
ABSTRACTS

KIS, JÁNOS

NEUTRALITY OF THE STATE

Neutrality of the state is part of the apparatus which serves to draw the normative, constitutional limits of government power. It is, at the same time, an essentially contested idea, attacked by many as uncoherent. The present essay makes an attempt to meet this challenge. Sections 1–4 offer conception and a justification of neutrality. They interpret neutrality as a requirement implied by the principle of treating people as equals, subject to the empirical condition of pluralism of ideals — ethical, religious and other. In this reading, neutrality demands from the state not to take any binding decision on the grounds that one ideal is superior to the other or that one conception of the world is true and the other is false. A distinction between radical and non-radical disagreements plays a central role in the argument. Disagreement is defined as radical when the disputed proposition is based on evidence which is not accessible to all. Treatment of people as equals requires not to make law or government order the justification of which entails any proposition subject to radical disagreement. Sections 5–8 face the standard objections to neutrality: that the impact of state measures cannot be neutral as between competing ideals; that neutrality itself cannot be given a neutral justification; that radical disagreements necessarily enter even in non-radical disputes; that all cultural systems, including science and common sense, are of limited accessibility principle and institutional separation of the public and private domains. Section 10 turns to the question whether neutrality is compatible with furthering of moral ideals.

ARATÓ, ANDRÁS

CIVIL SOCIETY IN POLAND AND HUNGARY

Using the concepts of „new evolutionism” (Michnik) and „self-limiting revolution” (Kuron, Staniszkis), the author follows and analyzes the role of civil society in the late communist and transitional period in Poland and Hungary. The term „civil society” is understood in the study as a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of associations and publics. Civil society is distinguished from a political society of parties, political organizations, and political publics in particular parliaments, because the latter is directly involved with state power, which cannot afford to subordinate strategic criteria to the patterns of normative integration and open-ended communication characteristic of civil society. The author emphasizes the role of the KOR in Poland, and the *Beszélő* circle in Hungary, as well as other independent initiatives in both countries which helped to manage a democratic political change. Finally the study ends with an analysis of the relationship of civil society and the new political elite in the post-communist period.

SCHÖPFLIN, GYÖRGY

POWER, ETHNICITY AND COMMUNISM IN JUGOSLAVIA

Looking at the pre-history and history of Yugoslavia, the author analyzes the possibilities and limits of democratization of the new states emerging from Titoist Yugoslavia. The study analyzes the Illyrian idea, the Croatian political culture, the impact of partisan war on national identities, and the Tito years when Communists attempted to control the ethno-national issue. The democratic traditions in the different republics varied widely, with the Western aspirations of the Slovenes being in stark contrast to the volatility and political inexperience of the Serbs. In the final analysis, as the author points out, the chances of converting Titoist Yugoslavia into a democratic Yugoslavia were never very good. The failure of the two attempts to hold the country together — linguistic-monarchical and communist — meant that the conditions imposed by the various actors would be too severe. An agreement on the benefits of keeping Yugoslavia intact was absent. Communism collapsed too suddenly for the various republican élites to find common ground, and it disintegrated at different speeds in different republics.

GYARMATI, GYÖRGY

ATTEMPTS AT FEDERATION AFTER WORLD WAR II

(From Mitteleuropa to the Ostblock)

This paper considers a regional subvariant of postwar European efforts at integration, namely ideas about Central- and East-European federation. Two aspects are described in detail. One explains how Hungarian views entered this regional project owing to foreign policy considerations and domestic interests. The other deals with different conceptions of a postwar Hungarian-Austrian customs union that have scarcely been discussed in the historiography of the subject up to this time.

The paper's basic points are as follows. While ideas of federation have been supported in the region mainly by intellectual pressure groups — either in opposition or in exile — efforts at federation after World War II became an official governmental programme and an issue of foreign policy concern in several countries. The ultimate failure of these efforts came about not by their rejection by a smaller state but by a Soviet veto, this was a reaction to Europe's division by the Cold War. In conclusion, these regional plans were doomed to failure, and at the same time Central Europe was removed from the map of the continent by establishing the Ostblock forcibly.

TÓKA, GÁBOR

PARTY SYSTEM AND CLEAVAGES IN HUNGARY

The paper attempts to analyse some of the assumptions behind the frequent assertion that the current Hungarian party-system is facing a gradual transformation, the inevitable end-product of which will be the location of parties along a single L-R continuum. It is argued that this deterministic view can be reconciled only with social change, but hardly with party-strategy and interest group approaches to issue and cleavage development. Hypotheses drawn from the macro-sociological and interest group approaches are tested on ISSP 1985, 1990 and 1991 and IEWSS 1991 data. The results suggest that first, the economic dimension of the L-R scheme is indeed less important in Hungarian and Polish party competition compared to Western ones; second, in Hungary the religious cleavage may be just as important as the former one in Western democracies; and third, this finding can be explained in the framework of the interest group, but not in that of the macro-sociological approach.

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