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varieties of authoritarian regimes around the world, which are proving to be surprisingly resilient.

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The Saddam Tapes: The Inner Workings of a Tyrant's Regime, 1978–2001 edited by Kevin M. Woods, David D. Palkki, and Mark E. Stout. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. 392 pp. Paper, \$36.99.

Saddam Hussein is entirely familiar to most Americans, but assessments of his decision making have been largely second-hand, inferential, and presumptive. While his capture in late 2003 promised to shed light on his leadership choices, a more-surprising development has been the seizure, translation, and transcription of thousands of hours of recorded conversations between Saddam and his inner circle. Kevin Woods and his colleagues are among those taking the first major steps in analyzing these materials. The result is an astonishing collection of annotated transcripts, with introductory commentaries by the editors to contextualize the recordings. Originally prepared by the Institute for Defense Analyses, the book draws on captured audio, video, and document files. It taps into a larger collection now available at the National Defense University's Conflict Records Research Center, a treasure-trove of materials that will transform our understanding of the regime.

The book is organized non-chronologically, with eight thematic chapters, an introduction, and an epilogue. It presents selections from 87 recordings made between 1978 and 2001, especially from 1983 to 1996. Chapters address Iraq and the United States, Israel, the Arab world, the Iran–Iraq war, the Gulf war, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the embargo and UNSCOM, and Hussein Kamil. Recordings cover the Revolutionary Command Council, Council of Ministers, and security-related working groups. Captured tapes were found “in bags buried in a garden” (p. 10), being prepared for destruction, or intact in presidential offices. The resulting transcripts are rich and varied, complete with unexplained gaps, static distortions, unidentified voices, inaudible portions, whispers, laughter, throat-clearing, the clanking of dishes, the slamming of doors, the rustling of maps, and occasional pounding on the table—all duly noted by the transcribers.

The portrait of Saddam that emerges both confirms and challenges conventional accounts. As the editors note, Saddam comes across “as a highly competent, intelligent, but intellectually undisciplined decision maker—a lively, quick-witted, and fickle man given to restless digressions...” (p. 324). Not surprisingly, he is conspiratorial and given to occasional brutality, menacing his

advisers while insisting in August 1990, for example, that they tell Kuwaitis, “You are all Iraqis now,’ and if anyone opens his mouth ... you need to empty all bullets in his throat” (p. 174). The tapes also echo group and interpersonal dynamics, with the editors concluding that “Iraqi decision making was never completely reducible to one man” (p. 326) and noting ways in which individuals expressed dissent or circumvented Saddam’s wishes. The recordings are consistent with the conclusion that Iraq abandoned its WMD programs long before 2003: Saddam laments in late November 1998, “We have nothing; not even one screw” (p. 293). But they give the lie to his claim under FBI interrogation that he never contemplated using chemical weapons in the Gulf war, catching Saddam declaring in November 1990 that “if we want to use chemicals, we will exterminate them...” (p. 239).

While the tapes provide tantalizing glimpses into the regime, their interpretation is not self-evident. As Woods, Palkki, and Stout suggest, having confidence in the authenticity and provenance of the tapes is easier than determining the veracity of speakers’ claims, or even knowing who was in the room when the tape rolled. The translation and transcription process alone is fraught with peril, they emphasize. One might go further in acknowledging the inherent limitations of this kind of source: words uttered aloud—even in highly secret meetings—are not unfiltered, pure expressions of leaders’ preferences and reasoning. Decision makers may not always understand their own motivations. And while leadership analysis can illuminate crisis decision making, especially when blunders are committed, it is difficult to divorce from domestic and international influences. Complementary sources and some skepticism are essential, but this does not diminish the extraordinary nature of the project.

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Latinos in the New Millenium: An Almanac of Opinion, Behavior, and Policy Preferences by Luis Fraga, John A. Garcia, Rodney E. Hero, Michael Jones-Correa, Valerie Martinez-Ebbers, and Gary Segura. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012. 448 pp. Paper, \$36.99.

It is unusual for a book to accomplish its stated objective and yet disappoint as greatly as does this volume. As promised, it delivers “a broad-based profile” of Latino social characteristics, group relations, policy positions, and political orientations. This is presented in the form of seemingly endless tables that are essentially merely more-recent versions of what is available from prior national