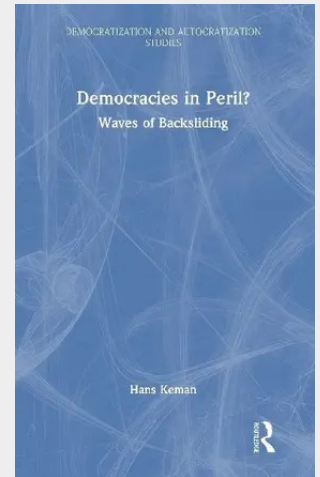


Democracies in Peril?

Waves of Backsliding

This insightful text rigorously examines and accounts for contemporary developments – and crucially a reversal of “democraticness” – in democratic polities and related political processes comparing 38 democracies across the world. The focus is on contemporary developments and recent volatile levels of democraticness. *Democracies in Peril?* introduces theoretical backgrounds of what makes democracy tick and scrutinises empirical trends and development in “democraticness” in an accessible manner. It explores what “democracy” as a political regime implies and how the liberal democratic model developed, as well as examining the present state of affairs in democracies, the challenges democracies encounter and the perils of democracy as a legitimate system of governance in the 21st century. The book provides a “systemic” approach to adjudicate the effects of this assumed reversal in democratisation in terms of popular preferences, party behaviour, institutional architecture and policy performance. The effects of public policy formation and the role of the state on actual democratic performance are also analysed. Finally, case studies on the Covid pandemic and the development of social welfare demonstrate the complex relationship between government capacities – under pressure – and the quality of democracy, approaching the question: How do 38 democratic states cope with societal problems, populist tendencies and a fast-changing world without degrading their institutional quality and legitimacy? This text will be of key interest to students, scholars, journalists and interested readers of comparative politics, democratisation, public administration, political economy, constitutional law and the social sciences in general.

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