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Constitutional Democracy in Crisis? Edited by: Mark A. Graber, Sanford Levinson, Mark Tushnet, New York, Oxford University Press, 2018, 736 pp., ISBN: 9780190888985, 81£ (hardcover)

In this thick and field-defining volume, some of the well-known and established scholars of legal studies and political science try to make sense of the current state of constitutional democracy worldwide. Are constitutional democracies in crisis? If so, why? According to the Freedom House 2019 report, people in 68 countries experienced deterioration in their political rights and civil liberties in 2018, while only 50 countries reported improvements. Amidst the deteriorating political situation in many places elsewhere, Donald Trump's ascendancy to the highest elected office in the United States fuels the anxiety of scholars and political commentators concerning the current state of American constitutional democracy, which could be under its most tumultuous period since the Civil War era.

In the introduction, the editors insightfully demonstrate several features that suggest the worsening state of constitutional democracy in the United States and beyond: (1) a weakening of constitutional democratic practices, and a remarkable decline in the number of societies under constitutional democratic governance; (2) the weakening of basic foundations of constitutional democracy such as pluralism; (3) seemingly consolidated and exemplary constitutional democracies are now facing increasing political polarization; (4) the widespread global nature of these indicators of constitutional democracy in crisis.

This work constitutes 38 chapters, organized into four key parts. Written by the editors, the introductory chapter compellingly contextualizes the puzzle of whether constitutional democracies are in crisis and acknowledges that the growing public concern as to the health of our democracies emerge from a variety of causes. These include the weakening of the middle class, and the failures of our current constitutional models to address effectively the challenges brought by

global transformations such as terrorism and economic global interdependence. Acknowledging the crisis, the volume problematizes whether the challenges constitute the regular and expected vicissitudes of the constitutional democratic model over time *or* are just a mere reflection of the political left's frustrations over elected far-right leaders, who appear to be a threat to the tenacity of constitutional democratic values. Part 1 provides the conceptual, theoretical, and historical tools to understand constitutional democracy since its prominent emergence in the aftermath of the Second World War. Part 2 includes particular country case studies of a wide range of constitutional democracies, including the United States, countries of the European Union, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Venezuela, and India, among many others. Part 3, meanwhile, focuses on how the state of constitutional democracy is influenced by a variety of global transformative factors such as climate change, religious fundamentalism, economic inequality, terrorism, immigration, populism, and racism, among others. To conclude the volume, in Part 4, each editor offers their own independent assessment of the state of constitutional democracy in separate chapters.

The core argument of the volume states that constitutional democracies are experiencing a crisis, as demonstrated by the following features: weakening of political rights globally; failure to generate equitably economic prosperity; increasing demands of democratic populations to reject inclusiveness; and the emergence of right-wing antagonism for independent judicial systems. Moreover, as the country case studies suggest, the essays indicate that domestic political factors primarily have facilitated the crisis of national constitutional democracies, rather than external variables.

While all of the chapters are well-written, several essays stand out. In addition to the introduction, Zachary Elkins' chapter on the history of constitutional crises as well as the chapter from Tom Ginsburg and Aziz Huq on the decline of constitutional liberal democracies provide some useful theoretical insights in comparing the defects of constitutional orders. The chapter on religion (Ran Hirschl and Ayelet Shachar) and the chapter on economic inequality (Ganesh Sitaraman) emphasize in a compelling manner how social identities and material distributive justice influence the stability of constitutional democracies. Indeed, all of the essays are written in an accessible manner that is likely to reach non-academic readers, who are curious about the causes and consequences of the decline in the quality of constitutional democratic orders.

However, the volume would have benefitted from a more comprehensive and representative coverage of country case studies of constitutional democracies. While there are full chapters devoted to countries from various regions, especially Western countries, there are only two chapters that focus on Asia: one chapter deals with India, while the other chapter concentrates on the region as a whole.

With approximately 60% of the world's human population based in Asia, it is unfortunate that there was no in-depth analysis of specific constitutional orders in the region except India. Similarly, the quality of the debate could have been strengthened by a more diverse roster of chapter contributors, such as in terms of gender and geographical diversity, considering that among its 44 contributors there were only 9 women and 4 scholars from an institution in the Global South.

These critiques notwithstanding, this edited volume is an informative, insightful, and comprehensive reference tool for those seeking to understand the conditions, causes, and consequences of the contemporary decline in many constitutional democratic orders worldwide. It makes a valuable contribution to the multidisciplinary scholarship in democratization, legal theory, and comparative politics, particularly with its theoretical tools and empirical assessments that improve our understanding of the current defects of democratic regimes.

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