In the final empirical chapter, the authors switch levels of analysis to explore whether evidence of *group-level* behavior reflects their conceptual categorization of Pentecostals as "empowered players of the game" and Mainline Protestants and Catholics as "reluctant reformers." To do so, they coded a sample of newspaper articles from anglophone African states and noted whether the article portrayed Pentecostals, Mainline Protestants, or Catholics as empowered players, reluctant reformers, or both. This analysis, along with brief case studies of church–state relations in Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia, is offered as evidence that despite their organizational differences and variation in church–state relations over time, Catholics and Mainline Protestants consistently acted at the national level as "reluctant reformers," while Pentecostals consistently acted as "empowered players."

This last contention is the most likely to spark debate. What does it mean to categorize all Catholic and Mainline Protestant political engagement in Uganda, Kenya, and Zambia since the 1980s as "reluctant reform," despite variation in the degree to which Catholic and Mainline churches facilitated third-wave democratization in certain times and places (Monica D. Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy S. Shah, *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics*, 2011)? Others may question how "reluctance," which McClendon and Riedl conceptualize at the *individual level* in terms of self-efficacy, relates to competing explanations for variation in churches' political engagement at the institutional level. For instance, scholars have explained variation in the roles played by different churches in national politics by focusing on changes in Catholic social doctrine, religious competition, or the relationship between religious and national identities rather than individuals' self-efficacy (c.f., Anna Grzymała-Busse, *Nations Under God: How Churches Use Moral Authority to Influence Policy*, 2015). Do such ideational and institutional theories challenge McClendon and Riedl's concept of "reluctant reformer" or complement it? Scholars are also likely to challenge the idea (prevalent as it may be) that Pentecostalism has a single origin in the United States (p. 46). Instead, African historians trace a parallel development of Pentecostal roots in early African Christian revival movements (Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*, 2008).

Moving forward, scholars might ask how the existence of Charismatic members of the Catholic and Mainline Protestant churches relate to the conceptual categories that McClendon and Riedl establish. According to the World Christian Database (https://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/, 2015), nearly one in three Catholics is Charismatic in Ghana and South Africa, and one in four is Charismatic in Kenya and Nigeria. Scholars should carry forward insights from McClendon and Riedl's study of African Pentecostals, non-Charismatic Catholics and non-Charismatic Protestants to study Charismatic Catholics and Protestants as well as Evangelicals in greater detail.

State of Repression: Iraq under Saddam Hussein. By Lisa Blaydes. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018. 376p. $35.00 cloth, $24.95 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592720002133

— Ariel I. Ahram, *Virginia Tech*
ahram@vt.edu

Iraq has been left out of consideration of mainstream comparative politics for too long. One of the main reasons for this estrangement was Iraq's inaccessibility and inhospitality to sustained social science research. In the 1980s and 1990s, scholars struggled even to gain access to the increasingly repressive regime of Saddam Hussein and the Ba'th party. Consequently, scholarship on Iraq had almost no impact on the development of important theories like rentier political economics, ethnic conflict, and authoritarian regime durability. With the downfall of Saddam in 2003, documents from the government and ruling party became accessible, with much of them eventually being stored at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. Scholars like Dina Khoury, Amatzia Baram, Joseph Sassoon, Samuel Helfont, and Aaron Faust used these documents to conduct a historical autopsy of the opaque Ba'th regime. Like scholars who flocked to the East German or Polish archives at the end of the Cold War, they focused on filling in the gaps of knowledge about what had happened behind Saddam's veil of repression. This research tended to be ideographic in scope, and few scholars ventured to use the data to place Iraq in comparative perspective or develop more generalizable theories.

Lisa Blaydes's *State of Repression* is an important step in reopening the dialogue between scholarship on Iraq and the nomothetic social sciences. She seeks to build a theory of how systems of political repression and rewards affect expressions of political identity. Blaydes's key contention is that people's choices about how to express their commitment to different political identities, whether a broad sense of Iraqi patriotism or more narrowly construed ethno-sectarian affiliation, were often a response to how the regime itself behaved. When the regime was able to allocate oil wealth broadly and effectively across the country, as it did in the 1970s, many Iraqis were willing to acquiesce to its demands for singular loyalty. The regime's ability to both reward and monitor the population for dissent, however, steadily degraded through the turmoil of the Iran–Iraq War, the Persian Gulf War, and the post-1991 sanctions era. Coercion became more flagrant and indiscriminant as the regime struggled to identify and recruit loyal supporters. Many Iraqis, in turn, embraced ethno-sectarian identities as a way of registering resistance against a state that failed to fulfill its own socioeconomic promises. This argument is a rejoinder to the still prevalent assumption that Iraq's tripartite ethno-sectarian cleavages—pitting Sunnis versus Shi'is versus Kurds—are innate, immutable, and bound for violence.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592720002133 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Blaydes culls through much of the same archival material as previous scholars but uses the data in a novel way. Much (although by no means all) of the previous scholarship aimed to reconstruct elite decision-making and bureaucratic processes, particularly by focusing on orders from Saddam himself. Blaydes, however, follows Khoury in using the data mostly to delve into the everyday experience of Iraqis under the Ba'th Party. Blaydes is unique, however, in using this data for explicit theory development purposes.

State of Repression offers a kind of master class on the uses of subnational and within-case comparison and multimethod research. The book is at its finest when it explores geographic variations in popular experiences of repression. For example, in chapter 4 Blaydes shows statistically how the largely Shi'i provinces of the south and lower Euphrates suffered larger numbers of casualties per capita during the Iran–Iraq War. The regime tried to funnel political and especially economic benefits to war widows and veterans to maintain public support for the war. Still, this experience of suffering in the 1980s cast a long shadow. The very districts that had suffered the most significant losses of young men during the 1980s were the first to see mass defections during the uprising in March 1991. These districts, in turn, suffered the most severe government repression and flagrant violence. Blaydes thus contributes to a general theory of the impact of regime violence on political stability.

Blaydes uses a similar subnational variation approach to explore the cohesion of Iraq's Sunni community. Saddam's regime is conventionally portrayed as an institution of Sunni supremacy (despite repeated admonitions from scholars of Iraq against following such a reductionist view). Yet, as previous scholarship has shown, Saddam and the Ba'thist inner circle maintained a general taboo against discussion of Sunni–Shi'i rifts, deeming themselves to be the standard-bearers of a general and ecumenical nationalism. By using regime data to measure political behavior, Blaydes takes up the question of whether Iraqi Sunnis saw themselves as a collectivity and unique interest group within the state. She argues that Sunni solidarity with the regime fluctuated and varied temporally and geographically. Some Sunni areas in the north and west were relatively neglected by the Ba'th during the harsh sanctions period, as discussed in chapter 3. Instead of creating a cohesive sense of Sunni identity, the regime funneled economic benefits from smuggling and black marketeering to areas around Tikrit, the hometown of Saddam and his closest kin. Buttressing this point further, in chapter 7, Blaydes diligently collects school registries from 1987, 1991–92, 1995, and 2001 to measure the number of students who self-identified as political "independents." Overtly rejecting the Ba'th party was politically risky, and the regime made sure that jobs and other coveted appointments were reserved for party members or supporters. Many Iraqis would go along with the regime's rituals of obedience to assure social progress and protection for themselves and their families, even if they secretly harbored doubts about the regime.

Yet, as Blaydes points out, there were always pockets of refusal. Unsurprisingly, most were concentrated in the Shi'i south and Kurdish north. More interesting, however, is that some predominantly Sunni areas, such as Mosul, also saw relatively high levels of political independents in the 1990s. The farther a Sunni lived from Tikrit, the more likely he or she was to declare political independence. Conversely, these same areas were also less likely to send their sons to serve in Saddam's militias in 2001 and 2002. Ultimately, Blaydes confirms a point that the estimable Hanna Batatu made more than four decades ago: Tikritis tended to rule Iraq through the Ba'th party, rather than the Ba'th party ruling through Tikritis. More generally, Blaydes illustrates the tensions between the autocrat's instinct to rely exclusively on closed networks of supports and kin and the imperative of building broader social coalitions to maintain power.

That said, there are points, like the discussion of rebellion and collaboration in Kurdistan, where theoretical ambitions outrun the empirical evidence. Such weaknesses should not detract from the profound value of this multifaceted book, however. It is unquestionably important for researchers of Iraq and the wider Middle East. It needs also to be on the reading list of those interested in authoritarianism and political identity.

Reforming Family Law: Social and Political Change in Jordan and Morocco. By Dörthe Engelcke. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 284p. $99.99 cloth, $32.99 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592720002066

— Iza Hussin , *University of Cambridge*
ih298@cam.ac.uk

Despite its relative neglect in the field of political science, family law presents a number of fruitful opportunities for exploring the ways in which history, institutional origin and design, path dependence, ideology, regime type, bureaucracy, social activism, language, and political performance matter for the study of law, legal institutions, and legal change. This comparative study of family law reform in Morocco and Jordan undertakes to clarify the impact of these factors, with a particular focus on institutional history; it is based on fieldwork in both countries, textual and archival sources, and interviews. Through the application of comparative case methods, textual and legal analysis, and state-in-society approaches at the domestic and international level, Dörthe Engelcke provides a rich methodological and analytic model for political and social scientists working at the intersection of law, politics, and religion.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592720002133 Published online by Cambridge University Press