

ABSTRACTS

ILONSZKI, GABRIELLA-VÁNYI, ÉVA

Ministerial Fluctuation and Institutional Changes in Hungary 1990–2010

The article examines the selection, de-selection and the career patterns of 139 Hungarian cabinet ministers (and the 204 positions they have occupied) from the first democratic government in 1990 (Antall government) to 2010 (Bajnai government). The article argues that the features and the transformation of the political system involve and require different ministerial types. Moreover, these types can also be separated according to their fluctuation. The analysis proves that on the basis of the changing institutional context a changing proportion of “politician minister” and “expert ministers” can be found during the two decades and the patterns of their nomination and removal are also varied. While the Hungarian governments were basically political government before 2010 in some policy areas (economy, finance) they proved to be open towards expertise rationality. The elevated role of the Prime Minister – a peculiarity of the Hungarian case in comparison to other post-communist countries – made the nomination of expert ministers possible. Via this type of nomination the Prime Ministers were able to exert pressure on highly important policy fields. In contrast, the role of expert ministers is diminishing. One explanation lies in the majoritarian turn of the political system, and the other in concrete political developments. Formerly, the Prime Minister needed expert ministers to increase his own elbow room. If and when party as an organizational force is becoming less relevant (because it is overcentralized and does not embody and does not aggregate the context of representation) the Prime Minister does not need expertise any longer but can and will pursue political governance..

ATTILA, ÁGH

Governmental System and Global Competitiveness. *The Perspective of a Developing State*

This paper deals with the performance of the public institutions based on the international rankings of the global competitiveness and according to the new EU paradigm, in which instead of GDP the term of social progress appears as the main criterion. In the last years there has been a big step ahead in the international social sciences towards the precise description and the performance evaluation of the state and government institutions, or in an even wider context, of all public institutions. This emerging new theoretical approach is, of necessity,

at the same time comparative as well, so it helps us to evaluate the Hungarian situation better in the comparison with the similar states of our region. The paper tries to prove that the state and government system of institutions is the weakest point of the Hungarian competitiveness. Therefore the reason for the decline of the Hungarian economy can be found in the poor performance of the public institutions because of the missing institutional reforms.

GYÖRGY, HAJNAL

Administrative Politics in the Decade of 2000. *The Structural Dynamics of the Organs of Public Administration of Agency Type between 2002 and 2009*

The article examines the structural dynamics of Hungarian central government agencies in the 2002-2009 period, on the empirical basis of longitudinal „mapping” (panel data) of organizations and related change events. The research questions are as follows. (i) Are there any characteristic patterns in the administrative policy on central government agencies in the 2000’s? (ii) If yes how are these patterns related to the political and economic crisis ensuing in the 2006-2008 period, and to what extent do they resemble the „post-NPM”, whole-of-government-type administrative policy characteristic for a number of Western politico-administrative systems?

MIKLÓS, SEBŐK

Crisis-driven Delegation. *Changing Technocratic Autonomy at the Time of the Financial Crisis in Western Europe*

The theory of crisis-driven delegation posits a causal link between policy uncertainty—usually associated with crisis situations—and the strategic decisions of elected office-holders. As a result the autonomy of unelected technocrats—and that of the bureaucracies supervised by them—is expanded, if only for a brief period of time. This article examines the relevance of the theoretical framework in the context of the financial crisis of 2008-2010 in 7 Western European countries. The results provide justification for the testable hypotheses with respect to institutional change operationalized as adjustments to extant rules and organisations. Evidence shows that in crisis situations politicians prefer autonomous technocrats and institutions over carefully elaborated rules. Ex post control and oversight, as opposed to ex ante directives, are the choice of politicians for holding technocrats accountable. And consensus, rather than conflict, drives the political process in these periods of extreme policy uncertainty. While the results of the article are preliminary at best, they present the theory of crisis-driven delegation as a promising research agenda and a useful supplement to extant research on the cyclical changes of the scope of the state.

PÓCZA, KÁLMÁN

How do we make a new constitution? *The process of constitution making in comparative perspective*

There is a big deficiency in the comparative political science concerning the empirical analysis of the constitution making processes. This essay is the first (theoretical) part of a comprehensive work which will undertake a comparative empirical analysis of certain constitution making procedures. It aims to determine the aspects and the method of a feasible comparative analysis. First of all a comparison should take into account the circumstances of the constitution making process (i.e.: the subject, the moment and the length of the process, the levels of the available informations for the constitution makers, the upstream and downstream constraints). On the other hand the different phases and characteristics of the process should be differentiated as well. As far as the researching method is concerned it will be stated that the actor-centered institutionalism could be the best way since it can achieve a balance between the two extrem positions of the behavioralism and the institutionalism.

FILIPPOV GÁBOR

Nomen est Omen. *Terminological Issues of Studying the Extreme Right*

The paper is based on the statement that language is not an instrument merely reflecting reality, but a factor that is actively constructing it, primarily defining the interpretation of core problems. Social science cannot back out of the responsibility created by the fact that language itself might become an important vehicle of political struggle. Hungarian discourses on right wing extremism, both academic and journalistic, must consider questions of terminology, which are specifically emphasized in international literature on the topic (most importantly the issues of denomination of groups and ideas, arguments pro and con for certain competing names in use). The paper gives a review on major linguistic, epistemological and methodological problems; builds on the above mentioned literature but applies it to the Hungarian historical and political context, while emphasizes that the terminology in use is by all means value-impregnated and keeps much at stake morally and in terms of legitimacy. The paper opts for the use of the name "extreme right", and seeks to give an adequate, essentialistic definition of it. The concluding part surveys the issues in the internal relations of the best known streams of the extreme right (Fascism and National Socialism) along with the most important approaches towards them, while argues for the importance of the distinction of the two ideologies based on the fundamental differences between them.