
ABSTRACTS

KÖRÖSSÉNYI

??

ENIKŐ GYŐRI

HOW CAN THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESERVE ITS SOVEREIGNTY?

By approving Law LXI of 2002 the Hungarian National Assembly modified the Constitution, and by this it made our accession to the European Union possible from the point of view of public law. That amendment on the one hand settled the question of transfer of sovereignty and on the other hand it obliged the Parliament to pass a law on the role of the National Assembly after the entry into the EU. For the time being the Hungarian basic law has only said that the Government has to inform Parliament on EU matters, but it has not specified whether the legislature will be able to keep its exclusive competencies in making laws and whether it will be able to control the Government's activities in the EU Council.

In line with the provision of the Constitution, first at expert level, since September 2003 under the auspices of the Grand Committee of the National Assembly at political level talks started on how to specify the rules of co-operation between the Parliament and the Government. A draft law should be the outcome of these four-party talks, which, later, will be tabled to the National Assembly. As it is laid down in the Constitution, the law should be approved by two-third majority, and should enter into force at the latest on 1 May 2004.

Being a hot political issue, the author of the article oversees the role of national legislatures as such in the European Union.

She briefly examines the existing models, i.e. how these Parliaments control their respective Governments in EU issues, and sees what can be adopted in Hungary. Her conclusion is that none of the present models can be entirely applied to Hungary, but certain elements can be used. Taking into consideration the constitutional and political system, political culture, the importance of national identity and the workings of the Hungarian Parliament., she shapes the Hungarian model. Her hypothesis is that a medium-strong control could be effected and would suit best the Hungarian traditions, where the Parliament does not decide the negotiating mandate of the Executive, but it keeps the Government accountable to it and strictly controls its activities.

ISTVÁN BALOGH

ON POLITICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

(OTFRIED HÖFFE'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY) PART II

In his theory of political justice Otfried Höffe focuses the attention on foundation of the legitimation and limitation of the power and expansion of modern state and law, which problems fall into the background of even such of outstanding contemporary philosophical conception as John Rawls' theory of justice. Höffe develops his theory in three logically connected steps. First he argues for his starting assumption, that the legitimation and limitation of the state simultaneously constitute the basic problem of the modern political philosophy. The justification is achieved by a critical analysis of the philosophical and juridical positivism and of the theoretical anarchism. The second step is the construction of a suitable basic structure which is generally qualified for performing the requirement of legitimation and limitation of the power and expansion of the state. Höffe argues that this basic structure must be a real construction, and that is the model of change, in contrast to the ideal construction of the classical and modern contract theories as well. The third step is the definition of the basic principles and characterization of the institutional system focusing on the human and basic rights for the legitimation and limitation of the power and expansion of the contemporary modern state.

Our study consists of two parts. The first part describes Höffe's basic theoretical position, that is the „practical metaphysics” and follows his critical arguments for the necessity of construction of the basic structure.

The second part provides a detailed analysis of Höffe's political theory of justice, from which some leading

considerations and starting points can be extracted for the foundation of the intercultural exercisable principles, predominately the human rights. Finally we are arguing, that Höffes invention, on the antropological level definable modell of change, can be interpreted as the kernel of a relation-antropology which can serve as the foundation for a reconsidered theory of justice.

TAMÁS FRICZ

THE OLD ELITE IN THE NEW DEMOCRACY IN HUNGARY

In the paper the author is in quest of an answer to the question what role the political, economic, and cultural elite groups of the old system, of the state socialist dictatorship play in the new democracy in Hungary. The basic issue of the paper is whether these groups were pushed into the background after the change of the system in 1989-1990, whether they had to endure some kind of being taken to task as it happened for instance, in the reunited Germany, or in the Czech Republic, or, on the contrary, the elite of the old system continues to play an active, decisive role, or even governs the ongoing processes. The approach of the paper is fundamentally that of political history and it is an analytical one, but also relies on the empirical research into the elites of the past years.

At first the writing attempts to clarify some theoretical issues related to the topic, primarily the one how the massive presence of the old elite, attached to dictatorship, can be approached, and whether there can exist any point of evaluation. Next the author studies the process of the change of the system, the relationship between the old and new elites, the return of the successor party twice to power and its causes, and the attempts of the two right-wing governments to alter power relations along an approach of political history and political sociology. He dwells not only on changes of the political power relations, but on those of the economy, culture and media as well during the past 14 to 15 years, and finally, some theoretical conclusions are also drawn.

GABRIELLA ILONSZKI

DOES ELITE CONTINUITY MATTER?

The article argues for a no. The transformation of the elite can be analysed from four perspectives: as personal continuity (or lack of it), as societal continuity (or lack of it), as structural transformation, and finally as changes in the elite

configuration. This latter dimension is strongly connected to the nature of the entire political system: it supports its consolidated and democratic character when consensually unified elites are in dominant positions.

The author finds that the nature of the elite configuration will answer the questions concerning the regime's low performance and peaking elite conflicts – the most topical issues in Hungary in the past years. While on the surface these problems seem to be connected to personal continuity, this cannot be positively proven. Rather, the whole elite configuration has to be reconsidered. In the process of systemic change it was generally agreed that an elite settlement took place. The author argues that this evaluation has by now been undermined: the actors, the range of issues and the political orientation of the major actors have changed substantially. Thus the elite settlement does not prevail.

Bringing two other elite configuration changes into the focus (the totalitarian Nazi regime's denazification stressing personal continuity and the Spanish elite settlement after the authoritarian period) the author argues that in Hungary neither of the two can be applied with success. Hungary represents a third type, that of post-totalitarianism, in which systemic change brought forward a quasi elite settlement. The leadership, representation and policy deficits that trouble the Hungarian political system and are connected to its low performance for some years cannot be tied to personal continuity issues, rather they have to be connected to the failure of the quasi elite settlement. An understanding of the need towards an elite convergence might ease the current tensions and difficulties.

GYÖRGY LENGYEL

THE CIRCULATION OF THE HUNGARIAN ECONOMIC ELITE IN THE 90S: SLOWING DOWN AND CLOSURE

The replacement of the Hungarian economic elite began before the systemic change. By economic elite it is meant those who can effectively influence the reproductive processes of the national economy with their decisions and are incumbents of relevant institutional positions. Top leaders of great enterprises, banks, economic ministries, as well as members of the economic committees of the Parliament belong here. The empirical surveys about the economic elite are from 1990, 1993 and 1998, which are compared with cadre statistics from the 1980s. The fluctuation of the Hungarian economic elite considerably grew in the latter half of the 1980s. In early 1990, before the elections, the rate of economic leaders promoted to

their posts within a year's time was nearly two-fifths. In the first half of the eighties the rate of such leaders sank below one quarter. Fluctuation was especially large in the ministries and banks. The new elite had novel features as regards its social profile. It was a younger and more closed social formation of higher social prestige than its predecessor. Yet it also had features reminiscent of the preceding elite. It still predominantly consisted of male diploma holders and former party members, although most of them had already quitted the party. Inquiring into where the post of an elite member was previously, one finds that over three-quarters had worked with the same institution or company earlier, too. This is in harmony with the preponderance of the continuous administrative career pattern. In the early phases of the careers, however, inter- and intrasegmental mobility was considerable. To a far greater degree than the average population, the new economic elite was ready to positively evaluate market experience, growing income differences and the meritocratic elements in the selection of leaders. As for the pace and depth of the replacement of the elite, compared to the marked changes in the late 1980s, signs of deceleration and closing down were discerned in the latter half of the nineties.

MÁTÉ SZABÓ

„PEOPLE” VERSUS THE „ELITE MOBILIZATION FRAMES IN HUNGARY BEFORA AND AFTER 1989

Elements of populism gained the momentum within Hungarian political discourse as follows;

-anti-establishment, anti-elite, anti „political class”,
nomenclature orientation

-going with the people, civil society, national and rural plus
ethnic community identity against the „alienated aliens”

-blaming the institutions as elections and parliamentarism,
which manipulated the „popular will”, the need for reviewing
electoral results or even to annihilate them and repeat the
elections

-new forms of organising, building an „Citizen's Alliances” (
Polgári Szövetség) with nation and civil society, where national
and religious symbols play a role, cultural and social
community building to establish hegemony beyond the sphere
of politics in other social subsystems

-remaking the form of the party giving momentum to the
spontaneously developed civic initiative's (polgári körök) on
the one hand, and dissolving the organisational identities of the
centre right parties within a common frame on the other hand.

These elements of populism emerged partly by recalling former experiences, structures and traditions of the anti-Communist dissent- analysed upon the lectures of István Csurka- or referring to Western center right party models in Germany(CDU as a Volkspartei) and Italy(Forza Italia) within Fidesz MPP in 2002. The latter development synthetised these elements already present within the campaign to a political strategy and organisational form within the May 2003 Fidesz party conference calling the party with the new name to express the organisational and strategical alterations within the identification logo a „Fidesz-Hungarian Citizen's Alliance”(Fidesz- Magyar Polgári Szövetség) of the civil society, nation and the center right parties under the strong leadership democracy model of Viktor Orbán and based upon the governing role of Fidesz. This idea of the hegemony of the right based upon one organisational form provoked political discussions, and is at the moment rejected by the two other still existing parties of the Right, MDF and MIÉP: However Hungarian electoral system is majoritarian character may establish the bloc of the right with the hegemony of the Fidesz-Citizen's Alliance , „Polgári Szövetség” despite of the political will of these parties.

Consequently, Fidesz as opposition mobilist party moved to the side of the „Euroscpticists” with the MIÉP, which rejected the Europeanisation, meanwhile MDF upheald its partisanship for the EU developed already earlier. What we may result, is that in Hungary there is an influent opposition party with right wing populist character, combining the tradition of the anti-Communist dissent with the new forms of populism in Western democracies. Fidesz this way will move on the equilibrium between populist mobilisation and democratisation and Europeanisation. First is a supply for its voters identified with the „citizen's”(polgárok) second is the demand from the EU, NATO and OECD countries, where Hungary seek for stable membership and support. At the moment the Left seems to be more successfully combining populism and Westernism, than the Right, but this may change under the uncalculable and unintended social consequences of EU accession or during the pressures of the so called New World Order of the USA, and than nationalism, populism from the Right could be the winning alternative with much less approval from the NATO and the EU.