

the JCP lay, according to Linkhoeva's observation, in their differing positions on Japan's role in the international proletarian revolution. After the Shanghai massacre in April 1927, the JCP's stubborn domestic line ultimately clashed with the 1927 Comintern Thesis on Japan, in which Bukharin asked for the re-establishment and strengthening of the JCP to fight against bourgeois democrats for the sake of the Chinese revolution. At this point, Yamakawa Hitoshi, Arahata Kanson, and some other early communists left the JCP. Their rejection of the Comintern's assessment of Japan's developmental stage and revolutionary goal marked the end of an era in which conflicts between the JCP and the Comintern came chiefly from their different interpretations of theories of revolution.

Linkhoeva insightfully highlights the determining role of the Chinese revolution in the twists and turns of the Comintern's engagement with the Japanese left. However, she is oblivious to her reader's need for a basic factual introduction to the Comintern's manoeuvres in the First United Front between the nationalists and communists in China. In addition, in the same context, the famous debate over the Asiatic mode of production (1927–1931) sparked by the failure of the Chinese revolution surprisingly finds no mention in the book. In 1931, this debate was brought to an end by a highly political solution, which rejected any geohistorical peculiarities of the Orient and declared the unilinear developmental path to be authoritative doctrine. The restated official world historical view, later articulated in Stalin's *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* (1938), had not only determined the Japanese left's historiography on China, it even cast a long shadow over Japan's historical writing in general in the postwar era. In spite of these flaws, Linkhoeva's book is a welcome contribution that goes beyond the traditional genre of the history of social movements. By providing us with a vivid and multi-faceted picture of Japan's highly diverse response to the 1917 revolution, this volume successfully brings to light the entanglements and interactions of various political factions in the political chorus of post-World-War-I Japan.

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ALIGMAGHAM, POUYA. *Contesting the Iranian Revolution. The Green Uprisings*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2020. xvii, 315 pp. Ill. £74.99. (Paper: £24.99; E-book: \$26.00.)

Pouya Alimagham's monograph is a welcome addition to the growing number of books and articles dedicated to the so-called Green Movement of Iran. The volume focuses on the slogans and mobilization strategies utilized by the protesters in 2009, discussing how they have built on the existing local activist knowledge dating back to the revolutionary movement of 1978–1979, yet reappropriating and subverting it – contesting the revolution, as the title reads.

Examining an impressive set of online material and documents, the author demonstrates how relevant the local history of activism is to subsequent opposition movements, even

when the protesters are ideologically distant, if not opposed. The Green Movement followed the re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the presidency of Iran in 2009. The protesters accused the regime of electoral fraud, and for several months engaged in street actions that the regime suppressed with violence. Dominated by a liberal ethos and criticizing the institutional and political system resulting from the 1979 revolution, the Green Movement reworded slogans and reutilized patterns of mobilization inherited from the late 1970s, when diverse political orientations existed but ultimately converged on Khomeinism as the centre of ideological gravity of the revolutionary movement.

While the empirical material discussed in the book is rich and extremely engaging, the author could have pushed his analysis further to theorize around some issues that, although mentioned, remain somewhat unresolved. For instance, the reader might be left with questions about the development and radicalization of opposition movements in restrictive environments and the implications of such activism for the dominant ideological superstructures of government. Linked to these issues are questions about whether the Green Movement acted within the larger political tradition born out of the revolution or outside of it; and if its nature was revolutionary or not. Was the goal of the Green Movement to provoke, if not lead, a regime change? Or was it a protest movement whose goal was to oust Ahmadinejad from power and enforce a new presidential election?

In my own work on political participation in Iran, which included an analysis of the activist milieu in the lead-up to the 2009 election as well as the consequences of the repression of 2009–2010 on the same environment, I have emphasized how, under specific circumstances, activists have radicalized and how the voices campaigning for a radical change in Iran strengthened their appeal between the late 1990s and the late 2000s. But the question of whether the Green Movement demanded a “simple” recounting of the votes or, taking a bolder stand, utilized the electoral fraud to push for a more radical change has no clear-cut answer. Alimaghham’s analysis, too, avoids answering the question, although he leaves it lingering, and stresses the importance of time in determining the demands of the Green Movement. It lasted for several months, and radicalized with time. It follows that it is difficult to provide a definitive answer to the question about the “nature” and the “real” demands of the Green Movement. The author argues that, while located within the political history of the revolution, the Green Movement was revolutionary in how it related to the values and symbols inherited from the revolution. It subverted the language of the revolution.

Disciplinarily, the book is at the junction of several debates in history, social movements studies, and political theory. In six chapters, the author demonstrates how the revolution and its symbolism – perpetuated by the Islamic Republic and pivoted around the values of resistance and defiance of the “arrogance of the powerful” – unintentionally educated the post-revolutionary generations to hold a critical stance against the very Islamic Republic. The author appears to question how it was not to be expected that the Iranian youth and population at large would restlessly challenge the powerfully arrogant political authorities, which often rely on state violence to rule the country.

In the first two chapters, Alimaghham discusses the book’s theoretical framework, the methodological challenges associated with gathering material about the Green Movement, and the historical trajectory leading to the formation of the protest movement in 2009. These chapters demonstrate an excellent command of mastering and merging different

strands of studies, from social movement studies to post-Islamism. Methodologically, the author has relied on sources available on the internet. This has caused two fundamental challenges: every video and single item had to be cross-verified to validate its veracity and had to be downloaded and safely stored, given its temporary existence on the web because of state censorship. The book, however, does not discuss methods, although the reader might have wanted to know more about the circulation and the chains of diffusion of online material in such agitated times of political contention.

Chapters Three, Four, and Five are the core of the analysis and discuss how the revolutionary legacy was reappropriated by the protesters, who revitalized the strategies of contention that led to the collapse of the Pahlavi monarchy in 1979 and the instauration of the Islamic Republic in 1980. The chapters examine how potent symbols of resistance, such as Palestine, were utilized in 1979 and in 2009, as well as how religious traditions, such as death date anniversaries, and festivities were turned into occasions for street protests in 1978–1979 and in 2009. The chapters highlight both the similarities and differences between such events of contention in 1978–1979 and in 2009. Alimaghani explains that, in 2009, the lack of a clear leadership and the brutal and immediate response of the regime constitute salient differences that led to dramatically different outcomes, as the 2009 movement was reduced to silence.

Considering that it did not achieve the objective of dethroning Ahmadinejad and enforcing a new presidential election, did the Green Movement fail? Contrary to received wisdom, the concluding chapter complicates this “failure narrative”. The chapter indeed emphasizes that the movement posed a significant challenge to the legitimacy of the Islamic Republic, because it highlighted the similitude between the regime and the “arrogant powerful” that the regime itself discursively constructs as its opposite. In spite of this blow against the regime’s legitimacy, however, the chapter shows that the strength of the Islamic Republic runs much deeper in society than did the strength and resources available to the pre-revolutionary monarchy, explaining why the Green Movement did not bring about a tangible change in national policies or regime. Nevertheless, it still represents a crucial reference for protests in Iran. The fundamental questions that the Green Movement posed to the regime (about its accountability and legitimacy) are repeatedly re-presented to the elites by the protesters, who cyclically take to the street in Iran. The author argues that later mobilizations in Iran, such as those taking place in 2017–2018, and even the so-called Arab Spring have a direct connection with the Green Movement. As for the former, Alimaghani demonstrates that both cycles of protests in Iran resonate with each other because both challenged the very legitimacy of the post-revolutionary regime. As for the latter, Alimaghani demonstrates that a similar political imagination inspired both the Green Movement and the Arab Spring. As such, the book shows that the Green Movement was successful in consolidating a genealogy of dissent within Iran and beyond, and that understanding the Green Movement is relevant to understanding the contemporary protest movements well beyond the boundaries of Iran.

Alimaghani’s volume is relevant to all scholars engaged in the analysis of contentious politics in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as beyond, and of social movements developing under neoliberalism. As we witness the proliferation of protest movements in the Global North and South, all committed to defying neoliberalism to a varying degree, the author engages in an analysis that brings together the local histories of activism and their specific symbols, with the global resonance they have. This book is necessary

reading for those in the fields of sociology and history, and demonstrates how area studies can contribute to advance disciplinary conversations well beyond their immediate geographical focus.

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ROMERO SALVADÓ, FRANCISCO J., *¿Quién mató a Eduardo Dato? Comedia política y tragedia social en España, 1892–1921*. Editorial Comares. Granada 2020. xv + 444 pp. Ill. €33.00.

ROMERO SALVADÓ, FRANCISCO J., *Political Comedy and Social Tragedy: Spain, a Laboratory of Social Conflict, 1892–1921*. Sussex Academic Press. Brighton 2020. xxiii + 340 pp. Ill. £34.95.

The book under review analyses a crucial period (1892–1921) of Spain's Restoration monarchy (1875–1923), a fascinating three decades punctuated by political instability, colonial war, nationalist discontent, sabre-rattling within the armed forces, terrorism, and social violence. Of these elements, the central axis of the book, as suggested by the title, consists of the interplay between elite politics and protest from below, which had its epicentre in Barcelona. Charting the struggle of elites to preserve oligarchic privilege as the age of mass politics dawned across Europe, the author makes a compelling case that there was a growing inevitability in the demise of the Restoration, even if, as he demonstrates, its capacity for survival was far from insignificant. Romero's study is shaped by the assassinations of two prominent politicians and prime ministers – Antonio Cánovas del Castillo (1897), the co-architect of the Restoration model, and Eduardo Dato (1921), its most fierce defender in the years of its final crisis after 1917. As Romero explains with aplomb, the fate of both men was sealed by their complicity in state repression. If Cánovas helped mould the Restoration, along with its repressive capacity, Dato can be seen more as its gravedigger: notwithstanding his liberal aura, his repeated dalliances with the military both undermined civil politics and aroused political aspirations inside the officers' corps. With a system "mired in fraud" and increasingly using repression as its everyday currency, Romero maintains that Dato's assassination in 1921 represented the "twilight of the political comedy" – indeed, just two years later a military coup by an emboldened army buried the Restoration.

This prequel to the author's important research monographs on Spain's political crisis during and after World War I is welcome. The first, which addressed the impact of World War I on Spanish political life, appeared in the 1990s, and was followed, in the 2000s, by a major analysis of the post-war crisis of the liberal system during 1918–1923. A measure of the expectation surrounding this study is that, during pandemic, it appeared in two languages in the space of a few months. This is unsurprising, since the hallmarks of Romero's work on the Restoration are evident in this new tome: the sharp analysis of high politics, the