

András Láncki

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? TRACING POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

The essay is seeking an answer to the perplexity of the notion of political responsibility. Since the idea of political responsibility is a modern one, one may wonder whether political responsibility has a meaning of its own compared to the ideas of constitutional impeachment and penalty of perjury in general. The author claims that only personal responsibility does have a domain of meaning despite the many arguments between supporters of personal and collective responsibility. A central concern of the author of this essay is that what is called political responsibility is a transformation of the personal responsibility into a blurred meaning under modern constitutional arrangements which are prone to dissolve personal responsibility among many by limiting political decision-making of the political leader for the sake of democratic rule.

Zoltán Miklósi

POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

The aim of the present paper is to offer an interpretation of the practice of holding people politically responsible. The starting point of the analysis is a widely accepted concept of moral responsibility, which is of the view that holding someone responsible for something means that the thing in question may be rightfully taken into account in the moral assessment of the person. Analogously, it may be maintained that to hold a political leader politically responsible for some condition means that the condition in question may be rightfully taken into account in the political assessment of that person. Under the circumstances of democratic politics, the "political assessment" of a person may be understood in two dimensions. First, how successful he is in achieving his goals within the existing political framework, and second, to what extent his conduct helps maintain the existing democratic framework. A negative judgement in the first dimension implies that the person is not fit for his office, while a negative judgement in the second dimension means that he is not worthy of the office.

Attila Károly Molnár

IRRESPONSIBLE DEMOCRACY

The paper focuses on responsibility in modern democracy understood as an egalitarian political society. Roughly speaking there three self-interpretations of egalitarian regimes are the contractualist, the mutualist and the scientism-

based ones. The common rhetoric of egalitarian people combines them in such a way that eliminates personal responsibilities. Without hierarchical decision makers (*forum externum*) responsibility cannot be decided, as one may learn from the ancient wisdom: *nemo iudex in causa sua*. Therefore, democracy may contain responsibility only if there are no egalitarian relations or conscience (*forum externum*). Democracy may fulfil several hopes of its believers, but responsibility is not among them. It seems to fall back upon non-democratic/non-egalitarian supporting institutions and phenomena.

Gábor Dobos

SHIFT AT THE MIDDLE LEVEL – THE EFFECTS OF THE 2010 LOCAL
ELECTORAL REFORM ON COUNTY GOVERNMENTS

Electoral rules have always been amongst the most significant components of a political system: they mirror the principles of legislators in terms of what they want to become. This is the most important feature of the system. The case of the Hungarian system of local governments is not different. One of the most important goals in the creation of the new electoral law in 1990 was that local politics should represent locality and national politics at the same time. The aim of this paper is to show how county level politics has changed due to a seemingly minor alteration in the local electoral rules, and concludes that merging the constituencies of the municipalities with a number of inhabitants below and above 10,000 results in the growth of the gap between the county and the local society as well as the institutionalization of the reign of national parties in the middle level of the political system.

Norbert Kohlheb – György Pataki

SKIRMISHES AT THE BORDER STRONGHOLDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The organisational structure of implementing environmental policy has undergone major restructuring in the last decade in Hungary. These changes influenced, to a great extent, both the internal organisational structure of environmental authorities and the scope of duties as well as the working conditions of street-level bureaucrats. The present research analyses the changing working conditions of street-level bureaucrats in Hungarian environmental policy making using a descriptive ex-post public policy analysis framework. Emphasis is placed on the characteristics of the process of implementation and factors producing gaps in implementation in Hungarian environmental policy making.

Dániel Róna – Ildikó Sós

BEYOND THE SPATIAL MODEL. SECONDARY PREFERENCES
AT THE 2010 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

The aim of this article is to demonstrate the merits and limits of the Downsian spatial model in the explanation of secondary party preference. Using empirical evidence from the 2010 Hungarian elections the empirical relevance of the left-right scale is investigated. The paper seeks to answer the questions as to what extent does the left-right position of the favourite and the second favourite party influence secondary voter's choice? What factors can cause the irrelevance of the uni-dimensional scale (e.g. the simultaneous support of two distant parties, such as Jobbik and MSZP or Jobbik and LMP in the Hungarian perspective).

In the first part of the study we develop theoretical considerations which may overrule the logic of the uni-dimensional model. In the empirical analysis using survey and aggregate data we conclude that the applicability of the spatial model depends primarily on satisfaction with the government.