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James Loxton and Scott Mainwaring (eds.) *Life After Dictatorship: Authoritarian Successor Parties Worldwide*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018 £26.99 (pbk), xv + 405pp. ISBN 978-1-108-44541-2.

The integration of elites from outgoing authoritarian regimes into new democratic settlements and the importance of building effective party systems in new democracies are both staples of the democratization literature. However, James Loxton suggests in the introduction to this new collection, the two have rarely been brought together in the systematic study of how the party organizations formed by authoritarian elites to bolster their rule fare in subsequent democratic party politics – and certainly not in global comparative terms.

*Life After Dictatorship* seeks to fill this gap, by bringing together in a broad common framework work on authoritarian successor parties (ASPs) - “parties that emerge from authoritarian regimes, but that operate after a transitional to democracy “(p 2) – in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and Eastern Europe. This regional-comparative focus is supplemented by two more country-specific chapters (paired comparisons of dominant ASPs in South Korea and Taiwan and rival ASPs in Brazil); a global comparison of ASPs’ linkage strategies by Herbert Kitschelt and Matthew Singer; and a study of West European conservative parties’ adaptation to democracy during the First Wave of democratisation by Daniel Ziblatt.

ASPs fall into two principal sub-types: former ruling parties, which administered authoritarian regimes such the former communist parties of Eastern Europe, the KMT in Taiwan or Golkar in Indonesia; and reactive authoritarian successors of parties formed – in the absence of a strong ruling party - by outgoing authoritarian elites in anticipation of transition, such as the Union of the Democratic Centre (UDC) and the Popular Party (PP) in post-Franco Spain or the National Democratic Congress Ghana, which was created as a vehicle for the country’s former military ruler Jerry Rawlings. ASPs are, moreover, more the rule than the exception. Examining 65 Third Wave democracies between 1974 and 2010, Loxton finds 47 ASPs that established themselves as prominent political players in the first electoral cycle, of which 35 were democratically returned to office.

As well as mapping the varied types of ASP, the collection sets out to answer three comparative questions: why ASPs parties exist and are often electorally successful; why some are more successful than others; and what effects they have on democracy. ASPs’ widespread emergence as important players should not come as a surprise. They typically enjoy a head start in material and political resources; a recognizable political brand; party organisation and informal networks that can be repurposed for party organisation; and polarisation between regime and opposition which, paradoxically, can inject cohesion and purpose into a newly (trans) forming ASP.

However, as Loxton concludes, the credibility – and hence likely success - of ASPs depends most on contextual factors: the political, and in particular, economic performance, of the former regime (important for the success of ASPs South Korea or Taiwan); the timing and nature of the transition and, in particular, the extent to which outgoing authoritarians are able to manage it on their own terms, perhaps by pre-empting social demands for democracy or carefully engineering key institutions such as the electoral system.

However, even in the most favourable contexts, to succeed ASPs need to politically negotiate legacies of policy failures and repression with the wider electorate beyond their own authoritarian core constituency. Here, Loxton identifies four contrasting strategies: public contrition for past wrongdoing; obfuscation downplaying or obscuring links with the past, scapegoating a few (supposed) miscreants in the old regime for excesses; or a simple unapologetic embrace of the achievements of – and past necessity for – authoritarianism.

Given the range of contexts – and the diversity of the parties themselves – ASPs' impacts on democratisation defy easy categorisation: they can, unsurprisingly, be negative, hindering transitional justice or, in federal democracies, laying the basis for (semi-) authoritarian enclaves. They can even act as straightforwardly revisionist parties seeking a return to authoritarianism at the earliest opportunity. But in some contexts, such as in post-communist Eastern Europe, Taiwan or much of 19th century Western Europe, ASPs help institutionalise party competition and incorporate old elites into the new democratic order. This may also exercise a 'demonstration effect' showing other authoritarian rulers that they can extricate themselves from their own regimes and survive and prosper in democratic conditions. In other contexts, their effects seem ambiguous. In Kenya, for example, the former ruling party KANU has stimulated party formation by generating not one, but multiple ASPs, which occupy virtually the whole political landscape, leaving little space for newer political actors.

Overall, the collection has clear strengths and weaknesses. Its minimal definition of an ASP facilitates, as the editors intend, an encompassing and sometimes enlightening comparison, which highlights how specialists working on one regional context may draw on insights and inspiration from another. Rachel Rachel's chapter on Africa draws attention to the importance of mechanisms (here the incorporation of 'big men' who ran personalistic regimes) which stabilise ASPs in the short term but make them more prone to collapse in the longer term. A similar mechanism might be sought in Eastern Europe to explain the collapse of powerful social democrat ASPs, which Anna Grzymala-Busse explains with perhaps less clarity as technocratic reformers who became 'victims of their own success.

In other respects broad global comparison is less effective. ASPs have little in common: some are programmatic, while others are clientelistic; some have formal nationwide organisation, while others are loose groupings. The equally minimalist notion of "authoritarian inheritance" is also not the theoretical advance suggested, affording limited

comparative leverage. Here well-developed regional literatures, where notions about ASPs and their inheritances have already been theorised, arguably need careful synthesis. The collection's basic insight that ASPs returning democratically to power are not just a series of regional peculiarities, but a global comparative phenomenon "hiding in plain sight" is an important one. In this respect its call for more ambitious cross-regional agenda is both pioneering and well made.