

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris apparently deteriorated as well after the 2024 general election; whether that resulted in her influence lessening is less clear).

Like any new important academic contribution, Yon's four-part construct paves the way for further exploration, analysis, and potential expansion by others. The same is true of his theory of vice-presidential decline. Is the asserted diminution of vice-presidential impact more pronounced with two-term vice presidents than those serving only one? Does the "outsider-insider" dynamic—which involves a President with little or no national governing experience and a Vice President with an extensive Washington background—affect the potential lessening of vice-presidential sway? Are there broader lessons to be learned from the examples of Rockefeller, Mondale, and Gore who voluntarily *chose* to reduce their own participation and influence in White House activities?

Throughout *Emerging from the Shadows*, the breadth of Yon's learning is on full display and his research is broad, deep, and varied. It includes not only a careful canvassing of archival sources from the Ford, Rockefeller, Carter, Mondale, Reagan, and George H.W. Bush papers but also more than seventy interviews, including with former vice presidents (i.e., Mondale, Quayle, Cheney), Cabinet secretaries, and White House staffers.

On the whole, the book's shortcomings are few and at the margins. First, the "rule" Yon offers about the

inevitable erosion of vice-presidential influence could be seen to be somewhat overstated. For instance, Bush's standing as Vice President does not seem to have clearly waned in the later stages of the Reagan administration. Similarly, there appears to be little indication that Quayle's low stature at the outset of his vice presidency dropped even further over time. Second, since one of the work's premises involves the concept of influence and its relationship to power, perhaps greater recognition and discussion of the Vice President's actual power would have been in order. Indeed, the last two vice presidencies were marked more by formal exercises of authority than informal influence (e.g., Pence's actions presiding over the electoral vote count and Harris's record-setting 33 tie-breaking votes in the Senate). Finally, the rationale for the nonchronological order of the chapters—starting with Rockefeller, jumping to Cheney, and then bunching Mondale, Bush, Quayle, Gore, and Biden together in a final segment—seems a bit strained.

Cavils aside, *Emerging from the Shadows* is a highly commendable work of scholarship. By introducing an insightful new four-tiered approach to analyzing vice-presidential influence and drawing attention to the tendency of a Vice President's standing to decline over time, Yon has contributed to a more refined understanding of the second office in the realm of governance. For scholars of the presidency and vice presidency, Yon's book is not to be missed.

COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Colonial Origins of Democracy and Dictatorship. By Alexander Lee and Jack Paine. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024. 300p.
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Despite winning a Nobel Prize for their work on the colonial origins of modern political institutions, the coauthors Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James Robinson have been critiqued—especially by non-economists—for their theory's arguably one-dimensional treatment of the colonial experience. Simplifying four-hundred years of European colonization across nearly every region of the world, their theory conceptualizes diverse modes of colonialism as either "settler" or "non-settler"—a binary that is unsatisfactory to many historians, political scientists, and area specialists.

Alexander Lee and Jack Paine's new book, *Colonialism and Democracy*, remedies this shortfall by providing a

much more comprehensive theory of the nature and effects of Western colonial institutions over the entire colonial project, spanning the Americas and Africa to the Middle East and South Asia. Instead of two ideal types of colonial rule, the authors highlight six distinct experiences premised on four factors: the nature of politics in the colonial metropole (pluralistic versus authoritarian), the size of the white settler population, the size of the non-white middle class, and the existence of an indigenous national monarchy. Briefly, the authors argue that the configuration of these different characteristics determined how soon elections were introduced in each colony. In turn, colonies with longer histories of repeated, territory-wide colonial elections were more likely to become consolidated democracies in the postcolonial period.

The first part of the argument contends that the nature of political authority in the metropole was a permissive condition for elections in colonies: early elections were almost never introduced in the colonies of autocratic metropolises (e.g., Spain, Portugal) and were only possible for the colonies of pluralistic metropolises (primarily Britain, but depending on the period, occasionally France and

the Netherlands). The authors highlight the remarkable statistic that within the Americas before 1850, colonies of pluralistic metropolises had electoral institutions in 73 percent of their colony-years compared to just 1.5 percent for those of authoritarian metropolises (between 1850 and 1945 worldwide, the percentages shift to 38 percent and 1.4 percent, respectively [p. 195]).

Obviously, not all colonies of pluralistic metropolises were granted electoral bodies. The authors argue that two conditions permitted early elections in such colonies: the existence of either a large settler population or a large non-white middle class fluent in the metropolitan language. For similar reasons, both groups were positioned to effectively lobby the metropole for elections. However, while large non-white middle classes tended to create durable democratic institutions lasting into the postcolonial period, settler populations produced conflicting democratic and anti-democratic forces. Where settler populations dominated the non-white population (e.g., the United States, Canada, Australia), democracy endured. But, where large settler populations remained in the minority, as in much of the Caribbean as well as in parts of Africa, backlash against the proposition of black rule in the postcolonial period led to democratic reversals. Finally, the authors note that metropolitan monarchies (specifically Britain) tolerated postcolonial monarchies (i.e., nondemocracies), where such monarchies had a nationwide mandate, such as the Gulf States or Eswatini. The final part of the argument proposes that colonies with longer histories (20 years or more) of pluralistic institutions were more likely to become and remain democracies in the postcolonial period. The authors propose that such colonies benefited from the institutionalization of nationwide, mass political parties as well as the normalization of electoral rules that became important to raising the costs of democratic subversion in the post-colonial period.

Taken together, Lee and Paine's theory artfully builds upon influential (but arguably oversimplified) work on the colonial origins of modern political institutions in post-colonial countries. It marshals a series of powerful descriptive statistics to show clear patterns that emerged from six distinct forms of European colonial rule. Given the sweeping history of European colonialism, studies of its effects are often regionalized by area specialists. Very distinct colonial process in North America, the Caribbean, South America, Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia make a unified theory of colonial legacies extraordinarily hard for any scholar to piece together. Synthesizing the extant scholarship from history and political science based in different world regions, Lee and Paine offer an impressive overarching theory of the effects of European colonialism on post-colonial democracy. While the analysis itself does not necessarily teach us anything new about any given case, it does provide rich historical detail about processes of early democratic consolidation under colonialism, and it

also synthesizes a wide range of theories and arguments about colonialism and democracy. Thus, the book will be an extremely helpful text for both graduate and undergraduate classes about colonialism, institutional persistence, or democracy and authoritarianism—in no small part because the book is meticulously organized and accessibly written.

Nonetheless, despite the expansive scope of the theory, the primary findings end up explaining a rather narrow set of cases because so few postcolonial states became consolidated democracies. Few colonies actually experienced lengthy periods of colonial-era pluralism: In addition to the British majority-settler colonies such as the US, Canada, and Australia, the authors count just 18 others scattered around the world (p. 169), most of which did not become democracies because they were settler-minority colonies or lacked a non-white middle class. The authors walk a well-trodden path when they describe the “neo-Britain” settler-majority colonies (e.g., the US, Canada, etc.), but their *ex-ante* expectations for *minority* settler populations are mixed, and there are few cases that resulted in democratic consolidation in the immediate post-colonial period (per the authors, only Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Mauritius [p. 172]).

As a result, their qualitative evidence for their positive outcome (postcolonial democracy) relies heavily on Jamaica and India. These are apparently the only two non-microstates to produce a non-white middle class that effectively lobbied for direct elections during the early colonial period, which resulted in postcolonial democracy. It is important to note that the authors never directly measure the size of a colony's middle class—one assumes because of a lack of data, but this is never stated—but instead measure it by the existence of a port city with precolonial trading ties to Europe. This produces a larger number of potential cases of future democratization, particularly in West Africa, but the authors describe how early elections among these port cities never developed into colony-wide elections. The authors do not offer a theoretical reason for why West Africa's middle class failed to meet their minimum standard for pluralistic elections under colonial rule (the key precondition for postcolonial democracy) when India and Jamaica's middle classes succeeded. As a result, much of the book is dedicated to explaining why different modes of colonial rule produced authoritarianism in the post-colonial period, a topic that is already well-understood.

Overall, the authors provide a unified account of the long-term effects of European colonialism on the prospects for postcolonial democracy. Pushing back on the overly simplified conceptualization of “settler” versus “non-settler” colonial rule, the book provides a thorough overview of the diversity of experiences under colonial political authority (and its varied effects) that is at once accessible and comprehensive. It is a very thoughtful addition to influential scholarship on the colonial origins of contemporary political orders.