

“presupposes a commitment to address climate change” (p. 167). This is an assumption many communities appear to violate, with a majority of US cities indicating in the 2010 International City/County Management Association Sustainability Survey they did not consider climate change a priority of their community. A 2015 follow-up survey found that the majority of US local governments responding (N = 1,899) did not coordinate internally on climate-change mitigation or adaptation. Despite such tremendous heterogeneity, Hughes argues that “the need for city governments to build institutions, coalitions, and capacities in order to govern GHG emissions will remain the same” (p. 168). Ultimately, the book provides a useful organizing framework and guidance for researchers trying to build cumulative knowledge on the drivers and outcomes of urban climate action.

Democracy at Work: Pathways to Well-Being in Brazil.

By Brian Wampler, Natasha Borges Sugiyama, and Michael Touchton.
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In 1990, almost 6 out of 10 Brazilians lived on less than \$5 a day, and 47 out of 1,000 newborns died before their first birthday. By 2010, poverty had been cut in half—fewer than 3 out of 10 Brazilians lived in such conditions—and infant mortality was drastically reduced to 16 deaths per 1,000 live births. Although progress is undeniable, these national averages mask considerable heterogeneity. Places in the north and northeast of Brazil have infant mortality and poverty rates twice as high as those in southern Brazil; social indicators in the less developed areas of the country are similar today to those that prevailed 10 or 20 years ago in its more developed regions. What then explains both the existence of Brazil's remarkable overall progress in human development and its starkly unequal subnational performance?

The first decade of the twenty-first century in Latin America was marked by a commodity boom, creating an increase in revenue that is often cited as the cause of the progress in human development observed in that period. However, Latin America had gone through periods of similar economic expansion during the 1960s and 1970s and failed to accomplish commensurate progress in social indicators. Still, by the twenty-first century, most countries in Latin America, including Brazil, held elections regularly, in contrast to the authoritarian regimes in the region during the 1960s and 1970s. Elections, in association with economic booms, are thought to have unlocked development throughout the region, especially in Brazil.

Brian Wampler, Natasha Borges Sugiyama, and Michael Touchton's exciting new book shows that this

conventional narrative simply misses the mark. Although economic growth is a clear force that creates opportunities for development, creating opportunities is not the same as seizing them, because the process through which gross domestic product growth may influence well-being and pro-poor policies is far from deterministic. Democratic elections and political competition are also undeniable incentives to keep politicians accountable. Yet a single-minded focus on these factors obscures the multiple paths through which citizens and civil society organizations shape policies on a continuous basis; budgets are set annually, social programs are administered year-round, but elections only take place every two or four years. The powerful combination of economic growth and democracy may be responsible for part of the progress observed in the last 20 years, but it fails to explain why different regions of Brazil, under the same national political system and economy, have such disparate outcomes.

Wampler and coauthors use variation in democratic practices to explain changes in well-being. They highlight variations in nonelectoral participation, rights-based social policy, and a usable state as pathways that lead to different outcomes in human development. Engagement in participatory and deliberative institutions allows citizens to give voice to their demands, thereby influencing policy making, and communities to adopt policies according to their needs. The expansion of citizen empowerment through rights-based policies enables individuals and communities to exercise agency and effectively engage with the state as citizens rather than clients. Finally, states need the ability to implement social programs by having sufficient and meritocratic staffing, resources, and some administrative continuity. These pathways each have their own impacts on well-being, but their interaction may also amplify their effects.

The authors put this theory to the test by using a well-rounded triangulation of complementary, quantitative, panel data regression methods, matching techniques, and qualitative process tracing. They amassed impressive datasets, using administrative municipality-year-level data up to 65,000 observations that are partly a reflection of the local state capacity they investigate in the first place. The quantitative analysis uses different techniques in an attempt to account for lurking variables that would put highly performing municipalities on the path to well-being in the first place, independently of the three pathways identified by the authors. They analyze poverty, health, women's empowerment, and education. Furthermore, they bolster their claims by using careful field-based case studies from Caramagibe, Jaboatão dos Guararapes, and Garanhuns, three northeastern municipalities in Pernambuco that have contrasting performances in well-being despite having similar initial conditions.

The authors find that participation, inclusionary state capacity, and rights-based social programs can be

effective in reducing poverty and infant mortality, saving mothers' lives, and increasing school attendance. Unsurprisingly, the conditional cash transfer program Bolsa Família plays an important role in reducing poverty, but the authors show that it also spills over into health and education. Still, no single policy or pathway is a silver bullet: policy councils help women run for office but do not help them have economic status, and Bolsa Família cannot help middle and high school students who may feel more pressure to contribute to household income.

As with any major scholarly contribution, aspects of the argument deserve further explanation, and there are questions left unanswered. Analyzing municipalities allows the authors to investigate within-country variation and localities ruled by different parties. However, the bulk of the book's empirical analysis covers the period during which the Workers' Party ruled the central government, and as the authors themselves acknowledge, the changes they observe were partly induced by federal coordination, incentives, and enforcement of legislation. Although by no means the sole actor responsible for participatory budgeting and the councils that are the driving force of non-electoral participation, the Workers' Party pushed for their creation. It expanded and consolidated the conditional cash transfer program that makes up a large part of the authors' measure of rights-based social policies and also led to the development of the index of decentralized management, an important measure of a usable state. Thus, would we have seen the conditions for these pathways work without Workers' Party rule? This question could use some further explanation because it speaks directly to the sustainability of progress as Brazil goes through radical political changes, including the current rise of right-wing federal and state legislators and a deep and resistant economic crisis.

Furthermore, one could challenge the claim that it is possible to neatly separate these causal pathways from other variables that lead to good governance and well-being. Many of those variables are admittedly difficult to measure, such as civic-mindedness and social capital, which operate differently in each locality, vary over time, and likely shape welfare outcomes in different ways. The authors present a set of correlations that are quite persuasive, and as a whole, they paint a consistent picture of how these pathways sum together and interact to produce well-being. But the process of creating these pathways is messy, and how communities are able to develop them probably influences whether they can effectively bring about change. For outside observers, it is intriguing to observe why Camaragibe was on a virtuous path, whereas even a reformist local leader in Jabotão Dos Guararapes failed to nudge it toward sustainable development.

Yet, these issues should not minimize the book's contribution. The authors' message that economic growth is

not enough for well-being is a necessary one. Although many focus on the role of fiscal booms in creating the conditions for expansion of welfare provision, this approach misses the reasons why money would trickle down into effective pro-poor policies. The authors point to the inner workings of policy implementation, helping readers interested in knowing which aspects of democracy work to create well-being. Even if some aspects of human development, such as quality of education, may take a longer time to take off, Wampler, Borges Sugiyama, and Touchton show us that a "thick" democracy can save the lives of mothers and children, empower women to run for elected office, and put children in schools and food on the table.

Royal Capitalism: Wealth, Class, and Monarchy in Thailand. By Puangchon Unchanam. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2020. 336p. \$79.95 cloth.
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Widely perceived as an anachronism since the nineteenth century, monarchy is a regime type that scholars of modern politics have paid scant attention to. This is not entirely surprising. Where they survive, such as in Scandinavia and Britain, monarchies often serve mainly ornamental functions, with sovereign power resting in fully democratic bodies. The persistence of politically powerful monarchies in some parts of the world is therefore something of a puzzle. Nowhere is that puzzle greater than in the country formerly known as Siam, the subject of Puangchon Unchanam's *Royal Capitalism: Wealth, Class, and Monarchy in Thailand*. Here the resilience of monarchy has gone hand in hand not with the extraction of resource rents, as is the case for many of the resilient monarchies in the Arab world, but rather with rapid industrialization, economic globalization, the emergence of a strong domestic bourgeoisie, and a fitful process of democratization. Such socioeconomic development, which accelerated dramatically in the 1960s, would be expected to lead to a decline in the political role of the monarchy. Yet the Thai monarchy has continued to exercise a degree of political power that vastly exceeds that associated with constitutional monarchies. Its continuing capacity to legitimate nondemocratic forms of government was most recently revealed following the 2006 and 2014 military coups, which toppled democratically elected governments led by Thaksin Shinawatra and his sister Yingluck Shinawatra, respectively.

Given that the Thai monarchy is protected by draconian lese majesty and national security laws, few scholars, Thai or non-Thai, have thought it worth the personal risk to subject the Thai monarchy to more intense scrutiny and critical analysis. Unchanam is therefore to be lauded for