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Terrence Lyons, Peter G. Mandaville, eds. *Politics from Afar.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. 256 pp. $50.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-231-70278-2.

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Politics from Afar: Transnational Diasporas and Networks, edited by Terrence Lyons and Peter Mandaville, makes an important contribution to the literature on diaspora politics. In particular, the book illustrates the importance of diaspora politics, while also outlining some of the limitations of that influence. Diaspora politics matters broadly geographically, impacts a number of important issue areas, and is timely and politically relevant. I proceed by outlining how *Politics from Afar* addresses the implications of diaspora politics in these three areas. I also identify puzzles raised by the book and suggest areas for further research.

In terms of geographic scope, the book address the politics involving diaspora groups originating from Ethiopia, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Ireland, the Dominican Republic, Morocco, Ireland, and elsewhere. The politics and economics of all these countries have been shaped in part by the actions of their diasporans and by the decisions that their states have made in organizing their relations with the diaspora. Diaspora politics is relevant in a number of geographic and cultural settings. Further research can continue to address those issues by examining diaspora politics issues across many countries using large-N statistical methods.

The book demonstrates that diaspora politics affects a number of other issue areas relevant to scholars and policymakers, from public good provision to violent conflict. Camilla Arjuelas's chapter demonstrates that violent conflict in Sri Lanka has been affected by the Tamil diaspora based in the West. The chapter also compares and contrasts the approaches of the Tamil and the Sinhalese diasporas to the conflict. Meanwhile, Heather Williams's chapter demonstrates how public good provision in Mexico, such as road building and sanitation improvements, are facilitated by contributions from Mexican Americans. Finally, Laura Hammond's chapter and Terrence Lyons's chapter describe how electoral politics in Somaliland and Ethiopia, respectively, are shaped by diaporans. For example, Hammond states that many prominent officials and politicians in Somaliland are diaspora returnees, including thirty of the eighty-two members of the House of Representatives.

The book addresses timely issues and recent trends. Chapters by David Scott FitzGerald and Peter J. Spiro examine the growing acceptance since the 1990s of dual citizenship and overseas voting rights. Policymakers in many countries are considering reforms in these areas. Spiro addresses both sides of the debate over dual citizenship and overseas voting: the claim of proponents that dual citizenship helps source countries attract remittances, and the claim of critics that those who do not have to live with the consequences of their vote should not be allowed to participate in elections. The trend toward acceptance of dual citizenship and of overseas voting raises important theoretical questions for future research, such as why some countries but not others have recognized dual citizenship, and what consequences overseas voting has for governance quality.

While the book demonstrates that diaspora politics is important, several authors also describe relevant limitations to its influence. Understanding the limits of diaspora influence makes for a more complete account of diaspora politics. For example, FitzGerald and Jose Itzigsohn both argue that immigrant-sending states continue to shape diaspora politics. While issues such as overseas voting and dual citizenship complicate the idea that nations are sovereign and territorially bound, to an important extent sending states decide the form of diaspora representation and influence within their country.

Another area where the influence of diasporas is relatively limited also raises an important puzzle. Itzigsohn and FitzGerald describe how communities of Mexican and Dominican origin in the United States have pushed for overseas voting rights, and have in recent decades succeeded in attaining those rights. However, their turnout in Dominican and Mexican elections has

been very low, limiting the impact of the diaspora on electoral results. The question of why diaspora groups and their representatives push for a right they later only exercise in a limited fashion is one that future research might address.

Another area for further study is that of migration and diaspora politics in authoritarian settings. Eva Ostergaard Nielsen's chapter makes a contribution here. Her article addresses the efforts of Morocco to organize relations with the Moroccan diaspora in Spain and elsewhere. Diaspora politics in Morocco involves debates over the participation of the diaspora in elections held in Morocco–an authoritarian state. Issues of degrees of authoritarianism, or of subtypes of authoritarian states, are relevant to understanding this topic.

Poiltics from Afar has important implications for larger political science debates. Within political science, international and domestic politics are usually studied separately. Diaspora politics in general and *Politics from Afar* in particular, demonstrate that domestic and international politics are often closely linked and should be studied together. Meanwhile, diaspora politics issues like dual citizenship recognition and overseas voting help us understand larger questions about identity and the nature of the nation-state.

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