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Book Review: Jorge I. Domínguez and Anthony Jones, eds., *The Construction of Democracy: Lessons from Practice and Research* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 253 pages, including tables, charts and index.

Constructing Democracy
The State of the Art

Joseph L. Klesner

Democracy's third wave has occasioned a prodigious outpouring of scholarly books and articles that have explored every imaginable dimension of democratization: factors leading to democratization, the processes of regime transition, the role of elite bargaining in bringing forward democracy, the impact of public opinion and mass pressure in regime liberalization, institutional arrangements and constitutions, and the importance of policy performance in democratic consolidation, to mention some of the most central themes. Because the literature has developed over the course of two decades now, finding an up-to-date summary of what we have learned proves difficult. Moreover, incorporating practitioners' insights into our corpus of knowledge sets for us another challenge that many political leaders have sought to fill with their memoirs, but of course those works range broadly in their quality and their detachment.

In this new volume, Jorge Domínguez and Anthony Jones bring together contributions from international scholars and former statesmen that strive to offer readers a state-of-the-art compendium of what we have learned about building democracy during the third wave. Based on the Conference on Democratic Transition and Consolidation, which was organized by the Fundación para la Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE) of Spain and the Gorbachev Foundation of North America (GNFA), and held in Madrid in October 2001, this book brings together the insights of the thirty-four heads and former heads of state and government and the more than one hundred international scholars of democratic transition and consolidation who met there. Far from being a who's who of American academic experts on democratization, the scholarly authors come from seven different countries,

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with Latin Americans and Latin American case material strongly represented. Moreover, in the latter pages of the book, five former heads of state or government contribute comments on themes explored by scholars in earlier chapters. In the chapters, the contributors strive to bring to the reader not only their own insights but also those of the working groups with which they met.

The editors break the chapters by summarizing the dialogue at Madrid into three main themes: macro issues of democratization, institutional design, and policies in the new democratic regimes. The first section includes the introduction by Domínguez and Jones, plus chapters on pluralism and public participation by Grzegorz Ekiert and Anna Grzymala-Busse and on the economic challenges facing new democracies by Andrew Richards. Ekiert and Grzymala-Busse contribute one of the strongest chapters in the book on strengthening participation and pluralism. As they argue, not all participation necessarily supports democracy: "a robust civil society can be used to build a dictatorship as much as to bolster democracy" (p. 24). Rather, to facilitate democratic consolidation, institution designers must encourage participation that is responsible, responsive, and representative. While promoting the development of civil society organizations, Ekiert and Grzymala-Busse particularly discourage the emergence of a "pillarized" civil society ("competing and mutually exclusive civil societies within the same territory," p. 29), favoring associational life that crosses ethnic, religious, or linguistic lines. They also caution against the privatization of participation, which favors the growth of clientelism and rent-seeking activity. Even more strongly, Ekiert and Grzymala-Busse urge that engineers of democracy seek to build political parties and a sound party system rather than overemphasizing civil society organizations. This message they especially address to international actors who might fund or otherwise support civic associations at the expense of parties. The latter deserve more attention, for only they aggregate interests and they have access to the levers of government.

Constitutional design receives more explicit attention from Richard Simeon and Luc Turgeon in the first chapter of the second section, which focuses on the institutions of democracy. They note that the founders of new democracies face four principal tasks: to create the institutions that are *democratic*, to create *effective* institutions, to be certain those institutions are *representative and accommodative*, and to assure that the institutions are *workable*. Simeon and Turgeon stress the building of what they call, following Jane Jensen, a "citizenship regime," which emphasizes the making of democratic citizens. Key to a citizenship regime are rights, access, and belonging. Including the citizenry in the making and (when necessary) amending of the constitution is the place to start to ensure that those new citizens feel that they have access to the society's authoritative institutions and that they belong to the political community. The goal they underscore is to create a democratic political culture. As former Indian Prime Minister Inder K. Gujral puts it in his comment, "A democracy is essentially a society with a conscience" and "neither laws

nor rules can be correctly interpreted without reference to a moral context" (p. 219). Institutions are not enough.

Simeon and Turgeon's chapter draws from a literature more steeped in political and legal theory than most political science treatments of institutional design. Political scientists can learn much from their chapter. In contrast, Antônio Octávio Cintra and Marcello Barroso Lacombe's chapter on executive-legislative relations reflects the considerable literature built up among new institutionalists on the merits of parliamentary and presidential regimes. Notwithstanding cautionary notes that scholars such as John Carey, Matthew Shugart, and Scott Mainwaring have sounded, Cintra and Lacombe conclude: "Parliamentary systems tend to be more stable and efficient with respect to policy decisions. Presidential systems are notoriously less stable and efficient"(p. 114). Although most scholars share this conclusion in a general sense, the bluntness of their conclusions fits poorly with Simeon and Turgeon's advice that "constitutional engineers should approach their task with humility" (p. 97).

The third section of the book takes on policy implementation in new democracies. It begins with a useful chapter from José Luis Méndez on the reform of the state. Abuse of power, excessive centralization, and corruption and cronyism under outgoing authoritarian regimes often lead those who guide democratic transitions to demand reform of the state. Those reformers typically consider decentralization of authority, privatization of state-owned enterprises, and bureaucratic reform to be key to creating the appropriate state for a democratic regime. External actors often support them in their efforts to make these reforms. However, Méndez offers this caution: "Decentralization, privatization, and bureaucratic flexibility should not be viewed as a zero-sum game in which the powers of local authorities, private enterprises, or agencies are increased at the expense of the central government" (p. 126). Rather, because democratic citizens value the public goods that that state can provide, the state as a whole needs to be strengthened, although also made more democratic. His contribution provides many detailed suggestions (too many to list in a short review) that democratic reformers might follow as they privatize the state sector, decentralize authority, and modernize their bureaucracies.

The other contributors to the third section focus more specifically on the military and law enforcement, particularly in Latin America (Rut Diamint), and corruption (Susan Rose-Ackerman). Both issues are central to the policy agenda in new democracies, although defense policy has received much less attention both from civilian politicians and scholars than it should, whereas policing and corruption clearly top the agenda of journalists and U.S. foreign policy officials assigned to Latin America and, perhaps to a lesser extent, to other newly emerging democracies. Diamint's chapter identifies forces contributing to and undermining democracy in the military's current mission in Latin America. The former includes peace keeping missions, where militaries must professionalize in order to interact effectively with other nations' forces,

which generally serves to depoliticize these militaries. Among the latter is the increased use of the military to interdict drug trafficking and to fight against terrorism. In both cases, the military tends to disregard the legal rights of citizens and otherwise tread on the civil liberties that democracy is supposed to enshrine. Of great concern is the tendency to use the military for policing, given the manifest failure of the police forces to provide law and order. As Carlos Blanco, a former Venezuelan minister for state reform, notes in his comment, bringing the military into policing "is counterproductive to the overall desire to diminish the military's presence" (p. 229). Finally, Diamint calls the new democracies of Latin America to task for failing to hold their militaries accountable for the human rights abuses they perpetrated under authoritarian rule.

Rose-Ackerman identifies three critical areas in which corruption has threatened new democracies: tax collection, the health-care sector in formerly socialist countries, and privatization. Corruption in any of these areas can seriously undermine the policy effectiveness of the regimes in power; worse, it can undermine citizens' trust in the new institutions of democracy. She observes, "Whatever other policies they implement, emerging democracies can make progress against corruption and self-dealing by developing improved and more effective routes for public participation and public accountability. This means . . . more effective paths for citizens to have a voice and to monitor public officials' behavior without fearing reprisals" (p. 194).

Few scholars are as gifted as Jorge Domínguez at summarizing a complex, multifaceted academic debate. In the introduction, cowritten by Domínguez and Jones, and in Domínguez's epilogue, he effectively draws out the many themes addressed in the book into a set of concise and clear conclusions. As he summarizes in the epilogue, "The construction of democracy requires vision, ambition, and decisiveness because democrats must not only construct the constitution of liberty for their homelands, but also build a democracy that delivers a competent state, respectful of its citizens, that fosters prosperity—a state capable of eliciting the consent of the governed" (p. 239). These are no small tasks. Would-be constitution writers would be well advised to read this volume before taking up their pens, so that they might better exercise the "political judgment" that Fernando Henrique Cardoso stresses in his comment as being essential to democratic consolidation.