

The chapter entitled “Connecting Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice” sets out recommendations for future international peacekeeping missions. Specifically, Rae calls for careful planning during each sequence of a peace operation: 1) peace negotiations, 2) predeployment planning, 3) establishment of security, 4) postconflict peacebuilding, and 5) departure. This chapter is short but rich in recommendations, though the one overarching suggestion is that “the United Nations should encourage less elitism and more discipline among its staff and peacekeepers, including being more open and inclusive toward the local population” (p. 221).

Rae frames his analysis on three conceptually distinct levels: international, state and society, and individual (p. 3). A reader may criticize the book for collapsing state and society as one level when, in fact, they ought to be theoretically separated (thus providing analytical leverage for studying relations between the two). Nevertheless, the book shows a keen awareness of state–society dynamics that addresses these concerns.

Throughout, Rae focuses on the microdynamics of relations between international and domestic participants and institutions. His sensitivity to local actors and his balanced account make this a valuable contribution to our understanding of UN peacekeeping missions. *Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice in East Timor* provides an empirically nuanced analysis of Timor that will interest area specialists, scholars working on transitional justice and peace building, and policymakers wanting more than a summary of “lessons learned” on Timor.

The Quality of Democracy in Eastern Europe: Public Preferences and Policy Reforms. By Andrew Roberts. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 239p. \$80.00. doi:10.1017/S1537592710001568

— Carsten Q. Schneider, *Central European University and Harvard University*

Is the quality of democracies in Eastern Europe really as bad as most people—both citizens in and experts on those countries—seem to believe? After the analysis of an impressive range of empirical sources using different methodological approaches, the answer of this nicely written book is a straightforward no.

Andrew Roberts spends considerable amount of energy and space at the beginning in developing his definition of the quality of democracy (QoD). This is not an easy task. Over the last decade, the use of this term has increased almost exponentially, which, no doubt, has been to the detriment of conceptual clarity and the term’s inner consistency. The author identifies the institutionalized potential for citizens to influence policies as the defining characteristic that sets democracies apart from any other form of political regime. QoD, then, is the degree to which this de jure secured potential is de facto realized by citi-

zens and rulers. In other words, in an attempt to make the concept of QoD analytically more rigorous and useful, he strips it of its many meanings and dimensions and defines it as the extent to which citizens rule.

According to Roberts, the strengths of popular control over democratically elected policymakers can be measured by looking at three main linkages. “Electoral accountability” is the possibility of citizens to punish bad and to reward good performance in office on election day. “Mandate responsiveness” is the possibility of voters “to choose future policy directions” on election day (p. 37). The third linkage is “policy responsiveness” and refers to the degree to which rulers do what the public desires with respect to specific policy issues. For the author, this link is “the hallmark trait of democratic quality because if the people are really ruling then policy should follow their preferences” (p. 91).

In Chapters 3–5, these three linkages are analyzed separately in the 10 new European Union members in Eastern Europe during the first 15 years of democratic rule. On a few occasions, comparisons to Latin American–established democracies are performed. In Chapters 6 and 7, structured, focused comparisons are used to analyze pension and housing reforms in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in the 1990s in order to get a more nuanced understanding of how policy responsiveness played out for some of the most important reform issues in these countries. Chapter 8 is dedicated to explaining the surprisingly high levels of QoD in Eastern Europe. The concluding Chapter 9 lists a number of caveats, responds to several objections one might have to Roberts’s concepts and findings, and draws attention to avenues for future research.

Having created a concept that is theoretically defensible and empirically manageable, the author succeeds in providing convincing evidence that QoD, at least as defined in this book, is much higher in Central Europe than is commonly believed. Electoral accountability seems to work well. Citizens in Eastern European democracies do tend to punish badly performing rulers, where performance is measured in terms of unemployment, growth, and inflation rates. Mandate responsiveness, in contrast, is less well developed in Eastern Europe. The evidence provided is twofold. First, party positions in these countries lack clarity, thus rendering it difficult for citizens to determine future policies by voting for specific parties. Second, once in power, campaign promises are usually not pursued with rigor. Policy responsiveness, in turn, is surprisingly strong. Both the large- and small-n analyses indicate that policymakers in Eastern European democracies do follow the opinion of the median voter. In his comparative case studies of pension and housing reforms in three countries, the author provides compelling evidence that, indeed, policymakers seem not only to be well informed about public opinion on important reform projects but also to go

through considerable pain in pleasing and appeasing the public. On the basis of detailed case analyses, the author identifies different types of policy responsiveness, such as strong and weak public-initiated, elite-initiated, elite-manipulated, and, to some extent, blame-avoidance politics (p. 190 f.).

One of the major achievements of this book consists in proposing a well-argued concept of QoD that does not fall victim to one of the two extremes currently dominating this field of research. It is not oversimplistic like those approaches in which definitions of QoD are indistinguishable from definitions of democracy per se and where this concept is simply measured with well-known democracy indicators such as Freedom House. Nor is it overcomplex like those approaches that subsume under QoD virtually all the good things that one could wish for in a democratic political regime. Those concepts of QoD regularly include dozens of dimensions and literally hundreds of indicators, thus radically reducing their practical usefulness and analytic rigor, at least for comparative social scientists.

The author's findings are also grist for the mills of those who argue that it is time to stop treating democracies in Eastern Europe as special cases of young democracies and, instead, to include them more frequently in comparative studies of "normal" democracies.

By radically reducing the concept of QoD, separating it from potentially desirable goals such as good governance, substantive representation of citizens, or minority rights, Roberts also provides a perspective from which one is able to ask the potentially counterintuitive question of whether high QoD is really always desirable. If citizens demand policies that are bad for them or for minorities, or both, and if policymakers are responsive to these demands, then high QoD is achieved at the cost of other crucial societal goals. His work thus opens important questions for further research, such as how and why "good" citizens exist and what the empirical relationship between QoD and other normative goal aspirations are.

One of the puzzles this book grapples with is the discrepancy between the widespread dim assessments of QoD in Eastern Europe and the author's own experience and findings. In the end, this discrepancy might not be so puzzling. Those who claim that QoD in Eastern Europe is low do not say that politicians are not listening to the public. Quite the contrary! For some, it is exactly this attitude of politicians trying to do what opinion polls suggest, rather than following their promises and convictions, that is interpreted as political weakness, if not populism, and that worries observers.

Strictly speaking, the book does not allow for a straightforward answer of its main question of whether QoD in Central Europe is strong or not. This is a direct consequence of several omissions in the author's way of forming and measuring the QoD concept. The first is the lack of an absolute standard against which QoD could be assessed.

The book, thus, provides values for QoD on a scale whose endpoints are unknown. This is partly due to the fact that the author ultimately shies away from making suggestions on how to either aggregate the evidence on the three linkages into an overall QoD score or to create a typology of QoD. Leaving the linkages unrelated implies that he can only assess qualities, and not *the* quality, of democracy. The author is well aware of this lack of integration, and potential trade-offs between linkages are tentatively discussed with the claim that only further empirical research can answer whether and where such trade-offs exist. Aggregation rules and the weighing of dimensions, however, should be the first and foremost theoretical tasks.

This lack of a theoretically-derived absolute standard could be somewhat mitigated by providing empirical reference points through more systematic comparisons of cases, both within and across regions. Without knowing more about countries in other world regions, it is difficult to tell whether, indeed, the findings for Eastern Europe are surprising or whether, instead, they simply show what is going on in any democracy almost by default. For the in-depth analyses, cases from the region could have been selected in a more purposeful manner. Rather than comparing three countries and policy areas where all of the variation remains well within the realm of successful linkages, the statistical analysis could have been used to identify outliers and to then subject some cases of failed linkages to an in-depth analysis. In fact, the absence of any clear empirical example of failed linkages, especially of failed policy responsiveness as the most important of them, somewhat creates the impression that, no matter what, politicians always listen to the public, even when they employ blame-avoidance tactics in order to implement unpopular policies, a tactic the author considers as a "middle ground of responsiveness" (p. 113). This makes one wonder whether in a democracy the policy responsiveness linkage can fail at all, that is, whether democratically elected rulers are ever entirely agnostic about public demands. If they are not, Roberts's empirical evidence of Eastern Europe rulers listening to the public appears to be much less impressive and might not count so much as an indicator of surprisingly high QoD.

Finally, the author's valuable contribution of having turned QoD into a concept amenable to empirical comparative research also has its flip side. By deviating quite radically from the mainstream concepts of QoD, he does not make clear how his book will help to integrate all the other issues that concern so many scholars of QoD and citizens in democracies. In other words, the question is how issues such as corruption, minority protection, populism, clientelism, xenophobia, and so on could possibly fit into the author's framework. The conceptual conundrum seems quite severe because the presence of some of those clearly negative issues would actually raise QoD as defined in this book. For instance, clientelism and

populism can be useful tools that allow rulers to manufacture citizens' demands for exactly those policies that the rulers prefer. Evidence that, in fact, elites regularly manipulate public opinion—and many believe that they certainly do—would cast serious doubts on the idea of using “listening to the public” as an indicator of QoD. Or, if the public is xenophobic, QoD would go up as rulers implement laws that discriminate against minorities or foreigners. Putting so much emphasis on following the will of the majority obviously raises the question of what one is supposed to do with the legitimate and often high-intensity, nonnegotiable policy preferences of structural minorities. Treating the “people” as a uniform group of citizens with simple preference structures is a particularly strong assumption, especially in Eastern Europe, a region riddled with severe and highly politicized minority issues, but probably also for any democracy.

Declaring majority rule as the only principle of democracy might allow for an elegant and analytically more useful definition of QoD. It comes at the cost, however, of leaving out long-standing debates on what else democracy can and should be by definition. As the author argues, not all extensions of the notion of QoD necessarily commit the fallacy of including either causes or consequences of democracy in the concept of QoD. According to democratic theorists, some of them, such as the rule of law, belong to the very essence of democracy just the same as majority rule does. The trick of achieving high QoD, it seems, is to find the right balances (plural) between these conflicting principles of democracy, rather than giving prevalence to one over the others.

It might thus seem that we are back to square one where QoD is unavoidably a complex multidimensional concept that, because of its nature, is intractable in comparative research. After reading *The Quality of Democracy in Eastern Europe*, however, we are not. The author deserves applause for pushing the debate on QoD forward and for being motivated to think about this topic in new and fruitful ways. His fine book is a must-read for everybody concerned about the present state of democracies—young and old alike.

States Without Nations: Citizenship for Mortals.

By Jacqueline Stevens. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

384 p. \$35.00.

doi:10.1017/S153759271000157X

— Elizabeth F. Cohen, *Syracuse University*

Jacqueline Stevens sets a dramatic stage for her new book by pointing out that state-sponsored violence is, in statistical terms, a public health crisis. By framing her argument in terms of public health, she asserts that people's ethnic, national, racial, or religious identity predisposes them to state-sponsored violence in much the same way as childhood obesity predisposes a person to adult diabetes. The goal of this book is to identify the sources of nation-

state violence and argue strenuously for their elimination. As the public health analogy illustrates, Stevens challenges assumptions about citizenship so deeply held that it is difficult to keep oneself from reverting to them. Because of this, *States Without Nations* advances discussions about citizenship and political power much more so than the average monograph in political science.

Stevens prefaces her proposition for transcending nation-state sponsored violence with the conclusion of her preceding book, *Reproducing the State* (1999), which argued that the legal family is a fiction instantiated by nation-states in order to allow them to make equally artificial claims to naturalness. As the legal family is naturalized, its hereditary relationships work in concert with rules of birthright citizenship (either *jus sanguinis* or *jus soli*) to automatically ensure nation-states of perpetually stable “natural-born” populations. The quality of naturalness also justifies demanding individuals' loyalty to the nation even when such loyalty requires that they give their lives over to it.

In addition to its false claims of naturalness, the specific form of family that nation-states have invented embodies gender biases. Following Freud, Stevens argues that these biases exist to assuage male pregnancy and birth envy. Pregnancy and birth guarantee women a connection to life beyond the boundaries of their own mortality that men lack. Stevens asserts that men have used gendered family law and violence, both of which are integral to the history of the nation-state, to compensate for their fears of mortality. In making these arguments she draws directly on Freud and Simone de Beauvoir and, indirectly, on Carole Pateman. Her contemporary fellow travelers include Joseph Carens and Ayelet Shachar, the latter of whom also argues against birthright citizenship, though not the abolition of the nation-state, as Stevens notes.

Stevens supports the disempowerment of groups whose anxieties about their own mortality prompt them to preempt one vision of death (their own) with nationalist politics that cause other kinds of death. She argues that we need to denaturalize the legal family by exposing its psycho-social political origins, in the process delegitimizing the family's most virulent political analog, the nation itself. She reasons that by accepting the artificiality of legally constructed families, states will be empowered to eliminate laws of inheritance and to appropriate the property of the deceased. Material property that no longer passes intergenerationally can be redistributed to meet the basic needs of the world's population. The author also intends for states to abolish the transfer of their most valuable political capital, citizenship, from parents to children. This requires eliminating birthright citizenship rules, replacing legally endorsed marriages with parenting contracts, and invalidating private land rights.

Anyone who has followed Stevens's courageous public challenges to US Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention and deportation practices will be unsurprised