possessed in the past. The roles that senior public officials previously performed behind closed doors are now more likely to be undertaken on the public stage. How should public officials adapt to these new conventions? Grube answers this question by developing a new approach to public leadership he describes as the "Washminster" model. As a hybrid between Westminster traditions and Washington practices, Grube proposes that officials should accept greater responsibility for the role they play in decision making while also assuming an independent identity and proactive public profile. They should have and embrace the opportunity to defend themselves from politicians' and media criticism as well.

Grube's key point is that such a model would enable civil servants to actively seek and deliver "public value" by providing evidence and data to enrich policy debates. He draws on Jeffery Tulis's concept of the "rhetorical presidency," which highlights the importance of communica-

tion as a means for presidents to assert their agenda in the face of restrictive institutions. Grube suggests that his Washminster model would allow civil servants to fulfill a similar role of "rhetorical bureaucrats." His key point here is that bureaucrats are already operating on the public stage, yet outdated conventions restrict them from assuming the tools of the trade that would allow them to exercise their growing agency effectively. Bureaucrats need to be allowed the space to communicate their knowledge and expertise to a wider public audience and thereby maximize their contribution to the democratic process.

*Megaphone Democracy* makes this interesting and compelling argument on the basis of wide-ranging new empirical evidence. Grube analyzes what he describes as the "visible manifestations of bureaucracy" (p. 52) in the form of written communications—letters, briefing notes, interviews and speeches—that provide evidence of bureaucrats' behavior. These are then compared to bureaucrats' interpretations of their own actions, which are found in 45 semi-structured interviews with retired mandarins from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. The actions and beliefs of bureaucrats are then triangulated with public records and media coverage. Grube uses this new empirical evidence not only to develop his Washminster approach to public leadership but also to document the different ways bureaucrats must increasingly engage with the public. These ways include communicating in writing, assuming roles in public leadership, appearing in front of oversight committees, publishing memoirs, and negotiating both established and new forms of social media. These examples are used to show how Grube's Washminster system is already in operation in many western democracies today and to make the case that we should rethink the relationship between elected representatives and appointed officials to ensure that bureaucrats engage in the policy-making process more effectively.

*Megaphone Democracy* raises several interesting questions about transparency, accountability, expertise, and political trust. Grube makes a clear and convincing argument that the relationship between civil servants and politicians has changed, which provokes obvious questions about how such a transformation can be explained. Grube repeatedly refers to the rise of the 24-hour news cycle and social media throughout the book and how they have led to increased scrutiny of bureaucratic leaders. But given how much of the book is focused on asserting the agency of public officials themselves, I wondered about civil servants' own role in contributing to these changes. Have civil servants actively sought to adopt a more public role, or have they passively and reluctantly been thrust into the public spotlight due to changes in the media and political communication? This raises further questions about popular understandings and expectations of democracy; in particular, precisely

where did this increased demand for transparency and accountability come from?

Grube's proposed Washminster model also raises questions about expertise and political trust. Central to the argument that bureaucrats should embrace their newfound public role in the policy-making process is the assumption that these individuals are knowledgeable and trustworthy and will thus provide evidence and insight to counter the misinformation and fake news that increasingly dominate policy debates. He argues, "Generally speaking, levels of trust in non-partisan officials is higher than it is for politicians. They have a sense of ethos emanating from their position and public service institutions they represent. They also have professional experience in dealing with data and evidence" (p. 45). Given the importance of citizens' trust in civil servants for Grube's Washminster model to enrich democratic debate, I thought the book would have benefited from providing some more evidence and discussion of citizens' perceptions of bureaucrats and bureaucracy. During the Brexit and the Scottish independence referendums, experts were often dismissed as being out of touch, and their advice was commonly portrayed as fear-mongering. Within this context, when the legitimacy of expertise itself is increasingly questioned, it seems important to think about how both civil servants and politicians can effectively engage the public with evidence-based arguments.

Overall, Dennis Grube's *Megaphone Bureaucracy* proposes a new and intriguing way forward for senior bureaucrats to negotiate emerging challenges facing western democracies.

**How Autocrats Compete: Parties, Patrons, and Unfair Elections in Africa.** By Yonatan L. Morse. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 336p. \$125.00 cloth.  
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In the past decade, the literature on autocratic institutions has increased dramatically. One of its key findings is that autocracies with political parties are better situated to manage both elites and voters and thus last longer, on average, than other forms of authoritarianism. Yet despite much work on this topic, most studies assume that all autocratic parties are created equal and are uniformly equipped to generate stability. In *How Autocrats Compete*, Yonatan Morse demonstrates deep flaws in this assumption. The core argument of the book is that only electoral autocracies with *credible* ruling parties enjoy the benefits of routinized elite management and voter loyalty. However, the majority of autocratic ruling parties lack credibility and thus face far more contingent circumstances. They depend more heavily on repression and coercion and are more

reliant on international support to stay in power. Morse explores this argument with secondary sources, archival materials, elite interviews, and within-country quantitative analysis in three key cases: Tanzania, Cameroon, and Kenya. As opposed to large-N, cross-national work on ruling parties, *How Autocrats Compete* offers a rich, in-depth analysis of the inner workings of three extremely different regimes.

The key contribution of the book is to break open the concept of the "autocratic ruling party" and provide a conceptual measure for the credibility of such parties. A party's credibility is measured by its physical size, decisional autonomy, internal democracy, and the breadth of its social commitments (p. 39). When we consider these factors, it becomes apparent that, historically, credible ruling parties are actually quite rare, despite what broader theories of authoritarianism might lead us to believe. The author then shows how these different aspects of credibility produce institutions capable of managing elite competition, mobilizing electoral support, and weakening the opposition. The ruling party in Tanzania, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), offers the classic example of a credible party. The Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) and the Kenyan African National Union, despite equally long histories as the CCM, lack credibility, acting primarily on the personal authority of the executive branch.

Using rich historical detail, chapter 4 describes the roots of these three parties from the independence era through the transition to multiparty politics. The author masterfully synthesizes a dense history of three political parties into a convincing narrative about the extent to which each one has been capable of producing credibility over the course of three decades. Using a trove of secondary sources, chapter 5 traces the process whereby party credibility—especially decisional autonomy and internal democracy—produces elites who are loyal to the party. In the era of multiparty politics, elite defection is highest in Kenya, which features the least credible ruling party, whereas it is lowest in Tanzania where elites can depend on independently enforced rules to provide credible mechanisms for career management.

Chapter 6 demonstrates how party credibility also produces voter loyalty, especially through its breadth of social commitments. Whereas in Tanzania the delivery of public resources is largely perceived as fairly distributed, in Cameroon and Kenya there are widespread perceptions that these social services are ethnically contingent, which undermines voter loyalty to the party. The author argues that in Tanzania, areas with higher levels of "social incorporation" are more likely to support the CCM in the multiparty era, showing that *ujamaa* villages from 1973 to 1975 are correlated with higher vote shares for the CCM, on average, during the multiparty era. However, the author never defines what he means by social