ABSTRACTS

Viktor Kiss

POLITICS IN THE AGE OF THE SPECTACLE. THE CRISIS OF GUY DEBORD’S, JEAN BAUDRILLARD’S AND DOUGLAS KELLNER’S APPEARANCE AND REALITY MODEL OF IDEOLOGY

According to the starting point of the paper the problematique of the ‘crisis of reality’ occupies a central place among the causes of the growing uncertainty of radical social criticism today. One of the number one pillars of radical social criticism has been the model of appearance and reality of ideology in political theory. Accordingly appearance was an ideological concept: originally it meant those experiences, thoughts, images and senses on which the illusions of the given age are built about itself; and they played an important role in the maintenance of hegemonic and unjust social, economic and political conditions. This approach had acquired great popularity even in circles of the broader intellectuals in social sciences as well as in theories dealing with politics. Its attractiveness was due to the fact that the hopes of radical politics were also linked to intellectually mapping reality and to its strength in exposition, namely to the assumption that sooner or later the facts and processes of Reality written in capital letters would break up the rule of the ‘reality of appearance’, the common social illusion built in the name of appearance. During the past decades the attractiveness of the appearance-reality model of ideology has spectacularly decreased in social sciences, which I think has three reasons. First: the epistemological scepticism of the post-modern in relation to the possibility of fully discovering reality. Second: the interpretative turn in social theory which has placed the analysis of discursive and imaginary and meaning formations ‘independent’ of reality, in the centre of the theory of ideology instead of the covering up and construction of reality. In the present paper I wish to focus on the third major component or the growing uncertainty of the appearance-reality model of the criticism of ideology. Accordingly the general faith in the strength of exposition was lost, in other words the conviction has become stronger that ‘something had happened’ with reality in late capitalism/post-modern societies. In this writing I wish to present the theoretical innovations of Guy Debord, Jean Baudrillard and Douglas Kellner in connection with the issues of reality becoming problematic. I am in quest for an answer to the question how the relationship of reality and appearance can be reworded according to their ideas. The paper primarily concentrates on the aspects of political theory of their writings: according to the main thesis of the paper the
ABSTRACTS

primarily objective of Debord, Baudrillard and Kellner was to make the appearance-reality model of ideology suited to help understand the processes and operations of politics in their own age, and to lay the new foundation of radical politics possible on its basis.

Keywords: Ideology, appearance-reality, post-modern politics, post-modern capitalism, hegemony, media politics, Marxism, consumer society

Zsófi a Papp

DISADVANTAGE OF INCUMBENTS, LOCAL LINKAGES AND PERSON-MOTIVATED VOTE IN HUNGARY

This article aims at determining how factors strengthening votes given to individuals such as incumbency and local political experience influence the proportion of votes given to individual candidates in Hungary between 1994 and 2010. Although these factors do not change power relations between parties, multilevel regression analysis shows that no matter how party-centred politics is, voters still appreciate local connection and experience. Oddly, instead of helping candidates to increase their vote share, incumbency appears as a disadvantage at elections. The trial-and-error tactics of Hungarian voters lead them not only to punish governments, but single-member district representatives too.

Keywords: Candidates, elections, personal vote, local background, incumbency

Péter Bajomi-Lázár

BETWEEN NEUTRALITY AND ENGAGEMENT: POLITICAL JOURNALISM IN HUNGARY

After the political transformation in 1989–1990, Hungarian journalist organisations and media policy makers have made several attempts to introduce the norms and practices of neutrality-seeking journalism; however, most news outlets continued to offer committed accounts of political events and issues. Why was the professionalisation of journalism interrupted? This paper attempts to answer this question by, first, offering an overview of the literature on comparative media systems in search of the factors shaping journalism practices and, then, by placing Hungary on the map of media systems. Finally, it argues that the dominance of different journalism practices in different countries may be explained, in addition to the historical factors listed in the literature, by different audience needs, with the public in transitionary societies seeking confirmation rather than information when using the media.

Keywords: Audience needs, media systems, media rituals, objectivity, professionalisation, journalism
ABSTRACTS

Márton Bene

VIRAL POLITICS. CITIZEN’S RE-ACTIVITY ON FACEBOOK PAGES OF CANDIDATES

The study examines what kind of content can trigger reactions from followers on candidates’ Facebook pages. In the age of social media the communication of citizens has been more appreciated, because their potential reach has dramatically expanded. Now, politicians are not only seeking to trigger reactions from mass media, but the communicative, interactive citizens have also become important for them. Facebook has become a crucial campaign tool, despite the fact that most politicians are followed only by small, likely partisan segments of their voters. Politicians, however, can reach the wider Facebook public even through triggering continuous reactions from this small number of followers. As citizens’ communication and reactivity work differently from mass media reactivity, this shift in the focus may change the nature of political communication. Therefore understanding the way citizens react to and communicate about politics on social media is important. The database contains all Facebook posts of the three of the most voted candidates from all single-member districts. That means a total of 7048 Facebook posts of 183 candidates. The unit of analysis is the individual Facebook post and the dependent variables are number of likes, comments and shares they get. The independent variables are the structural (text, picture, video, etc.) and the substantial (content, emotional tone, etc.) characteristics of the post controlling general follower-activity score on politicians’ Facebook pages. The results show inter alia that textuality remains pivotal even in Facebook-context and politics have become visible in front of the wider Facebook public mostly from its negative side.

Keywords: political communication, social media, Facebook, interaction, campaign

Norbert Merkovity

THE PHENOMENON OF SELF-MEDIATISATION IN THE ONLINE POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Analysing the use of social networking sites in the world of politics is an opportunity to learn the relationship between politicians’ communication and mediatisation. Mediatisation – which is referred to by some researchers as a “still unfolding historical project” (Livingstone, 2009: 7) – is a complex phenomenon, and a tool in the hands of politicians (Brants et al., 2010; Strömbäck, 2008). The mainstream of the European school typically interprets the theoretical foundations of the concept, however, by doing this we lose the possibilities of practical examination of mediatisation. The empirical research presented in this study is intended to prove that politicians are able to ‘domesticate’ the process of mediatisation on social networking sites, and while they are doing this they create the phenomenon of self-mediatisation. With the
content analysis of 53,381 Facebook and Twitter posts I compared the communication of parliamentary representatives of ten countries in the article. The following countries are involved in the project: Australia, Austria, Croatia, Canada, Hungary, Ireland, Montenegro, Switzerland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. The outcome of the research explains politicians’ self-mediatisation through self-broadcasting. The results of the comparative study also provide opportunity for further observation. One observation is the similarities and differences between the analysed countries’ parliamentary representatives. I reveal the common denominator of politicians who are using social networking sites. The limits of the research do not allow to fully explain the quality and characteristics of online political discourse. However, it is able to outline the trends that define politicians’ communication on social networking sites, and which may be an important starting point for future research carried out on the same subject.

**Keywords:** Political communication, self-mediatisation, comparative study, parliamentary representatives, Westminster countries, Continental countries

Ervin Csizmadia

**TRANSITOLGY IS OVER, SHALL WE FORGET IT? ‘COLLATERAL’ THEORIES AND LESSONS OF TRANSITION**

The essay focuses on answering the question of what happened to transitology, the main narrative of the 1989–90 process of democratization, after it prevailed. The theory lasted for just one decade and already at the beginning of the millennium Thomas Carothers declared the end of transitology. However, many things happened between its birth and demise. This essay aims to map this intermediate phase, as well as to present two experiments for the theoretical adaptation of transitology: the theories concerning the foundation and consolidation of institutions, and those concerning the creation of hybrid and illiberal regimes. The analysis would like to call attention to the fact that the theories of the period of transition were far from identical, they went through serious changes during the 90s. These changes however came about not outside of the trend, but within, therefore the approach of the founding theory pervades these pieces of writing. In some places the essay refers to criticisms incurred by transition theories, nevertheless, these are external critiques of transitology, therefore the essay only speaks of these tangentially. The author comes to the conclusion that though transitology has run out of wind, the theoretical and attitudinal lessons of it remain largely unprocessed to this day.

**Keywords:** Transitology, Consolidation, Institutions, competitive authoritarianism, illiberal democracy
CONTENTS

POLITICS AND SOCIAL CRITICISM

- Kiss, Viktor: Politics in the Age of the Spectacle
  (The Crisis of Guy Debord’s, Jean Baudrillard’s and Douglas Kellner’s appearance and reality model of ideology) ........................................... 7

WHO DOES VOTES ADDRESS?

- Papp, Zsófi a: Disadvantage of Incumbents (Local Linkages and Person-motivated Vote in Hungary) ........................................... 31

POLITICS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Bajomi-Lázár, Péter: Between Neutrality and Engagement
  (Political Journalism in Hungary) ........................................... 59
- Bene, Márton: Viral Politics. (Citizen’s Re-activity
  on Facebook Pages of Candidates) ........................................... 84
- Merkovity, Norbert: The Phenomenon of Self-Mediatisation
  in the Online Political Communication ........................................... 111

LOOKING OUT

- Csizmadia, Ervin: Transitology is Over, Shall We Forget It?
  (‘Collateral’ Theories and Lessons of Transition) ........................................... 135

BOOK REVIEW

- Flick, László: ’Intelligent Globalisation’ – The Dissolution of a Paradox
  (Dani Rodrik: The Globalisation Paradox. Democracy and the Future of World Economy) ........................................... 157

BOOK WATCH ........................................... 163

ABSTRACTS ........................................... 167