

ABSTRACTS

PÉTER GEDEON

Rival Theories of the Welfare State

There are different welfare states in modern capitalism. Why is there a liberal welfare state in one country, a conservative one in another country and a social democratic one in a third country? Explanations are themselves different. I would like to identify both the common and conflicting points of the different explanations by reconstructing the arguments of different schools of thought. Do rival theories as analytical constructs explaining the emergence of welfare states exclude or presuppose each other? I look at four theories of political economy that are different but at the same time connected by the way how they presume a causal relationship between welfare state regimes and social coalitions. (1) The power resource thesis describes the full causal line in the following way: social coalitions → government partisanship → welfare state regime. (2) In the theory of cross-class coalitions government partisanship is not part of the causal chain and the category of social coalitions becomes a mediating variable that is analytically preceded by the concept of labor market regime. The explanatory scheme of this theory is the following: labor market regime → social coalitions → welfare state regime. (3) The Varieties of Capitalism school also thinks that the labor market regime determines the causal line but it does not disregard the effects of government partisanship. Its scheme is as follows: labor market regime → social coalitions, median voter → government partisanship → welfare state regime. (4) In the theory of political institutional effect the variable of social coalitions mediates between the categories of electoral regime and government partisanship. The complete explanation is the following: type of electoral system → social coalitions → government partisanship → welfare state regime.

Keywords: Welfare state regime, power resource thesis, social coalitions, labor market regime, electoral systems

ZOLTÁN FARKAS

The Concept of authority and domination

In a paper published earlier, I was concerned with the concept, establishment and consequences of social power. In this paper I define the concept of authority

and the concept of domination in this context. In the first part of the paper, I mention the characteristic conceptions of the concept of authority, and I define the concept of authority as the social power-superiority of the given individual (or group). Next, I deal with the question of which phenomenon or phenomena as consequences I attribute to authority. In the second part of the paper, I define the concept of domination as institutional corporality power-superiority and I define the consequence of the domination and the significance of the domination in the establishment of social power and authority.

Keywords: Social power, authority, domination

PÉTER KREKÓ – ATTILA JUHÁSZ – CSABA MOLNÁR

The Rise of the Social Demand for Right-wing Extremism in Hungary

Political Capital Institute's Demand for Right-Wing Extremism Index (DEREX) elaborated on the representative international database of the European Social Survey reveals that the percentage of respondents who are receptive to anti-establishment, chauvinistic, xenophobic, and authoritarian ideologies of the radical right was on the rise between 2002 and 2009 in Hungary. The rise in demand could have contributed to the resurgence of the institutional far right in Hungary. In Hungary, the rate of respondents who are psychologically receptive to the ideologies of the radical right (the potential right-wing extremists) emerged from 10 per cent to 21 per cent in the examined period, which is a dramatic and almost unprecedented increase in Europe. The rise can be mainly attributed to the increasing level of anti-establishment attitudes and prejudices, and we can see a moderate upsurge in fear and pessimism. At the same time, there hasn't been any shift in the Hungarian society towards a more traditionalist and a more religious position. While we are focusing on the tendencies on the demand side in this study, we do not assume that the resurgence of the far right could be explained by this only factor. The reasons behind this phenomenon can be fully revealed just if we take into consideration the supply and the demand side factors, as well as the characteristics of the political environment at the same time.

Keywords: far-right, demand side, Jobbik, anti-establishment attitudes, prejudices

DÉNES PAPP

Political Information Seeking and Publishing Political Content Online

In recent years, the number of empirical studies concerning the patterns of online political information seeking and content sharing has risen significantly. These studies have contributed valuable data on the online audiences and the

nature of political content citizens generally search for, consume, or produce via this new medium. However, the exact degree to which certain new tools, like political blogs and social networking services help citizens acquire relevant political information and make their views more available to a wider audience is still subject of considerable academic debate.

In this study, I present an overview of the currently visible trends in the ways citizens search for political information online, the characteristics of popular online political content and certain barriers to disseminating political content online. Although a great number of people try to draw attention to themselves on the internet, very few actually succeed in reaching a broad audience. I argue that while the costs of distributing valuable information have rapidly decreased, the comparably high costs of political content creation still pose a very real obstacle for most people who do not have significantly more resources at their disposal than the average citizen and that these phenomena might facilitate further monopolization among news portals and possibly even ordinary political blogs.

Keywords: Internet, media concentration, social media, blogs

LUCA KRISTÓF

Political Views and Reputation in the Intellectual Elite

In the paper the interrelationships of the political views and reputation of the intellectuals participating in public life are analysed with the help of data of an elite survey by questionnaire. A markedly formulated political opinion, usually characteristic of the intellectual elite manifests itself dominantly as either leftist views or as a characteristic right-wing minority. The attitudes of the two groups of the elite differ not only in their relationship to religion and to socialism, but also from the angle of contacts kept with other elite segments such as the political and the economic ones. In addition to professional achievement self-determination of leftism or right-wing views is also part of respect emerging within the intellectual elite, but the hierarchy of the reputation of the two intellectual milieus differs from each other. In the leftist milieu having a more active intellectual discourse the internal mechanisms developing reputation operate far more successfully resulting in the fact that the respect of the greatest leftist stars spreads over the milieu and affects the entire Hungarian intellectual life. The right-wing group, considered as a minority in the elite is adjusted more closely than the network of relations kept close on the basis of the similarity of political views overarching elite segments. Being strongly embedded and the fact that they are less active in the intellectual discourse in the media hinder the production of an autonomous intellectual reputation in the milieu of the right-wing intellectuals.

Keywords: Intellectuals, left, right, reputation

PÉTER HAVAS
A Strange Coalition

The paper has got its title "A Strange Coalition" mainly because in May 2010, participants in this coalition the Conservative and the Liberal Parties reached handshake though in many points of view they had differed from each other's values and there had not been any precedent of such for almost 80 years.

After summarising political processes that led to the coalition including the victory of the Conservative Party without an overall majority, the paper is in fact dealing with one general dilemma: whether the coalition be understood as a practical effort to handle a political crisis, or is it rather a first step in order to the renewing politics? From this aspect the paper analyses the pillars of the coalition: the measures of implementation for the stabilisation of the economy and finance, introducing drastically increased tuition fees in the universities and the arrangement of the electoral reform.

According to the paper while for the Liberal Democrats, as members of the coalition the support of the first and second task meant challenges and leading to losing popularity of the party, the true crisis of coalition has been generated by the events about the reform of the electoral system. The Conservative Party as a leading force of the coalition supported the referendum on Alternative Vote that has been a definite term for Liberals to join, but when the referendum came they not only voted against, but became the main anti-Alternative Vote camp and due to that contributed to a crushing defeat of the reform and Liberals as for the main supporters of the alternative system. It proves that the Conservatives are still in favour of the majority system because it serves their political interests and they would like to win the election alone.

In spite of such difficulties, the paper's conclusion is that this coalition has some benefits for both participants. While its destiny is still on the balance, however, its conditions are today less stable than they were in 2010, and the Conservative domination in the coalition is stronger.

The logic of the paper is clearly suggesting that the future of the coalition in a significant degree depends on the politics of Liberal Democrats, depending on whether they are able to save their social-liberal identity, and will not avoid confrontations with the Tory Party. Until then suppositions that this coalition can lead to the rearrangement of the British party system remain open, and one should be satisfied with the strange coalition that can be interpreted also as a first step to a multiparty system.

Keywords: Conservative Party, Liberal Democrats (party), Labour Party, electoral systems