Abstracts

Discursivity in Political Science

András Koroncai: Discursivity in Political Science. Introduction

According to discursive politcal science, the reality of politics is constructed in and through discourses, and likewise its changing is also a result of discourses. Therefore, the subject of discursive political science are not "political discourses" but politics as discourse(s). This difference marks a theoretical distinction: while the former term assumes that discourses are one element of politics among other non-discursive ones, the later defines politics as a solely discursive reality.

Zoltán Gábor Szűcs: Fiction and Realism. Epistemological Foundations of Realistic Political theory

There is a rather surprising similarity between political realism, a long-standing tradition of political thought and fictional discourses that comes from the paradoxical nature of the epistemology of political realism. On the one hand, realism offers direct access to the reality of politics. This is exactly why it is often criticized for its naive positivism. On the other hand, realism fiercly criticizes other theories on the basis of their epistemological naivity because they believe that political practice can be satisyfactorily described, explained and prescribed by theories. This paradox, however, should not be seen as a theoretical weakness, but a constitutive element of political realism. Properly understood, an analogy between fiction and political realism can help us better understand how this paradox makes political realism so attractive and successful. Whilst fiction is based on a no less paradoxical "fictional pact" having the reader accept fiction "as if" it would be real and gives aesthetical pleasure in exchange for it, political realism is based on the above paradox of a theory both denying and promising direct access to the reality. "Realist pact" requires us to accept that a realist knows how politics works in reality and also knows why others do not. In exchange for it, realism offers a kind of "pleasure of recognition", the happy thought of being an insider and a lot of other things.

Gábor Pál: Discursive Political Science Meets South Park

The article aims to present the specific features of political discourse analysis (also called 'discursive political science' in the Hungarian acedemic milieu) as a theoretical approach and investigational frame on the one hand, and to unpick the political discourses centered on *South Park*, a scandalous TV show broadcasted by Comedy Central channel on the other. That is, by confronting a scientific way of understanding a somewhat strange, as/or rather untipical empirical case the paper both intends to highlight the main characteristics of an aspect and method perhaps less known in the inland public and to offer a discursive case study. In the first part of the paper the proper 'politicality' of the subject has been reflected according to five feasible criteria (personal-, thematic-, structural-positional-, genre-, interpretational-). In addition, the second part of the study reviews and analyses the very (discursive) acts of politicking and politicization in connection with the show focusing on the US publicity, especially on the discourse strategies used by several influential conservative pundits.

Gábor Illés: Constructions of the Crisis. A Comparison of Viktor Orbán's and Gordon Bajnai's Interpretation of the Crisis

The article is a social linguistic analysis that reconstructs and compares two interpretations of the 2008 global financial crisis, put forward by successive Hungarian prime ministers Gordon Bajnai and Viktor Orbán. By mapping their discursive procedures and strategies, it tries to show that both of them utilized the discursive resources of the political languages used by their respective political sides well before the crisis. To enrich the analysis, the article tries to interpret both crisis-constructions in an analogical way, using examples from the politics of antiquity as objects of comparison. The aspect-seeing remarks of the later Wittgenstein serve as the basis of this interpretive strategy.

Nelson Phillips, Thomas B. Lawrence and Cynthia Hardy: Discourse and Institutions

We argue that the processes underlying institutionalization have not been investigated adequately and that discourse analysis provides a coherent framework for such investigation. Accordingly, we develop a discursive model of institutionalization that highlights the relationships among texts, discourse, institutions, and action. Based on this discursive model, we propose a set of conditions under which institutionalization processes are most likely to occur, and we conclude the article with an exploration of the model's implications for other areas of research.

Márton Szabó: Why I am not a follower of Luhmann. An Answer to András Koroncai

In reaction to a previous writing, this essay compares Niklas Luhmann's social science theory with political discourse studies (PDS). First, it analyses the concept of self-creation (autopoiesis), which, in Luhmann's theory, is a super-concept explaining all of society. In PDS, autopoiesis is the formation and interpretation of an open reality. Second, the essay presents the interpretation of communicative society, which, in Luhmann's theory, is a global world

constructed and reproduced by communication. In DPS, communicative society consists of concrete discourse communities with open borders. Third, the essay examines whether there can be social spheres untouched by communication and discourse. In Luhmann's theory, there is no such area. In PDS, such spheres are allowed to exist. Nonetheless, PDS emphasise that the human body is also part of the interpretation, although not for everybody and every community.

Culture Eating its Own Children,
or Paradigms of Cultural Theory from the 1960's Until Nowadays

György Túry: Culture Eating its Own Children, or Paradigms of Cultural Theory from the 1960's Until Nowadays

The main concern of this paper is to find the roots of those opinions and attitudes that we most often hear today about contemporary, postmodern cultures. One of my theses is that we can find such origins in the evaluations and interpretations of postmodern cultures that came into existence at the same time as that culture came into being. I focus on the work of Susan Sontag, with a detailed analysis of the process during which she changed her critical and theoretical view concerning contemporary cultures from labeling them "subversive" in the early 1960s through calling them "conventional" not much later, to just plainly describing them in the second half of the 1990s as "barbaric." Apart from Sontag, I also look at the work of other authors (e.g., Bull, Földényi, Lash and Lury, McLuhan, and Szeman), and by way of conclusion I offer the reader an overview of the methodology and critical stance of contemporary Cultural Studies.

Metamorphoses of Power

Erzsébet Szalai: Metamorphoses of Power

In the present article the author aims to describe the characteristics and transformations of Hungary's power structures from the actually existing socialism to our present days on the one hand, and to provide a brief analysis of the supremacy referred to as international eco-financial superstructure, along with an insight into its most recent evolution and the consequences of the latter, on the other. The main idea of this article is that transformations of both nation states and of the global power structure are primarily catalysed by geo-political and geo-economic relations and changes. In light of the presence and influence of large, monopolistic commercial organisations, these power structures can be perceived as status groups disposing of class-like traits. After the global economic crisis breaking out in 2008, the status group like traits have become even more dominant. We can expect no change in this tendency in the foreseeable future.

Constructions of Social Structure on the Basis of Social Processes

István Harcsa: Constructions of Social Structure on the Basis of Social Processes

It is gratifying, that in the past couple of years there are more and more papers dealing with the results of research on social structure, and that this discourse keeps getting wider. A variety of approaches has surfaced, fueling debates about social structure. An example of that was the debate between Ákos Huszár and Márk Áron Éber concerning the questions of class and class structure. The present paper aims to give a critical evaluation of the authors' approaches, to highlight both the strengths and weaknesses. It needs to be stressed, that this debate was a result of a not sufficiently systematic usage of various basic concepts and classifications. The author of this paper agrees with Márk Áron Éber in his judgement, that Ákos Huszár's model of social structure is (despite its claims) not a class-based but a stratum-group based model. In the same time, we fully agree with Ákos Huszár's statement, that the two approaches of social structure (class theory and research on social stratification) are not in an antagonistic relationship. Based on this, it is not reasonable to suggest, as Éber did, that structure theory is concerned the more theorethical question: "How does society work?", while the other approach is concerned only with the empirical question: "How is society segmented?"