

experience of Indian democracy. By bringing the lives of people who are not at the center of social power structures into focus, it reveals how subordinate groups negotiate contradictions that appear in their daily lives when the legal promise of equality fails to provide any kind of protection. Behl refers to these contradictions as exclusionary inclusion, because they allow citizens to distance themselves from participation in violence and discrimination while supporting other interests—political, religious, social, familial—that obfuscate the inequality and marginalization faced by many subordinate groups. She backs up her analysis by weaving a discussion of the 2012 rape of Jyoti Singh and the legal debates that unfolded in its aftermath with semi-structured interviews of Sikh women focusing on their experiences across multiple domains: religious, social, political, and domestic. Finally, Behl argues that her conversations with Sikh women indicate that religion—which is traditionally seen in binary opposition to secular democracy as being conservative and restricting women’s freedom and equality—actually can provide women strategic opportunities to exercise some leadership and meaningful participation in communal life.

The analysis provided in this book is compelling. The discussion of the Jyoti Singh case and of the legal/political debates that shaped the passing of the 2013 Anti-Rape Law is nuanced, revealing very clearly that Indian politicians cannot visualize radical gender equality but rather are still focused on ideas of chastity and virtue as enduring traits of femininity that must be protected. Thus, although the law did give some legal teeth to rape prosecution, it also had major omissions; for example, the Armed Services Special Provisions Act precludes members of the Indian armed forces from prosecution for sexual assault in civil courts. Behl also argues that the massive outpouring of sympathy for Singh was related to the public misperception of her as an urban middle-class girl assaulted by uneducated goons, while actually she and her attackers shared similar economic and social backgrounds.

It would have been interesting if Behl had pursued the misperception angle and also dug into other reasons for the extraordinary outpouring of sympathy for Jyoti Singh and the large political protests by young people—mainly university students—that swept the nation. In a cultural context in which sexual and gendered violence is reported daily without much public outcry, these large-scale protests were very unusual and an indicator that Indian citizens are quite aware of the hollowness of legal equality promised them. It seems that this political phenomenon could be rooted in more than the misperceived class status of Jyoti Singh. Were there other political protests churning on university campuses that provided the catalyst? Was there a fortuitous coming together of progressive and feminist leadership at this particular juncture? Did a specific image or analysis capture the public imagination? Wrestling with these types of questions would have added

depth to this book’s unpacking of the politics of citizenship revealed by the state’s response to the Jyoti Singh rape and murder. However, even without attention to the aforementioned queries, Behl’s discussion is provocative and clear.

In addition to the deft discourse analysis of the legal consequences of the Jyoti Singh case, Behl uses ethnographic data to further refine her discussion of citizenship. Her semi-structured interviews of Sikh men and women, centering on women’s participation in communal living within the context of Sikhism, add a vibrancy to the book’s analysis. These Sikh voices truly underline how ordinary folks can emphasize the formal equality of religion and then strategically use this concept to justify inequality, thereby manifesting Behl’s notion of exclusionary inclusion. These interviews also complicate monolithic ideas of religious spaces as unrelentingly oppressive for women. I enjoyed reading the stories of how many women strategically used religious ideas to leverage a reasonable level of social and cultural prominence in their communities. However, because much of the discussion of how this came about centered on ideas of being a “proper” Sikh woman, who was chaste and virtuous, the liberatory potential of religion in the discourse of citizenship more broadly should not be overstated. In both secular and religious narratives, it is very easy for women to be classified as “unchaste” and therefore outside the protection of the state, as well as religious authorities.

Behl ends her analysis with a textual segment that is still quite unusual, even in feminist work: a reflexive autoethnography. Although in general feminists argue that a researcher’s positionality should be made transparent along with how this positionality shapes research, very few works actually take on such a task in a serious way. Thus, I was pleasantly surprised to encounter such a discussion in this work, which added further nuance to this study of situated citizenship.

In conclusion, Behl has written a thoughtful book on women’s citizenship. Although, with such a small sample size (a limitation of which Behl is aware), it may be difficult to generalize about a complex country such as India, this study provides future scholars with insightful and important observations as a point of departure for further scholarly work on citizenship.

**Legislative Development in Africa: Politics and Post-colonial Legacies.** By Ken Ochieng’ Opalo. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 290p. \$99.99 cloth.

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To the extent that political scientists have thought about legislatures in sub-Saharan Africa, they have not been viewed as consequential political institutions. Putting aside the fairly unique case of South Africa, African

legislatures have been seen as either too weak to effectively constrain powerful presidents or too compromised by corruption and clientelism to have any interest in playing such a role. Ken Ochieng' Opalo's *Legislative Development in Africa* is an important corrective to these views. First, Opalo challenges the uniformity of legislative subordination in Africa, arguing instead for variation in legislative independence and capacity, even under authoritarian rule. Second, he offers a compelling and original explanation of how the resources available to authoritarian presidents shape legislative autonomy and power. His argument challenges some of the intuitions advanced in the literature on autocratic institutions and authoritarian durability, making the book a valuable read for Africanists and non-Africanists alike. Finally, the book provides the most significant analysis of African legislatures in decades, and its impressive tracing of institutional evolution in Kenya and Zambia expands our understanding of these cases and of transitions from authoritarianism to democracy in general.

The key contribution of the book is the link it draws between the initial strategies used by executives to consolidate power after independence and differences in the subsequent evolution of legislatures. The immediate post-independence period constituted a critical juncture, in Opalo's account, that set legislatures on separate developmental trajectories. Where executives had access to strong administrative structures, as in Kenya, they could grant concessions and influence to other elites. This resulted in more autonomous and powerful legislatures. Where executives instead inherited weak administrative structures at independence, as in Zambia, they were in a more vulnerable position. Lacking the means to independently monitor and regulate rival political elites, these executives clamped down on legislative autonomy and exerted greater direct control over policy making and patronage. This model of executive–legislative bargaining may alter our understanding of the role that legislatures play in stabilizing authoritarian rule. It is unclear whether institutions independently increase the likelihood of autocratic survival, as the existing literature argues. Instead, Opalo suggests that strong, secure autocrats are the rulers who can afford to allow institutionalization, which explains the observed correlation between legislative institutions and autocratic survival.

For Opalo, patterns of legislative development are set under authoritarianism, but they have implications for governance after political opening. Where executives allowed for legislative autonomy, parliamentarians spent more time in session, developed internal procedures and committee systems, and bargained for organizational resources that allowed for a more informed role in policy deliberation. When authoritarian states liberalized, these stronger parliaments were poised to become feisty critics of presidential power. In contrast, legislative weakness under

authoritarianism persisted after democratic opening, even in cases where authoritarian ruling parties lost power.

The empirical core of the book is the sustained comparison of two fairly similar cases, Kenya and Zambia. In chapters 4 and 5, the author lays out how institutional inheritances at independence led to differences in presidents' abilities to monitor and regulate rival elites, which then shaped their choices about constraining or interfering with parliamentary activity. In chapter 6, the author draws on archival work in the two countries to show that divergence in the behavior of legislatures emerged before political opening. Differences in sitting time and the number of bills passed suggest that the Kenyan parliament played a more meaningful role in deliberating policy under authoritarianism than its counterpart in Zambia, even though legislative vetoes of executive-introduced bills were rare in both countries. Institutional divergence became more apparent after the transition to multiparty rule. The Zambian legislature continued its subordination to the executive, passing 90% of executive bills introduced in the first 10 years of multiparty rule, whereas Kenya's legislature passed only 57% of those bills during the same period.

The quality of the case study chapters is very strong. I know both of these cases very well, but I still found Opalo's marshaling of evidence and his interpretation to be fresh, original, and thought-provoking. The author also examines his argument using original data on parliamentary powers and budgetary control in 38 African countries in chapter 2. This chapter provides only weak support for Opalo's arguments about the origins of institutional divergence, although this is likely because of the lack of good proxies for executive resources. The chapter is more effective in addressing potential rival explanations for variation in legislative institutionalization within Africa, such as GDP per capita or ethnic heterogeneity.

*Legislative Development in Africa* lays out a powerful and elegant model of institutional creation and evolution, but there are points where I wish the book had veered more precariously off its own meticulously set path. There are two directions that future scholars of legislative politics may wish to pursue. First, Opalo argues that ambitious politicians are incentivized to build more powerful legislatures, where possible, but we learn fairly little about parliamentarians' own understandings of the institutions they were building. Did politicians view institutional innovation as a means of building collective power for the legislature itself, or were changes to sitting schedules and budgetary capacity viewed primarily through the lens of individual benefit? Do differences in legislative autonomy and capacity shape either parliamentarians' behavior or the broader institutional culture? For instance, are rates of absenteeism lower in stronger legislatures, or do a larger proportion of members speak during plenary?

The book also might have gone further in discussing the broader stakes of its argument, and analysis of the

consequences of legislative development is one of the most promising directions for future research. In chapter 7, Opalo takes a first step in this direction by looking at how political liberalization affected incumbents' reelection rates and legislatures' abilities to secure pork in his two core cases. But we are left wondering about the book's implications for larger questions of governance and accountability. Are more autonomous legislatures able to deliver better policies, or do they more consistently guard against executive overreach? Or is it possible that more powerful legislatures might impede electoral turnover and democratic deepening, because their greater capacity to capture rents could magnify electoral advantages for incumbents?

These suggestions should not detract, however, from the strengths of this excellent book. Opalo has written a groundbreaking work that should reinvigorate interest in postcolonial legislatures, which have not received the same attention as political parties and bureaucracies.

Furthermore, the book's core insight about the institution-strengthening effects of strong authoritarian executives should provoke new thinking on the causes of authoritarian durability and demise.

**Where the Party Rules: The Rank and File of China's Communist State.** By Daniel Koss. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 408p. \$99.99 cloth, \$34.99 paper.  
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The Chinese Communist Party celebrated the seventieth year of its rule in October 2019. The 90-million strong party has thus far defied many Western observers' expectations that it would implode. Led by Xi Jinping at the helm, the party appears to be stronger and more penetrating than ever. Why? Daniel Koss's book tackles such fundamental puzzles about the organizational infrastructure of the Chinese Communist Party from a historic and comparative lens. At a macro level, Koss's empirical study of grassroots party-building in China asks the question of how parties contribute to authoritarian rule. It also seeks to explain the unevenness of party infrastructure across different regions of the country. Comparing "red areas" where there is high party penetration with "pink areas" where the party has failed to fully penetrate, the book explains variations in governance outcomes as a function of party penetration.

The book's overarching point is that grassroots party politics is a key variable in explaining the durability of authoritarian rule. An authoritarian regime party can effectively penetrate society at a grassroots level through its local party branches that serve as "capillaries that enable

the microcirculation of information" (p. 5). Every party-state depends on its foot soldiers to collect taxes and to implement unfavorable policies. China is no exception. Koss provides compelling evidence that, in achieving both governance goals, the state succeeded in those places that had a strong party presence at the local level.

This makes intuitive sense. After all, if rank-and-file members are the eyes and ears of the party, they are more likely to fulfill their missions in places where there are more members and better-developed party infrastructures. Similarly, the extractive capacity of the state is higher in places with more party members who can provide valuable information to the government about local taxpayers. In other words, the degree of party penetration is directly linked to certain governance outcomes at the local level.

The second part of the book traces the historical origins of a strong grassroots party in China. This is where Koss's argument connects most directly with a broader comparative literature on revolutionary struggle and the birth of authoritarian parties. Why is it that some regions in China are more "red" than others? Why did the party not penetrate each region evenly? Koss finds the answer in an important historical event: the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–45. Confirming findings by comparativists Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, he finds that violent revolutionary struggle heralded the birth of a strong party in China.

Yet, he goes a step further to analyze subnational variations in China according to their exposure to the violent anti-Japanese struggle. This is a worthwhile inquiry, because it disaggregates the impact of revolutionary struggle across regions, an analytical task that scholars of China have long emphasized. Koss finds that the party is much stronger in regions that underwent violent struggle against the Japanese than in those that did not. Treating individuals as rational beings, Koss argues that people living in regions that the Japanese occupied were more likely to support the Communist Party because doing so was a viable survival strategy. As a result, occupied regions saw much deeper party penetration that persisted long after the war, constituting a path-dependent outcome. Thus, the origins of the Chinese Communist Party can be traced to the revolutionary struggle, one that created an uneven party infrastructure across the country.

Yet, it is one thing to have a strong party and quite another to have one that can rectify itself. One of the most intriguing analyses comes at the end of the book when Koss interrogates the ability of the party to auto-correct. Here, the book addresses a central debate in Chinese politics on whether the authoritarian regime is truly adaptive. Koss does not simply opine: he digs into historical archives to present evidence that the Communist Party not only survived the crises of the Cultural Revolution (1967–69) but that it also emerged even stronger and more capable of dealing with crises writ large.