FURTHER READING

The editors have determined that the following titles are of special interest to readers for their important contributions to the academic literature on international affairs.

The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution

Francis Fukuyama
(New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011), 608 pages.

Since his seminal article "The End of History?" was published in 1989, Francis Fukuyama has never shied away from tackling the big questions. *The Origins of Political Order* is no different, and it is unquestionably his most important work since the essay and subsequent book that made him famous. The first of two volumes, this book spans from prehistory to the French Revolution and uses comparative political techniques to describe a theory of evolution for the trinity of the modern political order: a strong and capable state, rule of law and the accountability of the state to its citizens. The second volume will address the period from the French Revolution to the present day.

As a work of meta-history, much of the material here is familiar as Fukuyama retreads ground covered by Samuel Huntington, Immanuel Wallerstein and others. However, his own theory highlights the crucial roles that contingency and the social nature of man play in the evolution of political order, yielding insights that cut across history and geography about why some states developed successful institutions while others were trapped by their own histories, never "getting to Denmark."

Fukuyama writes in a clear, invigorating style that is accessible to general audiences and only occasionally gets bogged down by esoterica and the complex structure of the book. Minor quibbles aside, he has built a solid theoretical foundation for the more formidable challenge ahead in the second volume: examining the effects of industrial revolution and violent social upheaval on the political order governing a rapidly diverging world. Judging from his opening salvo, I have little doubt that Fukuyama is up to the task.

Michael Larson

Political Violence and the Authoritarian State in Peru: Silencing Civil Society

Jo-Marie Burt
(New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 308 pages.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the government of Peru engaged in a bloody war with an insurgent guerrilla group called the Shining Path. An estimated 70,000 people, many of them civilians, perished in the conflict. Mainstream reporting on the conflict depicted the government as an authoritarian power whose injustices and transgressions gave rise to the terrorist movement.

In her latest book, Jo-Marie Burt presents a deeper and more complex portrait of the violence by examining the erosion of Peruvian civil society and how the methods used by both factions—the insurgents and the government—exploited social injustices to advance their respective agendas.

The result is a fascinating account of how domestic institutions and the public sphere ceased to function in the face of intense domestic warfare. Burt, director of Latin American studies at George Mason University, adopts an academic framework utilizing Antonio Gramsci's theory on political power in which coercion and consensus are mutually reinforcing.

She argues that the administration of President Alberto Fujimori exploited fears of Shining Path's terrorist actions to impose a series of draconian measures in the name of domestic security, achieving high approval ratings. Similarly, Shining Path built support among the disenfranchised while targeting socially progressive competitors, such as trade unions and community groups, for public support.

While a general audience may be turned off by the dry prose, academics and students will benefit from the book's straightforward analysis. It is well structured and Burt's arguments are clear, well reasoned and supported by copious footnotes. Most impressively, she draws upon grassroots ethnographic research, providing keen insight into the effects of violence from the 1980s to the present on the public space where grievances and injustices can now be addressed.

Lyle Sylvander

Dragon in the Tropics: Hugo Chávez and the Political Economy of Revolution in Venezuela

Javier Corrales and Michael Penfold
(Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2011), 195 pages.

Dragon in the Tropics by Javier Corrales, professor of political science at Amherst College, and Michael Penfold, professor of political economy at the Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración in Caracas, is a slim but informative description of the Chávez regime and how it has evolved. The book provides

a compelling overview of Chávez's handling of Venezuela's domestic politics, economy and foreign policy.

The authors argue that Venezuela under Chávez is neither a full democracy nor a dictatorship, but rather a mixed regime with elements of both political systems. They note the presence of elections, but also unfair electoral conditions, cronyism, voter intimidation and an absence of term limits, which secures Chávez's hold on power. The book argues that the transformation of Venezuela from democracy to a mixed regime cannot be explained by oil wealth alone. Chávez accomplished his goals before the country's oil boom by subverting institutions that could check his power.

The authors also describe Chávez's approach to foreign policy, balancing against U.S. power through significant foreign aid to countries in the region. His strategy has achieved little success in limiting U.S. influence in the region, but it has prevented democratic leaders in South America from isolating him. Finally, the book describes Venezuela's increasing economic footprint on the continent, despite a decline in oil production caused by a number of factors, including the flight of knowledgeable technicians from the oil industry.

These arguments are presented persuasively and with significant documentation. When evidence is lacking, it is usually due to the opacity of the Chávez regime. Using the history of the Chávez administration as a guide, the authors also evaluate many of the perspectives on Venezuela held by both the right and the left in the United States with illuminating results.

Matt Snyder

The Rise of Elective Dictatorship and the Erosion of Social Capital: Peace, Development, and Democracy in Africa

Kasahun Woldemariam
(Trenton: Africa World Press, 2009), 354 pages.

Kasahun Woldemariam's book examines the sources of extreme violence, economic disparity and political repression that have become synonymous with governments in Africa. Instead of rehashing old stereotypes, Woldemariam uses the abstract theory of social capital to explore "the Africa question" in a way that categorizes violence and poverty as symptoms of larger phenomena, not as causes of political underdevelopment.

For the author, the crux of Africa's governance problem is that the multiparty elections that dominate the political landscape are meaningless. The argument is that the leaders of most African parties are corrupt elites promoting fictional democracies in order to receive foreign aid, which creates distrust in the international community, discourages foreign investment, weakens public faith in governance and leads to ethnic wars among rival groups

trying to control the nation.

Woldemariam is methodical in proving his thesis and presents a fascinating narrative that moves from a description of traditional African governing structures to colonial structures to the emergence of the modern state. At times he strays from the point and peppers the text with anti-American asides (about the Iraq War, for example), but he does so without lingering.

Though Woldemariam's text is dry and repetitive, it asks an important question: How can Western-style democracy really work in a communal, traditional society? Woldemarian argues that while some regimes have all the pretenses of a democracy, such a façade is meaningless if the people have no faith in the government's ability to satisfy their needs or, more importantly, to provide opportunities to use their talents for the benefit of society.

Samantha Libby

The Struggle for Power in Syria: Politics and Society under Asad and the Ba'th Party

Nikolaos van Dam
(New York: I. B. Tauris, revised and updated edition, 2011), 288 pages.

Nikolaos van Dam's *The Struggle for Power in Syria* is an insightful study into the governments of Hafez and Bashar al-Assad, the father and son who have ruled Syria since 1970. Van Dam, a former Dutch diplomat and a specialist on Syria, argues that the son's government has maintained key features that were "essential for [the] survival and continuation" of the regime of his father. Although it was published just before the outbreak of the latest wave of protests in Syria in the spring of 2011, this new edition provides a solid foundation for understanding how the Assad family has held onto power, despite the long-standing grievances of the opposition.

Van Dam rightly points out that socioeconomic and ideological variables, along with a deep sectarian divide, are important elements that have shaped the Syrian ruling class. His work is most interesting when it teases out the societal connections that help the regime stay afloat, such as alliances between wealthy military officers in Assad's minority Alawi community and the rich, urban bourgeoisie, including both Sunnis and Christians.

Van Dam's discussion of the future, which is now unfolding in the Syrian streets, is poignant. He concludes his discussion of the Hama uprising in 1982 by pointing out that bloody repression "may very well have sown the seeds of future strife and revenge." Hama has been one of the centers of the protests this year.

Later, the author states that it is "very difficult to imagine" the government being "peacefully transformed into a more widely based democracy." *The Struggle for Power in Syria* provides a roadmap for how the country has reached the present state of unrest, and

the roadmap tells us that if the parallels between the two Assad regimes hold, there is more bloodshed yet to come.

Michael Jacobs

The New Authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa

Stephen J. King
(Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 288 pages.

Given the shifting political sands in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria caused by the Arab Spring, Stephen J. King's book is as timely as it is relevant. For each country, King exposes the elite-controlled regimes that hijacked the political process under the guise of economic liberalization and political democratization.

In both the old and new authoritarianism, the state controls all economic activity and public services, minimizing the role of the majority of citizens in the nation's economic and social life and preventing weak political parties and opposition coalitions from overtaking the ruling party. By contrast, free-market systems and multi-party electoral institutions have been unique components of the new authoritarianism, and economists and political scientists should take note.

The author directs us to lessons learned about the adoption of destabilizing free-market policy recommendations, which have exacerbated inequality, created a politically connected privileged class, decreased state-sector jobs and reduced subsidies for consumer goods and utilities. Though they encouraged economic growth, the policies also undercut political stability and established principal-agent problems. As an illustrative example, several Arab states have increased state jobs and salaries and postponed or cancelled subsidy cuts in response to the current unrest in the region.

As King compares different cases, he demonstrates deep learning about the four case-study countries and about the region generally. This book sets itself apart from other political science research by adopting a critical, evidence-based and systematic approach in analyzing how economic reforms have made authoritarianism stronger in the region, counter to popular beliefs.

Akshay Sinha

Putin's Labyrinth: Spies, Murder, and the Dark Heart of the New Russia

Steve LeVine
(New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2nd edition, 2009), 230 pages.

Informed by over a decade of reporting from the former Soviet Union, *Putin's Labyrinth* is a timely and intimate peek into the underworld of political violence in contemporary Russia. In this detailed chronicle of several high-profile murders "countenanced or at least tolerated by the Russian state,"

journalist Steve LeVine argues that the Russian government, by way of institutional neglect at the highest level, is complicit in an "epidemic of assassinations and bloodletting."

Prime Minister Putin's culpability lies in the "climate of impunity" that he has helped to foster. In business, politics and journalism, "violence can be permissible against those deemed to be outsiders." The examples considered range from the slaying of an acclaimed human rights activist to the Kremlin's negligence and outright malversation in the handling of the Nord-Ost hostage situation. They serve to corroborate LeVine's thesis that "in Putin's Russia the state cannot be counted on to protect the lives of its citizens," and, more pointedly, that the country is on a "visible slide toward autocratic rule."

In a new afterword to the second edition, LeVine takes stock of a number of ominous developments that transpired since the book's initial publication in 2008: the elimination of trial by jury for crimes against the state, a move to broaden the definition of treason and a raid on the offices of a historical society committed to monitoring rights abuses in post-Soviet states, among others. These developments reinforce LeVine's distressing conclusions about the precarious state of civil liberties in Russia. Extensively researched and rich in bitter detail, *Putin's Labyrinth* is a tonic for a failing democracy and a shot in the arm for the movement to restore it.

David Kortava

The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century

Stefan Halper
(New York: Basic Books, 2010), 252 pages.

In *The Beijing Consensus*, Stefan Halper, a longtime Republican insider who served presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan and George H. W. Bush in various capacities, makes a somewhat muddy attempt to sort out the appeal of China's particular brand of authoritarian capitalism.

Halper traces China's rise from the economic reforms of the 1980s and 1990s to today, when it is something like a nonaligned superpower, lending money indiscriminately to what he calls "pariah states" (e.g., Sudan, Angola and Venezuela), hosting lavish receptions for leaders in the Global South and wielding increasing influence in international bodies like the United Nations and the World Trade Organization.

Halper goes beyond the logistics of this transformation to get at the meaning of China's ascendancy and newfound influence. Letting slip his past as a Cold warrior, he hints at a coming, global ideological battle with section titles like "Confucius Versus Jefferson" and "China's Biggest Fear: American Ideas."

He argues that China does not pose a threat to the United States directly—and certainly not militarily—but that it does threaten American ideals, because

it shows the world that it is possible to have a (fabulously successful) free market without attendant political freedoms. Halper imagines third-world leaders choosing China as their business partner instead of America because it has ample cash to lend and a track record of success.

The author closes by offering recommendations to Washington on countering China's rise: engage with third-world leaders, don't take them for granted and forget about their ideologies. Only then will the United States' own idiosyncratic idea—freedom—dominate the twenty-first century.

Chris Chafin

The New Political Economy of Southeast Asia

Rajah Rasiah and Johannes Dragsbaek Schmidt, eds.
(Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2010), 290 pages.

Political leaders throughout Southeast Asia have been the subjects of criticism because of the outsize economic success of their neighbors in Northeast Asia. In this collection of essays, Rajah Rasiah and Johannes Dragsbaek Schmidt argue that economic nationalism and its ideological legacies are both products of this very criticism and have been a significant and distinctive political constraint on Southeast Asian governments seeking rapid economic development.

According to the authors, the lack of state support for the creation of market-friendly institutional frameworks, such as integrated bureaucracies, is rooted in misguided neoliberal policies (such as those in place in soft authoritarian regimes like Indonesia and Malaysia), which propagate ethno-political divides and emphasize low-cost, low-value-added economic activities. Rasiah and Schmidt emphasize the lack of an effective institutional infrastructure in import-substitution and export-orientation strategies that in turn hamper the development of local technological capabilities. They maintain that a structural transformation addressing these government failures is a prerequisite for sustained long-term regional growth.

While this book may succeed as a historical commentary on the political pressures countries face in postcolonial industrialization efforts, it falls short of the authors' stated ambition "to fill a lacuna in the existing literature on the political economy of Southeast Asia" by "taking an interdisciplinary approach on critical issues." Readers may be disappointed by the book's overwhelming emphasis on institutional flaws, overshadowing important discussions pertaining to the slow development of human capital, as well as the profound threat from manufacturing giants like China. Rasiah and Schmidt do, however, successfully give a broad account of the issues of social change in the region, with essays backed by strong empirical findings, written in a language suitable for nonspecialist readers.

Louise Loo

The Hidden People of North Korea: Everyday Life in the Hermit Kingdom

Ralph Hassig and Kongdan Oh
(New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 300 pages.

For outsiders, the view of North Korea has long been obscured. The current dictator, Kim Jong Il, once said: "We must envelop our environment in a dense fog to prevent our enemies from learning anything about us." However, Ralph Hassig and Kongdan Oh, two longtime Korea watchers, present a stunningly detailed account of daily life in this mysterious regime.

Based on interviews with 200 defectors, including several former officials, and dispatches from local media, the book describes the seldom-reported inner world of ordinary North Koreans. It challenges the conventional wisdom that the country's masses are always united around the Kim family. The authors contend that a form of "double thinking" is emerging: many people no longer believe in socialism, even if they pretend to during the day to avoid being labeled as members of the "hostile class."

North Koreans, say Hassig and Oh, have begun to trade products in black markets and hum songs from banned South Korean television and radio programs. Defections to the "evil capitalist countries" increase every year. Even government officials regularly defy Kim in order to take bribes.

The book is particularly notable for its vivid descriptions of Kim's extravagant—even capitalistic—lifestyle, complete with a Japanese chef who sourced ingredients from around the world, imported limousines and a "pleasure team" of women at his disposal. The dissonance between the private life of the "Dear Leader" and his austere policies for the public has never been more apparent.

Despite these contradictions, the authors conclude in their last chapter that the regime remains stable and secure, a paradoxical end to an otherwise shrewd and thought-provoking book.

Angela Beibei Bao