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Democracy in divided societies: Electoral engineering for conflict management

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a decline in civic activism, and a breakdown of the social-support mechanisms that had been one of the strengths of the Soviet system.

The blame for this turn of events is placed primarily on Yeltsin and his chief political and economic advisers. Western leaders, the International Monetary Fund, and particularly Western economists are also accused of encouraging Russian leaders to follow an inhumane set of policies. The overall reform strategy, generally in line with what has come to be known as the Washington Consensus or "shock therapy," emphasized monetarist approaches, price deregulation, rapid privatization of industry, and the end of government-provided subsidies and social safety nets. One of the most important contributions of the book is its explication of the behind-the-scenes political maneuvering that produced the reform strategy. Especially useful are the insights on the various protoparties and political movements that struggled to establish a political foothold in the chaotic developments of the period. Reddaway and Glinski coin the term "market bolshevism" to describe the political mindset of the winners—the political figures such as Anatoly Chubais who implemented shock therapy—a disregard for public opinion and a manipulative approach that manufactured mass support only when absolutely necessary, as during Yeltsin's bid for reelection in 1996.

This is a book that provides an overabundance of detail, and almost no evidence relevant to its main thesis is overlooked. Some of the evidence that contradicts the thesis is perhaps dismissed too readily, however. The authors view the period of shock therapy as having lasted seven years, rejecting arguments by reform defenders that the Yeltsin government quickly backtracked and that compromises made because of political weakness undermined the foundations of many of the reforms. Instead, Reddaway and Glinski present this "seesaw" approach as the intended strategy. Further, a number of phenomena—such as the rise of criminal mafias—that were presumably unanticipated consequences of the policy choices made are presented as if they were part and parcel of the reformers' strategy.

The authors present alternative paths as real options, although they seem beyond what was possible in Russia at the end of the 1980s, beginning of the 1990s. Popular discontent—a "grassroots anti-nomenklatura upsurge" (p. 253)—that supposedly could have been mobilized into a movement in support of another kind of reform did not appear to have the kind of usable potential that the authors suggest. In order to tap this presumed source of support, the authors argue that Yeltsin should have relied more on the nascent democratic movement. In particular, they favor the national-democratic wing, such political figures as Sergei Baburin and Oleg Rumiantsev. In the early 1990s, these figures were marginalized politically, and they joined the opposition that conspired to seize power in October 1993. Reddaway and Glinski also side with opposition economists such as Sergei Glaziev, who has long advocated an economic strategy based on government support of key industries and strong social programs for the victims of reforms.

There is an unfortunate tendency in some of the analysis to relay as evidence conjecture and conspiracy theories that figure so prominently in the Russian media. For example, the shortages of consumer goods in the late Soviet period are viewed not as evidence of the collapse of the previous system but as a pressure tactic by wholesale traders to wrest control from the state over this sector. In discussing the events of October 1993, when the anti-Yeltsin opposition in parliament launched a violent attempt to seize the mayor's office, television facilities, and other centers of power, the authors use speculative and dubious accounts to suggest that the violence

was deliberately facilitated by Yeltsin's security forces. The goal was to justify the later use of tanks against the parliament in support of Yeltsin's ultimate purpose, "the destruction of Russia's parliamentarism for the sake of increasing his personal power" (p. 429). The authors find it plausible that the 1999 incursion by Chechen rebels in Dagestan was provoked by the Russian security forces (headed at the time by Vladimir Putin) in order to provide an excuse to start a new war in Chechnya.

Overall, though, despite its weaknesses and occasional lapses, Reddaway and Glinski's account provides an extraordinary wealth of information on the twists and turns of Russian politics during this formative period.

Democracy in Divided Societies: Electoral Engineering for Conflict Management. By Benjamin Reilly. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 232p. $60.00 cloth, $22.00 paper.

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Benjamin Reilly makes an important contribution to the debate on the appropriate institutional design of electoral systems for mitigating conflict and sustaining democracy in ethnically plural societies. The dominant position in this debate posits the importance of proportional representation (PR) systems. An alternative position, less widely accepted largely because of an ostensible absence of empirical examples, posits the importance of majoritarian preferential systems that encourage cross-ethnic vote pooling. Reilly extends this debate by drawing on heretofore unknown or understudied cases to examine the operation of both majoritarian (the alternative vote or AV and the supplementary vote or SV) and proportional (single-transferable vote or STV) preferential systems in different social contexts and in different elections (legislative and presidential).

The book's central argument is that, unlike the elite-based PR systems, preferential systems privilege the decisions of voters as the source of cross-ethnic vote swapping, forcing otherwise rational candidates to forgo ethnic outbidding in favor of seeking votes across ethnic cleavages. The argument turns on the notion of "centripetalism," which, for Reilly, refers to a "normative theory of institutional design" that seeks to 1) create electoral incentives for politicians to campaign for votes across ethnic cleavages, 2) establish arenas of bargaining for ethnic elites to transfer the lessons from electoral bargains to other political issues, and 3) foster centrist and aggregative multiethnic political parties instead of extremist and exclusively ethnic ones (p. 11).

Eschewing systematic theory testing, Reilly uses this normative theory as a loose framework to evaluate the performance of preferential systems in *all* cases (except Malta) that are known to have utilized them. Bracketing the case studies are an informative overview of the development of preferential voting systems from their origins in attempts in the nineteenth century to overcome the intrinsic weaknesses of majority runoff elections (Chapter 2) and a useful discussion of the technical variations in the institutional designs of such systems that also highlights the unexpected consequences of minor technical modifications in institutional design (Chapter 7).

The book's initial focus on Australia is useful, and not only because it has developed and refined all variants of preferential systems in national and subnational elections for almost a century. As an ethnically diverse but not an ethnically divided society (p. 25), it also serves as a controlled case for illustrating the advantages of preferential systems in achieving the three centripetal objectives. The fascinating case of Papua

New Guinea provides the clearest and strongest support for AV. One of the world's most ethnically fragmented societies, Papua New Guinea used AV in three elections between 1964 and 1972 to mitigate conflicts through cross-ethnic vote swapping negotiated by candidates who campaigned together among each other's ethnic groups, seeking second-preference votes on the correct calculation that rational voters would give their first preference to candidates from their own ethnic groups. The adoption of "first past the post" (FPTP) after independence in 1975 reinforced the advantage of AV, as the new FPTP system created severe cross-ethnic coordination problems, encouraging the entry of large numbers of candidates, with corresponding decline in winning vote ratios and increase in election-induced ethnic violence. The 1998 assembly election in Northern Ireland, held under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, provides the clearest and strongest support for STV. In that election, STV helped, through vote transfers, to neutralize extremist sectarian parties and elect pro-agreement, centrist parties from each side of the otherwise deeply divided ethnic cleavages.

Fiji and Sri Lanka, however, provide weak support for the claimed effectiveness of preferential designs. In Fiji, where indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians have roughly equal population ratios but are otherwise ethnically, economically, and politically divided, the use of a partially engineered AV system in one parliamentary election produced limited preelectoral cross-ethnic vote-swapping agreements among erstwhile "monoethnic" parties. But the election results undercut even these limited agreements. In Sri Lanka, the use of SV in four presidential elections between 1982 and 1999 failed to counteract the overwhelming Sinhalese population advantage (74%) over Tamils (18%) and Muslims (7%), leading always to the election of Sinhalese candidates by an absolute majority of first-preference votes. A number of factors related to contextual variations and technical modifications in institutional design are adduced in an ad hoc manner to account for these differences between institutional expectations and electoral outcomes.

Beyond these major cases, the book also contains brief, informative discussions of the failed attempts to adopt AV in the United Kingdom, the one-time use of STV in Estonia's transitional election in 1990, the potential advantage of AV in the election of Bosnia-Herzegovina's tripartite presidency (an option that was considered but not implemented for the presidential elections there in October 2002), and the use of various preferential systems in several subnational elections in the United States and Canada.

The book does not systematically account for the mixed results from the major cases, exposing the analytical weakness of the "electoral engineering" approach. For instance, perhaps the most important insight of the book, which is found only in the last few pages (pp. 185–192), concerns the significance of two aspects of ethnic group demographics—fragmentation and concentration—in mediating the expected impact of preferential designs. With respect to fragmentation, ethnically heterogeneous districts are considered to be "the single most important demographic precondition for centripetal strategies to work effectively" (p. 185). Group concentration, on the other hand, creates ethnically homogeneous electoral districts, rendering the use of vote pooling highly problematic.

Reilly wisely uses these demographic variations to caution against a cookie-cutter approach to electoral engineering. Curiously, however, he does not systematically examine the implications of these variations in the case studies, even though ethnically heterogeneous districts are commonplace in Papua New Guinea and ethnically concentrated districts presumably exist in Northern Ireland, the two cases that pro-

vide unambiguous support for preferential systems. Also left unexamined is the failure of AV to produce the expected results in Fiji, where the ethnic group demographic (dispersion and geographic intermixing) is also considered favorable for the effectiveness of the design (p. 187). Examination of these issues requires a more rigorous analytical approach than allowed by the normative electoral engineering approach. It especially requires the use of quantitative techniques such as regression analysis to clarify the independent, additive, and interactive effects of institutional design and context on electoral outcomes. The two approaches, however, are not mutually exclusive. Quantitative analysis provides the systematic knowledge and understanding of the relative effects of institution and context that are necessary for realizing the prescriptive aspirations of the electoral engineering approach.

Reilly's book, therefore, does not close the debate on the appropriate institutional design of electoral systems for managing ethnic conflicts. But its coherent and convincing arguments in favor of preferential systems, and especially its coverage of heretofore unfamiliar and understudied cases that have employed them, advance and enrich it.

Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food. By Michael G. Schatzberg. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001. 292p. $49.95 cloth, $22.95 paper.

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Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa is an insightful, refreshing, and original book that refines and expands our understanding of the so-called "politics of the belly." A phrase made famous by Jean Francois Bayart *(The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly,* 1993), the politics of the belly is the phenomenon of "eating" the fruits of power. The extent to which officeholders monopolize or share these fruits with the larger community has, however, significant consequences for their legitimacy. As Michael Schatzberg suggests, a "moral matrix of legitimate governance" (p. 35) embedded in familial and paternal metaphors shapes these belly politics. In turn, he argues that the moral matrix is rooted in four major premises. The first and second are related to the image of the ruler as a "fatherchief," who has the obligation, on the one hand, to nurture and nourish his "family," and on the other hand, to punish his "children" when necessary and pardon them when they truly repent. The third premise concerns the status of women in society; while they are not considered equal to men, rulers should, nonetheless, respect their role as "counselors and advisers." The fourth premise "holds that permanent power is illegitimate and that political fathers ... have to let their children grow up, mature, take on ever-increasing responsibilities in the conduct of their own affairs, and eventually succeed them in power" (p. 192).

Governments that respect these four moral premises are not necessarily democratic, but they enjoy legitimacy and thus will endure; neither the ballot nor the bullet is likely to overthrow them. When the "father-chief" "eats" within limits and guarantees his "family" access to food, while both knowing that his power is not eternal and listening to his "wives" and "daughters," he will win popular support. To that extent, Africans will be satisfied with a regime that responds to their own norms of accountability and legitimacy. These norms correspond to what Schatzberg calls "thinkability." Thinkability is not simply "that which is politically thinkable" but is also, in Schatzberg's eyes, legitimacy itself. Moreover, the author contends, legitimacy can be apprehended through an exhaustive study of the "mainstream political discourse" (p. 32).

Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa seeks to uncover this discourse by systematically examining daily state newspapers,