

the veneration of policy convergence,” the literature on privatization in Latin America suggests that “electoral choices did shape policy outcomes” in these reforms, even when external pressures were high (p. 3).

By looking at the effects of political competition on policy reform, the author argues that both differences in partisanship and electoral choices have an effect on the timing of privatization (time 1), the type of privatization (time 2) and the postprivatization patterns in regulatory policy. The book is divided into three main general sections, each of which seeks to explain cross-national variance along these three policy levels.

In the first section, Murillo explores the conditions under which governments liberalized the telecommunications and electricity sectors. Accounting for common external pressure to liberalize as applied to countries in the region, she demonstrates, through statistical analyses, that electoral competition explains the timing of policy adoption. Because voters are generally distrustful of market reforms, privatization is significantly (and 75%) less likely to occur when, in a competitive political environment, a challenger poses a credible electoral threat opposing market-oriented reform. In the absence of these challenges, Latin American governments succumbed to fiscal pressures and demands for technological upgrading and introduced market-oriented reforms in public utilities. While these pressures led left-leaning governments, or “pragmatic populists,” to accept the privatization of the two sectors, the type of privatization that took place (time 2) varied depending upon the partisan identities of reformers. These identities impacted the ways in which reformers filtered information regarding technical choices and influenced their choice of experts, to whom they delegated further complex policy decisions.

In the second section, Murillo explores how both the reformers’ partisan biases and the different distributive demands of their constituents conditioned the resulting postprivatization regulatory content as being either “market-controlling” or “market-conforming” regulation. The former refers to the establishment of a regulatory framework that provides strong market oversight, whereas the latter allows the market to mitigate conflict among firms and therefore establish weak regulatory oversight. On the basis of an index developed to measure variance in regulatory strength, which includes regulations regarding foreign investment and entry rules, Murillo argues that market-conforming regulation was more likely to be established under right-wing politicians, who believed in the market creed, whereas market-controlling regulation was more likely to be established by converted populists.

In the third section of the book, the author narrows her analysis to three cases, Argentina, Chile, and Mexico, to look at postprivatization patterns in regulatory policy. In this section Murillo very convincingly demonstrates that once privatization has taken place, both partisan preferences and political competition also matter because poli-

cymakers respond to demands and will cater to consumers. In situations of intense political competition, governing parties will be more sensitive to salient issues such as tariffs. The distribution costs and benefits among providers, sectoral rivals, and consumers will vary depending upon the political salience of the issue and level of competition.

This book is an impressive and rigorously researched study. Given its ambition and magnitude, readers may well find some components stronger than others. While the inclusion of Chile during the *Concertación* years in the analysis of postreform patterns is sensible, Chile’s inclusion into the discussion regarding the timing of privatization may appear to be less so: Political competition was not existent during the Pinochet years, and so its comparability with electoral democracies is stressed. The work would have also benefited from a closer look at executive–legislative relations. Murillo does a terrific job of exploring the contexts and choices made by policymakers in the executive branch of government, but, in some cases, parliaments played important roles in the politics of economic reform. This was certainly the case with Mexico after the 1997 midterm elections when the dominant party lost its majority in the lower house of congress for the first time in 68 years.

These wrinkles do not detract from the quality of this outstanding work, however. *Political Competition* makes a significant contribution to debates around economic reform, the influence voters have on policy direction in new democracies, and political institutions. It provides a corrective to the overly pessimistic assessments of democratic politics and policymaking in Latin America with a clear yet extremely important finding: In democracies, however imperfect, voters matter.

Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza: Engaging the Islamist Social Sector. By Sara Roy. Princeton: Princeton

University Press, 2011. 336p. \$37.50.
doi:10.1017/S1537592713001898

— Ora B. Szekely, *Clark University*

Sara Roy’s book provides a welcome addition to the existing scholarship on civil society in the Palestinian context in general, and with regard to Hamas and the Islamic movement in particular. The author begins by summarizing and assessing the conventional wisdom (as articulated by governments, the media, and some academics) that Islamic social institutions (ISIs) in general, and Palestinian ISIs in particular, are complicit in terrorist violence because they free up funding for militant activity, serve to indoctrinate participants and, through their very existence, legitimize the groups providing the services in question (p. 4). Refuting this argument is the central purpose of the book. Roy argues that rather than serving as a recruiting ground for Hamas or a source of political indoctrination, the Islamic social sector has historically been focused

on social reform, civic engagement, and the strengthening of Palestinian civil society.

Chapter 2 provides a fairly straightforward but carefully researched (and in some instances unusually detailed) history of Hamas as a political, military, and social organization. Chapter 3 begins the book's theoretical work, offering a survey of Islamic thought on the question of civil society and state–society relations, ranging from the mainstream to the radicals to the moderates, including analysis of thinkers from Mohammed Abduh to Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani to Sayid Qutb. On the basis of the doctrine reflected in Hamas's reformist social project and its approach to political competition, Roy situates the movement at the moderate end of the spectrum. She then explores the specifics of the Palestinian context in Chapters 4 and 5, focusing on a discussion of Hamas's evolution during the First Intifada and the Oslo period (1993 to 2000) in Chapter 4, and on an exceptionally detailed discussion of Islamic social institutions in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 summarizes the main analytical findings of the book, while Chapter 7 discusses the changes Hamas underwent as a result of the Second Intifada, the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, its election victory in 2006, and the conflict with Fatah leading to Hamas's takeover of Gaza in 2007. The book closes by detailing the destruction brought about by Operation Cast Lead in 2009.

What *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza* does not do is theorize about the provision of social services by Islamist movements in a general sense. This is not a book about the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, or Hezbollah in Lebanon, or “Islamist civil society” writ large; it is a book about the Islamic social service sector in the West Bank and Gaza. This is not a criticism; the provision of charity by Islamist groups in general, and in countries such as Egypt and Lebanon in particular, has already been well covered by a number of authors, including Janine Clark (*Islam, Charity, and Activism*, 2004), Shawn Flanigan (*For the Love of God: NGOs and Religious Identity in a Violent World*, 2009), and others. While Roy engages with this literature, the real focus of the book is the Islamic social sector in the Palestinian context. And in fact, the depth of information on Hamas in particular and the Palestinian ISIs is one of its strengths, and is perhaps necessary as well, given the very specific constraints these institutions face.

The book makes two major contributions to our understanding of the Palestinian Islamic social sector, as well as of Hamas itself. Arguably the most significant is that it offers a nuanced counterpoint to the argument that Islamic charities and other civil society institutions are little more than recruiting grounds for Hamas fighters or tools for indoctrination of aid recipients. The strength of Roy's argument is that rather than offering a one-dimensional defense or indictment of Hamas and the Palestinian ISI sector, she demonstrates that the relationship between Hamas and

these institutions is a complicated one, which has evolved over time and defies simplistic categorization. While not entirely uncritical of Hamas, the author contextualizes the growth of the Islamic social service sector and explores the ways in which it is both connected and unconnected to Hamas itself, ultimately suggesting that the link between them is “philosophical rather than organizational” (p. 164), meticulously illustrating her analysis with detailed descriptions of the institutions in question and interviews with both staff and patrons.

This brings me to the book's second major contribution, which is the wealth of information on the institutions themselves. From the detailed description of the programs for children at the House of the Book and Sunna in Khan Younis (pp. 103–4) to the discussion of the specific medical treatments available at al-Wafa Medical Rehabilitation Hospital (pp. 151–59), this information is invaluable to those with an interest in Palestinian civil society or Islamic social services. A wide range of interviews and visits to institutions (both “traditional” and “developmental,” an interesting distinction) provides an impressive portrait of the Palestinian Islamic social sector, particularly during the Oslo years.

There are a few issues that may leave readers with some questions. For instance, given the significance of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency's services for the lives of many Palestinians, how do ISIs complement or supplement the services provided by UNRWA? How do staffs from the two sets of institutions interact or coordinate with each other? Secondly, although Roy demonstrates that the Islamic social sector is not deliberately designed to attract supporters to Hamas, I do wonder whether this might not occur anyway, intentionally or not. In the 2006 Palestine Legislative Council election (addressed in Chapter 7), Hamas-aligned candidates fared far better in those seats elected through a plurality-at-large system, in which people voted directly for the candidate, than in the seats elected through closed-list proportional representation in which they voted directly for the party. (The Palestinian Authority uses a parallel voting system.) This suggests that the reputation of individual candidates, rather than Hamas's political platform, was what appealed to voters. Candidates who were in some way associated (or perceived by voters to be associated) with these organizations may have acquired a reputation for competence and honesty that garnered them votes, even if those voters never used ISI services themselves.

Roy's discussion of the Islamic movement's focus on social reform during the Oslo years also raises a number of interesting questions, contrasting as this does with the spike in Hamas attacks on Israeli civilians in the early 1990s (pp. 33–35), often read as attempt to distinguish itself from Fatah and/or to sour the Israeli public on the peace process (Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence and Coexistence*, 2000, and

Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas: The Islamic Resistance Movement*, 2010.) The disjuncture between the socially reformist project engaged in by the social service sector of the Islamic movement, on the one hand, and the confrontational approach adopted by parts of Hamas's political wing and the Al Qassem Brigades, on the other, does present a noteworthy contrast, which perhaps speaks to the complex and at times seemingly disconnected relationship between the two that Roy describes. The implications of this disconnect for our understanding of policymaking processes and mechanisms in Hamas's political wing (which Roy does touch upon briefly, but which are not the primary focus of her analysis) may provide an interesting avenue for future research.

There will no doubt be those who disagree with part or all of the arguments in *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza*. However, in providing such a complex portrait of the Palestinian Islamic social service sector, Roy makes an important contribution to both the scholarly and policy-oriented debates surrounding this issue.

Third World Citizens and the Information Technology Revolution. By Nivien Saleh. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. 294p. \$95.00.
doi:10.1017/S1537592713001904

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As debates regarding the role of information technologies in political and social movements abound, particularly in the aftermath of global and transnational protests in recent years, several perspectives have been offered in the attempt to elucidate the causal factors behind peaceful regime change and meaningful democratization in some of the few remaining authoritarian strongholds in the world today. Of these competing perspectives and analyses, Nivien Saleh's *Third World Citizens and the Information Technology Revolution* is an important and necessary addition for expanding the domain of inquiry and range of actors we must consider and theorize upon in order to draw reasonable conclusions. Saleh's detailed case study of Egypt presents and develops an analytical approach focusing deeply on the historical and political economic contexts of information infrastructure *before* the period of rapid mobilization now popularly termed the "Arab Spring." The book helps to bridge the vast divide between perspectives that tend to focus exclusively on the politics of technology regulation or on the agency of citizens who make use of these globalized communication systems, respectively.

It has been more than two years since the unprecedented protests began in Tunisia and escalated quickly to Egypt, then throughout the Arab state system, and further evidence has emerged that ensuing autonomous protests, like Occupy Wall Street and the Indignados, have drawn direct inspiration from the Arab and Egyptian experiences throughout the Americas, Asia, Europe, Oceania, and sub-

Saharan Africa. The sheer diversity and challenge of theorizing the conditions, causes, and strategies that might make information technologies politically consequential is particularly daunting, yet necessary. Existing studies in communications, political science, and sociology have already expanded the key variables necessary for understanding the contemporary repertoires that enable new forms of social mobilization and political action. And in almost every instance, critical observations have noted the young demographic of 20- to 30-year-old activists who were critical in sparking recent protests; in closed and repressive political systems, they have increasingly turned to online spaces to design strategies, build social capital, and coordinate offline action. But in important ways, there is an increasing consensus that the very tools and infrastructures enabling democratization can and are being used by authoritarian states and repressive regimes for social and political control.

So who sets the rules undergirding the platforms that support these recently proliferated extensions of civil society and state power in the virtual world? How have they come about, and what might a critical understanding of this historical process tell us about the mediation of power and politics in developing states? Saleh's work does the important job of looking *behind the scenes* of the façade of "Facebook revolutions" or "Twitter revolutions." By examining the history of the information technology revolution in Egypt, which is strongly tied to the needs of economic development and the challenges of globalization, the author has offered a decidedly critical realist approach. Given this analytical lens, the definition of research questions, and selection of social actors to be examined, Saleh offers a necessary investigation of the international regimes behind technology regulations and the social construction of technology uses in Egypt.

The book is organized in three thematic parts, composed of 11 chapters. Part I tells the early story of global telephony and the economic logic of the industrial era operating primarily within advanced democratic economies. Readers and students interested in having a deep understanding of contemporary telecommunication politics should read this part carefully before moving forward, as most contemporary telecommunication issues are continuations of these preexisting conflicts of stakeholder interests.

Part II then provides the bulk of the analysis and new material through a case study of Egypt. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 extend the analysis by drawing direct comparisons between the ways that advanced industrial economies strategized to bring poor economies and fragile systems in line and the ways that the existing telecommunication regime operates to expand market access. Chapters 7, 8, and 9 then tell the internal story of this impact on the Mubarak regime and detail the ways in which the state apparatus itself was modified and fundamentally altered