behind vote choices. Drawing on a fascinating experiment, the authors provide suggestive evidence that voters follow leaders—especially Narendra Modi—for their ideas as well as for their perceived capacity to lead.

At the end of this masterful demonstration, no reader will be left believing that ideology deserves to be overlooked in the study of Indian elections, or that Indian elections can be reduced to a game of musical chairs between elites or to patronage. If it ever was disputed, it is now clear that ideology does matter, and that scholars’ persistent avoidance of the term “ideology” when thinking of Indian politics was, at best, arbitrary. At the same time, as any groundbreaking work does, the book raises new questions that future contributions will need to tackle.

Five areas of inquiry especially strike me as worth additional scholarship. First, now that the authors have convinced us that ideology deserves more respect in our analyses, we may all want to know exactly how much respect. Empirical challenges make it difficult for them to be more precise on this front, and it is genuinely difficult to quantify it. Nonetheless, it is easy to imagine that observers of Indian politics would next want to know whether ideology is the main factor in partisan politics or simply one among many.

Second, and Relatedly, what might be the constellation of possible factors that do play a role in electoral politics in India? While I agree with Chibber and Verma that there is surprisingly little evidence to show that clientelism drives voting behavior, it does not necessarily follow that ideology does. Fleeting campaign dynamics may drive vote choices in ways we have not completely identified; political styles and image building may deserve further examination. So too does economic voting, as voters in some states appear to practice a form of retrospective economic voting that would not fit neatly in the authors’ framework. This is, of course, less a critique than a candid observation of the fact that much remains to be explored when thinking about voting behavior in India.

Turning to the third topic for future research, we will need to think of how to reconcile the relative ideological stability described in Ideology and Identity with what happens during campaigns on the ground, that is, a very unequal focus on ideology across candidates and constituencies, and a frequent tendency among elites to tailor their product to the audience they happen to have in front of them.

Fourth, while the book’s focus on the politics of statism and recognition provides us with an appealing frame of analysis, it may be worth further discussion. The “politics of statism” is a potentially very broad area—which may explain its uneven impact on some outcomes of interest—and one that we may want to further unpack. Besides, it is not readily obvious that these are the only two dimensions that should matter. Voters’ positioning on secularism or anticorruption may, for instance, come to better explain partisan divisions in the future.

Finally, we may want to know more as to why voters embrace the ideologies identified by the authors. Chapters 4 and 7 start tackling this question. Yet more exciting work probably remains to be done in the aftermath of this pathbreaking book before we fully understand how and why voters sort themselves ideologically.

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This book is an ambitious, mixed-method examination of LGBT activism in postcommunist East-Central Europe that makes the counterintuitive argument that backlash to international pressures can be constructive to a social movement’s development. Conor O’Dwyer finds that the backlash unilaterally raises the visibility of the group by its targeted attacks: It fosters solidarity as individuals experience having their safety and security threatened, and when a state is not immune to international pressures, the movement is likely to find new allies.

The argument is grounded in an empirically rich comparison of the dynamics of activism and backlash in Poland and the Czech Republic in the years before, during, and following their accession to the European Union. As detailed in Chapter 2, the EU became an important champion of LGBT rights just as postcommunism was seeking accession. Some leverage was direct, as accession required labor code reforms to ensure antidiscrimination protections for LGBT individuals and provided some resource support to local groups. More significant was the indirect impact. In pushing postcommunist countries to adopt laws that circumvented the prevailing social attitudes, this process sparked a backlash in several countries and prompted framing contests between these opponents to gay rights and activists who embraced the EU’s language of human rights. This result is seen most clearly in Poland, where small communities of mostly gay men in the 1990s were transformed into a vibrant and politicized national LGBT movement whose successes included the election of the head of a transgender rights group to parliament in 2011. In contrast, the once-promising movement in the Czech Republic has languished.

Chapters 3–6 trace these processes in detail. As explained in Chapter 4, the Czech gay rights movement had begun early and expanded into a national, politically oriented umbrella social-movement organization that could work “behind the scene” to achieve incremental reforms by the end of the 1990s. This development was facilitated by Czechoslovak sexologists who had gotten homosexuality decriminalized in 1961, by framing it as a problem that could lead to social alienation without
Ayoub’s *When States Come Out: Europe’s Sexual Minorities and the Politics of Visibility* (2016), the book speaks to multiple central literatures in political science. Like Ayoub, O’Dwyer analyzes the impact of transnational influence on norm diffusion by examining the EU’s recent pressure on LGBT rights, pointing to the visibility that such pressure can bring but also to the impact of opponents. However, the author is more concerned with social movement theorizing, making two important assertions that differ from Ayoub: first, that we should think about movement success beyond policy outcomes and, second, that threats to the “immediate protective surround” of individuals—often engendered by backlash—is one powerful way to overcome the collective action problem. While O’Dwyer might not agree—by bringing into focus the mobilization of marginalized “sexual minorities”—I think that his book challenges the common wisdom that postcommunist civil society can be characterized as weak, in the 1990s or today.

The book raises two concerns for me. First, while I agree that social movements are more than their legislative success, I hesitate to use the vibrancy of a movement as the only measure of its success, especially considering the high personal costs paid by LGBT activists and allies in Poland with the return of the hard-right in 2015. Feminist political science has many, and more nuanced, answers to this question of what counts as success for women’s/feminist activism—as well as numerous studies of the EU’s impact on violence against women—that could have been usefully considered here. Second, I think that the book glosses over the strategic political choices made by the hard-right, thereby failing to interrogate their claim that Europe is responsible for their homophobia. For example, the book asserts that “[t]he EU’s promotion of LGBT-rights norms in applicant-states provoked varying degrees of hard-right backlash” (p. 18), even as the EU could do very little really to protect LGBT individuals. As others who have a global lens have asserted, I suspect that the postcommunist hard-right leaders chose to attack LGBT rights because that is what illiberal populists are doing these days; Europe is the scapegoat.

These concerns open up important and timely questions, which, together with the its strengths, make *Coming Out of Communism* a book that should be considered for use in introductory comparative politics seminars for doctoral students.


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In their new book, Thomas B. Pepinsky, R. William Liddle, and Saiful Mujani want to provide a “corrective”