



Democratic Institution Performance: Research and Policy Perspectives

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How do nations make successful transitions to democracies? Our understanding of how democracy functions?and under what circumstances it can be consolidated and strengthened?remains highly uneven. Recent events underscore the critical importance of expanding our understanding of democratic institutions and operations. Here McMahon and his distinguished contributors demonstrate how the dynamic process of democratization is shaped by the specific contexts in which it occurs; how the internal community plays a key role in the development of democracy; and how the ability to understand democratization requires both internal and external perspectives.

The contributors seek to improve the definitions of what constitutes a democracy and to determine how the effectiveness of democratic institutions might best be judged in order to better serve the analysis of and policy approaches to building democratic institutions. With fewer overtly authoritarian states in the post-Cold War world, a wealth of raw information and experience has begun to accumulate. Our understanding of democratic institutional performance requires us to look closely at the performance of the institutions themselves. The book contains chapters on public opinion, civil society, domestic institutions of governance, elections, globalization, international standards of democratic development, international assistance and academic research. A concluding chapter summarizes what democratization processes can teach us about democracy in a broader context.



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