

tentative and sketchy in a number of crucial places and just begs for others to build on what he has started. This is especially true of the fundamental relationship uncovered by Lutz in constitutional design between popular control and separation of powers.

The book does not fit easily into the existing division of intellectual labor (and not just within political science). This makes it both more difficult to write and more difficult to read. It is more difficult to write because Lutz tries simultaneously to give an inclusive outline of a field that does not yet really exist and to contribute both to its methodology and to its substantive claims. He includes a general statement of principles of constitutional design (but that is not where the book's main contribution is, many of those principles being hardly novel). He also presents a strategy for the study of such principles through a search for patterns in design (his "interesting curves"). But on closer inspection, some of those curves turn out to be far more fundamental than others. The book's main contribution is somewhat hidden by all the other things it does. This main contribution is Lutz's completely novel approach to popular sovereignty as the central principle of constitutional design.

The principle of popular sovereignty, the core of this book, is presented first through a discussion of the notions of sovereignty (with special attention to Jean Bodin) and popular sovereignty in the history of political philosophy. It is presented, second, through the development of two indices that measure popular control and separation of powers, respectively, as these appear in constitutional designs (not necessarily in the actual practices of constitutional democracies). Popular sovereignty is achieved by combining popular control and the separation of powers, in a system of limited popular control. The key empirical finding of Lutz's study is that popular control and separation of powers are closely related in constitutional designs: The more popular control, the more separation of powers. This relationship seems to me unexpected, and potentially very important. It certainly should be added to the repertoire of key relationships in the study of democratic constitutions.

The author dismisses the preoccupation in comparative politics with the contrast between presidential and parliamentary system, and proposes the separation of powers variable as a more significant dimension of democratic constitutionalism. To back this up, he identifies a powerful relationship between separation of powers and popular control. Is he right? The evidence presented suggests that he may well be right, but it will take much more than one book to establish such an important claim.

Lutz is surprisingly relaxed in the way he constructs the two crucial indices of popular control and separation of powers. The Index of Popular Control (to take one example) requires something like a theory of democracy to really back it up. It gives some weight to various features of a

constitution that contribute to popular control (frequency of elections, who gets directly elected, role of referenda, and many others). The weights given to each feature, and the selection of which features to include, constitutes a tacit theory of democracy (determining what is more and what is less important for popular control). Without such weights there can be no index, and plainly, many alternative reasonable weights can be proposed. The specific decisions need to be defended (he does a little of this, but not nearly enough), or alternative indices need to be constructed to show that the relationship between popular control and separation of powers is not a byproduct of some arbitrary aspect of the choice of weights in constructing the indices.

As I said, *Principles* opens up a series of important topics for the future, such as the relationship between popular control and separation of powers. It does not by itself establish such a relationship. I hope it will be recognized for the pioneering work that it is, especially in comparative politics. It presents itself more as a work in political theory (it is that, too), and so it is at risk of not reaching that audience in comparative politics that could most effectively built on its main contributions.

**Rightful Resistance in Rural China.** By Kevin J. O'Brien and Lianjiang Li. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 200 pages. \$70.00 cloth, \$24.99 paper. DOI: 10.1017/S153759270707260X

— R. Bin Wong, *UCLA*

Studies of contemporary China move between two poles of presentation—richly detailed analyses of phenomena that seem specific to China and more sweeping panoramas that leap to broad generalities without always marking their steps forward clearly. Kevin J. O'Brien and Lianjiang Li offer an insightful study of collective action in contemporary China that successfully steers a course between the typical extremes. Their work is solidly anchored in years of research in the Chinese countryside, where they have conducted interviews and administered surveys, and about which they have read government documents and the press. This work also takes into account the growing amount of scholarship being produced by the Chinese themselves. And most helpful to their efforts of explaining Chinese cases to a broader audience, their analysis consistently engages the literature on collective action conceptualized principally out of studies of advanced industrial societies and the histories of those societies.

The book opens with an explanation of the category "rightful resistance" as a kind of action taken by people who can appeal to some set of principles or policies known by, and accepted at least by some of, those in positions of authority in order to press for actions that serve their interests. The next four chapters take us through the ways in which acts of "rightful resistance" take place. Chapter 2

explains the likelihood of particular kinds of collective actions according to structurally determined openings and people's perceptions of possibilities.

Chapter 3 addresses what the authors label "boundary-spanning claims," which are claims that fill a conceptual continuum between routine forms of rule-governed engagement by citizens with officials and outbursts beyond institutionalized modes of expression that encourage confrontation and violence. Boundary-spanning claims test the gray area between the permissible, tacitly acceptable and the explicitly disallowed. Researchers can gain further insight into what counts as political participation and what is labeled resistance by tracking activities that fall into this arena of boundary-spanning claims. Chapter 4 considers how forms of contention have changed in rural China, suggesting that people's willingness to engage in confrontations with local-level officials in the hopes of negotiating their demands, rather than relying on appeals to higher levels of government, represents an escalation of techniques. With a sense of how acts of rightful resistance begin and how they have been changing in contemporary China, Chapter 5 engages the conceptually challenging issue of assessing outcomes of these actions; outcomes include those for activists, onlookers, and different levels of government. Moreover, they can be either direct or indirect, the latter being harder to observe and measure. Chapter 6 concludes the study by drawing implications for how we should think about citizenship and the possibilities of political change in China; the authors see citizenship more as a claim to membership in a community than as negative freedoms with respect to the state (p. 122).

The authors identify "rightful resistance" as a particular kind of public and collective challenge to authority, one that does not need any well-organized group required for social movements because actions of rightful resistance are more episodic than sustained.

They view their actors as engaged in what Charles Tilly has called "contentious conversation" and James Scott has called "critique within hegemony" (pp. 4–5). They make comparisons with protests against apartheid in South Africa, protests in state socialist regimes, and protests in the United States, like the pay equity campaign (pp. 15–22). The vocabulary of their analysis draws on the categories that Tilly began to develop in the 1970s, in works such as *From Mobilization to Revolution* (1978). Actors consider their "opportunities," and their "mobilization" depends on their perceptions of openings of the moment and the kinds of more structured opportunities that exist more generally. Their work therefore stresses the interests of actors and their abilities to make claims that some authorities, either local or at a higher level, are likely to acknowledge in some way or another. Rightful resistance achieves its results through nonviolent coercion, undermining authorities of legitimacy and restricting their access to the resources

they need to rule (p. 61); the conceptualization here draws on Kurt Schrock's work, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies* (2005).

Like many authors of works on social protest, O'Brien and Li tend to select their cases according to the value of the dependent variables, that is, those outcomes of rightful resistance involving some accommodation from authorities. Indeed, this kind of focus is necessary for them to trace the transformation of boundary-spanning claims and escalating demands that give rightful resistance a visible dynamic of change. They recognize that there are issues of regional variation, as well as empirical uncertainties about the typicality of the outcomes they have selected for, irrespective of spatial variations—these unknowns suggest that we should exercise a measure of caution in generalizing from their analysis. At the same time, scholars will want to think more carefully about their finding that Chinese claims for citizenship involve more community membership than do negative freedoms from a central state, since the possible relationships among community and state in defining citizenship and democracy are basic to an understanding of the nature of politics.

In just 130 pages, O'Brien and Li lead readers through a wide array of evidence to illustrate the plausibility of their arguments about a category of political engagement that lies between the normal forms of participation typical in democracies and the more extraordinary forms of massive contention represented by social movements and large-scale protests. Their work fits within recent trends in the study of collective action, especially as developed by Tilly in collaboration with Sidney Tarrow and Doug McAdam, as exemplified in their 2001 publication, *Dynamics of Contention*. At the same time, the book makes its own more general theoretical and methodological contributions, including the important argument that we can understand "rightful" acts of political participation and resistance without expecting them to lead to democratic government in any simple or necessary way.

**Runaway State-Building: Patronage Politics and Democratic Development.** By Conor O'Dwyer. Baltimore:

The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. 278p. \$49.95.  
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— Karen Dawisha, *Miami University*

This first book by Conor O'Dwyer adds to a growing and impressive collection of works on state building in post-communist countries. In it he seeks to explain the *variation* in the growth of large patronage networks in state administrations in three central European countries—Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. In doing so, he looks to the relationship between the establishment of strong party systems and the ability of states to withstand