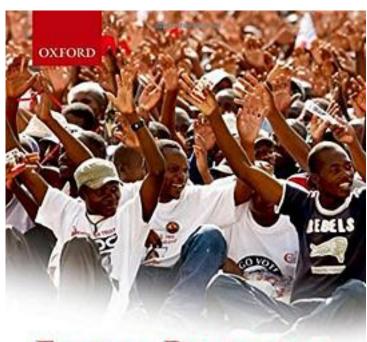
## From Protest to Parties



# FROM PROTEST TO PARTIES

Party-Building & Democratization in Africa

## Adrienne LeBas

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#### Product Description

Why do strong opposition party organizations emerge in some democratizing countries, while parties in others remain weak or fragmented? Does polarization undermine democratization, or might it play an important role in party-building?

From Protest to Parties examines differences in opposition party strength in hybrid regimes in Africa. These political systems, which mix democratic and authoritarian characteristics, are a novel terrain in which to study party formation and organizational development. In order to understand why some parties are able to transcend ethnic cleavages, LeBas points to differences in past patterns of authoritarian rule. Where authoritarian states relied on alliances with corporate actors, notably organized labor, they unintentionally armed their allies, providing them with structures and resources that could later be used to mobilize large constituencies and effectively challenge the state. From Protest to Parties also suggests that conflict can help build the institutions necessary for democracy just as surely as it can endanger them. Opposition parties are more likely to maintain their organizational cohesion and the commitment of activists when they use strategies and appeals that escalate conflict and re-orient social boundaries around the lines of partisan affiliation. Polarization forges stronger parties, but it also increases the likelihood of violence and authoritarian retrenchment.

From Protest to Parties draws upon an in-depth analysis of three countries in Anglophone Africa: Zimbabwe, Zambia and Kenya. Though these countries share similar institutions and electoral rules, opposition party development takes a different route in each. In addition to providing a unique window into the politics of mobilization and protest in closed political regimes, the book sheds light on how the choices of political elites affect organizational development.

#### About the Author

Adrienne LeBas is an Assistant Professor of Government at the School of Public Affairs in American University. She previously taught at Michigan State University and was a Postdoctoral Prize Research Fellow at Nuffield College, Oxford University. Her current work examines popular responses to political violence in Kenya.

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