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which represents a 'ticking time bomb' (chapter 4) and the threat of a renewed revolt by the Shi'ite minority (chapter 9).

Since Saudi Arabia remains an enigmatic state, so does its politics, which is the basis which Aarts and Roelants use on which to posit their predictions or 'scenarios'. One scenario is 'social explosion', especially as low oil prices could threaten the rentier state dynamics. Another posits 'the king's dilemma', in which any possible reforms might lead to un-ending demands for more. The two other scenarios are 'severe repression' by the state supported by strong and even popular religious institutions, which have maintained an historic alliance with the rulers since the eighteenth century (chapters 2 and 12), and 'total implosion', in which the state would disintegrate geographically, in the style of Syria. These scenarios are all bleak, but their variability, based on a wealth of information and the lively narrative of first-hand interviews, keeps them within the bounds of plausibility. Nevertheless, this practical broadness still lacks a theoretical conceptualisation which could have better situated these 'ingredients', belonging to disciplines as different as political economy, IR, education and feminism.

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The Arab Spring: Pathways of Repression and Reform by Jason Brownlee, Tarek Masoud and Andrew Reynolds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. 324pp., £19.99 (p/b), ISBN 9780199660070

Jason Brownlee, Tarek Masoud and Andrew Reynolds' text provides a timely reflection on the recent Arab Spring uprisings, which began with the ousting of Tunisian autocratic Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali on 14 January 2011. However, rather than offering another descriptive account of recent events that have swept the Middle East and North Africa, Brownlee et al. seek to situate recent developments in a broader comparative framework. The authors effectively present the Arab Spring against the historical backdrop of other waves of political change, such as the

collapse of single-party communist rule in Central and Eastern Europe. In doing this, they point out that, contrary to popular perception, 'most Arab countries did not witness extraordinary social upheaval' (p. 18), and comparatively, Arab regimes proved extraordinarily resilient to the wave of popular protest that swept the region in the aftermath of Ben Ali's fall.

However, the aim of this text is not to provide a historical context for the Arab Spring, but instead the authors aim to explain the variation in outcome in terms of leadership change, regime continuity and regime breakdown. Through six chapters, the first of which is a chapter on 'Theorizing the Arab Spring', the authors provide a strong case for explaining 'quiescence rather than rebellion' that posits that most regimes were able to make use of reserves of loyalty and repressive capacity effectively to prevent prospective challengers from mounting challenges to their rule (p. 213). Moreover, the authors go on to argue that the most resilient regimes were those that held oil wealth (p. 214). Of course, Libya constitutes an outlier to this finding; however, the authors argue that Libya's case can be explained through the external intervention that came in the form of a sustained bombing campaign (p. 214).

Indeed, it is this text's situation of the Arab Spring in the broader context of comparativist literature that aims to explain democratic transitions and authoritarian resilience that makes it essential reading for students and scholars of comparative politics who are seeking to make sense of the political transformations in the Middle East and North Africa. This work is both empirically strong and theoretically informed, characteristics which set this book apart from much of the existing scattered literature on the Arab Spring.

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The Libyan Revolution and Its Aftermath by Peter Cole and Brian McQuinn (eds). London: C Hurst & Co, 2014. 320pp., £30.00 (h/b), ISBN 9781849043090

Peter Cole and Brian McQuinn's edited volume, *The Libyan Revolution and Its Aftermath*, is an authoritative account of the Libyan revolution and post-revolutionary transition that is without a doubt essential reading for those with an interest in state-building, humanitarian intervention and the politics of the post-Arab Spring in the Middle East and North Africa. Indeed, many of the themes explored in this volume's 14 chapters provide deep empirical insights into Libya, but also important lessons for future conflict interventions.

With chapters authored by a mix of practitioners and scholars, readers will find within this volume rich descriptive contributions that chronicle Libya's transition while at the same time imparting broader lessons on the consequences of intervention. To be sure, Libya in the aftermath of NATO's air campaign in 2011, which was triggered by a civil war that pitted Gaddafi regime loyalists against a disparate set of armed groups, was to be a testing ground for a new form of post-conflict intervention that was to see the international community attempt to guide Libya's political transition with a minimal foreign presence on the ground. As this volume's chapters illustrate, after 42 years of rule under Muammar Gaddafi, Libya was far from being a blank canvas upon which new state institutions could be built. Libya was a vast country in which numerous groups, based on either local, regional or tribal affiliation or ideological affinities, sought to fill the vacuum in governance. In addition, post-Gaddafi Libya was also confronted by deep divisions among revolutionaries, who proved unable to reconcile discordant perspectives on the direction of Libya's transition.

Particularly illustrative of this is Peter Bartu's contribution that explores the emergence of the National Transitional Council, which was quickly recognised by Western powers at the outset of the Libyan civil war. Another example of these divisions highlighted in this volume is Libya's divisive transitional justice process, which Marieke Wierda's contribution discusses and which, according to Wierda, quickly descended into a purge. Not only does this volume highlight many of the challenges faced by locals and internationals in the aftermath of the collapse of the Gaddafi regime, but the chapters on Libya's Islamists

and regionalism offer an important glimpse into Libyan politics that cannot be found elsewhere. In sum, contributions such as these make Cole and McQuinn's edited volume the most important and authoritative work published on post-Gaddafi Libya to date.

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**Broadcasting the End of Apartheid:
Live Television and the Birth of a New
South Africa** by **Martha Evans**. London: I.B.
Tauris & Co, 2014. 319pp., £62.00 (h/b), ISBN
9781780768625

Broadcasting the End of Apartheid: Live Television and the Birth of a New South Africa is an intriguing account of the role played by televised global media events within twentieth century South African history. Martha Evans' research seeks to use Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz' concept of 'media events theory' to highlight that just as the print media played a critical role in cementing Afrikaner nationalism pre-apartheid, live television played as crucial a role in the formation of South Africa's national identity in the post-apartheid era. One of the most noteworthy aspects of Evans' research is her contention that live television broadcasting played an important and symbolic role in South Africa's transition to democracy between 1990 and 1994. More specifically, her contention that the live coverage of disasters like the Boipatong and Bisho massacres in 1992 played a pivotal role in 'inflating the significance' (p. 163) of such events is one which is particularly convincing. Given that 1990 to 1994 is regarded as one of the most violent periods in South Africa's history, Evans' analysis sheds light on why those events are remembered above others in the historical narrative of the transition.

Evans' research is presented in a well-structured format with each of the six chapters complemented by a strong sub-conclusion, bringing each to a neat close. Despite a detailed discussion of media events theory in