
ABSTRACTS

ENYEDI, ZSOLT

PARTY SYSTEM AND POLITICAL CONSOLIDATION

Serious doubts exist as to whether political parties are playing a positive role in the consolidation of the Hungarian political regime. In order to evaluate the parties' actual performance, this paper identifies the ways in which parties and party systems may contribute to the well ordered functioning of the political regime, and conceptualizes and operationalizes the process of political institutionalization. Nine dimensions of institutionalization are singled out: elite support, pattern of party competition, organization, adaptability, autonomy, civic support, monopolization of social and political functions, penetration into external subsystems and party-friendly institutional environment. All these dimensions are linked to empirically observable indicators. The model emphasizes trends over time, the intentions of parties and the constraints they face. The scheme incorporates the rules which shape the environment of parties, hypothesizing that these are good reflections of the parties' efforts to obtain a strong position in the political system. While the links of parties to socio-demographic groups are deemed to have secondary importance, their power position vis-à-vis other political agents is given greater weight.

The second part of the paper applies the re-defined concept of party system institutionalization to Hungary. The results show that the Hungarian parties are autonomous and relatively well institutionalized, able to control the power structures surrounding them. The parties have placed themselves in a position from which they can shape the crucial social and political processes of their country, and they use this power to impose a sui generis partisan order on the society. The weakest point of Hungarian parties is that they can't yet control their electorate. The main strategy of the parties to have a firmer grip on their voters is not organisational but ideological by nature.

HUORANSZKI, FERENC

CONTRACTUALISM AND POLITICAL OBLIGATIONS

This paper attempts to answer the question whether the philosophical problem of political obligations can be solved with the help of contractualist arguments. Early modern contractualists, like Hobbes and Locke, used contractual arguments to justify political obligations and to delimit their extensions. In modern contractualism, however, the role of contractual justification has been significantly modified. Modern contractualists, like John Rawls and David Gauthier, wish to justify universal moral norms or norms on which the basic structure of any just society should be erected. In this framework it seems to be impossible to justify political obligations which we may owe to a particular sovereign's decisions. It is especially difficult to justify the existence of such obligations in cases where we consider the decisions of the sovereign of which we are citizens unjust. Rawls and Gauthier equally fail to show that there could be a contractual justification of such particularized obligations. Further, the paper argues that: 1. we should distinguish obligations from duties with reference to their scope; whereas the scope of the latter is universal, that of the former is limited according to some contingent circumstances in which they arise; 2. obligations in non-political contexts supervene either on personal relations (like family or friendship) or on obligation-imposing situations in which we voluntarily engage (like using public transport or having made a promise). Political obligations do not seem to supervene on either of these circumstances, therefore they call for some special justification. It is shown that those versions of contractualism which are based on rational choice and/or game theory cannot justify political obligations since the scope of the reasons used in these kinds of justifications is universal of necessity. There are two conclusions to be drawn here. First, one may accept that the failure of contractual justification proves the impossibility of political obligations: the existence of political obligations would then only be a moral illusion. This conclusion is partly endorsed in the paper: although there are moral grounds for political obligations they are not to be found in our relations to our government (or sovereign, in general) but rather in our relations to our fellow citizens. Second, it is mentioned that there is an alternative interpretation of contractualism proposed by Thomas Scanlon which allows for the restriction of the scope of moral norms to be justified. With this sort of contractualism it might be possible to show that, under certain suitable conditions, we have derivative obligations to our government's decisions since we have primary moral obligations to our fellow citizens.

A. GERGELY, ANDRÁS

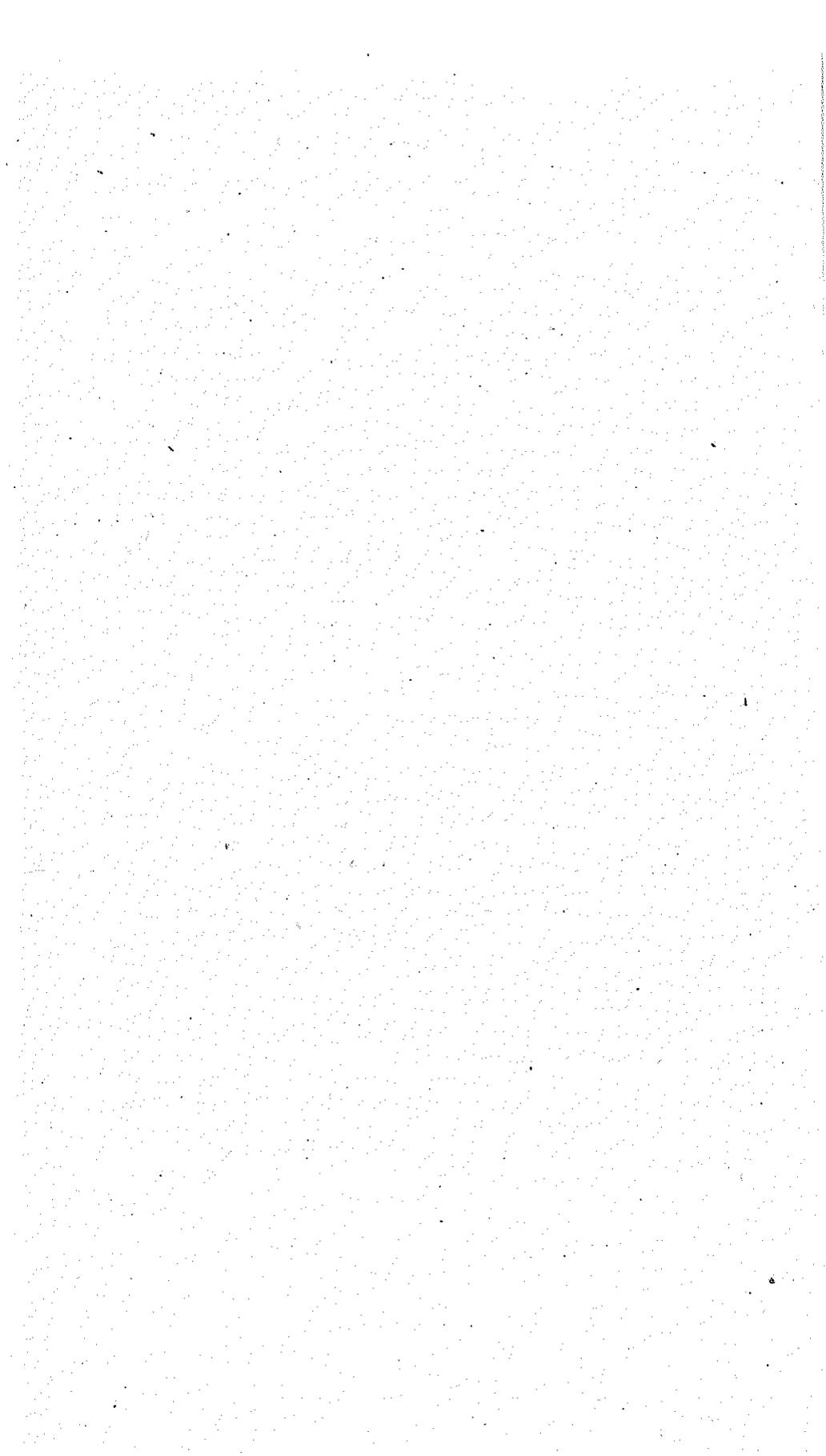
MINORITIES AND INTEGRATION

We have precious little up-to-date knowledge about the ethno-political and ethno-cultural structures in present-day Hungary. The paper attempts to analyze some of the possible answers in the context of the field of political force where the country's level of preparation for integration is highly debatable, and where there is a long way to go before we show adequate tolerance and accept otherness. On the other hand, the fall of communism buried the traditional forms of solidarity and group bonds. The situation is further complicated by the obsolescence of the nation state framework on the one hand, and the challenge of European integration on the other. Undertaking local otherness and continental identity at the same time, however, is not a readily acceptable perspective: if different cultures (living side by side) interfere with one another's system and disrupt one another's traditions cultural differences take the shape of ethnic prejudices and otherness threatens with an inter-cultural explosion.

SZABÓ, MÁTÉ

THE EU AND CIVIL ORGANIZATIONS

The field of the civic organizations between private sphere and political society contain a multi-organizational field of different associations, unions, interest groups and social movements who are oriented towards public policy decisions and implementations without having institutionalized power positions in political system. There are traditions of civic culture and of governmental support and bargaining towards the differentiated NGO field in the countries of EU and by the EU integration organizations itself. A brief sketch of these traditions is offered based upon primary sources and analyses. In the second step, the post communist civic organization structure in Hungary will be analyzed based upon statistics and social science analyses with a special focus on the governmental and other political interrelations of parties and NGOs, unions and NGOs, and of parliamentary committees and NGOs. The model of the EU will be discussed compared to the Hungarian conditions with the emphasis on what roles NGO's may play in the process of the Europaization, and what effects European integration may have on the conditions of the civil society in Hungary.



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