

even though core-periphery relations have often involved direct coercion, to consider the latter as a mechanism of dependence that explains the lack of development in the periphery would be misleading.

The promise thus remains unfulfilled. Most of the chapters represent summaries of past research projects and offer very few surprises even for readers who have not been following academic production on the history of development. The editors make no attempt to integrate or systematise their insights or draw lessons on the mechanisms of dependency and development. The chapters are contrasted against the two grand narratives, but the volume does not speak to the debates in the social sciences and developmental economics that are offering more plausible mechanisms for accounting for how the inter-connectedness of societies at different levels of development can create problems and/or opportunities for the development of emerging economies. This assembly of prominent scholars thus offers a nice *Festschrift* to the eminent historian, but, unfortunately, it does not go beyond that.

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**Daniel Bochsler: *Territory and Electoral Rules in Post-communist Democracies***

Basingstoke 2010: Palgrave Macmillan, 215 pp.

Since Maurice Duverger's ground-breaking 1954 title (*Political Parties*, first published in French in 1951), the interaction between electoral systems and party systems has been a major field of study in political science and political sociology. Daniel Bochsler's book, partly based on his journal articles and PhD dissertation, is a valuable contribution to this research endeavour. It focuses on the impact of electoral systems

on party system formats in European post-communist countries, which seems to challenge the classic scheme in which the increasing disproportionality of electoral systems decreases the number of parties in parliament.

The main puzzle is exposed in Chapter 2 where party system formats (operationalised as the effective number of parliamentary parties) are regressed on electoral system variables (district magnitude or effective thresholds) and a number of control variables such as size of parliament, ethnic fragmentation, and democratic experience. Contrary to the implications of the electoral system theory and results obtained from research conducted on Western democracies, in the post-communist context electoral system variables exert only minor effects and are statistically insignificant. In other words, the relationship between electoral system type and the effective number of parties appears to be weak or non-existent. However, the author reminds us that the mechanical effects of electoral rules must be constant across the globe and that these inconclusive results must therefore be due to intervening variables that were omitted or taken for granted in other contexts. The missing piece of information is, according to Bochsler, the degree of party nationalisation, which refers to 'the territorial homogeneity of party support' (p. 37), that is, the degree to which party support varies from one electoral district to another. Before empirically testing his claims, the author tackles a number of important issues: how to measure party nationalisation (Chapter 3), how to account for its variation (Chapter 4) and how to deal with mixed electoral systems (Chapter 5).

The empirical measurement of party nationalisation for the purpose of cross-national comparison is fraught with difficulty; especially since the number of electoral districts and district size vary between countries and, to a large extent, even within countries. Bochsler summarises and rig-

ously discusses the pros and cons of all existing indices of party nationalisation and goes on to suggest his own carefully constructed measure of party nationalisation. This new measure draws on the Gini coefficient and allows for a comparison of variance calculated at different levels of aggregation (e.g. regions, districts). Its high degree of reliability is proved empirically when applied to a subset of post-communist elections.

With low levels in Bosnia, Ukraine, and Russia (in particular in the single-member district tier) and high levels in the Czech Republic and Hungary, party nationalisation varies widely in the region under scrutiny. What factors contribute to this variation? This is the driving question of the next chapter. Four variables are considered: the degree to which government is centralised, the presence of territorially structured cleavages, the constraining character of electoral systems (existence of legal thresholds), and the degree of party institutionalisation (i.e. time since democratisation). Unfortunately, owing to a lack of time-series data on the degree of decentralisation, the author relies on data from a single point in time (2000) to test the first variable and finds no systematic relationship. Here it is worth noting that such a finding does not come as a surprise given that, at that time, most countries had just adopted a more decentralised structure or were about to do so. Data from 2005 or later would thus be much more appropriate, which Bochsler does not mention. As for the remaining variables, regression analyses reveal that the presence of territorially structured ethnic cleavages is the main explanatory factor, but that it is moderated by legal thresholds. Lastly, Bochsler argues that the high number of independent candidates in the single-member district tiers of Ukrainian and Russian elections (tiers that disappeared as a result of electoral system reforms before the elections of 2006 and 2007, respectively) is due to the 'su-

per-presidential' character of the political regimes in these countries. This is certainly only one of a number of possible explanations, but Bochsler seems to prefer it over the others (*cf.* p. 83 and footnote 85).

Chapter 5 focuses on mixed electoral systems, which are particularly popular in the post-communist region—eight countries have used them in at least one election between 1990 and 2007. The author distinguishes them into non-compensatory (most post-communist countries with mixed electoral systems), semi-compensatory (Albania and Hungary), and fully compensatory systems (no post-communist case). This distinction does not rely on the observed disproportionality of electoral outcomes but on a newly designated formula that incorporates, on the one hand, the share of parliamentary seats that are assigned to compensate for disproportional outcomes and, on the other, hypothetical electoral outcomes under the single-member district tiers of the electoral systems in question (p. 95). To determine the nature of mixed electoral systems, the measurement of their compensatory potential is of vital importance as it indicates the extent to which their effects are restrictive (similar to the effects of simple plurality or majority electoral systems) or inflationary (similar to those of proportional representation).

More generally, Bochsler questions the idea that mixed electoral systems lead to intermediate outcomes in terms of party system fragmentation. He concludes from the evidence from post-communist Europe (not presented in the book) that their electoral outcomes 'follow to a large extent the patterns of either the PR tier or plurality/majority vote' (p. 131), which is a result of interactions between the two types of tiers referred to as contamination. These interactions are difficult to predict because they depend on factors that are not entirely determined by the electoral system itself, such as party nationalisation, volatility, and strategic coordination between parties. It is

good to note here that these factors naturally influence the effects of all electoral systems (not only the mixed ones), but Bochsler may be right to emphasise their importance for the direction of the contamination effect. However, it is also the complexity of mixed electoral systems—providing incentives for manipulation—that leads to their irregular outcomes, as the book shows on the example of the Albanian election of 2005. Despite their unpredictability and given their rather low compensatory character, all mixed electoral systems are included in the rest of the analyses in this book via their single-member district tier.

Building on the elements in the preceding chapters, the main puzzle is addressed anew in Chapter 6. Several sets of regression analyses demonstrate that, when party nationalisation is added as a predictor to the original equation, the electoral system variables work as expected, even in the post-communist context. District magnitude as well as the number of districts and the size of parliament attain the hypothesised magnitude and statistical significance. The stronger party nationalisation is, the greater their impact on party fragmentation. Nevertheless, this is true only as long as there are no nationally defined legal thresholds that discourage the formation of local parties. As Bochsler notes, this implies that even in case of territorially concentrated cleavages (i.e. low party nationalisation), party system fragmentation can be prevented. Ultimately, as a bold legacy to future studies, all the equations are simplified into a parsimonious *predictive* model of party system fragmentation employing only four variables (three for electoral systems without legal thresholds): district magnitude, nationalisation of the party system, legal threshold, and number of districts.

Undoubtedly, there are many points on which the present book warrants praise, but the one first and foremost is its innovative character. Admittedly, the main thesis

on party nationalisation is not truly revolutionary and has, in fact, been more or less present since initial challenges to Duverger's laws (e.g. the case of India). However, Bochsler makes the party nationalisation condition explicit and circumscribes its implications. Moreover, through his model, he is able to account for the variation in the party system fragmentation of almost all the countries in post-communist Europe, which hitherto proved a stumbling block.

The essence of this volume's innovativeness lies in the use of original, carefully designed, and formally defined indices, which may prove useful for further research. For instance, the measure of party nationalisation is constructed with a rigour rarely seen in the social sciences and should definitely be replicated. The book is also innovative as regards data. For the analysis of party nationalisation, the author compiled a new dataset of sub-national electoral results in the countries under study between 1990 and 2007 that can be downloaded from his personal website. On top of making the academic community aware of new instruments and new data, Bochsler's book is exceptional in that it follows the school of quantitative predictive models advocated by the prominent Estonian scholar Rein Taagepera. Thus his final model not only predicts the direction of the effects of independent variables but also their magnitude. This is definitely the direction in which political science should evolve. Last but not least, the author displays excellent theoretical and conceptual thinking throughout the text. On the whole, his book is characterised by conciseness and clarity and is skillfully supplemented with graphs.

Notwithstanding these virtues, there are some points that merit more critical attention. The first of these is case selection. In his analysis, the author decided to include all post-communist countries except for Belarus, which makes one wonder whether the word 'democracies' in the title of the book is not misplaced, because there

are countries which clearly cannot be considered as such (e.g. Russia, Ukraine, Albania, Bosnia, and Kosovo). Of course, this is not just a matter of semantics. The decision to compare all these countries with consolidated democracies in Central Europe has serious consequences for the analysis and can bias the results. In the former countries, the quality of the data and the incentives for the behaviour of the actors involved in the electoral process are not the same. In addition, these non-democratic countries have the highest degree of ethnic heterogeneity and the lowest degree of party nationalisation. One may then ask to what extent the results are driven by territorially structured ethnic heterogeneity or some other omitted intervening factors specific to unstable or undemocratic polities. The author could have easily dismissed these doubts by presenting on each occasion a supplementary analysis testing his model exclusively on consolidated democracies (e.g. the post-communist members of the European Union).

Second, there are some methodological issues that at least deserve a more extensive discussion, if not correction. For instance, while the type of data used (cross-sectional time-series) may be treated using different methods, Bochsler applies OLS regressions with robust standard errors with no prior discussion. Similarly, he does not discuss the high multicollinearity in some of his models (p. 152) and makes use of regression models without intercept even though he does not explicitly outline the theoretical justification for this choice. Then, to eliminate potential endogeneity problems, the author could have contemplated lagging some of his variables. Finally, in contrast with other indices featured in the book, the detailed description of the indicator of 'territorial ethnic divisions' (used as a predictor of party nationalisation in Chapter 4) can only be found in the endnotes. These slight imperfections are nonetheless rather minor when compared

with the positive aspects described above. All in all, *Territory and Electoral Rules in Post-Communist Democracies* is certainly one of the best political science books published on Central and Eastern Europe in recent years and it will draw the attention of scholars from various research fields.

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**Kimberly Elman Zarecor: *Manufacturing a Socialist Modernity: Housing in Czechoslovakia 1945–1960***

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This book was written by Kimberly Elman Zarecor, a pupil of the important architectural theorist Kenneth Frampton, as an extension of her doctoral thesis, which she defended in 2008 at Columbia University. It focuses on the beginnings of the construction of structural panel buildings in former Czechoslovakia after the Second World War up until 1961. This is a timely topic for discussion by architectural historians. While panel housing blocks are an omnipresent relic of the socialist era of construction, Czech theories of architecture have thus far considered such housing blocks merely as 'endless rows of prefabricated drab boxes'.

The post-war history of Czech architecture has long been neglected, or, more precisely, has been completely ignored. Although a number of studies, books and exhibitions devoted to architecture, mostly of the 1960s, have recently appeared, they are usually monographs of an important architect or studio, highlighting achievements of exclusivity beyond the boundaries of standard production. Why is the history of Czechoslovak architecture between 1948 and 1989 neglected? The first reason is the high regard in which inter-war functionalism is held. Functionalism, a style from the