Invitation and program (14/01/2021)

International Workshop:

Revisiting Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Contemporary Europe

Date: 27–29 January 2021
Place: virtual workshop on zoom
Keynote speaker: Professor Herbert Kitschelt, George V. Allen Distinguished Professor of International Relations, Duke University, North Carolina, USA

Workshop theme:

What is the nature of citizen-politician linkages in the 21st century? This question is highly relevant today due to the crisis of representative democracy, decreasing trust in political elites and democratic institutions. At the same time, established parties are faced with the threat of populism. Ideologically footloose voters and the weakening of traditional cleavage structures undermine programmatic appeals typical for the post-War era in Europe. In an era of rapid economic changes and globalization that cut across national boundaries, the linkage mechanism between the represented and their representatives are transforming.

Herbert Kitschelt challenged previous research that posited the programmatic linkage to be the only mechanism capable of safeguarding accountability and responsiveness. Reflecting on the challenges of the globalized economy, dealignment, and the welfare state crisis, Kitschelt has shown how, in the absence of a functioning welfare state, clientelistic linkage can functionally substitute programmatic ties, especially in new democracies. The third – charismatic linkage – outlined by Kitchelt is brought to the fore by the recent rise of populism. Populists build personalized linkages with voters using direct forms of online communication to foster a closer relationship with the people that bypasses traditional political parties. Populists create an illusion of responsiveness while simultaneously eroding accountability.

The workshop focuses on the nature of citizen-politician linkages. The core and the principal reference point is the book *Post-communist party systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-party Cooperation* by Herbert Kitschelt, Herbert, Zdenka Mansfeldova, Radoslaw Markowski, and Gabor Toka. The book, published in 1999, examined the dynamic of citizen politician linkages in Eastern Europe. The workshop reflects on and revisits the events of two decades that have passed since the publication of this book through the lenses of citizen politician linkages. It brings together the book's authors and other Central European politics scholars to reflect on the book's legacy, impact, and relevance for today's research.

Information:

The workshop is held online, in English, and registration is free. Given the time difference between the USA and Europe, it is held in three blocks over three days.

The workshop is organized by Dr. Zdenka Mansfeldová and Dr. Petra Guasti.

For free registration, please direct your requests, including institutional affiliation and email contact, to zdenka.mansfeldova@soc.cas.cz and petraguasti@googlemail.com

The event is supported by the Strategy AV21 of the Czech Academy of Sciences, research program No. 15 – Global Conflicts and Local Interactions: Cultural and Social Challenges.

Program:

27/1/2021 (Wednesday)

14.00 Welcome
Zdenka Mansfeldova, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

14.05–14.20 Introduction of the Keynote Speaker
Lenka Bustikova, Arizona State University

14.20–15.45 Keynote and Discussion
Party Systems in Transition to Knowledge Societies
Global Trends and Specific Challenges in Post-Communist East-Central Europe
Herbert P. Kitschelt, George V. Allen Distinguished Professor, Duke University

15.45–16.00 Break

16–17.30 Panel I. Contemporary Challenges to Party Systems
Chair: Zdenka Mansfeldova, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences
Discussant: Martin Brusis, Munich

Turning Symbolic Linkage to Programmatic: An Authoritarian Dividend
Gabor Toka, Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives, Central European University

Linkage and Political Representation: Orthodoxy, Innovations, or Paradigmatic Shift?
Radek Markowski, SWPS, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw

Dynamics of Newness in the Slovak Party System
Oľga Gyárfášová, Comenius University in Bratislava & Peter Učeň

From Heaven to Hell? An Attempt to Explain the Czech Social Democratic Party Decline
Michel Perottino, Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Anti-establishment and Euroscepticism: Bulgarian Far-right 2005–2019
Dragomir Stoyanov, University of Sussex & Plamen Ralchev, University of National and World Economy

Global Conflicts and Local Interactions — Research Programme, Strategy AV21, The Czech Academy of Sciences

INSTITUT POLITOLOGICKÝCH STUDIÍ
Fakulta sociálních věd
Univerzita Karlova

Institute of Sociology
Czech Academy of Sciences

28/1/2021 (Thursday)

14.00–15.00 Book Talk and Discussion
Chair: Zdenka Mansfeldova, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences
Michal Klima, Metropolitan University Prague
Informal Politics in Post-Communist Europe: Political Parties, Clientelism and State Capture

15.00–15.15 Break

15.15–17.00 Panel II. Challenger Parties and their Linkages: New Wine in Old Bottles?
Chair: Michel Perottino, Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University
Discussant: Petra Guasti, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

Populist Parties, Digital Platforms, and Dynamic Representation: Exploring the Five Star Movement's "Geometry" of Representation Mandate
Francesca Feo, Scuola Normale Superiore; Lorenzo Mosca, University of Milan; Davide Vittori, Universitè Libre de Bruxelles

An Easy Way to Make up a Party
Jana Reschová, Faculty of Law, Charles University of Prague

Differentiation, Convergence, or Non-Programmatism? Performance Failures, Representation Gaps and the Formation of New Political Parties
Raimondas Ibenskas, University of Bergen

29/1/2021 (Friday)

14.00–16.00 Round Table Discussion Transformation and the Future of Party Systems
Moderator: Petra Guasti, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

Panelists:
- Fernando Casal Bertoa, University of Nottingham and Zsolt Enyedi, Central European University/ Oxford University, as a Leverhulme Visiting Professor
  Party System Closure: Alliances and Innovations in Europe between 1848 and 2019
- Mattia Zulianello, University of Birmingham
  Anti-System Parties: From Parliamentary Breakthrough to Government
- Lenka Bustikova, Arizona State University
  Extreme reactions: Radical right mobilization in eastern Europe

16.00–16.15 break

16.15–17.00 Closing Discussion& Outlook

Abstracts:

Panel I. Contemporary Challenges to Political Parties and Party Systems

Turning Symbolic Linkage to Programmatic: An Authoritarian Dividend
Gabor Toka, Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives, Central European University

It has often been noted that policy differentiation (and hence programmatic competition) between parties remained rather limited in the 1990–2010 democratic period (Kitschelt et al. 1999; Benoit and Laver 2006). While polarization on some socio-cultural issues remained strong – and thus they could be seen as "dimensions of identification" (Sani and Sartori 1983) or symbolic politics (Edelman 1965) –, major questions of public policy with substantial and tangible impact rarely generated easily identifiable and persistent policy divides that would prove salient for the electorate. After ten years of authoritarian rule, though, the beginnings of comprehensive, significant, ideologically anchored, and probably salient differences between government and opposition are emerging exactly at a time when policy-orientation seems at an all-time low among politicians, and at least one of the two rival sides seems particularly fragmented along ideological lines. I argue that the explanation lays in frequent wholesale alterations between government and opposition in the democratic area having undermined, and a period of authoritarian government having enhanced the prospects for programmatic competition. Authoritarian government, in particular, allowed the same side stay in power for an extended period of time to implement ideologically colored and comprehensive changes in the policy status quo with a much reduced need for accommodating a wide range of opinions and groups in the electorate, and focus merely on reinforcing loyalties in an ideologically ever-more-isolated minority of the electorate.
Meanwhile, the authoritarian regime forced the ideologically fragmented opposition to unite while depriving it from access to many means of successfully appealing for electoral support. In the end, in lieu of better alternatives and under compelling incentives to pull out a programmatic appeal to the electorate, the opposition converged around a programmatic platform that has weak routes in symbolic politics but offers a distinct and coherent policy alternative to the status quo along most fundamental dimensions of public policy. What is less obvious is whether this bipolar programmatic differentiation can possibly be sustained should the authoritarian framework for elections disappear.

Linkage and Political Representation: Orthodoxy, Innovations, or Paradigmatic Shift?
Radek Markowski, SWPS, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw

The paper is speculative-analytical and derives from the author's personal dissatisfaction with traditional attempts at explaining the linkage, political representation, and vote choice in Poland (and CEE) in the last decade. The concept and the phenomenon of political linkage and political representation assume two entities exist and interact – the representative and the represented. We are currently faced with acute problems applying the traditional way of depicting this "basic bond." First, parties have changed; voters too. The paper will discuss in detail how these two core entities of the linkage bond have changed. The scope of change in the contextual factors (cultural/civilizational) is of unrecorded magnitude from the past, ranging from the impact of social media, AI and labor market shifts, new life-styles to the more overarching problem of "Anthropocene"-driven challenges.

Dynamics of Newness in the Slovak Party System
Oľga Gyárfášová, Comenius University in Bratislava & Peter Učeň

The breakthrough publication Post-Communist Party Systems did not cover the Slovakian case. As for the other Visegrad countries, the authors concluded: "Whereas Hungary, and to some extent Poland, develop a consensual democracy with centripetal competition around key issues of economic policy making but highly polarizing inter-party competition around socio-cultural issues, the Czech Republic produces a more competitive democracy with significant party divisions over economics ...." (p. 403) During the first post-communist decade, Slovakia lacked the programmatic competition and was characterized by a dominant conflict between political liberalism and authoritarianism. Later development within the Visegrad Four countries was anything but linear and even countries with favorable conditions in the early years witnessed backlashes to the democratic consolidation. Slovakia's party system has been characterized by "stabile instability" - known for the frequent emergence and breakthrough of new parties. Except for 2006, in all elections since 1998, including the latest one in 2020, parties created shortly before elections succeeded in passing the threshold of parliamentary representation. The paper aims at exploring several generations of new political actors from several perspectives: features of political projects, resources, political opportunity structure, and linkages between them and their voters. The paper focuses on Slovakia's path to the party system 30 years after, however, with some generalizations to other post-communist democracies in the region.

From Heaven to Hell? An attempt to explain the Czech Social Democratic Party Decline
Michel Perottino, Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

The Czech social democratic Party (ČSSD) is facing the most important crisis until its rebirth thirty years ago. This crisis is evident if we remember the electoral results in the last parliamentary elections in 2017 when the party gets only 7,27 %. It is the worst result since 1992 based on the votes the Social-democrats get (the percentage is better comparing to 1992, but the number of votes is significantly weaker). This critical situation is commonly linked to the visible and very loud internal intra-party dissent and the concurrence of the Andrej Babiš' movement ANO 2011 (with a better electoral strategy and dominance in the media and social media). The problem of the ČSSD has nevertheless to be linked to some other facts and factors of crisis, maybe less visible, but no less critical. We have to take into account also the changes that occurred in the Czech society, notably leading or linked to the voters' dealignment and depoliticization, but also the more general weak linkage between citizens and politics (especially the political parties), the personalization of the politics and, last but not least, the relation to its former president, Miloš Zeman.

Anti-establishment and Euroscepticism: Bulgarian far-right 2005-2019
Dragomir Stoyanov, University of Sussex & Plamen Ralchev, University of National and World Economy

Some scholars (Mudde 2004; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008) argue that in the CEE countries, we can witness a combination of an anti-establishment and Eurosceptic critique toward the political figures at both national and European levels. According to Mudde (2004: 7), political entrepreneurs in CEE would try to politicize the existing socio-economic and socio-cultural differences, pointing to the EU as a "perfect external enemy to give…a classical populist spin." This argument has been supported in the case of Bulgaria, where the nationalist-EU divide is taking more space in the last several years (Zankina 2017). Thus, the paper explores the process of emergence and development of anti-

establishment and Eurosceptic political positions of some of the most influential Bulgarian far-right political parties (Ataka, NFSB, VMRO-BND). The paper's conclusions are based on party manifestos analysis, party leader's speeches, expert interviews, and election surveys for 2005-2019. The paper

finds that the expressed anti-establishment and Euroskepticism of Bulgarian far-right political parties in part is a result of their strategic political considerations and in part of their ideological profiles.

Book Talk and Discussion

Informal politics in post-communist Europe: Political parties, clientelism and state capture.
Michal Klima, Metropolitan University Prague

This book offers a fascinating, thought-provoking, and groundbreaking study of post-communist political life. It is published just as the countries of Central and Eastern Europe mark thirty years since gaining freedom and have embarked on the path of democracy. This book is one of the first full-length academic works to explore how informal structures, headed by bosses, godfathers, and oligarchs, affect formal party politics and democracy. The unique post-communist transition is observed as a specific historical moment of disorder, offering a window of opportunity for the large-scale exploitation of public resources in the sense of a kind of "Klondike Gold Rush." Phenomena of corruption, clientelism, patronage, party capture and state capture are topical themes that are deeply explored. This text will be of key interest to scholars and students of Central and Eastern European politics, democratization, transitional societies, clientelism, party systems, and, more broadly of comparative and European politics.

Panel II. Challenger Parties and their Linkages: New Wine in Old Bottles?

Populist parties, digital platforms, and dynamic representation: Exploring the Five Star Movement's "geometry" of representation mandate.
Francesca Feo, Scuola Normale Superiore; Lorenzo Mosca, University of Milan; Davide Vittori, Universitè Libre de Bruxelles

Populist parties depict themselves as the true and only representatives of the people's will and promise to transform politics by making it closer and more responsive to citizens' demands. The paper provides and empirical account of the representation practices of the Five Star Movement, a case of successful populist parties which relies significantly on digital tools (the platform Rousseau) to restore the transmission belt between citizens and representatives. Building on a revisited understanding of the "party mandate model" we explore the extent to which FSM representatives have received voters and members' demands in their political agenda, using an original dataset including all members' and MPs' law proposals advanced on the Rousseau platform between 2013 and 2019, as well as national party manifestos. Our results show that FSM MPs were only partially responsive to voters' priorities as well as moderately consistent with members' proposals. These results, on the one hand, help us assess the potential impact of digital platform in the representation process; on the other hand, they help to advance our knowledge on how, in deeds, populist parties contribute – or not – to restoring the linkage between citizens and the political elites.

An Easy Way to Make up a Party
Jana Reschová, Faculty of Law, Charles University of Prague

Democracy without parties appears to be a byproduct of populists' strategies going hand in hand with the calling for direct access to the politics and decision-making channels. It strongly impacts institutions originally based on strong political parties linked to stable partisanship, party loyalty, and established party leadership. The post-1989 times were largely open for initiatives enhanced by frequently held elections for newly established parties, movements, or electoral groupings whose life expectancy

proved to be rather brief. A question that comes to an institutionalist's mind is whether possible explanations may not reside in an easy way to start a party. Procedural, legal, and program manifesto aspects are considered to determine how much the populism emerging in the institutions may hamper the decision-making process and its legitimacy.

Differentiation, Convergence, or Non-Programmatism? Performance Failures, Representation Gaps and the Formation of New Political Parties
Raimondas Ibenskas, University of Bergen

Do new political parties in younger democracies emerge to respond to the representational and performance failures of established parties? This research argues that voters' representational and performance concerns encourage the formation of distinct types of new parties. On the one hand, the perceptions of new party elites of representational gaps lead to the entry of new parties that differentiate their ideological positions from established parties. On the other hand, voter discontent about the performance of existing parties triggers the formation of new parties that either adopt similar ideological positions to those of established parties or have a limited emphasis of ideology. The findings from 10 countries in Central and Eastern Europe in the period between 2000 and 2020 that build on a new dataset on new party entry, expert surveys on parties' policy, and several cross-national voter survey datasets largely support these expectations.

Round Table Discussion Transformation and the Future of Party Systems

Party System Closure: Alliances and Innovations in Europe between 1848 and 2019
Fernando Casal Bertoa, University of Nottingham and Zsolt Enyedi, Central European University/ Oxford University, as a Leverhulme Visiting Professor
Forthcoming in 2021 Oxford: Oxford University Press

The book maps trends in interparty relations in Europe from 1848 until 2019. It investigates how the length of democratic experience, the institutionalization of individual parties, the fragmentation of parliaments, and the support for anti-establishment parties, shape the degree of institutionalization of party systems. The analyses presented answer the questions of whether predictability in partisan interactions is necessary for the survival of democratic regimes and whether it improves or undermines the quality of democracy. The developments of party politics at the elite level are contrasted with the dynamics of voting behavior. The comparisons of distinct historical periods and macro-regions provide a comprehensive picture of the European history of party competition and cooperation. The empirical overview presented in the book is based on a novel conceptual framework. The book's central concept, party system closure, is operationalized with data on the party composition of more than a thousand European governments. Party systems are analyzed in terms of poles and blocs, and the degree of closure and polarisation is related to a new party system typology. The book demonstrates that information collected from partisan interactions at the time of government formation can reveal changes that characterize the party system as a whole. The empirical results confirm that the Cold War period (1945-1989) was exceptionally stable, while the post-Berlin-Wall era shows signs of disintegration, although more at the level of voters than at the level of elites. After three decades of democratic politics in Europe (1990-2019), the West and the South are looking increasingly like the East, especially in terms of the level of party de-institutionalization. The West and the South are becoming more polarised than the East. However, in terms of parliamentary fragmentation, the South and the East's party systems are converging, while the West is diverging from the rest with its increasingly high number of parties. As far as our central concept, party system closure, is concerned, thanks to the East's gradual stabilization process and the recent de-institutionalization in the West and South, the regional differences are declining.

Anti-System Parties: From Parliamentary Breakthrough to Government
Mattia Zulianello, University of Birmingham
Routledge 2019

This book adopts an innovative conceptualization and analytical framework to study anti-system parties and represents the first monograph ever published on the topic. It features empirical research using original data and combining large-N QCA analyses with a wide range of in-depth case studies from 18 Western European countries. The book adopts a party-centric approach to the study of anti-system formations by focusing on the major turning points faced by such actors after their initial success: long-term electoral sustainability, the different integration modalities at the systemic level, and the electoral impact of the transition to government. The author examines, in particular, the interplay between crucial elements of the internal supply-side of anti-system parties, such as their organizational and ideological features, and the political opportunity structure. Anti-System Parties is a major contribution to the literature on populism, anti-establishment parties, and comparative political parties.

Extreme Reactions: Radical Right Mobilization in Eastern Europe
Lenka Bustikova, Arizona State University
Cambridge University Press 2019

Focusing on the rising support for the populist right in Eastern Europe, this book examines how anger and resentment towards minorities is being utilized in politics. Bustikova details the process by which the acquisition of political power and demand for rights by ascendant minority groups precipitates a backlash of mobilization from the radical right. However, this book also argues that prejudice against minorities is not a sentiment exclusive to right-wing voters and is not the root cause of increasing support for the radical right. Rather, this study reveals variation in how minorities are accommodated by the government and explain the electoral successes and failures of radical right parties. By examining the capitalization on these feelings of discontent towards politically assertive minorities and the governmental policies that yield to their demands, Bustikova exposes volatile, zeitgeist-dependent conditions under which once-fringe right-wing parties have risen to prominent but precarious positions of power.