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How Democracy Functions in Ethnically Divided Societies, and Power-Sharing Minorities

*Licia Cianetti*²: *The Quality of Divided Democracies. Minority Inclusion, Exclusion, and Representation in the New Europe.* – University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2019. – 250 p.

Функціонування електоральної демократії в етнічно різноманітних спільнотах

Ліція Ціанетті. *Якість розділених демократій. Інкорпорація, сепарація, репрезентація меншин у Новій Європі.* – Мічиган: Вид-во. Мічиганського університету, 2019. – 250 p.

The Quality of Divided Democracies is about how democracy works or fails to work in ethnoculturally divided societies. It advances a new theoretical approach to assessing quality of democracy in divided societies and puts it into practice with the focused comparison of two divided democracies – Estonia and Latvia. The book uses rich comparative data to tackle the vital questions of what determines a democracy's level of inclusiveness and the ways in which minorities can gain access to the policy-making process. It uncovers a "presence-polarization dilemma" for minorities' inclusion in the democratic process, which has implications for academic debates on minority representation and ethnic politics, as well as practical implications for international and national institutions' promotion of minority rights.

The Quality of Divided Democracies contemplates how democracy works, or fails to work, in ethnoculturally divided societies. It advances a new theoretical approach to assessing quality of democracy in divided societies, and puts it into practice with the focused comparison of two divided democracies – Estonia and Latvia. The book uses rich comparative data to tackle the vital questions of what determines a democracy's level of inclusiveness and the ways in which minorities can gain access to the policy-making process. It uncovers a "voice-polarization dilemma" for minorities' inclusion in the democratic process, which has implications for academic debates on minority representation and ethnic politics, as well as practical implications for international and national institutions' promotion of minority rights.

This is also an innovative and well-conceptualized study about the question of what constitutes democracy in ethnically divided societies. Licia Cianetti addresses this question through a thoroughly researched and well-written comparative account about the way different forms of minority mobilization and representation have shaped minority access to policy making in Estonia and Latvia. This book is a must-read for scholars and policymakers interested in the challenges of democratic governance in multiethnic societies in Europe and elsewhere.

The Quality of Divided Democracies speaks to an important question facing modern Europe, namely how minorities and minority interests are included in policy-making. The empirical work is thorough, impressive, and comprehensive, and one came away impressed with the case studies. The author has tremendous expertise on Latvia and Estonia.

It was an extremely interesting to review the work that has both theoretical sophistication and excellent empirical evidence. Challenges the relatively new field of inclusion/integration studies to reconsider the strength of its categories and presents new analytical tools in their stead.

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