

The Emergence and Revival of Charismatic Movements

Political movements founded by charismatic leaders are often considered ephemeral. Existing literature argues that because they rest on unmediated, emotional attachments between leaders and followers, these movements either fade quickly after their leaders disappear or transform into routinized parties. Yet, charismatic movements around the world have proven surprisingly resilient and have retained their personalistic core. Focusing on Argentine Peronism and Venezuelan Chavismo, this book investigates the nature and trajectory of charismatic movements from the perspectives of both leaders and followers. Using interviews, focus groups, and survey experiments, Caitlin Andrews-Lee reveals that charismatic movements can emerge, survive, and become politically revived by sustaining – not discarding – their personalistic character. Followers' charismatic attachments to the movement founder can develop into an enduring, deeply affective political identity that successors can reactivate under certain conditions by portraying themselves as symbolic reincarnations of the founder. Consequently, charismatic movements can have lasting, deleterious effects on democracy. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

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Argentine Peronism and Venezuelan Chavismo

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