

ABSTRACTS

Balázs Kiss

EVENT, NETWORK, SEMIOTICS. ON THE POSSIBILITY OF WRITING THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

The paper presents the theoretical and methodological bases of the research project Political Communication in Hungary, 1990 to 2015. The objective of the project is to give a historical description of the advancement of political communication for the past twenty-five years. The method defines events, endogenous or exogenous ruptures in everyday politics, as the specific triggering points for communications processes, in which the political agents and communities are eager to restore the normal ways of politics. The analyses will search for referential and discursive networks in the communications upon events. Together with social semiotic research, the network analyses will lead to the mapping of political communities within the overarching Hungarian political community.

Keywords: Political communication, social semiotics, communication history

Gabriella Szabó

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY

This paper contributes to the research project entitled 'Political communication in Hungary, 1990-2015' by revising our notion of community from the viewpoint of political communication. In order to do so, at first I discuss the three main theoretical traditions of social science that are committed to comprehending the relationship between community and communication, namely the Habermasian concept of deliberation, symbolic interactionism and network analysis. After the critical review of the literature, I attempt to sketch a new conceptual framework for an understanding of the community of political communication. The article argues that the practices of social semiotics and dense interaction ties have constructed distinctively separate communities of political communication in Hungary over the past two decades. The study concludes with an agenda for future research in which the integrative and disin-

egrative capacities of politics can be analysed throughout the political communication.

Keywords: Political communication, community, interaction, Hungary.

Márton Bene

COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS AND POLITICAL COMMUNITY. THE USE OF METHODS OF NETWORK ANALYSIS IN THE RESEARCH INTO THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION ABSTRACT

The purpose of the paper is to present how network methods can be applied in the research of the history of political communication and political communities. The study analyses the communication networks of public debate surrounding the so-called “Csurka-study” published in 1992. A total of 168 actors’ referential, discursive and channel usage links were examined, by which it was discovered that the Hungarian public had been largely integrated in this period. The integration was primarily due to the key actors, to the excessive attention of the public as well as to the excluding discourse with respect to Csurka’s study dominating the public debate. A parallel tendency was that commenters more permissive towards the Csurka-study were expelled to the periphery of the public. Under the integrated public, however, the contours of three discursive proto-communities appeared, making the fissions of the community represented by the MDF party visible.

Keywords: Political community, radical right, Csurka-study, network analysis, integration, discursive network, political communication

Zsuzsanna Mihályffy –Márton Bene – Fruzsina Nábelek
NETWORK ANALYSIS AND CAMPAIGN RESEARCH

Our paper is aims at analysing the communications scenario preceding the 1994 general elections in Hungary, as part of the “Political Communication 1990–2015” research project. The project approaches the history of political communication through the political community and uses network analysis as its main method. According to our first results, the Hungarian political community was homogeneous on the level of interactions (cluster-free and cohesive network), but on the level of discourse two proto-communities emerged,

a right wing and a leftist-liberal one, with a group of other actors bridging between the two. From a campaign studies' perspective, our results echo previous ones, showing that in the '94 campaign politicians had a lead role in communication, and the media only operated as a channel for the political actors, but less so as an actor, and non-politicians had a minor voice in communication compared to politicians as well.

Keywords: Campaign studies, network analysis, political communication, community, dis-course, Hungary

András Bíró-Nagy

CAREER PATHS OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN MEPS. POLITICAL EXPERIENCE
AND CAREER AMBITIONS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The article investigates the career paths of Central European Members of the European Parliament. Based on the analysis of biographies and the results of a quantitative survey research about career ambitions with MEPs from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the paper both outlines the career paths that lead to the European Parliament and the perspectives for a career after the EP mandate. The research proves that the Central European MEPs are more strongly linked to national politics than the MEPs of the EU-15, and they are even more embedded in their country of origin than the MEPs of the first directly elected EP were in 1979. However, local politics is a much less frequent recruitment base for future MEPs in Central Europe than in the "old Member States". The political experience and career ambitions of Central European MEPs prove the popular myth wrong, according to which the European Parliament is essentially a retirement home for politicians who have no future political goals. The development of a supranational elite has started in all five countries between 2004 and 2014. The majority of Central European MEPs plan further career steps at European or national level, and only approximately one third of them can be considered as "European pensioners".

Keywords: European Union, European Parliament, elite research, career paths, Central European MEPS

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