

the conditions under which the country is successfully able to promote its foreign policy priorities at the European level. His first master variable in this regard is the quality of national preference. When Prague's position was well deliberated at home and provided inclusivity, ambitiousness and complexity, it was more likely to succeed. That has been proven by Prague's contribution to forming the Eastern Partnership and launching its Civil Society Forum. The second master variable deals with a country's ability to position itself as a norm entrepreneur. In other words, a country has to frame its policy goal as an appealing norm: e.g. solidarity in energy security matters, right of the Eastern Partnership countries to aspire to a European perspective, etc. It has to establish a larger coalition of actors which may help to spread this message. Neuman highlights think-tanks, civil society organizations and, interestingly, the European Commission, which have proved to be extremely valuable partners in norms diffusion in selected cases. Norms promotion is interlinked with the third master variable – character of interstate negotiations and negotiating skills. The Czech Republic has been fairly successful in coalition building. On the other hand, given its necessity to consult with the capital on everything, its flexibility during negotiations has been questionable and this has made the Czech Republic a slow partner at the negotiating table. The latter finding might be seen in connection to the very first master variable. If there is a strong consensus on a national priority, the country would be less likely to change the country's position, and, mainly, it would become more necessary to consult with the capital on any steps.

Neuman also presents supportive variables: timing, content expertise and holding the Council Presidency. The latter seems to be the most important from both the theoretical and the practical point of view. As the legacy of the Czech EU Council Presidency is still unclear,

one of the Neuman's conclusions is a valuable contribution to the debate. He underlines that 'the Presidency served as a true catalyst for increased policy making at the domestic level. As such, the national preference formation phase on the domestic level gained momentum as a result of the approaching Presidency' (p. 263). Apart from that, his findings are in line with previous (e.g. Tallberg's) hypotheses that the (pre-Lisbon) Presidency was more than just an administrative matter.

Marek Neuman conducted research which is valuable from both the empirical and theoretical points of view. He developed master variables for (successful) national preference promotion on the European level which deserve to be further tested.

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Kröger, Sandra et al.:

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: STILL DEMOCRATIC IN TIMES OF CRISIS?

Abingdon: Routledge. 2014. 252 pages.

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The book *Political Representation in the European Union: Still Democratic in Times of Crisis?* introduces the current topic of democratic representation during and after the financial and economic crisis which hit in 2008. It explains how representation is perceived and searches for changes in representation not only within European institutions but also in civil society and transnational organizations. With its orientation, this book might be interesting not only for students and scholars

of European studies and democratic theory, but for the general public interested in the consequences of the crisis on democratic representation in the EU, as well.

Johannes Pollak starts the first part of the book, devoted to electoral representation, with the chapter about compounded representation in the EU. In his text, Pollak summarizes the variety of actors who represent European citizens and their ability to fulfil the representative expectations. The author's attention soon turns to the role of national parliaments, however. The main part of the text focuses on a discussion of facts about the 'executivization' of European politics, parliamentary instruments and the lack of practical utilization. Finally, the last part of the chapter offers a brief analysis of parliaments' potential in the search for remedies for the economic crisis. However, as the author concludes, not even the crisis was able to actively engage national parliaments or to strengthen their position within the compounded representation in the EU.

The second chapter contains contributions by Anna Rasmussen and Gert-Jan Lindboom. They look for the differences in interactions among parties and interest groups at the European level compared to the domestic area. The authors pay a lot of attention to the Europeanization effect and describe some changes according to Ladrech's catalogue (2009). An additional case study about party-interest group interaction is done on a Danish sample. The authors are aware of the fact that generalization can be a problem; on the other hand, Denmark seems to be the country with the highest probability of finding some evidence of Europeanization, as the authors argue well. They found that the interaction of parties with EU level interest groups is still marginal. Unfortunately, the interconnection of the case study with the crisis is also quite weak in this chapter. This is also caused by the fact that interviews with Danish party officials

were made in 2007 and 2008, and therefore it only concludes that a current crisis is unlikely to change the parties' behaviours.

The third chapter, written by John Eric Fossum, deals with the question of how the crisis affects the EU representative structure. The author briefly reviews the situation before the crisis and then analyzes the destructive effect of the crisis on democratization in the EU. Fossum shows in several points what these effects are and points to the problem of the continuous differentiation of European integration. Compared to the previous chapters, he keeps his text 'in the time of crisis' and also foresees future development.

Apart from parliaments, representation on the Council of the EU is also explored in chapter four by Daniel Naurin. While it is a descriptive text which begins with an explanation of what the Council is, how it is structured and how consensus is reached, it also offers a stimulating point of transparency of the Council and its incorrect perception by citizens (p. 81). In this contribution there is also limited attention paid to current economic problems. The reader has to be content with the note that in the time of crisis, the Council intensified its meetings and served as a crisis manager. Naurin concludes that the crisis has improved representation of the Council by highlighting EU affairs at a national level. This appears to be a vague conclusion without any previous argumentation or even analysis.

The fifth chapter deals with another institution, the Committee of the Regions (CoR), and Simona Piattoni presents a methodologically and theoretically prepared text. Piattoni analyzes the opinions that the CoR published related to the economic and financial crisis, and optimistically looks for signs of democratic representation of the CoR. The author uses several citations from those opinions to demonstrate how the CoR is fulfilling its representation functions. Even though local and

regional authorities were somewhat excluded from resolving the crisis, Piattoni optimistically (and maybe a little bit naively) concludes that CoR fulfilled its representative function during those hard times well.

Martino Maggetti starts the second section of the volume on non-electoral representation with network governance in Europe. Although he begins his contribution with a descriptive part, he also includes his own analysis of current representative patterns in the Committee of European Securities Regulators (CESR). Maggetti proceeds systematically and offers a chronological evaluation of representation during different periods, from intergovernmental to more autonomous and European interest-oriented, and finally back to the national supervision power. In this sense the financial crisis is seen as a critical juncture, but the author does not mention the consequences which followed for the representative function of the CESR. Nevertheless, the author shows that representation also has its dynamic outside of main European institutions and offers valuable insight into their own perception.

The European Commission as a non-electoral institution also found its place within the book. A duo of authors, Nieves Pérez-Solórzano Borragán and Stijn Smismans, take inter-institutional insight and explore how it maintained institutional balance, especially during the crisis. They conclude with two main points: the crisis limited the Commission's role as broker through the use of inter-governmental crises management and gave the Member states an offender to blame for austerity measures. The authors argue that the crisis had created a 'technocratic' environment (p. 137, 138) which prevented the Commission from enacting its role. At the same time, the increasing politicization of the EU commissioners is only marginally mentioned (see e.g. Wille 2012), which is also an issue within the current discussion on democratic deficit.

The eighth chapter, written by the editor of the book, Sandra Kröger, focuses on European umbrellas of civic organizations and their representation of constituencies. The author uses three different types of organizations to show various levels of legitimacy. Although Kröger argues very well for her choice of organizations, she slightly fails to explain why she tested only the UK and Germany. In addition, in the case of European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), she explains that 'standards in Germany are so much higher than in Eastern Europe' (p. 156). This particularly means that national condition matters and it can make a difference for each national organization and the European umbrella's interaction; therefore we cannot generalize for the whole structure. Nevertheless, she found that 'member' types of organizations are the most legitimate.

In chapter nine, Dawid Friedrich also looks for democratic representation but this time in transnational citizen forums. He deals with the topic more theoretically and offers a broad overview of literature and recent trends in representation theory. From a more practical perspective, Friedrich illustrates which forums have taken place in the EU up till now (p. 166) and answers questions on participants and founding. Unfortunately, as in the previous chapter, the text is left without any connection to the financial and economic crisis.

The tenth chapter by Hans-Jörg Trenz uses the perspective of mass media and argues that the EU suffers from a public communication deficit. He claims that democratic representation can be compiled through public speeches. The problem, then, is lack of communication space between a multi-level EU system and its constituencies. Coming out from this problem, Trenz explores its consequences during the period of the crisis. The author presents many problematic areas (populism, disinformation, nationalism of media) but stays at a more general level. The text uses a different

perspective, but definitely complements the whole puzzle of the non-electoral perspective of representation in the EU and previous sections dealing with civil society.

The last chapter of the second part looks for the guardian of constitutionality in the EU in the context of new economic governance. Michelle Everson and Christian Joerges explore the attitudes of the European Court of Justice and the German Federal Constitutional Court during the crisis and found that both of them failed in maintaining the legitimacy of the legal system by accepting economical orthodoxy in crisis management. They also concede that now more than ever it is clear that there cannot be only one guardian of constitutionalism in the EU.

Beate Kohler-Koch and Dario Castiglione conclude the book with two essays and summarize what has been learned: firstly, from the practice of representation in the EU and then from a theoretical perspective. Kohler-Koch follows the chronology of the text and forms a complex puzzle of representation in the EU. He highlights the main points of each chapter, points out missing features of the text and calls for further research. Castiglione, on the other hand, explores the usefulness of representative theories in explaining the multilevel and diffuse system of the EU.

The whole book creates a unique collection of contributions which are independent of each other but (should) have two main common features: EU representation and the current financial crisis. As for the first, it is unquestionable that all contributions deal with representation from some point of view but not all of them to the same extent. The texts mostly use Pitkin's (1967) definition of representation (those who are represented and those who represent) and analyze particular institutions (chapters one, two, four, five, seven, eleven), while others focus on civil society (chapter

six, eight, nine). The text of Hans-Jörgrenz (chapter ten) on mediated representative politics also employs 'audience' as a third feature of representation and goes beyond the original definition. Therefore, the chapters by Kohler-Koch and Castiglione play an important role – not just to summarise but also to interconnect those separate elements of the volume.

Compared to EU representation, the financial crisis, as the subtitle of the volume, is not in the spotlight of every single contribution, as you would expect when starting the book. Chapters four, eight and nine do not deal with the current crisis or they only do so in a limited way, which reduces the consistency and currency of the book.

It is not an easy task to evaluate such a diverse range of contributions which together form one volume. Although individual contributions provide complete, interesting and not mainstream insight into representation topics from the perspective of the financial crisis or from a general perspective, the whole volume gives the impression of incoherence. As Kohler-Koch points out (p. 234), the overall explanation of varied representation in the EU system is absent. What is the complete picture of the EU representation (during the crisis)? That is the question the book is silent about.

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