

especially taxes, while often directing benefits toward the main group of contributors. Literature on the fiscal contract began with studies of state formation in medieval and early modern Europe, and when Flores-Macías describes the negotiations between governments and business organizations, it is easy to hear echoes of the early history of the liberal state. These include the earmarking of revenues for purposes favored by business, oversight boards with civil society participation (circumventing legislatures regarded as “weak,” p. 172), guarantees of legal stability, and sunset provisions, in part to assure taxpayers that any future extension would be negotiated.

The author also briefly reviews important theoretical and regional works on taxation and state-building (pp. 4–7), although he does not make explicit connections to this literature elsewhere in the text. For example, he refers to the advantage enjoyed by right-wing administrations in gaining the cooperation of business organizations as a “Nixon goes to China” logic (pp. 3, 50, 81). Although this label might work for the (older) general reader, the pattern is a staple of taxation politics. The correspondence between who pays and who benefits constitutes key evidence of a fiscal contract for authors such as Jeffrey Timmons. (We can see it in contemporary Europe where regressive value-added taxes provide funding for big welfare states, and the countries most reliant on net wealth taxes are Luxembourg and Switzerland.) In addition, those who expect democratic electorates to vote for redistribution can find a few hints of confirmation—such as when Uribe’s administration considered but rejected an increase in consumption taxes on staples, in large part due to the measure’s political unpopularity (pp. 75, 79, 84).

More seriously, the reader will notice some slippage in the two key terms of the argument, public safety and elite taxation. With regard to the first, we see it in the discussion of Colombia. The author’s theoretical premise that contemporary violence in Latin America is “less political and more Weberian” (p. 10) fits poorly with Uribe’s central preoccupation with defeating the FARC insurgency (and his indulgence of right-wing paramilitaries). Granted, it is surely true that by 2002 the splintering and demoralization of the Colombian guerrilla forces had made them more like ordinary criminals. But although the book makes clear that the armed forces, not the police, were the main beneficiaries of the capital levy (p. 28), its ambiguous references to security and the control of territory obscure the fact that this measure was popularly known as a “war tax” and that its goal, often proclaimed by Uribe and his generals, was victory.

With respect to elite taxation, a problem arises whenever this term refers to something other than a straightforward tax on wealth. In Mexico, several states increased their payroll tax rates by 50% in response to crime spikes. Although these increases were negotiated with business, placed a burden on formal-sector employment, and

represented the most productive revenue option open to state governments under the Mexican constitution, they were surely not taxes on the elite (p. 53), even if they were erroneously perceived as such (pp. 158–60). Similarly, in summarizing the Honduran case, Flores-Macías classifies a tax on (domestic) financial transactions, known colloquially in many places as a “check tax” (*impuesto al cheque*), as “targeted elite taxation” (p. 53). The regional context complicates this assessment: by the time this tax was imposed in Honduras (2011), it had enjoyed a faddish popularity for more than a decade, having been instituted in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela. Although as a tax on formal-sector finance it is progressive (though distortionary), in these cases its adoption probably owed more to its administrative simplicity and the governments’ dire fiscal straits.

This relates to the broader question of the significance of these tax reform moments. One percent of GDP going to the Colombian armed forces might sound like a lot until we notice that tax revenue in that country rose from 11.3% to 17.3% percent of GDP between 1990 and 2001 (the year before the capital levy), and the regional average increased from about 16% in the early 1990s to 22% in the late 2010s (*OECD.stat*). This implies that some of the book’s analytical claims (about resource rents or inequality) relate to and should be tested against overall revenue trends, not particular reforms. Nevertheless, Flores-Macías provides abundant evidence that these reform processes were more consequential than their contribution to tax/GDP ratios would suggest. Although the book lacks before-and-after figures for security-related spending, it provides convincing narratives of effective expenditures and declining crime rates (pp. 124, 170–71). Most importantly, it describes how Latin American business elites came to be persuaded—finally—to support taxes that enhanced or restored the core attribute of their states: the ability to keep the peace. This is a story worth telling.

Institutionalizing Violence: Strategies of Jihad in

Egypt. By Jerome Drevon. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022.

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The literature on Islamism is extensive, and there are a plethora of studies that have been conducted in this field over the past couple of decades. However, among these studies, there are a select few that stand out for their substantial contributions to the field. One such work is Jerome Drevon’s new book, *Institutionalizing Violence: Strategies of Jihad in Egypt*. Drevon offers a comprehensive examination of the origins of Salafi jihadism in Egypt, through a thorough and rigorous approach that is

grounded in extensive field research. His analysis is both insightful and thought-provoking, making it a valuable addition to the field of Islamism studies and political science more broadly.

The book traces the roots, dynamics, and trajectories of two of the most prominent Islamist groups in Egypt's recent history: the Islamic Group (al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya) and the Jihad Group (Jama'at al-Jihad). Through a meticulous analysis of various primary and secondary sources, Drevon's book delves into the complex factors that have shaped these groups' trajectories and affected their actions. Drevon employs qualitative and quantitative research methods and is sensitive to historical and political context in seeking to understand the development of these two groups over the past four decades. The book provides a fresh and unique perspective on the question of why certain Islamist groups resort to violence. Rather than focusing on the traditional explanations of ideological, political, social, and cultural factors, the book instead concentrates on the role of internal and organizational dynamics, personal experiences, and emotions in understanding the decision-making process behind the use of force for political ends.

Theoretically, Drevon draws on the extensive research that has been done on Islamist movements over the past few decades and is grounded on social movements theories that have dominated the field of Islamism over the past couple of decades. While acknowledging the contribution of this research in studying Islamism, Drevon weaves his own theoretical and analytical framework by integrating insights from several research traditions such as contentious politics, civil war, political parties, and institutional studies. He employs two key concepts in order to help understand the trajectories of the Islamic Group (IG) and the Jihad Group (JG): radicalization and institutionalization. The former refers to "the processes leading to the adoption of violence, as well as the maintenance and intensification of violence" (p. 8), and the latter refers to "the process by which organizations acquire value and stability" and through which an organization "becomes valuable in and of itself, and its goals become inseparable and indistinguishable from it" (p. 9). Both concepts have been borrowed from the works of Samuel Huntington (*Political Order in Changing Societies*, 1968) and Angelo Panebianco (*Political Parties: Organization and Power*, 1988), and have been integrated into a relational model that explains the radicalization and institutionalization of violence within Salafi jihadi groups. The dynamics of the radicalization (DR) model, as the book calls it, argues that the radicalization process of armed groups happens in interactions with five potential actors: the state and political environment, the security services, the Islamist social movement, a potential countermovement, and the public. According to the DR model, the changing patterns of

these interactions play a crucial role in the radicalization of jihadi groups. In tandem, the institutionalization of violence occurs along four dimensions—internal, external, structural, and attitudinal—which result in organizational consolidation.

Drevon's book advances two primary arguments pertaining to the radicalization of jihadi groups. The first argument asserts that radicalization is a relational process that emerges through the institutionalization of the aforementioned dimensions. These dimensions give rise to diverse processes, responses, and attitudes toward violence and serve to reveal the intricate nature of the radicalization process within jihadi movements. Importantly, this argument calls into question reductionist theories on using violence by these movements, particularly in the post-September 11 era.

The second argument put forward by Drevon's book is that the institutionalization of jihadi groups impacts their strategic choices and shapes their trajectories. This is a crucial aspect of the model as it demonstrates how the scope and degree of interactions between different actors and jihadi groups can influence and shape the political choices made by jihadi leaders. The model asserts that jihadi leaders do not make choices in a vacuum, but are also constrained by their institutional contexts. This argument is important as it highlights the different phases of the radicalization process within jihadi movements and how they are influenced by various factors, rather than being solely driven by ideological or political preferences.

After laying out the book's arguments, Drevon delves into the historical roots of the IG and JG in Egypt. Through a detailed analysis of the emergence and spread of Salafi ideologies and groups from the early twentieth century onward, the author contextualizes the political climate in Egypt during the 1950s and 1960s, which ultimately led to the proliferation of jihadi Salafi groups in the 1970s. Despite the presence of other literature addressing these historical developments, this book offers distinct perspectives by illuminating the various mechanisms that contributed to the radicalization and institutionalization of violence within both the IG and JG since their emergence in the 1970s. To illustrate the distinctions between the radicalization experiences of the JG and IG, Drevon employs the DR model in unpacking the radicalization processes of both groups. Specifically, the radicalization of the JG is shown to be a result of interactions with the state and political environment, as well as upward spirals of political opportunities. Conversely, the radicalization of the IG is found to be associated with interactions with a countermovement, specifically the Muslim Brotherhood, and with security services. This analysis provides a nuanced understanding of the several dynamics that contribute to the radicalization of these two groups. More importantly, the divergent radicalization processes of the

JG and IG have had a significant impact on their views on the use of violence. The JG's early cells that emerged in the 1970s viewed violence as a necessary means to combat regime repression and liberate the Muslim world from Western hegemony. In contrast, the IG's adoption of violence against the regime was a gradual process and related to the changing political environment in Egypt under former president Anwar Sadat. This distinction is crucial, as other studies often fail to differentiate between these two groups when it comes to their use of violence against the regime. Additionally, the level of internal institutionalization is a crucial factor in determining the extent of the use of violence by these groups. The strong internal institutionalization of the IG resulted in a controlled and calculated resort to violence that was in line with the movement's tactical and strategic objectives. On the other hand, the weak internal institutionalization of the Jihadi-Salafists (JG) led to a haphazard and impulsive use of violence that was often counterproductive.

Despite the contribution of Drevon's book to the existing literature on jihadism, there are also a number of limitations that might be worth mentioning. First is the generalizability of the findings of the book and the analytical model beyond the case of Egypt, which the author admits in the conclusion of the book. While the book attempts to apply the DR model to other cases such as al-Qaeda, the results are not consistent with the book's argument on institutionalization. Second, despite its potential utility, the DR model can be criticized for falling into the trap of causality that the author sought to avoid in the first place. This model provides insight into the internal dynamics and trajectories of the IG and JG; however, it still presents a linear view of causality. Ultimately, radicalization and institutionalization are the outcomes of the interactions between jihadi groups and different actors, with the latter being treated as independent variables. Third, the classification of these actors is not fully convincing. For example, some of them can fall into the same category (i.e., the state and security forces). It would have been more convincing if the author explained why he chose to divide them the way he did. Fourth, the book overstretched the history of violence in jihadi movements. It inaccurately conflates the ideas of Islamic revivalism and reformism, as espoused by figures such as Muhammad Abduh and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani in the late nineteenth century, with the views of Islamist ideologues such as Sayyid Qutb. This is problematic as it ignores the significant ideological distinctions between these groups. Finally, the book inadvertently conflates the relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and violence. While the author acknowledges the differences between the Brotherhood and jihadi groups, there are instances in which he erroneously links the Brotherhood to armed groups. This is not accurate and therefore problematic.

Nevertheless, *Institutionalizing Violence* is a comprehensive and important work that provides a deep understanding of the complex history of Salafi jihadism in Egypt.

Popular Politics and the Path to Durable Democracy.

By Mohammad Ali Kadivar. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022.

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Over the last ten years, the scholarship on democracy and democratization has been preoccupied with both the durability and the quality of democratic institutions, whether in long-established democratic countries or in recently democratized ones. The failure of transitions to democracy across the Middle East and North Africa—with the potential exception of Tunisia—and democratic backsliding in several countries across four continents has revived studies about the factors that make democracy survive and thrive or fail. In his new book, Mohammad Ali Kadivar makes an excellent contribution to this debate.

Since the early processes of transition in Southern Europe and Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s, studies on democracy and democratization have often emphasized the role of elites in ensuring a successful transition. In particular, several scholars, including Huntington and Di Palma, highlighted how too many demands and too much participation from below on a still fragile political system after the fall of authoritarianism could derail the transition and pave the way for the return of authoritarian rule. The isolation of the moderates within the failing authoritarian regime and the ability of opposition leaders to insulate themselves from the hardliners within the regime and the radicalism of the street, respectively, were believed to be crucial to ensure the success of the transition. More often than not, a formal pact between members of the regime and opponents was deemed necessary to seal the transition and lead to the construction of a genuine democratic system. For example, Hicham Alaoui's recent study on the processes of democratization in Egypt and Tunisia argues that the presence of a pact in Tunisia and its absence in Egypt is what explains the diverging institutional outcomes in the two countries.

In this "elitist" context, as Kadivar labels it, popular mobilization before and after the fall of authoritarianism has been often deemed problematic for—if not outright dangerous—to the survival of democratic structures. Kadivar offers a different perspective, which is in line with recent studies on the role popular mobilization plays in political and social processes across the Middle East and North Africa, as the work of John Chalcraft for instance demonstrates. Rather than linking successful and durable democratization to the strengths of pacts or agreements between elites, he argues that a sustained, long-popular