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STUDIA POLITICA SLOVACA

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Contents

• ŠTÚDIE A ANALÝZY •

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Examining the Gendered Regime of Slovak Cabinet Appointments Using a Feminist Institutionalist Perspective

In this study, I am applying the feminist institutionalist model developed by Annesley et al. (2019) to analyze cabinet formation in three Slovak governments by focusing on the actors, formal and informal rules, and the process of ministerial selection. By interviewing political actors who participated in the cabinet formation, I am uncovering which type of criteria—experiential, affiliational, or representational—are decisive in selecting a ministrable. It is the affiliational criteria that were decisive in most of the cases of ministerial selection in Slovakia, as the need for experience is a prescriptive but very flexible criterion that can be disregarded when needed. On the other hand, representational criteria played no role in cabinet formation in Slovakia. Consequently, this study reveals how the interplay of formal and informal norms and rules maintains a gendered regime of ministerial selection that conserves the political disadvantage of women in Slovak cabinets. The characteristics of an institutional setting, such as that of the party system, play an important role in the gendered regime as well. A small number of portfolios and a high number of parties in coalitions create conditions where only a few party leaders are usually appointed to the cabinet. Weak party organizations, lack of women's organizations within parties, and the absence of conviction among the selectors highlighting the benefits of gender equality offer little hope for the future improvement of gender balance in Slovak cabinets.

Key words: gendered regime, Slovak government, cabinet appointments, Feminist institutionalism

Introduction

The prime minister is the most important component in a government that determines political development in parliamentarian democracies. A minister's personality, values, and policy goals are essential to what rules and policies will be eventually adopted as laws. Men historically dominated the government cabinets as the institution was created by males and for males. This privilege continues to this day, although gender-parity cabinets in the world are not uncommon anymore. There is abundant scientific evidence that cabinet formation and the government itself are gendered institutions that are hindering women's nomination to the cabinet.

There has never been a gender parity government in Slovakia, although there is a weak-positive overall trend in the share of women in the cabinet. The number of women in 3 recent Slovak governments ranged from 0 to 5. Though Slovakia recently had governments with 5 women ministers (35.71%), there were no women ministers in the years 2014–2015. The sharp increase in female representation in the cabinet has happened without any known or objective changes in the rules such as being the introduction of a gender quota. The variance can be *prima facie*, explained by the relatively high political agency of the selector, the prime minister, who, at least according to the formal rule in the constitution, can appoint whomever she wants. How can the variance be explained when applied to the Slovak government?

To better understand the process of ministerial selection in Slovakia, in this study I employ the feminist institutionalist model developed by Annesley et al. (2019), focusing on the process of government formation and the biases of the selectors who directly influence and decide who will be a part of the next cabinet. I aim to understand the selectors' motivation, ideas, constraints, and norms that guide their decision-making during cabinet appointments. The aim of this study is twofold: Firstly, I aim to explain the variance in the number of female ministers in Slovak cabinets. Why were there female ministers nominated to some cabinets while none in others? Why are male ministers still prevalent in every Slovak government? This study investigates how formal and informal norms interplay, hindering women's nomination to the cabinet. Secondly, I want to shed light on the selection process; who are the selectors deciding on who becomes a minister in Slovakia? In order to reveal the gendered regime of cabinet appointments, my goal is to identify formal and informal rules that guide these selectors during ministerial selection. To meet this end, I conducted semistructured interviews with 8 respondents from 2 Slovak coalition governments. This study aims to contribute not only to the feminist scholarship on executives but also to the wider political science scholarship in Slovakia and beyond.

Gendered Political Representation and Feminist Institutionalism

The feminist theory recognizes that political positions are imbued with gendered meanings, excluding women from the political sphere, positioning them as outsiders and second-class citizens. Feminist political scientists focus on how gender and political power intersect and influence each other—in our case, in the process of ministerial appointment. The feminist approach allows political scientists to understand the context of patriarchal forces that function within the process of cabinet formation and explain why women are still left out of cabinet membership, determining under what conditions they will be granted a cabinet seat. Processes that exclude women from governmental institutions are widely documented in political science scholarship (e.g., Escobar-Lemmon & Taylor-Robinson 2009; Chapell & Waylen 2013; Campbell & Child 2013).

Many studies have been written about women in Slovak politics; however, there is a paucity of studies that have touched upon women in executive positions. A scientific work by sociologists Filadelfiová, Radičová, and Puliš (2000) included detailed statistics of women's descriptive representation at all levels of the Slovak executive, including government and bureaucracy at

ministries.[1] Until recently, there were no publications that were systematically focused on the representation of women in Slovak cabinets. The application of the feminist institutionalist approach in this study has a lot to offer to better explain the gender gap in female nominations to Slovak cabinets.

Feminist institutionalists postulate that institutions are intertwined with gendered norms and rules that can either be formal or informal. They focus on how norms affect actions and strategies of institutional actors and how they approach these rules (Staab & Waylen 2014; Mackay et al. 2010; Mackay & Meier 2003; Krook 2010; Kenny 2013; Mackay & Waylen 2009). Researching executives using the feminist institutionalist approach means addressing the structural factors and masculinist construction of the cabinet that affect opportunities for women's access (Beckwith 2020, p. 136).

Formal institutions can be characterized by codification in a written form (Lauth 2000, p. 24) where they are *"consciously designed and clearly specified"* (Lowndes 2005, p. 292). They require the ability to identify that a rule has been broken and come up with ways to find and punish the violator (North 1990, p. 47–48). Informal institutions usually incorporate unwritten codes in doing things such as traditions, cultural norms, customs, moral values, or religious beliefs. Informal rules are enforced through self-assertion or social pressure on internal actors, not through third parties (Chappell & Waylen 2013).

The volume of research that uses the feminist institutionalist approach has been growing in recent years (Annesley & Gains 2010; Annesley et al. 2014; Waylen 2016; Annesley et al. 2019) and has been also applied to the executive positions. The latest significant publication is a monography by Annesley, Beckwith, and Franceschet (2019) that examined 142 governments in 7 post-industrial democracies with various political systems. The methods outlined in this cross-national and longitudinal study inspired this paper as well.

The feminist Institutionalist Model by Annesley et al. (2019)

Annesley et al. (2019) developed a model that allows researchers to examine ministerial nominations over time and cross-nationally by focusing on the process of ministerial selection. Their model has three dimensions: *"(1) ministerial appointment is a dynamic process (2) involving two sets of actors, namely, selectors and ministrables, both of which are (3) governed by rules (many of which are unwritten)"* (Annesley et al. 2019, p. 17). According to the authors, the process of selecting ministers begins right after elections and can take place either within the political party, in coalition negotiations, or in both (p. 17). In the case of a coalition government, this process is strongly placed in a context where the political party negotiates with coalition partners about the allocation of a certain number of portfolios to a party and to their respective nominees. Annesley

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[1]   Sociological publications are predominant, but in political science, there are several publications about women in politics (see Bitušíková 2005, 2011; Bútorová 2008; Maďarová 2011; Filadelfiová, Puliš, Radičová 2000); municipal politics (Sloboda 2014; Klimovský 2015; Maškarinec & Klimovský 2017); and even in ministrial departments (Sloboda, Valkovičová, Šupáková 2020).

et al. (2019) label the actors who have the competence to select ministers by the term *selector* and the potential ministers by the term *ministrables*. The most important actor is the prime minister in both the presidential and parliamentary political systems. In countries with coalition governments, the prime minister is more restrained in her political agency by the selectors from opposing parties.

According to the model, the last ingredient in the appointment process are *rules* that either empower or constrain the power of selectors to choose autonomously their nominees. Annesley et al. (2019) borrow the concept of rules from E. Ostrom (1986) who identified three types of effects that impact rules on political decision-making: *prescriptive*, *prohibitive*, and *permitive.* The authors also introduced the *degree of institutionalization* of a rule: if it is high, the rule is expected to be adhered to. Another important attributes of rules are their *flexibility*; some rules must always be adhered to, and some are more open to interpretation.

Annesley et al. (2019) show how rules, their interaction and specific application, produce different effects on women and men. There are usually no formal rules on the eligibility criteria for ministrables. However, who gets selected as a minister is not random at all; it is navigated by a plethora of informal rules that are not necessarily disadvantageous to women. They are like a double-edged sword: they can be used to suppress female representation very efficiently, or if the selector is motivated to pursue gender equality and use her political agency to meet this end, she can significantly improve women's representation in the cabinet.

Based on their inductive analysis of cabinets in 7 countries, Annesley et al. (2019, p. 22) analyzed the hierarchy of these criteria in the decision-making of the selectors. As a result, they divided informal rules into three categories: *experiential*, *affiliational*, and *representational*.

Experiential criteria encompass political skills, political experience, policy expertise, or education. A ministrable is expected to be prepared for her position. This can mean previous experience in a political position, policy expertise, good public communication skills, managerial experience, formal education, or academic career. Ministers are usually highly educated. However, this rule is very flexible and open to *post-hoc* interpretation, and therefore, almost everyone can be regarded as sufficiently qualified. It is, therefore, a ubiquitous minimal criterion, but on the basis of experiential criteria, it is usually not decided who will eventually become a minister. Experiential criteria are, thus, prescriptive and flexible rules for selectors.

Affiliational criteria, on the other hand, refer to the personal relations of the selector with the ministrable; the selector is looking for a loyal minister to eliminate risk because ministers need to defend the governmental agenda. Personal connections with the selector are highly relevant because selectors prefer candidates whom they can trust, whose behavior they can predict, and whom they can control. It is, therefore, not surprising that selectors prefer the party members that they know, although, in certain and specific cases, selectors can choose a ministrable that is nonpartisan. Appointing a loyal person whom the selector knows from the past is a permissible rule, even though selectors only seldomly present it openly.

Lastly, representational criteria include various socio-demographic factors that can matter in a country. The ministrable can benefit from being a member of a certain group—region, language, age, minority, religion, race, gender, or party faction. When appointing a team of ministers, it can be expected by the public, political party, journalists, etc., that the cabinet will represent certain

groups. If the selector disobeys this informal rule and does not appoint the expected groups, she can expect sanctions such as public backlash, intraparty resistance, or international criticism. The representational rule is, thus, a prescriptive rule and an inflexible rule; being a member of a certain demographic group is objectively given, and there is not a lot of space for improvisation (Annesley et al. 2019, p. 156).

Annesley et al. (2019) argue that ministers are not appointed as isolated personalities but rather as a part of a cabinet team. Moreover, they challenge the notion that cabinet appointments are based on merit, that they should be studied by analyzing objective meritocratic criteria such as education, policy expertise, etc. They argue that the selection of ministers does not even resemble an objective process of finding the best-qualified ministers; rather, it is based on a need to create a team that balances experience and loyalty and represents various groups (Annesley et al. 2019, p. 99).

Moreover, Annesley et al. (2019, p. 175) claim that they have found that representational criteria mattered in all the seven countries examined, although to various degrees. It was introduced by three processes: First, the pressure by the feminist bodies in political parties that pushed for a higher representation of women broadly in the party ranks but also in the ministerial appointment. Second, the conviction of the party leaders that the inclusion of women is just and would be beneficial. Third is the growing pressure from outside influences by the norm of how a balanced cabinet should look like. As these forces interact, they create a new informal rule where the exclusion of women from the cabinet becomes unacceptable. The authors find that the presence of representational criteria for women's inclusion is a key factor prohibiting selectors to only use affiliational criteria in appointing all-male or nearly all-male cabinets (Annesley et al. 2019, p. 250).

The Slovak Case Study

To meet the aforementioned research goals, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selectors and people who participated in the selection process of Slovak cabinets. I intended to interview former ministers, prime ministers, political party elites, and political party employees. The selection of respondents was based on the criteria of whether they directly and personally took part in coalition negotiations. Respondents who were negotiators themselves and had a direct experience in the coalition negotiations were preferred. If it was not possible to interview direct negotiators, I opted out for respondents who were very close to those negotiations. Two ideologically diverse coalition governments were chosen to be studied: the government of SDKU, SMK-MKP, ANO, and KDH of Prime Minister M. Dzurinda, which ruled between 2002 and 2006 and the government of SMER-SD, SNS, Most-Híd, and Sieť of Prime Minister R. Fico, which ruled from 2016 to 2020.

Eventually, interviews with 8 respondents who were divided into two groups were secured. Category 1 respondents were direct negotiators (4 respondents) and Category 2 respondents were not directly involved with the negotiations (4 respondents); however, they have observed the process of cabinet formation closely as they were ministers, party advisors, members of the presidential party, or party employees who had direct access to leaders.

An interview with a respondent from each coalition party from the government of M. Dzurinda was secured; in some cases, more than one respondent was even interviewed. Despite my efforts, it is unfortunate that neither the representatives from the party SMER-SD and SNS responded positively (see Annex 1). So the respondents will not be afraid to talk about sensitive personal and political issues, they were granted anonymity.

In the interviews, the focus was only on the nominations of ministers that took place directly after the elections; thus, the nominations that occurred after one of the originally appointed ministers left office were left out. The respondents were not informed before the interview that the gender aspect of government nominations would be highlighted, as this might have antagonized some of them.

Results

Formal Rules

The government of the Slovak Republic is one of the two branches of executive power in the parliamentarian democracy. Part of the executive power, including the responsibility of appointing the government, is carried out by the president, but most of it belongs to the government, which according to the constitution is the supreme body of the executive power (Article 108 of the Constitutional Act No. 460/1992 Coll). The government consists of the prime minister, vice-chairmen, and ministers.

Formal rules that delineate the creation of the government are established in the sixth head of the Slovak constitution and are quite brief. The constitution and other laws establish only a few rules for the selection of a minister, among which there are no representational, affiliational, or experiential criteria.

The only formal step in the formation of the government is the appointment of the prime minister by the president. The prime minister proposes cabinet members who are subsequently appointed by the president. Therefore, the president has the freedom to entrust practically anyone and no one in the formation of the government, but if this person is to become the prime minister, she must meet the basic formal criteria according to Art. 110 (2) of the Slovak Constitution: *"She must be a citizen of the Slovak Republic and she must be eligible for election to the National Council of the Slovak Republic."*[2]

Since the Slovak government is not directly elected, it is accountable to the National Council; therefore, after its appointment by the president of the Slovak Republic, the government must appear before the National Council, present its program, and ask for a vote of confidence.[3] For

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[2]   That means that she turned 21 on the day of the election at the latest, has a permanent residence in the territory of the Slovak Republic, and there are no obstacles to the execution of the passive right to vote, e.g., unconditional execution of a prison sentence and a final conviction for an intentional crime, if the conviction has not been expunged and limitation of legal capacity. See Art. 74 (2) of the Slovak Constitution together with Section 6 of the Act No. 180/2014 Coll. on the conditions for the exercise of the right to vote.

[3]   Art. 113 and 114 (1) of the Slovak Constitution.

that reason, the government needs to have an absolute majority of votes in the parliament, at least at the given time, i.e., at least 76 deputies. Besides these formal limitations, there are no formal regulations of the course of the negotiations on the cabinet formation. There are also no laws enacted in Slovakia that would codify rules on government composition with regard to gender on the national level or on the party level.

The Informal Rules of Negotiation of Governmental Policy Priorities

In both cases, the coalition negotiations start by amalgamating common policy priorities that the respondents agree with, which is better to define them before the portfolio distribution. For instance, during the 2016 negotiations, there were 10 policy priorities, and each party was instructed to propose a proportionate number of priorities based on their electoral result.

All the respondents also agreed that the most usual format of negotiations was the meetings of triplets who were chosen by the party leader. This rule had exceptions, though; sometimes there were quadruplets and other times, only party presidents. The basic negotiation team was usually composed of the party president, the leader of the future party club in the parliament, and a third person who differed in various accounts. *"They are really the most trustworthy, even the most intimate friends of the political leader, close allies and comrades-in-arms, in whom I could have confidence…"* (interview with a Category 1 respondent, 2022).

As women are very scarce at the very top of the Slovak political party leadership, and since the party president decides autonomously who is going to sit at the negotiation table with him, the triplets are an informal rule that hinders women's advancement to the cabinet. Moreover, the members of the negotiation team were able and often succeeded in securing a cabinet seat for themselves: *"In that pre-phase, they select party priorities that are close to them and declare party policy and values, but in reality it is them fending for themselves. Because suddenly if you get two portfolios, which have nothing to do with you personally, you realize that you cannot go there. Those policy demands of the party are always shaped by those strong party players who in reality play on themselves in this"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

Division of Portfolios and Political Positions

When it comes to the division of numbers of portfolios among coalition parties, a very strongly institutionalized informal rule is the proportional distribution according to the electoral results. Respondents from both governments unanimously recognized this informal rule, and they differed only in the details of its application. The number of portfolios in the examined period ranged between 12–15, and the average number of governing coalition parties in Slovakia is 3.11. That means parties usually receive about 3–4 portfolios. This leaves only a limited space for nominations that go beyond the most powerful people of the party who negotiate from the beginning in triplets. If a woman is not at the highest level of the party leadership, it is unlikely for her to receive an appointment.

According to respondents, the first two key positions that are always determined in nego-tiations in the first place are the positions of the prime minister and the speaker of the parlia-ment. Usually, the prime minister becomes the leader of the strongest party in the coalition, and the speaker of the parliament the leader of the second strongest party. The position of the vice president of the cabinet usually does not have a real political impact besides signalling which of the ministers of the coalition parties is the most important. Due to the absence of real political significance of vice-presidential posts, they will not be discussed further. The next round of ne-gotiations focuses on the most important portfolios. There is a slight difference on the opinions of various actors on which portfolios are the strongest and which ones are the most important. There is a consensus that the Ministry of Finance is the strongest, or at least in the top 2. How-ever, the topic of importance might differ in time and also on what the political party wants to achieve politically.

After the first round, where the most important portfolios were distributed, the negotiation on second-order portfolios or on those that receive European funds followed. *"Key portfolios have their substitute portfolios, which serve in the negotiation. If it is a power department, the solution when someone has not managed to get the Ministry of the Interior is the Ministry of De-fense or the Ministry of Justice. And then there are the so-called 'economic' portfolios, the Euro fund departments, (...) education, environment, and agriculture"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

In the end come portfolios that are the weakest; they do not have many subordinated organiza-tions, they do not receive European funds, and they do not have much influence. *"...healthcare and the economy, I don't want to say that B-class portfolios, but no one fights for culture, (...), nor transport, and social affairs"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022). All respon-dents agreed that the least popular sector is health care, and nobody wants it, with the exception of ANO in 2002. Some respondents also labeled the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Fam-ily as undesirable because it deals with union dialogue and strikes.

Selection and Veto of Ministers

Some political parties specialize in certain portfolios—SMK-MKP and Most-Híd, for in-stance, in agriculture and the environment; however, that only emphasizes the fact that such parties have ministrables for these portfolios. *"In principle, serious candidates were already there before the elections, it was always known that if a portfolio was given to us, who would we probably nominate there"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

Who are these ministrables, and how do they rise to their powerful positions before the elec-tions? A respondent and also a selector wrapped up the characteristics of an ideal ministrable this way:

"I can't send someone to the health department who won't be respected among doctors. Or to the economic ones, that is, conditio sine qua non, that is a necessary but insufficient condition. And then come other attributes. And that is, let's say, the ability to manage to assert the erudition that you have in you (...) there must also be the managerial-political dimension. And finally, in

the third row, personal. The minister should be loyal and should not screw up at the first setback (...). You know the politically important thing is that the adept understands that I will not give away, I will save, that I am a rather conservative person when it comes to values, but very liberal when it comes to state administration" (interview with a Category 1 respondent, 2022).

Obviously, this statement includes both experiential and affiliational criteria. However, it does not specify which one is more important and which aspect decides whether the ministrable will be selected over others.

According to the gathered data, approximately one-fourth of the parties do not have a prepared ministrable in advance of the government creation. Due to the fact that Slovak political parties are small in number and often split, disappear, and reemerge, the pool of their ministrables is limited. Therefore, in certain situations, when an expected candidate cannot be nominated, the contest for the cabinet position occurs. In such cases, it is possible to see more clearly which criteria really mattered in the ministerial selection. In this section, such situations in the two studied governments will be examined by focusing on how experiential, affiliational, and representative criteria were applied in the real scenarios.

Vetoing can be performed either by a coalition partner or a prime minister. The most important constraint of a prime minister is a strong prescriptive informal rule that overwrites the formal rule that is imbued in the constitution; in coalition governments, she cedes her selection rights over a large portion of the cabinet seats to other coalition partners. In certain situations—for example, when the ministrable is unacceptable for good reasons—there is another informal rule: the veto. If the prime minister finds objective reasons not to appoint a candidate, she can prohibit the nomination. However, this rule does not yield sufficient power, and it depends on the strength of the position of her party in the coalition. Subsequently, the president appoints ministers; however, Slovak presidents have never used this strong, formal, prohibitive rule against a ministrable before 2018. All the selectors in the examined governments agreed that they were not influenced in their selection by the future decision of the president.[4]

Other actors who can constrain or empower the selectors are their political parties. Their strength in shaping the selectors' decisions can depend on various factors. Firstly, some political parties, such as ANO in the abovementioned coalition governments, were basically owned by their leaders. Others, such as SMK-MKP, had elaborate internal democracy with stronger party bodies that were theoretically able to change the selectors' will. However, there was no account or recollection by the respondents that the competence of the party bodies ever turned out to be a real constraint on the selector in the appointment of ministers. It stems from the fact that the selector is elected by those party bodies, and her position depends on the party's support. Her position should be stable after the elections as she was able to enter the parliament and is in the coalition negotiations, which is objectively a success. Therefore, in fact, the presidency or other bodies do not usually exert their will against their party president during coalition negotiations. In the examined political parties, there were also no strong women's organizations that would have forced a selector to appoint more women to the cabinet.

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[4]   The presidential veto appeared for the first time only in 2018 after the murders of Ján Kuciak and Martina Kušnírová, when Andrej Kiska refused to name nominees of the SMER-SD party (TASR, 20.3. 2018).

Selecting Ministers in 2002

In 2002, three out of four parties continued in the coalition government from the previous term; therefore, there were not many surprises in appointments. It was only a newly formed party, ANO, that could have brought in new personalities.

In SDKÚ, I. Mikloš and E. Kukan continued as ministers. I. Šimko was not a surprising name among the ministers as a party vice president; however, due to the portfolio balancing, he could not become the Minister of Interior again and, against his will, became a Minister of Defense instead. I. Šimko did not have a background in defense; however, he was the founder of SDKÚ. *"Ivan Šimko, he was a specific case, he and Dzurinda, the two of them co-founded SDKÚ, and I think he [M. Dzurinda] felt some commitment that it was important to give Ivan some executive position"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

SDKÚ also received two portfolios from the lower tier: The Ministry of Transportation where they nominated P. Prokopovič, and the Ministry of Social Affairs, where they nominated Ľ. Kaník. For both of these portfolios, SDKÚ nominated ministers who were unexpected from the experiential point of view; however, they had crucial affiliational characteristics as both of them were former presidents of the parties that had merged with SDKÚ.

Before the elections, Ľ. Kaník was a leader of the Democratic Party that had a chance to enter parliament and was a rival of SDKÚ. Not long before election day, Kaník ceded the campaign and publicly supported SDKÚ, which came as a surprise to everyone and significantly helped SDKÚ to win the elections. A selector has said about Kaník: *"He had studied the pension systems of Chile. (…) We perceived how he is fundamentally interested in this topic. (…) In our discussion, the idea came up that when he was such a bloke that he did what he did, we will reward him a little. But this was not the idea from the start, I promise, the first thing was that we had a talented wizard for the portfolio"* (interview with a Category 1 respondent, 2022).

In the case of P. Prokopovič, a similar pattern occurred. Without previous explicit experience in this field, he became the Minister of Transportation, being the former president of a party that had merged with SDKÚ. *"Basically he (…) ran a patisserie in Stropkovo and this was where the entire competence of the Minister of Transportation came from—from the confectioner"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

SDKÚ originated from the government of 1998, when it was formerly known as SDK, a big coalition government that was composed of 11 parties. In short, Dzurinda managed to create SDKÚ from the former SDK by merging the number of these parties and their personalities into one. As a result, it was difficult to balance between party factions: *"Balancing the situation within the SDKÚ and then within the government coalition meant that some kind of professional background was not a decisive criterion, it was always sought that the leaders of those parties, the leaders of the factions, would be satisfied and, in principle, a portfolio was sought for that person, so that it would be felt that there was some kind of professional closeness. (…)Great care was taken to keep all those factions happy"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

The situation in KDH was more straightforward, which can be explained by the long tradition the party had been practicing since 2002. The party president, P. Hrušovský, was appointed as the deputy speaker of the parliament. V. Palko, as a co-founder of the party, the vice president, and

a member of the negotiation team, knew other top party leaders from the communist times and had powerful experience from previous political positions. Being appointed as the new Minister of Justice, D. Lipšic might have been a surprise because of his young age; however, by the time that he became minister, he was also a vice president of the party, was publicly well-known, and knew the portfolio from within. He also had a previous experience as the chief of staff of the former Minister of Justice. The third minister of KDH became M. Fronc, the Minister of Education. This was obviously the last portfolio that KDH obtained, and Fronc was not at the top of the party leadership; however, he was party presidency member, a long-term member, and the policy leader for education in the campaign.

In the SMK-MKP, the president of the party, B. Bugár, also left the cabinet to others and pursued a parliamentary career; however, most of his nominees were also not a surprise: P. Csáky was the vice president and the party founder. L. Miklos and L. Gyurovsky had a strong affiliation with the party leadership and had been experienced. It was for the first time when SMK-MKP obtained the Ministry of Agriculture, and SMK-MKP did not have a ministrable prepared for this position. Therefore, the party made an internal tender where four candidates applied. Eventually, Z. Simon was selected. *"He did not win the first round in the party, he was only second, we had Mr. Farkaš, who was the chairman in both cases in the parliament, the budget committee and was an economist, he was better. We just did not know at the time that he had a shady background, he was Mr. Világi's person. Lobbying decided, which we underestimated at that time"* (interview with a Category 1 respondent, 2022).

The most complicated was the situation in ANO, the party that was established only a while before elections by a TV tycoon P. Rusko. The second founder was Ľ. Lintner. None of them became ministers. P. Rusko eventually ended up as the vice-chairman of the parliament, and Ľ. Lintner, too, ended up in the parliament. ANO wanted the Ministry of Finance; however, it obtained the Ministry of Economics. R. Nemcsics, its new minister, was a party expert in economy, but more importantly, he was a close confidant of P. Rusko. The second portfolio the party received was the Ministry of Health Care. ANO had an expert prepared beforehand whom they promoted during electoral campaign—medical doctor R. Zajac, who was willing to enact reforms in the department. The third portfolio the party managed to negotiate was the Ministry of Culture. P. Rusko was unable to become its minister because of his conflicts of interest. The obvious choice became Ľ. Lintner, the vice-chairman of the party, party co-founder, and a TV personality himself. However, due to an internal party veto, he was not nominated eventually. The party started to look for a suitable ministrable in its membership ranks and came up with an ordinary member, R. Chmel, a well-educated writer who was known on the cultural scene. The leadership of ANO did not object to his nomination, and he became the minister (interview with a Category 1 respondent, 2022).

Representational criteria played no role in this government. When asked whether the selectors considered representation criteria, the respondents gave a universally negative answer. The prime minister, M. Dzurinda, said to the media that he is sorry that no women are represented in the new government; however, things just turned out that way (SITA, October 8, 2002). A respondent from Category 1 said, *"There were no women, so what was I supposed to create one? If one appeared, I would be just happy."* All the factors that are usually present when women

receive a nomination described by Annesley et al. (2019) absented: Coalition parties did not have women's organizations that would pursue such nominations. Selectors also refused the concept of gender representation in the government. *"No, I did not think in this way,"* said one respondent from Category 1. Another respondent said, *"No, no, no, nothing like that, I don't have any gender equality in my head, it did not make sense to me. I honestly declare that gender is not one of my criteria, and I cannot even think of any other criteria."* The third respondent also expressed that representation of women was not considered: *"No women were actually considered, the nominations were quite clear from the start. We had three women in the leadership. Not one of them was there, nor did any of them have the ambition to be a minister, only maybe if some ambition was there, (…), then not in front of me"* (interview with a Category 1 respondent, 2022).

The experiential criteria turned out to be so flexible that even minister Prokopovič and Kaník were rationalized as suitable. Thus, it is obvious that the experiential criteria were not the ones that were decisive in the selection of ministers to this cabinet. It was not primarily a competition

Table 1: Credentials of ministers appointed after 2002 elections to the cabinet.

Political Party	Coalition Ministers 2002- 2006	Party founder	Top party position	Negotiation Team	Minister in previous government	Faction leader	State Secretary in Previous Government	Party expert before elections	Donor backing
SDKÚ	I. Mikloš (M)		–	–	–			–	
	E. Kukan (M)	–	–	–	–	–		–	
	I. Šimko (M)	–	–		–				
	Ľ. Kaník (M)					–			
	P. Prokopovič (M)					–			
KDH	V. Palko (M)	–	–	–				–	
	D. Lipšic (M)		–	–				–	
	M. Fronc (M)						–	–	
SMK	P. Csáky (M)	–	–	–	–				
	L.Miklós (M)	–			–	–		–	
	L.Gyurovsky (M)	–				–		–	
	Z. Simon: Contested seat (M)								–
ANO	R. Nemcsics (M)	–	–						
	R. Zajac (M)							–	
	Contested seat: R. Chmel								

Source: *Author.* **Note***:* M = Male; F = Female.

for the most-informed expert but rather an appointment of trusted party politicians, a careful balancing between various party factions, and satisfying various party interests. Affiliational criteria that are the permissible type of informal norms prevailed in the cabinet appointments of 2002, which resulted into a hostile situation for the appointment of women.

Selecting Ministers in 2016

In 2016, there were more possible coalition combinations. SMER-SD dominated the elections; similarly, its close partner, SNS, entered the parliament, garnering them 64 seats in the parliament together. That was, however, the end of natural coalition partnerships. In order to reach a stable majority, SMER and SNS needed partners to form a coalition, provided that they have declared they would not form a coalition with fascists. Most-Híd and Sieť eventually agreed to form a coalition with SMER and SNS (aktuality.sk, March 16, 2016).

Ministerial nominations of SMER-SD were not surprising; they were all seasoned ministers from the previous single-party government of SMER-SD. With one exception: the Minister of Health Care: *"That responsibility was huge. And no party wanted to bear political responsibility for it, especially when they knew the state of it. It is mainly a matter of communication that a person who is not a member of a political party is appointed, who declares himself to be a manager, and thus the party gives it to him. And that person became T. Drucker"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

SNS received three portfolios, two of them "economic"—education, defense, and agriculture. I was not able to secure an interview with the respondent from SNS; however, according to respondents from the other coalition parties, SNS had a very strange selection model that is also apparent as seen on Table 2 below. The party president, A. Danko, selected his three ministers completely outside the party ranks. According to a respondent from Category 2, he sold the portfolios to oligarchs. The fact that the nominees were nonpartisan caused a huge power boost for him. *"He became the only link between the executive and the party, and of course, the party felt completely rightfully spit on, but he could have afforded it, because at that time he was already the owner of the party, as he paid off all its debts. On the one hand, he could fire those ministers at any time without angering the party, see the case of Plavčan, and on the other hand, as soon as the party wanted to arrange something, it was up to him whether it would be communicated to the ministers or not"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

Most-Híd received two ministerial seats, and unsurprisingly, its vice presidents were appointed to the positions. A new vice president of Most-Híd was L. Žitňanská, the former Minister of Justice from KDH and SDKÚ-DS. Moreover, B. Bugár stayed in the parliament.

Sieť went through a split right after the elections and lost three MPs, which resulted in its weakened position in negotiations. It also caused the replacement of some of its remaining MPs with opposition MPs should they leave the parliament to take positions in the cabinet. The leadership of Sieť was, therefore, unable to take positions in the executive. In the beginning, Sieť was supposed to have two smaller portfolios and wanted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was not granted to it. Eventually, Sieť opted for one large portfolio—the Ministry of Transportation.

The first ministrable that was proposed to the prime minister was R. Auxt, who was a party expert on economics. The selectors started a scrutiny process on him as he was publicly not well known. *"They scrutinize for two reasons—they want to have ammo for the fights within the co-alition and they also want to make sure he will not put them at risk if it turned out he was a cretin. But he had a real position within Sieť that was given by economic interests. So he eventually ended up as the Director-General of the NDS, which is economically even stronger as the Minister of Transportation"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022). In the end, SMER-SD managed to veto the appointment of Auxt.

According to the respondent from Category 2, another power struggle started at Sieť because it was the only portfolio the party had received and the only chance to get some political and economic benefits. All these unusual circumstances resulted in the fact that the new minister became R. Brecely, an expert in energetics who did not expect it and had no experience in transportation.

Table 2: Credentials of ministers appointed to the Cabinet after the 2016 elections.

	Coalition (2016 – 2020)	Party founder	Top party position	Negotiation Team member	Previous Minister	Faction leader	Previous State Secretary	Party expert before elections	Party donor backing
Smer-SD	R. Kaliňák (M)	–	–	–	–			–	
	P. Kažimír (M)		–		–			–	
	P. Pellegrini (M)		–		–			–	
	M. Lajčák (M)				–			–	
	P. Žiga (M)		–		–			–	
	J. Richter (M)				–			–	
	M. Maďarič (M)		–		–			–	
	T. Drucker (Contested seat) (M)								
SNS	P. Plavčan (M)								–
	G. Matečná (F)								–
	P. Gajdoš (M)								–
Most-Híd	L. Žitňanská (F)		–	–	–	–		–	
	L. Sólymos (M)	–	–	–					
Sieť	**R. Brecely – (Contested seat) (M)**							– different area	–

Source: *Author.* **Note**: M = Male; F = Female.

"And that fight was waged by two wings, the wing that stood by Procházka won, and the nominee was also selected based on that. He was the 27th person on the voting list and no one knew him, and it could have been justified by the fact that he was a former manager at ČEZ" (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022). There were more candidates for the position, and the party presidency was supposed to vote on who will be nominated. The main reason that his nomination was eventually supported was because he was backed by the party's sponsors.

According to the respondents from the two coalition parties, the representational criteria were absent in this cabinet formation too. Counterintuitively, this was the cabinet that, at a certain point of time, around the year 2018, reached the historical record: 35.71% proportion of female ministers. Interestingly, one respondent explicitly stated that at the level of the whole coalition, the question of female representation was completely out of place. *"It is not dealt with at all…."* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

As previously mentioned, the case of the nomination of the SNS minister, G. Matečná, can be explained by this account: *"Those nominations are exactly the image of the power interests of that party, and if the interests are masculine, so will be the government. If in some parties women participate in power, this will also be reflected in those nominations"* (interview with a Category 2 respondent, 2022).

According to a respondent from the first category, Most-Híd genuinely cared about the representation of minorities, but not on the cabinet level. The balancing of various minorities started at the level of state secretaries and lower. The party considered regional representation and national minorities. In Sieť, representational criteria played no role as it had only one portfolio.

Conclusion and Discussion

This qualitative analysis that expose the ministerial-selection process and the factors affecting which selectors decide who can become a minister is a contribution to political science and feminist scholarships in Slovakia and beyond. I partially corroborated the conclusions of Annesley et al. (2019) that in Slovakia, too, the selection of ministers does not resemble an objective process of finding the best-qualified ministers to the cabinet. Among the experiential, affiliational, and representative criteria, it is the affiliational category that was decisive in most cases of ministerial selection. The vast majority of ministers in Slovak cabinets are nominated mostly because they are party founders, are already very high in party ranks, were ministers in previous governments, have the support of party donors, are important faction leaders, or were members of the negotiating team of their political party.

The experiential criterion is prescriptive but can be very flexible. In almost every case, a vindication for a ministrable nomination can be found using the argument of her previous experience. However, it is very rare to receive a cabinet appointment based only on experiential criteria. Parties usually resort to it when they receive an unexpected portfolio or lose a ministrable whom they had prepared for the post. Experiential criteria allow selectors to nominate based on affiliational criteria and publicly disguise it by asserting the experience of a ministrable. Experiential criteria are not even a *conditio sine qua non* in obtaining a ministerial nomination in

Slovakia. Therefore, nominees are supposed to be already in the highest party leadership to be appointed to cabinet positions, which is a difficult endeavor since Slovak political parties have no quota nor strong women's organizations that would have forced a selector to appoint more women to the cabinet.

I have found that representational criteria play no role in cabinet formation. Every single respondent I interviewed confirmed that representational criteria were not applied. Political parties as organizations that could constrain a selector in advanced democracies are generally weak in Slovakia. Therefore, within her portfolios, the party selector—the party president/leader—has relatively unconstrained political agency.

The assumption of Annesley et al. (2019) that cabinets are constructed as a team is not applicable to Slovakia either. After the division of portfolios, the Slovak prime minister cedes a large portion of her appointment power to her coalition partners, who are very autonomous selectors of their ministrables. The prime minister can attempt to veto a ministrable in serious circumstances if she is utterly unfit for the job; however, her chances for the veto are uncertain. There is an informal, strongly institutionalized, and prescriptive rule that each party nominates their ministers to their portfolio without interference.

Annesley et al. (2019, p. 250) have found that cross-national variation in women's representation in cabinets cannot be explained by institutional settings, such as a political system. I contest this finding; the party system and other institutional characteristics matter, to a great extent, for the prospects of Slovak female ministers. Firstly, Slovakia has a low number of cabinet seats, which historically ranged between twelve and fifteen. In a coalition government, which is the prevalent model of government in Slovakia, the average number of coalition members in government is 3.11. Thus, a coalition party has only a very limited number of cabinet positions, and they are usually filled by high-rank party officials. In each of the examined governments, there were only some places that were not decided based on affiliational criteria beforehand. There is often not enough places left for the application of representational criteria where affiliational criteria has already been applied. Secondly, as found in our previous study that focused on portfolio allocation in Slovak governments, based on an expert survey, 10 out of 16 Slovak portfolios are gendered masculine, which negatively influences women's opportunity to receive an appointment there (Hudáčková & Malová 2022). Third, Slovakia has an atomized party system (Casal Bértoa 2022), and Slovak political parties are not institutionalized enough. Their frequent splits, downfalls, and merges result in detrimental conditions in establishing strong women's organizations within them that would push forward female candidates and the idea of gender equality.

These characteristics of Slovak institutions have profound consequences for the chances of women becoming ministers. For future theory development, I recommend a cross-national study of formal and informal rules in democracies with various coalition practices and various party systems. Moreover, this would be beneficial in expanding the explanatory power of the theory when also focusing on ministerial selection during replacements.

Against all odds, Slovakia has had female cabinet ministers; however, when a woman became a Slovak minister, it was not because selectors wanted a more gender-balanced cabinet. The reason they received a nomination was not their gender; it was despite their gender. The high variance in the number of female ministers in Slovak governments can be explained by the fact

that representational criteria are not institutionalized in Slovakia. Therefore, zero women representation in the cabinet can easily happen again because the penalty for their exclusion is low or nonexistent. For all the above mentioned reasons, I am negative about the prospects of gender parity in Slovak cabinets in the near future.

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Appendices

Annex 1: Interview log.

Interviewee Category: (1) Member of the Negotiation Team: Former Prime Minister, Party Leader, or Minister; (2) Not a Member of Negotiations Team but followed the negotiations: Former Minister; Advisor to the Party/Leader/Prime Minister, Member of the Party Leadership, or Highly Positioned Party Employee.	Date of the Inerview	Government	Location	Type of Interview	Recorded (Yes/No)	Confidentiality assured (Yes/No)
Category 2	25.4.22	2002-06	Bratislava, Slovakia	In person	Yes	Yes
Category 2	23.2.22	2002-06	Bratislava, Slovakia	In person	Yes	Yes
Category 1	25.5.22	2002-06	Bratislava, Slovakia	In person	Yes	Yes
Category 1	8.6.22	2002-06	Bratislava, Slovakia	In person	Yes	Yes
Category 1	16.6.22	2002-06	Bratislava, Slovakia	In person	Yes	Yes
Category 1	13.6.22	2016-20	Bratislava, Slovakia	In person	Yes	Yes
Category 2	14.6.22	2016-20	Bratislava, Slovakia	In person	Yes	Yes
Category 2	24.6.22	2016-20	Bratislava, Slovakia	In person	Yes	Yes

Source: Author

Annex 2: Interview Questionnaire[5]

INTRODUCTION

Brief description of the political situation after the specific elections in order to refresh respondent's memory - election results, no. of ministers of her party, names of ministers.

QUESTIONS

PROCESS

Coalition negotiations:
- What was your role in negotiating the nominations for ministerial positions - in the party / in the coalition negotiations, to what extent did you observe the process / participated in it?What came first - was it the division of the number of departments between the parties? By what mechanism? Or were the departments divided according to what each party was interested in? Were some departments dealt with first?
- What did the coalition negotiations look like? - format, frequency, etc.
- Did the coalition negotiations regarding the filling of ministerial posts concern only ministers or did the various compensations between the coalition parties cover a wider package of nominations for different institutions? (state secretaries, administration bodies, state enterprises, etc.?
- Has there been a problem in the entire government to fill some of the ministerial seats with ministers? Which ones? If so, why?
- Has someone vetoed / tried to influence the nominations of other parties?

Party level negotiations:
- Which departments was your party primarily interested in and which ones did it eventually receive? Describe the process.
- Selection of people in the party for each ministerial position - description of the process.
- Who participated in the selection of ministers in your political party and to what extent? What was the position of these people? Was it obvious who is a ministerial candidate before elections? How did you pre/selected the candidates who had the chance to become ministers?
- When someone was selected for a ministerial department, what procedure was followed within the party? Was there an approval mechanism for nominations, such as the presidency / party council or other bodies? Or was it just the party President who had a freedom to choose?

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[5]   Questions were slightly adapted for each interview according to the position of the respondent in the negotiating process and the level of her political agency and insight.

- Did the ministerial candidates lobby for themselves?
- Some nominations may have been clear in advance according to the party's programmatic focus and visible personalities. Which departments / which people were like these?
- Were there any departments your party obtained for which your party did not have a straightforward nominee before the elections? Describe such cases.

Experiential criteria
- Why were these nominees chosen for the ministerial seats of the political party?
- Analysis of individual party nominations: What were their qualities? What was their qualification for this post? Continuity / party positionss / party factions / merits / expertise / popularity, other ...
- If more candidates were considered for a ministerial post, what factors were decisive for the successful nominee?
- Were there any nominees in the government / party who did not have sufficient qualifications / experience for the department? Has there been a debate about it?

Affiliational criteria
- Of those people who were eventually nominated to the cabinet, were any of the president's personal friends before politics? Or was it more about political friendships? Do you remember where they met?
- Were any non-partisans nominated? How did the party found them? Why did it reach out to them?

Representational criteria
Do you remember that it would be addressed in the party / coallition negotiations that:
- not all ministers should be from Bratislava?
- the question of the age of nominees?
- should someone be a representative of a minority / other group?
- are there enough women in government?
- Was there a discussion about these aspects?

When the individual candidates for ministerial posts were being selected, was it considered whether the President would be willing to appoint them? Were there cases where there were such concerns? Did it affect the nominations in any way?

Source: The author.

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Irrational Attraction of Rationality [1]

The content of political doctrines and dominant lines of practical politics is legitimised by the effort to implement the ideal of a good, free society by applying the idea of reason. At the same time, its performance not only defines the conditions for the theoretical justification of the idea of power, but also becomes a tool for its implementation. The primary goal of this paper is in an endeavour to place the normative nature of current (democratic) political regimes where we encounter the need for a more fundamental theoretical argument that would enable us to respond to their dynamic, often contradictory development. One of the consequences of such fixation is in the division of sciences into the realms of nature and society, the independence of their methodological orientation, or the factual and theoretical division of human reality into rationalism (means, technology, efficiency) and human values and meanings which become the domain of irrationalism. Therefore, from the perspective of modern political systems, irrationally conditioned modelling of reality under the guise of rationality may be considered an important aspect of the ideological compromise between politics, economics, and the media sphere on the lasting continuity of prosperity for the rich ones.

Key words: rationalism, irrationalism, reason, knowledge, power

Introduction

Everything alive keeps pursuing a better world. This is one of the ways for us to formulate a basis for an anthropologically conditioned possibility of conceptualising the substantive core of the evolutionary dynamics of humanity at the level of the coding system of signs. Processes whose character determines the content of political doctrines and dominant lines of practical policy in the implementation of the ideal of a good, just, and free society by applying the idea of reason. At the same time, its performance not only defines the conditions for the theoretical justification of the idea of power, but also becomes a tool for its implementation.

The history of the development of human communities opens up a large number of chapters of the alliance of rationality and power. The determining power of the implementation of elements of purposeful rationality at the political level is almost always represented by the legiti-

mation of a certain type of interest associated with the greatest power to enforcing them. In fact, the undisputed component of progress makes it possible to seek, create and, where necessary, adapt legitimacy practices to justify the content and exercise of political power, subject to the author's ability to change his or her perception of their specific application. Therefore, the primary goal of this paper is in an endeavour to place the normative nature of current (democratic) political regimes where we encounter the need for a more fundamental theoretical argument that would enable us to respond to their dynamic, often contradictory development. Productivity of this effort is enhanced by the situational framework of quite specific conditions, within which and through which solutions to various problems of a political, economic and legal nature are specified, including the variable classification of historical experience.

The theoretical background of this approach develops monitoring the content turbulences in the political systems of liberal democracies, what we have outlined as general framework of our concept - irrationally conditioned modelling of reality under the guise of rationality may be considered an important aspect of the ideological compromises. In the arena of current ideological confrontations, the fixation of the line not only leads to a systematic cultivation of citizens' belief in the ideal of democracy, open society, liberal virtues, and authentic citizenship, but intensifies the feeling of deep disillusionment with (non) functioning state or supranational power structures, often shifting perceptions of content and scope of politics to the position of a failed cartoon. The diagnosis of this condition therefore raises a fairly legitimate question: according to what (who) does the world actually work? If at all, what type of rationality[2] does this idea fit to? Who is the subject of the administration and inspection of its effectiveness?

The Role of Values and Power in the Evolution of Rationalism and Irationalism

Experiments with projects to transforming man, society or the world with a universal form of government, legitimised by a rationally conditioned interest in the highest good represent an impressive part of the history of political doctrines. Their theoretical starting points may be identified already in the ancient tradition at the level of the relationship between thinking and reality, where reason was understood as a basic identifying factor for a unified picture of reality. Its essence was in a unique combination of the belief that the world is lawful and rational, that it is within the power of reason to understand and control future trajectories, with an irrationally conditioned notion of a good, happy life, consisting in the ability of reason to know the highest virtues - the idea of the good. For example, *Plato* in his conception of the ideal State assumed that by thinking (*noésis*) and reasoning (*dianoia*) we can capture the ideal beings and attain knowledge as the highest form of true knowledge. The ontological determination of what is

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[2] Rationality as a specific feature that individuals and groups of people display in their thinking, actions, language or institutions has several historical forms. In addition to the ancient (6th century AD - 17th century) and modern type of rationality (17th century - mid 20th century), we can also talk about the so-called non-classical type of rationality, which seeks to overcome the fundamental limiting aspect of the modern type, consisting in the demands of reason for its own unlimitedness and the possibility of creating artificial nature.

and what can be both unique and unchanging and even thought presupposes here the agreement of thought and reality, the truth understood as wisdom, the highest good. At the same time, the knowledge of the noblest idea predestines its bearer to rule, so that the political capacity to exercise power is conditioned by wisdom.

In the ancient tradition, however, we may also note the roots of another way of thinking, which is the product of realising the limits of one's own knowledge, or the cognitive imperfections of the person knowing. It connects with knowledge based on searching, exploring, considering, in which the idea of error is contained in the idea of truth as standard. Accordingly, our knowledge, more precisely our belief that in knowledge we touch reality, is always just improvisation, is of the most probabilistic nature. Cognition works on the principle of reflexivity - people's thoughts, feelings, actions are part of the reality they are thinking about, so their opinion will never fully coincide with the world as it really exists. It is precisely the absence of agreement between the rational subject and the actual state of affairs that brings an element of uncertainty, unpredictability into the participants' understanding, as well as into the events in which they participate. Such an attitude not only corrects the resistance of any opinion in terms of its exclusivity, but paradoxically points to the fact that a basic rational attitude is the result of a belief in reason. Free choice in favour of a rational position admits its origin in an irrational decision, it is even conditioned by the presumed *irrational belief* in reason. The same is true of the irrational *belief* in progress based on the development of knowledge.

Optimistic visions of the highest as the substantial core of politics, in their Renaissance - humanistic form, have been transferred to the level of planned use of scientific knowledge. The acquisition of knowledge gradually acquired the character of a tool for controlling nature, transforming the human destiny, and promoting conflicting goals in gaining and maintaining power. In the indicated contexts, together with the separation of reasoning and deepening the considerations from the knowledge gained through activities and experience, we thus have the opportunity to reflect on the situation when individual scientific disciplines in different time periods and in different ways are pushed to defend their legitimacy by modifying theoretical production in favour of social (political) orders. At least in terms of the classical modern idea of the unity of science, it is especially the field of humanities that does not have a goal *in itself*, but must prove its practical usefulness.

The transformation of the irrationally conditioned Christian vision of universal salvation into the universal liberation of man through politics has opened up a wide range of possibilities for the practical application of universalist conceptions of the world in the name of abolition, oppression, tyranny, injustice, unfairness, social inequality or war. The ethos of progress gradually gained its expression by projecting into the position of human personality development as a spiritual being, endowed with consciousness and will, the ability to act rationally and freely, in close correlation with transcending the current givenness by reason and opening to what man is not yet, but can become. The primary ideological feature of the special emphasis on the role of knowledge here is in the unique combination of its two components: perfect knowledge as a possibility and perfect knowledge as a necessity.

However, when projecting the horizon of the future in the struggle to creating a better world by applying the idea of reason, we reach an imaginary crossroads. The belief of Western mono-

theism is gradually beginning to be alternated by a belief in infinity, the infinite possibilities of human knowledge, and the belief in the cumulative replicability of progress. The dream of *regnum homini* in the perspective of modern, secular Enlightenment ideologies embodies a new type of "ordinary" man who, by reason (knowledge) transforms his destiny, creates a new, better world. The situational complexity of the modernisation era is completed by a coordinated causal chain from individualisation, industrialisation, economic development, social mobilisation to the transformation of values, and the requirement to participate in political life in most developing industrial societies. Paradoxically, however, man becomes a reality here only by becoming a member of the system, he is only real as long as he is reducible to the function of the system, as long as he may be defined by his needs. It is by entering the area of (economic) relations that he is, independently of his consciousness, drawn into the regular context of his own realisation. What appears - as K. Kosík points out - is the transformation of the *subjective into the objective,* when man is no longer defined "*by himself..*, *but becomes a definable element of the construction and operation of the system* (Kosík 1966, pp. 71 – 74).[3]

The basic premise of the idea of the system as fixable, subsequently knowledgeable regularities is represented by the ideologised essence of the idea of the common good (well-being) that we follow. If man is to be a functioning part of this system, he must be equipped with the characteristic features necessary for his proper functioning. Reason in fact belongs to one of them, but it is not primarily an immanent part of an individual's consciousness to develop rational abilities, but rather a necessity of life, something that is a tool of mediating a reasonably shaped reality (system). The reason of classical rationalism of the 17th and 18th centuries, which created a modern civilisation with the technology and conveniences of science, formed a reasonable individual with the ability to think exactly, paradoxically has the potential to create a reality that it can neither rationally organise nor rationally understand. Political rationalism, accompanied by the demand for a direct rule of reason and the gradual expansion of institutions (political, economic, legal) falling under this rule, also offers the summarisation and glorification of technical knowledge, full of rules and principles.

The political objective of the ultimate triumph of reason in establishing social harmony thus set in motion the forces for which rational behaviour leads to the efficient use of resources, to the attainment of the objective with minimal effort or the maximum degree of benefit. Reason is a technique of behaviour and action, a technique of its most perfect expression, and science is a guide to how to use resources rationally (effectively) to achieve an objective. Thinking about the legitimacy and rationality of the objective is actually precluded by science, which leads to a symbiosis of two split ontological spheres – the rationalisation of irrational and irrational consequences of rationalisation. One of the consequences of such a fixation in the line we follow is in the already proclaimed division of sciences into the field of nature and society, the indepen-

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[3] The concentrated expression of the logical structure observed represents the intellectual heritage of one of the greatest representatives of the Enlightenment period, I. Kant. He thought of man as a free being who could autonomously determine his will by rationally transforming natural lust. The postulate of freedom is, in Kant's view, determined by a general moral law, the subject of which is *man as a purpose for himself* (a noumenal being), capable of autonomously directing his will in accordance with the general requirements of practical reason.

dence of their methodological orientation or the factual and theoretical division of human real-
ity into rationalism (means, technology, efficiency) and human values and meanings, which in
a paradoxical way become the domain of irrationalism. An adequate solution to the researched
issue seems - once again in the words of *K. Kosík* - a dialectical reason as a higher kind of ratio-
nality, as a universal and necessary "*process of knowing and formation of reality which leaves
nothing outside and is therefore the mind of both science and thinking and human freedom and
reality ... So it knows in itself that its activity is in raising and resolving the contradictions, ... it
does not exist outside reality, nor does it leave reality outside itself. It exists only by realising its
reasonableness, i. e. it is created as a dialectical reason only as long as it creates a reasonable
reality in the historical process*" (Kosík 1966, pp. 73–74).

The idea of a definitive push of rationalism-based theories in the transformation of nature,
man and society according to the universal model gained in magnitude in the golden era of mo-
dernity by connecting scientific knowledge and the accumulation of capital (profit) with politi-
cal and military power. The new logic of shaping the political, legal or economic reality of (not
only) Europe according to the capitalist formula was further accentuated by the compromise
between the feudal lords, the bourgeoisie and the industrialists, bound together by the institu-
tion of private property. The legitimacy of open, critical science has also grown in line with the
idea of positive performance dynamics, which only confirms the already proclaimed connection
between science, power, capital, and technology. The production and usability of knowledge
was gradually conditioned by their transferability into the language of numbers, technological
features that are a tradable commodity. In fact, knowledge itself has become an information
commodity, a necessary precondition for the production of things that humanity wants, so - as
we have already indicated - it is not (cannot be) just pure good, because it ceases to be an end
in itself. One of the rarest contributions to the good of humanity, made for social and political
progress, has gradually become an immanent part of ideological struggles for the liberation of
man from the fate that makes him human over the centuries.

Behind the entire, almost exclusively optimistic rhetoric of people who have power, there is
the idea of a bright future. However, when analysing the ways of enforcing the abstract princi-
ples of truth in science, the general good in politics, or the improvement of the exercise of power
in the State, we come across another issue that seems theoretically unresolvable. This contradicts
the inner meaning of our regulatory concepts in relation to reality. The tradition of their content
fulfilment is based on the determination of a certain pattern - the concept of its own, which deter-
mines what is right, good, just *in itself*, i. e. what it "*should be*"! This "*should be*" characterises
unambiguity, immutability in time, can be only one and does not contain any opposing parts. It
acquires an abstract nature, it becomes a general, absolute, but an unusable principle from the
point of view of addressing specific situations. Man's behaviour in the real world is influenced
by the factual ambiguity of the conditions in which it takes place, which predisposes him to the
necessary improvisation in choosing between the various options. Thus, a practical guide to ac-
tion in terms of a specific situation requires an intermediary article to develop the content of the
abstract concept, which is its interpretive interpretation. But the concept in itself, due to its ab-
stractness, has no content, so it cannot be developed theoretically (interpretatively). Addressing
the issue of developing the content of the concept of its own on a practical level means giving

it, more precisely inserting in it, "*subjective preferences into the abstract idea*" (Valach 2001, p. 33).

This contradiction in the indicated contexts further complicates the paradox of the interpretation itself, because due to the absence of the content of the idea of good - as productively recalled by M. Valach - is not "*able to proceed in developing the idea of good ..., it becomes a process in which the interpreting entity inserts their own ideas and beliefs in the answer, which, however, should have been completely non-subjective in nature, that is, a simple expression of the idea of good*" (Valach 2001, pp. 37-38). The observed argumentative trajectory, especially in the context of modern political theory of democracy, leads us to a relatively absurd realisation that the plurality of political principles and the absence of a universal, generally binding criterion of what is good (right) legitimises not only content dispersion but also dispersion of interpreters. Completing the ideological development of humanity by accepting a State establishment that presupposes multiple interpretations, followed by the choice of performers in legitimising power means not just a departure from the original idea of good, but also chaos from the perspective of legitimacy of one (generally acceptable) single binding interpretation (of the interpreter) of what is good, right. The personification of the will of one, several, most or all (if such a thing is really possible at all) is basically identical to the idea of perfect good in itself, we will just "fill" its original, abstract concept with rational content. Due to its reasoning, its essential essence is therefore in a *manipulative function* in the reproduction of a system that has a certain value potential. Therefore, in the long run, the legitimacy of democracy stands and falls with the possibility of maintaining an irrational belief in the ability of each individual to understand the essence of political decisions based on rational argumentation in implementing the ideal of the common good, through elected representatives fulfilling the will of the people.

Alliance of Rationality and Power in the Process of Forming Modern Liberal Democracies

The charming illusory nature of simplistic arguments, expressing the relativisation of the axiological core of democracy, leads the object of our collective devotion to the gradual shifting of ideological limits to its extreme forms. We are pleased that the essence of modern liberal democracies is the fidelity of the whole (majority) society to a general principle, but we are not able (willing) to understand the present precisely because of "inherited" irrational belief in a modern plan of thought based on the ideas of infinite progress, rationality of a world with universal and cosmopolitan values, of which the political projects of the transformation of man (of the world) with a universal form of government were (and still are) its immanent part! Conscious projection of social reproduction to a single, universal idea of globalisation (global civilisation), transformation of world order according to liberal model or universal civilisation, organised according to trade and capital movements, experiments with biotechnology on human transformation (transhumanism), human leaders (engineering of human souls), these are just some of the fragments of an endless mosaic of attempts to "remake" man or the world according to a model that are doomed to failure. We do not have the tools to attain the objectives that we cannot even

agree on, and the world is not a homogeneous political and economic system ruled by a single ideology. Rather, it is a laboratory where there are many parallel attempts to improve the quality of human life, victory over hunger, disease, wars, but still mixed with the ambition to meet basic necessities, ensuring strategic access to energy resources or consciously managing evolution through technology. The idea of the "end of history" in the form of continuous development of human societies from simple tribal communities to modern liberal democracy and technology-driven capitalism, resolution of historical conflict by general mutual recognition through State-guaranteed rights, universal industrialisation, global economic expansion - these are new (not just) conceptual opiates, creating new shortcomings, inciting new conflicts and putting a greater risk of destabilisation from global dependence.

The starting point of our classification of the normative nature of politics is one of the modifications of the idea of the doctrinal unity of faith (irrationalism) and reason (rationalism, science) in justifying power legitimised by the interest in the highest good. The basis for understanding humanity as a moral ideal in overcoming evil with good, the relentless revolutionary logic of ordering by man, in which good, freedom and happiness would prevail, was in the orientation towards the exclusive position of the human self in the hierarchy of creation, the determination of man as an objective contained in everything else. In accordance with the ethos of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the theory of natural rights, the bearers of the proclaimed optimistic perspectives were gradually becoming middle-class members (townspeople, craftsmen) for whom criticism of monarchy, absolutism and traditional spiritual elite was the regulatory ideal of creating a new world and expressing their own political or economic interests. The social hierarchy was violated by its growing competences, ambitions and wealth, as well as by the increasingly economically independent bourgeoisie with a new morality, attributing to the economic system (industry, capital flow, economic freedom, rationality) much higher value than the prevailing value orientations. The political, economic and moral appeal of the rules offered to the general population, and subsequently their codification by legal acts, have led to a huge increase in the number of people who have sought to improve their living conditions. They made it possible to create a layer known as the "people", represented by parliament, where man - the citizen gained the status of a universal enemy of any tyranny and a human rights defender. The modernisation enlightenment policy project further strengthened this tendency by combining the ambition to improve the exercise of power by exercising representative and liberal procedures in a democracy, with an irrational belief in the productive and distributive power of the market.

In the process of forming free competition capitalism, we therefore consider it very important to point to a potential ideological loop, set not only by the eschatological perspective of emphasising unlimited human possibilities, which does not respect the dichotomy between politically impracticable and empirically verifiable reality with appropriate enforcement of of political ideals, but especially the increasing conflict following from the need to satisfy the different needs of social groups with different statuses! The relationship between the vision of political (freedom) and social (equality) rights, which puts the basic orientation guidelines of politics in the context of the classical doctrine of democracy in a completely different light, seems to be problematic here. The process of concentration of private power, the economisation of all spheres of human life, combined with its legitimisation in the logic of democratic and liberal principles ultimately

created a state of semantic emptiness of authentic ideas of democracy and liberalism, when the social and economic power of a privileged minority alongside with the political ones reinforcing them form an almost impenetrable barrier for the effective exercise of the social, political, and civil rights of the discriminated majority! Concerns of several nineteenth-century conservatives (Disraeli, Main) about the pernicious, inhuman and mechanical influence of political rationalism, utilitarianism, pragmatism or positivism on definition framework of politics have already indicated much in this regard, while Marx spoke of the contradictions of material productive forces with existing production and ownership relations, which eventually resulted in a struggle for social, political rights, emancipation from property inequality or the exploitation of workers. The alienation of the producer from the results of his work in the process of exchange on the labour market, the transformation of the producer into goods for the owner and the resulting oppression, asymmetry, inequality, these are - in the words of J. Lysý – "*real, past and present shackles of exploitation*" (Lysý 2011, p. 289).

It is not at all surprising, then, that even the current moments in history are marked by an ever-increasing asymmetry between the political eschatology of the elites and the logic of the basic (natural?) life connections. Changes in the global distribution of power are destroying the middle class, labour market segregation has resulted in segregation based on social inequality (*social apartheid*), the primary target group for investment (concentrated capital power) is global "*plutonomy*" (about twenty percent of the population the remaining eighty percent are employees without any economic (social) security. The market reduces the freedom to choose to buy goods, individual consumption, not to the area of solidarity or care for others, but perhaps the most obvious manifestation of the (old) new division of modern societies is the multicultural nature of their metropolises, which literally embodies an *oligarchic paradox* - their nature does not determine the people who live there, but the "global billionaires" for whom these are places to save their money. Thus, one of the most striking consequences of globalisation and the technological revolution is the "non-national" elites, loyal to global economic growth (*success*), self-interest (*prosperity*), but the power of which remains thoroughly hidden. The main idea of the democratisation wave in Europe ("*you can't develop economically unless you have democracy*") is thus "logically" turning into thinking about capitalism (liberalism), which does not necessarily need democracy (open society) for its development, because they are mutually incompatible.[4]

Some Words by Way of Conclusion

Thus, modelling reality under the guise of rationality obviously helps. Despite the many indisputable signs of progress in the organisation of power, politics, society still remains in the hands of representatives of private supranational financial and bureaucratic centres, standing above the powers of national parliaments. The State is basically controlled by groups of investors who have

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[4]   D. Rodrik speaks of a *global "trilemma"* - a state in which democracy, national self-determination, and economic globalisation cannot be pursued at the same time, because once the territories of sovereign nations are now limited by international law and global guidelines (Rodrik 2011).

enough resources (private power) to set the agenda according to the rules of trade also in the field of ideological direction - due to their share of power, market and profit maximisation. Modern liberal democracies can actually be understood as "*zones of conflict between different groups of private capital*" (Chomsky 2019, p. 61), embodying undemocratic, absolutist structures, because they function without the possibility of exercising public, democratic control from the bottom up. The consequence of this situation is in the cognitive retardation of the representatives of the power elites, the separation of control and management from politics, and the determination of the nature of the social system by the people who "own" it and thus to a large extent also control it. They preach democracy on behalf of the public, but in fact they control the public on behalf of democracy.

Politics is the technology of manipulating people. It has its own rules, because of it there is a huge number of institutions, organisations and symbols to guide the potential that lies in human nature. When they function properly, they use various conceptual constructions to classify this condition, which can obscure the fact that the vast majority of members of society are controlled, economically, socially and politically disadvantaged and does not decide anything. Even the emancipation of civil and political rights at the expense of social rights and the constant increase in property inequality can only be considered a useful illusion, a tool for buying social peace. So according to what (who) does the world actually work? If at all, what type of rationality does this idea correspond to? Who is the subject of the administration and control of its effectiveness? Or else: what do people want from the State? Where is good, freedom, democracy? Where did man stay in all this (rational or irrationally conditioned) chaos?

There is a lot of answers, almost unlimited ambitions. "*Panem et Circenses*", because it is easiest to blame democracy for one's own failures. Rationalism, the functionality of modern principles of values or pluralism are not what the most pressing problem in democratic liberal societies is. Maybe it's the unreality of human ambitions in formulating their regulatory ideals in the realm of justifying (natural?) Inequalities, maybe it's the resignation to project a simple, understandable vision of a good, decent and friendly environment for all. But we must not forget the idea that if liberal democracy is the definitive form of State establishment, the "*culmination of the ideological development of mankind*" (Fukuyama 2002, p. 11), then in the context of our storyline reversing the idea of representative democracy to the idea of representative oligarchy completing the development of social, property and economic inequalities of mankind, a compromise between politics, economics and the media spheres on the lasting continuity of prosperity for the rich.

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X-raying Citizenship Participation through the Lens of ICT: Quest for Democratic Governance and Development in Nigeria

The study looks at citizen participation through the lens of information and communication technology. The questionnaire was administered using a mixed approach method on local council ICT officers, registered voters, local non-governmental community and youth leaders, and key informant interviews with officers of ICT organisations. For the quantitative design, a questionnaire was given to 418 respondents, and 18 essential informants were purposefully interviewed. The data were analysed with SPSS; tables were used for correlation co-efficient analysis, and content analysis presented the interview responses. ICT and public participation in municipal governance had a positive correlation of +0.629, according to the findings. The study finds that ICT tools will improve local governance in rural areas for long-term democratic good governance and development.

Keywords: ICT, Citizens Participation, Good Governance, Local Governance, Democratic Governance and Development.

Introduction

Many intellectual efforts on governance studies have reverberating over the years. Thus, making the democratic governance in Nigeria, as well as most other African and third-world countries, rife with inappreciable and high levels of inefficiency and ineffectiveness, which are visible in so many areas of human endeavour (Misuraca 2007; Nasser, Gage & John 2005; Olowu 2004; Mundy & Sultan 2001). Poor service delivery and supply of public goods are examples of the consequent effect, as are obstacles to not only openness, but also accountability in public affairs, municipal public institutions, and, ultimately, many 'states' underdevelopment statuses (see Onimode 2000; Yagboyaju 2004; Yagboyaju 2011). Other empirical studies (Onuoha 2005; Kukah 2012; Akinlo 2015; Adeyeye 2016 and Aransi 2017) claim that official corruption, high-handedness and insensitivity of political leaders and public office holders, lack of citizens' participation and engagement (sin qua non to democratic sustainability), and other factors have hampered progressive governance not only in Nigeria but across the African continent, making sustainable democratic and developmental aspirations impossible.

Meanwhile, the relevance of information and communication technology (hereafter, ICT) in

governance processes and integration toward the promotion of global socio-political and economic development cannot be overstated. With the continual flow of information, increased human rights, and poverty reduction,have promote socio-eceonomic and political culture of most developed countries. (see Kwami 2013; Adesola 2012; Adibe & Orji 2012; and Kajogbola 2004 amongst others). Investing in e-government service delivery is warranted, of course, because it allows for more citizen participation, ease, and cost savings—all of which have long been elusive in the service delivery of many African countries. In one case, mobile technology to increase citizen participation and civil society engagement in decision-making has become a more relevant and novel occurrence in recent years. ICT-enabled mobile phones and applications are widely welcomed not just by governments, but also by NGOs as a powerful weapon for citizen engagement in politico-social debates due to their ease of use, cost-effectiveness, and availability.

These days, ICT has aided e-governance in a variety of ways. For example, it has served as an administrative tool for delivering transparency and efficiency and effectiveness to local government administrations and acquiescently completing transactions. Meanwhile, it could be demonstrated to be quite effective at eliminating corruption and a valuable instrument for that goal, especially in developing nations where studies have shown that corruption perception index values are still very high, particularly in Nigeria. Kenya's Electronic Graft Management (EGM) plan, according to Iwasokun, referenced in Nasser, Gage, and John (2005), is proof of effective ICT use to combat corruption. The EGM initiative used this internet infrastructure to provide a corruption reporting facility in six towns, with guarantees for user anonymity, reports confidently sent to EGM centres for further processing and analysis, and follow-up by relevant authorities failsafe.

Furthermore, ICT advances service delivery, allowing citizens to obtain cheaper, faster, and more efficient services. Electronic services, which use ICT to provide information and conduct transactions, have the advantage of allowing citizens to obtain information and conduct transactions 24 hours a day, seven days a week, especially for some essential grassroots administrative transactions, such as tenement rate collections, local permit requests, rate and tax file collection and submission, and motor vehicle licencing requests. All of these things invariably improve public participation as well as solid grassroots governance. However, the extent to which ICT can improve citizen involvement and good governance in the Nigerian setting, particularly at the local level, is questionable, given the literature's abundance of examples of political apathy and bad governance at the local level. This dreadful scenario influenced the study's decision to look into the relationship between ICT use and public participation in local administration in the Nigerian Southwest.

In Southwestern Nigeria, we believe that effective use of ICT is critical to tackling problems of bad local government and citizen participation in politics. As a result, the article investigates the impact of information and communication technology (ICT) on citizen participation in grassroots governance in Southwestern Nigeria. This is in order to advance knowledge on the relationship between ICT and local government in Southwestern Nigeria. This article is divided into four sections. The conceptual and theoretical frameworks are covered in the following parts. The methodology, empirical data analysis, findings, debate, and conclusion are all included in this part.

Conceptualising Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Governance, and Good Governance

In this study, ICT is defined as a group of related technologies defined by their functional usage in communication and information access, of which the internet is an embodiment that enables information sharing across political boundaries; it is a collection of activities facilitated by electronic means, including information processing, transmission, manipulation, distortion, and display. Technology is use to disseminate, segment, gather, and communicate information via computers and connected networks. ICT includes mobile technology, social media, e-platforms, and mobile applications. The internet is a worldwide computer network that can be optimised both technically and functionally in this study. However, in the context of its function in local governance in Southwest Nigeria, it is viewed as a network for people who use computers, mobile technology, and social media to access large amounts of information, revolutionising information access for individuals and businesses.

The term ICT, according to Chisenga (2006) broadens the definition by adding that "it includes rapidly evolving telecommunication technologies (such as telephony, cable, satellite, TV and radio, computer-mediated conferencing, video conferencing), as well as digital technologies" (e.g. Information networks/Internet, intranets and extranets, computers, World Wide Web) and applications software. New Communication Technologies (NCTs) and/or New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs) are also terms interchangeable with ICT, to talk about hardware, communication gadgets, equipment or facilities that have restructured, improved, eased and exchanged ideas and various kinds of information among people within or across distant boundaries/frontiers" (Akpomuvie 2010).

According to Nwodu (2003) in K.W. Olawoyin and K.O. Lamidi (2019) ICT is a generic name for "numerous communication hardware adopted in ensuring instant dissemination of information and social values across the globe". It includes personal information processing systems, mobile phones, and the internet, as well as image technology, electronic mail, cable television, and digital broadcasts. Web-enabled, stand-alone, and many other networks fall within the ICT category, but so do technologies. Corroborating the aforesaid, Kajogbola (2004) further emphasises that ICT provides inexpensive but speedy and convenient communication means for the citizenry. The adoption of technologies (ICT) by many countries in different sectors of their economy has culminated in a positive and direct impact on the organisations' efficiency, productivity and service delivery. ICT usage improves services and promotes sustainable grassroots development not only in governance but in any organisation; thus, today's business environment witnesses so many changes (Halison 2011). Teaching, learning, and research are facilitated in an academic setting, and information distribution is accelerated.

Essentially, description of governance as either good or bad, according to Adesola (2012) in K. W. Olawoyin and K. O. Lamidi (2019), entails considerate knowledge of the essence of the political entity, which is not only entrenched in the constitution but also a function of the state's goals, ideals and the nature of current political opprobrium confronting such state or political entity. According to Amoako (2003), governance is a "process that is employed to achieve the noble end of the state, one of which is through the art of governing people within a given terri-

tory or a state". Consisting of two essential aspects of the state, namely the state structure and legislative procedures and those of the executive and judicial and administrative bodies at all levels of government. Significantly, governance is based on a functioning state. Governance is defined as the control of activities by all means necessary to achieve a set of desired objectives. In a political sense, the government is a more complicated undertaking.

Also, Adeyeye (2016) in K. W. Olawoyin and K. O. Lamidi (2019) explains that "the word 'governance' is as old as 'government', and the issue revolving around it is an increasingly crucial phenomenon in all sectors and at all organisational levels—social, economic, cultural, administrative and political". The etymology of both words are traceable to the 14th-century French words, "*governance*" and "*government*". Initially, the connotations were considered to be similar and interchangeable, with each referring to acts and/or how governance is conducted. However, by the 16th century, the government had come to signify "a method by which something is governed," and by the early 18th century, it had come to mean "a governing power." Furthermore, according to ILyIN (2013) referenced in Adeyeye (Ibid), the phrase governance became marginalised over time, and by the 19th century, it had become an incipient of archaism.

In a similar view, Kauzya (2000) in K.W Olawoyin and K.O. Lamidi (2019) It was also pointed out that the term "governance" comes from the Greek language and means "steering": "… A ship, for example, is more than just about staying afloat and moving forward, backward, or sideways. It is the awareness and comprehension of the direction and confirmation that the ship is always sailing in that direction. A skipper may only claim competent seamanship for everyone on board and those waiting for it to arrive when the ship arrives where it is anticipated".

As a result, 'governance' is an act of steering a people's development as a multifaceted compound situation of institutions, systems, structures, processes, procedures, practises, relationships, and leadership behaviour in the exercise of political, social, economic, and managerial or administrative authority in the running of either private or public affairs. The exercise of this authority in the interest of the governed, their livelihood, and participation as the driving force can thus be referred to as "Good Governance".

In the intervening time, 'governance' in Okot-Uma (2004) expression is conceived from Lasswell's traditional definition of politics as who gets what, when and how, and perhaps how much better still. As a result, the Estonian notion of governance comes to mind, which may have a lot to do with the authoritatively allotted and dispersion of values in society, according to Estonian conceptualisation, which is primarily political. Similarly, the World Bank (WB) cited in Odunuga (2003) "view governance as, how power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development". The process by which authority is exercised in the management of a country's social and economic resources; the form of a political regime; and the capacity of governments to design, formulate, and implement policies and discharge functions are the three critical aspects of governance, according to the World Bank.

Correspondingly, the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) cited in Odunuga (2003) perceived governance and government as being synonymous. As a result, it sees governance as a complex set of processes, methods, relationships, and institutions through which individuals and groups exercise their legal rights, express their interests, fulfil their commitments and obligations, and resolve their differences.

Scholars have agreed that all these attributes or elements are effective instruments of governance as they provide the necessary anchor and justifications for legal and moral to the government (Lipchak 2002; Okot-Uma 2004). Thus, governance includes decision-making processes, policy formulation and implementation capacity, institutional and structural arrangements, personnel development, information flows cum style and nature of political leadership within a political system. Similarly, UNESCAP (2010), cited in Nwelih and Ukohoha (2012) and World Bank (2005), identified eight (8) major characteristics of good governance: It is participatory, consensus-oriented, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, accountable, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. Assurances that corruption is minimised, minority viewpoints are considered, and the voices of societies most vulnerable are heard in decision-making processes. It is also relevant to society's current and future requirements. As a result, it is critical to explain the aspects of good governance outlined by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) (2010).

Theoretical Framework

The Karl W. Deutsch Communication Theory is used in this research. The idea focuses on government in general (albeit this research focuses on local government), the electorate, and politicians as decision-making bodies based on multiple information flow. That is, information flowing from the masses, media, and groups (ethnic, religious, pressure group, or professionals— Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities, (ASUU) The Nigeria Union of Teachers, (NUT) National Union of Local Government Employees, (NULGE) Market Women Association, pressure groups, political parties, local government officials, and so on) are all channels or means through which information flows, and serve as the foundation of grassroots governance. Communication theory places a strong focus on 'change .' It is the flow of information that causes the appropriate receiver to change. That is, the decision to participate in political processes or not, and whether or not to be patriotic, based on previous political experiences and exposure of electorates in the study area, which has been marked by violence, rigging, electoral fraud, corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, and other sharp practises by the political class, in tandem with poor local service delivery by public-office holders.

According to Deutsch's communication theory, government or politics directs and coordinates human activity toward achieving predetermined goals, and the decision is seen as the essential mechanism through which these processes materialise. It should be noted that, in contrast to the neutral effects of a decision, communication theory is primarily concerned with the process by which decisions are produced. This, however, implies that this theory places a greater focus and value on information flows and coordination than on the information's final destination. As a result, it can be claimed that this theory is primarily concerned with problems of dynamics and information flow, which connects steering with a movement that serves as the fundamental unit of analysis.

This theory is helpful in evaluating the functions of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for local administration in Southwestern Nigeria. The promotion and

understanding of ICT in Nigeria, which emphasises information, communication, and technology, will encourage effective citizen participation in political processes and expose public office-holder activities at the grassroots. Fundamentally, increasing accountability improves political communication, which fosters or promotes excellent local governance through the use of ICT (e-governance, mobile technology, and social media).

This underscores the fact that the idea of ICT to engender good local governance was borne out of the quest or demands and needs from various groups, elites and media and so on, as well as for political development and democratic consolidation in the study area. The internet, primarily through social media, allows citizens to have adequate access to information that can enhance their participation in politics and, at the same time, promote good local service delivery. For instance, the theory holds that every electorate is a decision-maker who makes or takes a decision on available information.

Linking this to how the electorate participates in the politics of their local populace in Southwestern states, the theory could be used to describe voters' behaviour in terms of their voting decision. For instance, voters decide on whom to support or vote for based on available information about the candidates; if there is no adequate information, they may not participate in the election, and this, in the long run, will lead to political apathy. On the other hand, the citizens must keep abreast of adequate information and should constantly engage local public office holders to hold them accountable in office. All these depend on the process and steering (flows) of information in a political system; if there is no room for adequate flows of information reaching the public on political events within the local populace, there will be little or no accountability in service delivery, little or no information about the electoral system and this to a more significant extent will affect the good local governance, specifically the southwestern states and the country at large.

Lastly, the interactive communication opportunity that the Internet (ICT) provides makes it an essential tool for political communication emphasised by Karl W. Deutsch. This, to a large extent, will help to stimulate political participation through unhindered political communication, transparency, accountability (through various e-platforms such as e-payment for the collection of taxes and e-administration) and good local governance for sustainability and development.

Methodology

This study relied on primary data gathered through key informant interviews and questionnaire distribution among elected political office holders, local party officials, NULGE, and executive members of ICT-oriented Non-Governmental Organisations. The study golas and significance of the study is to ascertain how ICT tools can be use improve local governance in rural areas for long-term democratic good governance and development. The reserch adopted descriptive design which involves the systematic collection, presentation,and analysis of data he in order to elicit information on the connection between information and communications technology (ICT) and governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria, based on their expertise and knowledge on the usage of New Technology within the governace space at the grassroots level

in the study area, 460 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the category of the above mentioned respondents. However, 418 copies of the questionnaire were recovered from the field, accounting for 90.8 per cent of the total number of questionnaires distributed. Additional data was gathered through the use of in-dept interview with 18 key informant taken from ICT officers of non-government organisations (Revoder, Tracker, and BudgIT) who have a thorough awareness of the topic at hand. The questionnaire was administered using a mixed approach method on local council ICT officers, registered voters, local non-governmental community and youth leaders, and key informant interviews with officers of ICT organisations. Appropriate sampling technique was adopted in the course of the research work with the opportunities to select respondents for the sudy of this resech work by choosing purposeful and judgmental sampling. The data were analysed with SPSS; tables were used for correlation co-efficient analysis, and content analysis presented the interview responses. The hypotensis of the resaech was tested using Spearman's correlation coefficient with the statistical tool utilised in the analysis of the data. 5% (i.e. 0.05).which indicated that ICT and public participation in municipal governance had a positive correlation of +0.629, according to the findings.

The hypotensis was tested using correlation analysis between the influence of ICT on citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria. According to Table 3, Spearman's correlation coefficient was positive (+0.629), significant at $p<0.05$. The positive coefficient indicated an approximate sixty-three (63%) positive influence between the ICT and citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria. The null hypothesis was rejected since the probability value (0.000) was less than the alpha level (0.05), and the study indicated that ICT has a substantial influence on citizens' participation in government at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria ($r = 0.629$, $p < 0.05$). As a result of the Spearman coefficient, three-fifths of the changes in citizen participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria are linked to ICT platforms' functions. The positive link also demonstrated that the more the influence of ICT tools, the more incredible citizens' participation in governance in Southwestern Nigeria's local areas.

Influence of ICT on Citizens' Participation in Governance at the Local Level in Southwestern Nigeria

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of data gathered in the evaluation of the respondent's idea/knowledge about the influence of ICT on citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria. The Table reveals the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents, as well as the mean and standard deviation of each of the assertions set out to achieve this objective. Its responses/values were organised using the Likert scale of measurements: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

On the first assertion in Table 2, an aggregate of 357 representing 85.9% of the respondents agreed that the use of ICT has significantly influenced more citizens participating in the political process at the local level. However, about 52 (12.4%) of the respondents expressed disagreement with the same assertion ($\overline{X} = 3.14$, SD = 0.906). It could be inferred from this outcome that ICT

Table 1: Evaluation of the Respondent's Idea/Knowledge about the Influence of ICT on Citizens' Participation in Governance at the Local Level in Southwestern Nigeria

S/N	Assertions	Strongly Agree f (%)	Agree f (%)	Strongly Disagree f (%)	Disagree f (%)	No Response f (%)	Descriptive Statistics	
							Mean Value	Standard Deviation
I.	The use of ICT has significantly influenced more citizens to participate in the political process at the local level.	157 (37.6)	202 (48.3)	26 (6.2)	26 (6.2)	7 (1.7)	3.14	0.906
ii.	The use of mobile communication, social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Have influenced the massive involvement of voters.	152 (36.4)	225 (53.8)	20 (4.8)	14 (3.3)	7 (1.7)	3.20	0.811
iii.	Voters and citizens tend to be more familiar and closer to the political leaders and recognise their leaders through ICT.	128 (30.6)	189 (45.2)	58 (13.9)	36 (8.6)	7 (1.7)	2.94	0.969
iv.	ICT has enhanced proper scrutiny and counting of votes after the election.	121 (28.9)	205 (49.0)	48 (11.5)	33 (7.9)	11 (2.6)	2.94	0.977
v.	In southwestern Nigeria, citizens' participation and involvement in the decision-making process in the governance of their localities has been enhanced by the ICT.	110 (26.3)	203 (48.6)	56 (13.4)	38 (9.1)	11 (2.6)	2.87	0.991
vi.	Electoral frauds and the indifferent attitude of the masses towards political participation can be checked by a well-thought-out ICTs platform in local governance in Southwestern Nigeria.	113 (27.0)	226 (54.1)	40 (9.6)	31 (7.4)	8 (1.9)	2.97	0.914
vii.	Effective use of ICT in politics, government and public institutions are faced with poor funding.	148 (35.4)	190 (45.5)	46 (11.0)	23 (5.5)	11 (2.6)	3.06	0.959
viii.	Citizens can become politically active and involved (participatory) more in politics through ICT in the local governance of Southwestern Nigeria.	118 (28.2)	213 (51.0)	46 (11.0)	32 (7.7)	9 (2.2)	2.95	0.945

Source: Field Survey, 2018

use has been widely observed as an avenue for citizens' awareness and involvement in the political process at the local level.

The second assertion was, however, set out to confirm the stated findings above; it was asserted that the use of mobile communication, social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram,

etc. Have influenced the massive involvement of voters. Reacting to this, 128 (30.6%) and 189 (45.2%) strongly agreed and ordinarily agreed, respectively to this assertion ($\overline{X}$ =3.20, SD = 0.811). This, however, is empirical justification for the proclaimed increase in the level of citizens' awareness and voters' education as well as participation at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria.

Also, voters and citizens tend to be more familiar and closer to political leaders and recognise their leaders through ICT. In respect to this third assertion, an aggregate of 317 (75.8%) respondents fell in agreement with this statement ($\overline{X}$ =2.94, SD = 0.969). It thus interprets that using ICT tools is a veritable means for politicians to draw voters more closely with them. However, respondents were asked to agree or disagree on whether the ICT enhanced proper scrutiny and counting of votes after the election. In their response to this fourth assertion, 121 (28.9%) respondents strongly agreed, and 205 (49.0%) respondents agreed, while 48 (11.5%) respondents ordinarily disagreed, and 33 (7.9%) respondents strongly disagreed. However, about 11 representing 2.6% of the respondents did not react to this assertion ($\overline{X}$ =2.94, SD = 0.977). The interpretation of this distribution revealed that more respondents still tended towards an agreement with this assertion.

On the fifth variable of the Table above, an aggregate of 313 (74.9%) agreed that in Southwestern Nigeria, ICT had enhanced citizens' participation and involvement in the decision-making process in the governance of their localities. Nonetheless, 94 (22.5%) of the respondents though, disagreed with the assertion ($\overline{X}$=2.87, SD = 0.991). This data distribution implies that ICT is an observation instrument for enhancing civic participation in the decision-making process. Existing studies have claimed that electoral frauds and the indifferent attitude of the masses towards political participation can be checked by well thought out ICTs platform in local governance in Southwestern Nigeria. Reacting to this sixth predisposition, a summation of 339, representing 81.1% of the respondents, concurred with this position. This is evidenced by the strength of the mean value, which tended towards agreement than disagreement ($\overline{X}$ =2.97, SD = 0.914).

The seventh assertion stated that effective use of ICT in politics, government and public institutions are faced with poor funding. Responding to this assertion, three (3) categories of data distribution were observed: 80.9% of the respondents fell in the agreement category, about 16.5% of the respondents maintained an opposite position to the assertion, while just 11 (2.6%) of the respondents were indifferent ($\overline{X}$ =3.06, SD = 0.959). The above results connote that poor finance impedes the practical usage of ICT in local governance. Also, on the eighth assertion, it was thus revealed that citizens could become politically active and involved (participate) more in politics through ICT in local governance of Southwestern Nigeria. It was therefore revealed by the descriptive survey that a majority of 331 (79.2%) respondents unanimously agreed to this assertion ($\overline{X}$ = 2.95, SD = 0.945). It could be inferred that, although only the usage of ICT cannot enhance active political participation, it can engender more activeness and reactiveness in the citizens towards the political space and governance at the local level.

Equally, results from the interview aptly confirmed the quantitative results, specifically in the influence of ICT on citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria. For most respondents, ICT has a tremendous influence on citizens' participation in governance at the local government level. Of more revealing was the belief, by respondents, that more

often than not, the use of ICT has made more local youth who ordinarily may not have an interest in governance now develop a genuine interest in governance at the local government level. However, some few respondents believe that ICT has no real influence on citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria.

A look at this kind of response from the respondents suggests that their response was borne out of the higher illiteracy level of the grassroots, considering the low rate of ICT use in some rural local governments. In line with the influence of ICT on citizens' participation in governance at the local level, the submission of one of the respondents, a Director of Budget and Planning, in one of the selected states in the Study Area was spectacularly more revealing. For him:

The 2017 service delivery with the use of ICT was more effective than in 1999 due to more citizen participation because day in day out, there is an improvement in the service delivery via ICT usage. For example, as we are in Ile-Ife, now, we can easily send a message via the internet to other local governments in Osun state through the use of ICT and perhaps mobile communications through mobile phone, Short Messages System SMS, WhatsApp to mention but a few, this was minimal and not possible to some extent before in 1999. These invariably allow us to have a strong 'say' in the local level governance in Southwestern Nigeria. (Key Informant Response 2018)

A critical look at the respondent's submission above shows that in the true sense, ICT has had no small influence on the participation of citizens in local governance. This is because the people can report poor service delivery, lack of accountability, corruption and many other traits of bad governance using just a mobile phone. The use of Instagram, WhatsApp and Facebook, ICT tools or platforms have engaged no small amount of people in governance, including local governance. This view had earlier been affirmed by Ajayi and Adesote (2015), Odalonu (2015) and Makinde, Hassan and Olaiya, (2016). They revealed that the continuous use of ICT tools (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) At the local level had encouraged more citizens to be involved and participate in governance.

Similarly, in a bid to show the connection between ICT and citizens' participation in local governance, A respondent who represented one of the Chairmen of the selected Local Government in Southwestern Nigeria equally submits that, *"we are in a global village, the use of ICT has helped us to reach people and to know their view and opinions concerning a particular government policy and action"* (Key Informant Response 2018).

This view was further affirmed by another interviewee, a President of Community Development Association in one of the selected states, who averred that:

In the past, information was complicated, but now that we have social media, information is easily accessible to us all 24 hours a day and seven days a week seamlessly. From here, you can pass information through social media on current political issues, and someone in London can hear you within a second. In fact, with the use of these social media, Nigeria political culture has changed such that in the past, the campaign was usually done from one place to another, candidates and political parties will be going from one place to another. But now on media, you can just post who you are, the position you are vying for, the reason you are vying for that position and your manifesto. Somebody in London and Abeokuta can be reading at the same time. This is one of the advantages of ICT via social media in influencing political discussion and election in Nigeria (Key Informant Response 2018).

The initial assertion shows that through social media, which is an ICT tool or platform, more people have been engaged in governance, especially local governance. For instance, people through relevant ICT tools participate in governance by sending short messages through their mobile phones to the appropriate authority, while some have been engaged in holding public officers more accountable for their duties. The fear of being photo-shot by citizens has made many government workers and even local governments deliver on good governance. This goes to show that ICT use has had a significant influence on 'citizens' participation in governance.

Corroborating this view, the Confidential Secretary for the ruling Political Party, All Progressive Congress (APC) in one of the selected states affirmed that: The use of mobile communication and social media has influenced the massive involvement of voters in political discussions and elections in Ogun state. For instance, using electronic media in the electioneering process, people get first-hand information regarding party politics. Today, there are impromptu meetings involving the APC caucus, and as the confidential secretary, I have to use the What app platform to communicate the message to the concerned members. And before you know it, members arrive at the party state secretariat for the meeting. That is the power of ICT in political participation (Key Informant Response 2018).

A thorough analysis of the above (from the respondents mentioned above) on the influence of ICT on citizens' participation shows that ICT has had a strong influence on the participation of citizens in governance. Furthermore, of note are the revelations of these respondents on how the use of ICT by citizens' awakens slumbering government from sleep and make government deliver on their promises which in the long run enhance good governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria.

However, it is also observed that the views of the respondents can aver to be entirely consistent with results of findings in Adesola (2012), Adeyeye (2016), Nwelih and Ukohoha (2012) and Kwami, (2013), which showed that there is a strong link between ICT usage and widespread participation of citizens in governance, including local government level. The submission of one of the respondents, a Deputy Director (Software and Applications) Science and Technology Ministry, in one of the selected states, representing the commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, specifically buttressed the findings found in Kwami (2013) and Adeyeye (2016). For him, the influence of ICT on citizens participation in governance is not limited to only voting, engaging in decision pieces of machinery of government, but includes public criticism of government policies, participating in governance through representation, holding public officers accountable, advocating for effective and efficient service delivery at the local level and participating in all government activities. In conjunction with the influence of ICT on citizens' participation, while stating further, the correspondent specifically argued that: Social media has changed the dimension of election and voting processes because people can now express their political views on social media. Even people go to the extent of posting election results from their polling units on social media, so they play a kind of intermediary role and give people first-hand information. So the use of social media has changed the electioneering process at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria (Key Informant Response 2018).

From the submission above, it can be inferred that more citizens get involved in governance at the local level through the social media platform of an ICT. Social media form an integral part

of an ICT deployed by citizens in the assessment of governance both at the higher and lower level of governments in Nigeria. The youth now uses social media to evaluate government programmes and rate government performance in terms of good governance. By so doing, the youth participate in governance at all levels of government.

In a similar vein, another respondent's submission was also very revealing, as he pointedly argued that: Politicians can use the use of mobile communication to campaign to the people; through it, they tell the public the program they have for them, their program, their manifesto, their campaign point, so that people can come to see them one on one and ask questions about them and I think with that it can influence their chances in the election. When people hear what they have for them and know these people mean business, definitely with that, they can work for them (Key Informant Response 2018).

While a respondent, NULGE Chairman in one of the selected states, believes that social media encourage citizens' participation in governance, he believes that mobile phone allows politicians to campaign to the citizens, who in turn assess the validity of their promises on the mobile phone. As citizens were able to see and make contributions by asking questions on the spot from politicians for clearer clarifications on proposed promises, they were more engaged in governance using mobile phones.

However, despite the enormous responses supporting the nexus between ICT and citizens' participation in governance at the local level, very few of them believed that ICT has no influence on citizens participation in governance and that even when it does, Nigerian politicians do not allow the peoples' views count let alone their participation in governance at the local level. Few other respondents criticise poor access to the use of ICT at the local rural level as stumbling blocks to citizens' participation in governance.

The response of one of the respondents, the Head of Administration Department in one of the selected local governments, clearly shows that poor access to ICT prevents citizens' involvement in governance. He specifically reveals how rural local governments in Ogun State were technically denied the right to participate in governance at the local level as a result of poor access to social media and poor internet services. While some have access to mobile phones, they lack the requisite skills and knowledge to operate them; it is only used for receiving and making calls. This, according to him, is peculiar to rural farmers and artisans in Ipokia Local government area. More importantly, the submission of a Women Leader of the leading political party in one of the selected states confirms the fear expressed by the earlier position of the previous respondents. For her: In Ife-East Local Government, especially in rural areas, mobile phones are now standard, but the majority of the phones are not internet-connected; I mean there are no data to operate them, and the use of social media is not in vogue here in Iyanfoworogi. This limits our participation in governance, and most times, we do not even know government policies and programmes, so how do we participate in local governance? There is low use of ICT, and this invariably affects participation in governance (Key Informant Response 2018).

An analysis of the Head of Administration Department and of a Women Leader's response shows that even though ICT encourages citizens' participation in governance, its non-existent or poor usage discourages citizens' participation in governance, especially in rural local government. This position had also been upheld in some studies' results (Decalo 1994; Amoako 2003;

Okot-Uma et al. 2004). Specifically, Decalo notes that: "In the absence of global budgetary generosity, the bulk of Africa may be turned loose to drift their way, returning to political turmoil, authoritarianism, and military rule once the international craze for democracy fades".

Considering all the responses by respondents during the interview session and findings from empirical works, it can be reasonably be inferred that ICT had a significant influence on citizen participation in governance at the grassroots level in Southwestern Nigeria. The result was further confirmed by that of the quantitative results as eighty-six per cent (86%) of respondents administered with a questionnaire believed that ICT has had a more significant influence on citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Nigeria Southwest.

Test of Hypothesis

This section deals with the hypothesis analysis/interpretation of this study. Spearman's correlation coefficient is the statistical tool utilised in the analysis of the data. 5% (i.e. 0.05). is the level of significance was used in the analysis in this study

Table 2: Correlation analysis between Influence of ICT on Citizens' Participation in Governance at the Local Level in Southwestern Nigeria

Hypothesis				
In Southwestern Nigeria, ICT has no substantial impact on citizen participation in local governance.	Correlation coefficient (r)	Df	p-value	N
	+0.629	1	0.000	418

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 2 above presents the correlation analysis between the influence of ICT on citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria. According to Table 3, Spearman's correlation coefficient was positive (+0.629), significant at $p < 0.05$. The positive coefficient indicated an approximate sixty-three (63%) positive influence between the ICT and citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria. The null hypothesis was rejected since the probability value (0.000) was less than the alpha level (0.05), and the study indicated that ICT has a substantial influence on citizens' participation in government at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria ($r = 0.629$, $p < 0.05$). As a result of the Spearman coefficient, three-fifths of the changes in citizen participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria are linked to ICT platforms' functions. The positive link also demonstrated that the more the influence of ICT tools, the more incredible citizens' participation in governance in Southwestern Nigeria's local areas.

Study's Findings

The findings of the study are discussed in further depth in this section. It synchronises and triangulates quantitative and qualitative data with comparable empirical findings from other research works on the study's topic. It did, however, point out a point of disagreement between the conclusions of this study and previous empirical results. The study's goal and assumptions were tested using data obtained from the field in a questionnaire and an in-depth interview with critical respondents, as indicated in the introduction section. The study's findings must be discussed further when the hypothesis has been tested and approved.

The study begins with the study objective, which was confirmed or achieved with the data from the field to examine the influence of ICT on citizens' participation in governance at the local level in Southwestern Nigeria. During the research, especially during the interview session, almost all respondents shared the view that ICT has a strong influence on citizens' participation in governance at the local level. For these groups of respondents, the use of mobile technology like mobile phones, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Have all contributed to improved citizens' participation in governance. In addition to this, results of the quantitative analysis confirmed and correspond to that of the qualitative data as 85% of respondents agreed that ICT has immensely contributed to citizens' participation in governance at the local level (see item 1 of Table 2). These results were also supported by data available in the literature where academic scholars aptly corroborated respondents' views from the field. Thus, the first goal was readily accomplished using data acquired through interviews and questionnaires, and this correlates to the first research hypothesis that ICT has increased residents' participation in local administration in Southwestern Nigeria. Given the correlation between the first objective and the hypothesis, this hypothesis is trustworthy and dependable. Specifically, empirical works of Odunuga (2003), Nassar (2005), Iwasokun (2012) and Thompson (2008) aptly supported both the first objective and the hypothesis, respectively.

Conclusion

Our discussion on the x-ray of the role/impact of ICT on citizen participation in local governance in Southwestern Nigeria with its attendance implication for sustainable democratic governance and development, so far, is quite revealing. The breadth of ICT's positive influence on strong grassroots governance, based on practical and unrestricted public participation, openness, accountability, and effective local service delivery, is a big revelation. The results of the data analysis for this study, which was assessed and analysed using Spearman's correlation coefficient to look for a significant link between the factor and the outcome variables at 0.05 levels of significance, further validated this position. P-values of less than or equal to 0.05 indicate that the independent variable (ICT) is significantly related to the outcome variable (good local governance) based on unrestricted citizen participation, with the resultant effect on long-term democratic governance through effective service delivery to the local population.

Flowing from the aforesaid and based on the empirical analysis of this research, the study, therefore stongly recommended as follows:

- ICT has a strong influence on citizens' participation in governance at the local level. The use of mobile technology like mobile phones, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Have all contributed to improved citizens' participation in governance.
- That ICT has impact on sustaining democratic governance and Development .The breadth of ICT's positive influence on strong grassroots governance, based on practical and unrestricted public participation, openness, accountability, and effective local service delivery, is a big revelation.
- That the use of ICT has influence and promote participant political culture among the people at the local level. Voters and citizens tend to be more farmiliar and closer to the political leaders and recognizes their leaddres through ICT.
- That the use of ICT has positively influence citizens' participation and involvement in the decision-making process in the governance of their localities.
- That unrestricted citizen participation have the resultant effect on long-term democratic governance through effective service delivery to the local population.
- That the use of ICT has reduces electoral violent, malporactise and vote ringing and promote proper sorting and counting of votes after the election.

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• RECENZIE A ANOTÁCIE •

KRISTÍNA VALÁŠKOVÁ

Ústav politických vied SAV, v. v. i., Bratislava, Slovenská republika

Dinušová, D. a kol.: José Martí a súčasnosť. Bratislava: VEDA, vydavateľstvo SAV, 2021, 240 s., ISBN 978-80-224-1912-3

Dinušová, D. a kol.: José Martí and the Present. Bratislava: VEDA, vydavateľstvo SAV, 2021, 240 s., ISBN 978-80-224-1912-3

Publikácia *José Martí a súčasnosť* z vydavateľstva VEDA, zostavená Dominikou Dinušovou, prezentuje pohľady medzinárodného kolektívu autorov a autoriek na osobnosť José Martího, na jeho myslenie a podnety, ktoré ho ovplyvnili. Apoštol kubánskej nezávislosti, ako je José Martí prezývaný, bol nielen básnikom, novinárom a esejistom, ale aj filozofom a politológom, ktorého myšlienky a životné úsilie vplývali na kubánske dejiny a spoločnosť počas jeho života, ako aj po jeho smrti. Celkový prínos Martího je pre kubánsku spoločnosť natoľko hlboký, že v súčasnosti je na Kube vnímaný ako národný hrdina.

Samotná publikácia je členená na tri časti v závislosti od rozmeru Martího práce, ktorej sa autori v jednotlivých častiach venujú. Prvá časť s názvom *Interkultúrne dialógy* sa pokúša priblížiť literárnu stránku diela tohto autora a presahy jeho tvorby mimo územia Kuby. Prvá kapitola tejto časti nesie názov *José Martí a slovenská recepcia jeho diela*, ktorej autorkou je slovenská hispanistka Eva Palkovičová. V tejto kapitole autorka ponúka sumár slovenských recepcií Martího diel vydaných na území Československej republiky a neskôr Slovenskej republiky. Autorka sa zameriava najmä na Martího jediný autorský modernistický román *Osudové priateľstvo*, neskôr tiež známe pod názvom *Lucia Jerez*, ktorá je ústrednou postavou tohto diela. Práve cez ňu, ako autorka poukázala, Martí vykresľuje rúcajúcu sa koloniálnu spoločnosť starých noriem (s. 32), ktorých súčasťou je postava Lucie, a upozorňuje na sociálne a ekonomické otázky, nerovné postavenie obyvateľstva a nespravodlivý súdny systém (s. 33). E. Palkovičová tiež zdôraznila Martího prínos ako priekopníka literárneho žánru moderny, pričom poukázala na ním využívané umelecké a jazykové prvky, prirovnania a motívy, ktoré neboli typické pre latinskoamerický priestor a svojím spôsobom predbehli dobu (s. 35).

Na túto časť tematicky nadväzuje kapitola Maurícia Nunez Rodrigueza s názvom *Pohľady na vývoj naratívneho štýlu José Martího*, ktorá, ako je podľa názvu zrejmé, sa zaoberá charakteristickým naratívnym štýlom Martího nielen v jeho publikáciách, ale aj v dielach, ktorých bol prekladateľom. Autor poukazuje na postupný vývoj štýlu Martího od fragmentov poviedok v jeho zápisníkoch až po už vyššie spomínaný román *Lucia Jerez*. Rodriguez si vybral toto dielo na bližšiu analýzu, v ktorej predstavil jednotlivé aspekty ovplyvňujúce toto dielo, špecifiká Martího novátorského naratívneho štýlu typického až pre obdobie 20. storočia, prvky meniacej

sa kubánskej spoločnosti v kontraste prenikajúcej európsko-americkej kultúry, ktoré sú prítomné v celom tomto diele.

Posledná časť prvej kapitoly zachytáva Martího vzťah k americkému vplyvu v Latinskej Amerike v tomto období. Kapitola nesie názov *Spektrum Williama Walkera a spory v Strednej Amerike. Konštanty v Martího zápiskoch* autorky Marlene Vázquez Pérez. Autorka zachytáva vzťah Martího k Spojeným štátom americkým plný nedôvery a obáv ovplyvnený inváziou Williama Walkera do Strednej Ameriky a následným vytvorením jeho vlastného štátu, ako aj panamerickej konferencie z rokov 1989 – 1890. Na jednej strane vníma Martí americkú a európsku otvorenosť voči reformám ako vhodný prostriedok na vysporiadanie sa s pozostatkami španielskeho koloniálneho systému na Kube, na druhej strane sa obáva americkej rozpínavosti v oblasti Južnej Ameriky. Autorka poukazuje tiež na Martího vízie sesterskej spolupráce juhoamerických krajín, ktoré sa stali nosnou témou jeho prác.

Druhá časť publikácie s názvom *Myslenie z nových perspektív* približuje prácu José Martího z pohľadu politologicko-filozofického. V prvej kapitole s názvom *José Martí a mayská kultúra Guatemaly* predstavuje Pedro Pablo Rodriguez vzťah Martího k pôvodným juhoamerickým kultúram. Martí sa vo svojich dielach často ujíma úlohy šíriteľa pôvodnej domorodej kultúry. Autor na začiatku kapitoly poskytol pohľad na formovanie Martího myšlienok a jeho vlastné prekonanie predsudkov voči domorodým kultúram, prameniace zo španielskeho systému vzdelania. Podľa autora formujúcim prvkom bolo priame Martího stretnutie s týmito domorodými obyvateľmi. Autor tiež priblížil Martího pôsobenie v Guatemale spojené s formovaním jeho koncepcie domorodých kultúr, ktoré prežili vplyvy španielskej okupácie vďaka izolácii a uzavretí sa do seba, a tie podľa autora Martí vnímal ako súčasť svojho konceptu novej Ameriky. P. P. Rodriguez ďalej poukázal na Martího snahu o oslavu významných predstaviteľov mayských dejín, ktorých prirovnáva k známym postavám z gréckym mýtov. Martí vyzdvihuje civilizačný vývoj Mayov a obdivuje ich usilovnosť a pracovitosť po stránke duchovného života (s. 77). Autor kapitoly P. P. Rodriguez v rámci nej upozornil, že napriek tomu, že Martí je obdivovateľom kultúry Mayov, tak počas obdobia jeho pobytu v Guatemale kompletne absentuje téma vtedajších nútených prác domorodého obyvateľstva (s. 79).

Autorom druhej kapitoly tejto časti je Francisco Lopez Civeira a jej názov znie *Idea „Našej Ameriky" José Martího.* Na začiatku kapitoly autor charakterizoval základy Martího koncepcie „Našej Ameriky" – „Nuestra América", ktorá reagovala na otázku koloniálneho zriadenia vtedajšej Južnej Ameriky, ako aj celkového Martího pohľadu na problematiku vysporadúvania sa týchto krajín s meniacim sa systémom starých modelov vlády. Autor zdôraznil, že namiesto týchto modelov Martí preferuje ideu nového národa – „pueblo nuevo", ktorý má základy v obyvateľstve Latinskej Ameriky, pričom sám seba vníma ako syna tohto národa plniaceho povinnosti, ktoré má voči svojej vlasti (s. 94). V kapitole autor tiež spomína Martího obavy týkajúce sa problémov spojených s nastoľovaním týchto zmien v „našej Amerike", či už ide o vnútorné problémy daných štátov a spoločností, alebo problémy vychádzajúce z vplyvu iných mimo juhoamerických krajín.

V ďalšej kapitole s názvom *Úlohy duchovna u Josého Martího: Posledné dni výpravy* autorka Mayra Beatriz Martínez predstavila prepojenie Martího a jeho diela s duchovnosťou. Autorka hneď na začiatku kapitoly upozornila na Martího vzťah k náboženstvám, ktorý neskôr definoval

duchovnú stránku jeho koncepcie. Podľa autorky Martí do svojej koncepcie „Našej Ameriky" zapracoval aj prvky „nového náboženstva" postaveného na báze oddanosti voči dosiahnutiu spoločného dobra, pričom sám seba identifikoval so stereotypmi Ježiša Krista, ktoré umiestnil do paralel so svojím životom (s. 103). Autorka ďalej predstavuje Martího postoj k zdokonaľovaniu duše a ducha a aspekty, ktoré toto zdokonaľovanie ovplyvňujú. Ďalej tiež poskytuje Martího pohľad na lásku a krásu, ktorých základy nevníma psychologicky, ale v oveľa hlbšom prepojení. V závere kapitoly je badateľné Martího úzke prepojenie s prírodou (s. 114 – 115). Táto kapitola uzatvára druhú časť knihy orientujúcu sa na filozoficko-politologické prvky v dielach José Martího a je priamym napojením sa na nasledujúcu časť.

Tretia časť s názvom *Inšpirácie a aktualizácie* nadväzuje na obe už spomínané časti a zachytáva presahy Martího diel a jeho myslenia do súčasnosti. Prvá kapitola tejto časti nesie názov *Impulzy Martího filozofie a revolučných tradícií na Kube,* kde autorka a zostavovateľka celej publikácie Dominika Dinušová ponúka odkaz José Martího v rámci dejinného vývoja Kuby. Autorka už na začiatku kapitoly poskytuje pohľad na vnímanie Martího prostredníctvom slov Fidela Castra, ktorý vníma Martího a jeho mravné zásady ako jeden z dvoch inšpiračných zdrojov revolučného myslenia v Latinskej Amerike (s. 120). Autorka poskytuje pohľad na Martího celoživotný boj za nezávislosť Kuby a snahy o vymanenie sa z područia Španielska ako koloniálnej veľmoci. Pokračuje potom politickou a ekonomickou rozpínavosťou Spojených štátov amerických. V tejto časti tiež autorka poukázala na diela a vzťahy José Martího s marxistickými intelektuálmi a politikmi, konkrétne s Carlosom B. Balinom, Julliom Antoniom Mellom a Juanom Martinellom. V ďalšej časti D. Dinušová charakterizovala Martího vplyv na kubánsku revolúciu. Martí nevnímal revolúciu ako akt násilia, ale zastával postoj nutnosti revolučného ozbrojeného boja, pričom samotnú revolúciu vnímal ako proces kryštalizácie slobodnej Kuby (s. 129). Autorka tiež upozorňuje na to, že kubánska revolúcia čerpala z Martího nielen v ideologickej rovine, ale aj priamym spôsobom uskutočnenia samotného revolučného boja (s. 132). V poslednej časti tejto kapitoly autorka zhrnula odkaz José Martího prítomný v kubánskej revolúcii, ale aj v revolúciách ďalších latinskoamerických krajín a Martího stále pretrvávajúci vplyv na kubánsku spoločnosť.

Autor druhej kapitoly tretej časti Ľuboš Blaha, ktorý ju nazval *Che Guevarov odkaz a jeho vybrané súvislosti s José Martím,* sa zameral na osobnosť a pôsobenie kubánskeho revolučného politika Che Guevaru, v menšej miere potom na odkaz Martího nacionalizmu vo filozofi tohto kubánskeho revolučného marxistu. V prvej časti poskytol všeobecné informácie o Che Guevarovom živote a myšlienkach formujúcich jeho názory a postoje. V tejto časti sa autor zameral predovšetkým na vplyv myšlienok José Carlosa Mariáteguiho, ktoré na Che Guevaru vplývali od mladosti a formovali myslenie tohto kubánskeho revolucionára. V nadväzujúcej časti sa Ľ. Blaha opäť majoritne zameral na osobnosť Che Guevaru v spojitosti s odkazom Mao Ce-tunga, ktorý ovplyvnil Che Guevaru nielen po myšlienkovej stránke, ale aj po taktickej. Tretia časť tejto kapitoly sa už priamo venuje vplyvom Martího myšlienok na Che Guevaru. Napriek tomu, že Martí nebol marxistom, Che Guevara ho pokladal za intelektuálneho autora revolúcie a jej duchovný pilier (s. 160). Autor sa v tejto časti zameriava na pojmy spájajúce myšlienky oboch osobností – všeobecný odpor voči rasizmu, kritiku Spojených štátov amerických a obavy z ich rozpínavosti, vytvorenie zjednotenej Latinskej Ameriky a riešenie

sociálnych problémov. Avšak hlavným spoločným pojmom spájajúcim filozofiu oboch autorov je pojem národ, ktorý bol nosnou témou Martího aj Che Guevarových snáh o zjednotenie a oslobodenie Kuby. V ďalších častiach sa L. Blaha opätovne zameral na Che Guevaru. V štvrtej časti tejto kapitoly sledoval nosné piliere marxistickej teórie tohto revolučného politika. Následne v piatej časti autor spracoval tému Che Guevaru v dobe globalizácie, kde opisuje najmä na Che Guevarove vnímanie imperializmu a neokolonializmu juhoamerických krajín.

Záver publikácie tvorí sumár života José Martího od Petra Dinuša, ktorý v ňom zhrnul nielen život tohto kubánskeho spisovateľa a politika, ale vyzdvihol význam jeho osobnosti na kubánskej, ale aj medzinárodnej pôde.

Recenzovaná publikácia predstavuje José Martího z viacerých uhlov – ako literáta a priekopníka tohto žánru, ako nacionalistu snažiaceho sa vysporiadať s útlakom vlastného národa a dosiahnuť svoj sen o jednom spoločnom národe obyvateľov Latinskej Ameriky a, samozrejme, aj ako politika a revolucionára pokúšajúceho sa o prevrat, ktorý mal priniesť Kube rovnosť a slobodu. V danej publikácii je nutné vyzdvihnúť predovšetkým komplexnosť pohľadu na Martího osobnosť, ale aj celkovú komplexnosť týchto uhlov pohľadov. Autori prezentujú José Martího nielen zo všeobecne známeho pohľadu, teda ako ho vnímame my na Slovensku, ale aj z medzinárodného pohľadu a pohľadu kubánskeho obyvateľstva. Práve tieto pohľady potvrdzujú význam José Martího ako osobnosti s mimoriadnym významom. Napriek tomu v publikácii absentuje prehľadná časť mapujúca chronológiu Martího života, ktorá by bola vhodná práve pre čitateľa, ktorý je menej oboznámený s touto významnou osobnosťou. Záberom svojich tém je však publikácia veľmi zaujímavou a prínosnou nielen pre čitateľov odbornej literatúry, ale aj pre širokú verejnosť.

Zostavovateľka Dominika Dinušová a aj ďalší autori spracovali zaujímavú tému, ktorá je menej známa našim čitateľom. Cieľom recenzovanej publikácie bolo zachytenie života José Martího a jeho celoživotného prínosu v kontexte vtedajšej spoločnosti a doby, ako aj v kontexte myšlienok ďalších spisovateľov, politikov a revolucionárov, ktorí ovplyvnili José Martího, alebo ktorých, naopak, ovplyvnil on.

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Ústav politických vied SAV, v.v.i., Bratislava, Slovenská republika

Martinkovič, M.: Coalition Governments and Development of the Party System. Berlin: Peter Lang gmbH, Berlin 2021, 124 p., ISBN 978-3-631-83142-7

Stabilita, alebo by možno bolo vhodnejšie povedať nestabilita koaličného vládnutia na Slovensku máta politológov od vzniku republiky. Ide o problém, do ktorého vstupuje viacero premenných a preto nemá jednoduché riešenie. Je to volebný systém, ktorý vďaka svojmu pomerne nízkemu prahu dovoľuje vstup do parlamentu a možnosť podieľať sa na vládnutí pre veľké množstvo strán akejkoľvek afiliácie? Strany, ktorých programy a ciele sa výrazne líšia a ich koordinácia je obtiažna? Alebo osobné animozity predsedov, na ktorých stojí a padá politika viacerých strán bez stabilných a overených miestnych štruktúr?

Publikácia Coalition Governments and Development of the Party System si dáva za cieľ analyzovať vládne koalície od roku 1990 do roku 2016, resp. do konca tohto volebného obdobia. Členenie je založené na jednotlivých voľbách, nie na vládach, ktoré sa niekedy formovali aj v medziobdobí. Autor na takýto jav síce vždy upozorňuje, ale v prvom rade sleduje stabilitu samotného vládnutia a jednotlivé strany zúčastnené na ňom. To vyplýva najmä z faktu, že na určenie pozície strán v systéme a hodnotenie ich programov na ideologickom spektre používa RILE index (right-left positions). Keďže index nebol aktualizovaný pre voľby, ktoré sa konali v roku 2020, tie nie sú v práci zaradené. To však nie je prekážkou, naopak, pri volebnom období, ktoré ešte nie je ukončené, by išlo o predbiehanie udalostí.

Ide o publikáciu, ktorá sa svojím rozsahom rozhodne radí k menším, skromnejším. Na niečo málo viac ako sto stranách opisuje, ale najmä analyzuje vládnutie v ére samostatnosti Slovenska. Rozsah však vôbec nie je nedostatkom. Ide o hĺbkovú analýzu koaličného vládnutia u nás. Rozhodne nejde o publikáciu, ktorá by bola určená pre širokú, laickú verejnosť a populárnym spôsobom by povrchne opisovala známu históriu. Naopak. Ide o vysoko odbornú publikáciu zameranú na úzke vedecké publikum, pre ktoré môže mať významný prínos. Už samotný fakt, že je písaná v anglickom jazyku, jej dáva predpoklady na to, aby slúžila takémuto účelu. Nezameriava sa tak len na úzky okruh domácich výskumníkov, ale ponúka priestor na využitie aj za hranicami.

Jej cieľom je charakterizovanie slovenského straníckeho systému z perspektívy cleavages. Zaujímavou z pohľadu dneška je aj snaha o analýzu možnosti vzniku a preniknutia do systému pre extrémistické a antisystémové strany. Či už z dôvodu koncentrácie koaličných strán v stredových pozíciách a vytvorením priestoru pre takéto strany, alebo, naopak, postupným odklonom strán k extrému. Historický vývoj nám ukazuje, že táto otázka by mala byť ďalej rozpracovaná, nakoľko takéto strany neustále vznikajú a mutujú nielen u nás, ale aj v zahraničí. Z pohľadu výskumu koaličného vládnutia sú pútavým objektom výskumu, či už pre skúmanie ich koaličného potenciálu, ako aj ich samotného správania v multipartijnom systéme.

Práca nás postupne prevedie jednotlivými volebnými obdobiami od roku 1990, pričom autor nikdy nezabudne pripomenúť dôležité historické míľniky, ktoré formovali dobu. Dáva tak vládnutie do kontextu a aj zahraničnému čitateľovi, ktorý nemusí byť do hĺbky oboznámený s históriou Slovenska, ponúka oporný bod pre ďalšiu orientáciu. V každom volebnom období je kladený dôraz na analýzu štiepnych línií, ktoré pretínajú spoločnosť a rozdeľujú zároveň aj politické spektrum.

Špecifickým delením je línia mečiarizmus-antimečiarizmus, ktorá posúva do úzadia klasické línie ako práca-kapitál, či mesto-vidiek, ktoré môžeme pozorovať v iných krajinách. Aj napriek prítomnosti silných kresťanských strán tu nepozorujeme výrazné delenie na štát-cirkev.

Nasleduje komplexná analýza vládnucej koalície s presným popisom jednotlivých politických strán, ich orientáciou, zameraním, elektorátom a ďalšími charakteristikami, ktoré sú nevyhnutné pre jej pochopenie. Na spresnenie ich polohy v systéme na ľavo-pravom spektre používa RILE index, ktorý bol publikovaný v rámci medzinárodnej databázy CMP (Comparative Manifestos Project). Tá je produktom The Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB). Ide o medzinárodne uznávaný komparačný rámec na porovnávanie straníckych systémov a ich vývoja.

Výnimku z tohto pravidla tvorí volebné obdobie 2012 – 2016. Nie však kvôli nedostupnosti dát, či iného technického nedostatku. Ale z jednoduchého dôvodu, že v tomto volebnom období nevznikla koalícia, ale vládla len jedna politická strana (SMER-SD). Tento stav je anomáliou, ktorá nie je nemožná, ale v režimoch s pomerným volebným systémom, ktoré majú nízko nastavený volebný prah, je vysoko nepravdepodobná. Autor, samozrejme, opisuje dôvody, prečo sa tak stalo.

Vďaka zameraniu na jednotlivé strany môžeme sledovať aj zmeny v nich samotných. V ich programoch, smerovaní a z toho vyplývajúceho postavenia v systéme. Na druhej strane máme možnosť sledovať aj ich koaličný, alebo vydierací potenciál vo vláde a teda aj „váhu" strany. Tá je vždy vyjadrená aj číselne ako pomer medzi počtom poslancov a počtom obsadených ministerských kresiel. Na tomto základe si môžeme utvoriť obraz o sile strany v koalícii.

Výskum zároveň potvrdzuje Sartoriho tézu, označovanú ako štvrtý zákon (volebných systémov), že pri neprítomnosti systematickej štruktúry a očakávania pomerného zastúpenia pri potrebe rovnakých vstupov pre všetky strany sa do parlamentu môže dostať ľubovoľný počet strán, ktorý je obmedzený len volebným prahom. Tento jav môžeme sledovať jednak ako kolísavý počet strán zastúpených v parlamente, ako aj ich pravidelnú rotáciu, keďže žiadne dva za sebou nasledujúce volebné obdobia nepriniesli tú istú zostavu. V každých parlamentných voľbách sa dostali do NR SR nové strany a niektoré, naopak, vypadli. Deje sa tak na oboch stranách politického spektra, ako aj v jeho strede. Tento jav nie je závislý od programu strany, ale je súčasťou volebného systému.

Pomerný volebný systém takmer výhradne produkuje koaličné vlády, čo vytvára tlak na strany. Jednak na vládnej, ale aj na parlamentnej úrovni. Ten sa prejavuje jednak počtom a pôvodom štiepnych línií, volatilitou voličov, alebo štruktúrou politických strán čo vedie k fragmentácii straníckeho spektra. Chýbajúca stranícka štruktúra a programová vyprázdnenosť, nahradená silnými predsedníckym figúrami v kombinácii s nízkou citlivosťou občianskej spoločnosti, vytvára priestor pre systematickú polarizáciu. Tento jav označuje autor ako najzásadnejší problém vládnutia v posledných tridsiatich rokoch.

Martinkovič v tejto práci efektívne uplatnil svoje skúsenosti s výskumom volebných a straníckych systémov. Podarilo sa mu analyzovať jednotlivé politické strany zúčastnené na vládnutí, ako aj tie, ktoré ostali v opozícii, do hĺbky tak, že staval na výskumoch pionierov skúmania tejto problematiky. Vytvoril ucelený obraz o politickej scéne na základe chronologickej analýzy jednotlivých volebných období. Popísal nedostatky systému, ich zdroje a možné ďalšie následky.

Publikácia je vhodná pre každého politológa, ktorý sa zaujíma nielen o výskum koaličného vládnutia, ale aj o skúmanie strán a do určitej miery aj volebných systémov. Skrýva v sebe zrniečka poznania, ktoré môžu inšpirovať k ďalšiemu výskumu domácich aj zahraničných odborníkov. Presahuje aj do praktického života a rozhodne by nemala chýbať na stole žiadneho lídra koaličnej strany. História nám ukazuje, že by pre nich mala byť povinným čítaním a príručkou, ako veci robiť správne, i varovaním, ako sa vyhnúť chybám.

• I N F O R M Á C I E •

MICHAL UHRIN

Katedra etnológie, Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave,
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Vedecká konferencia „Byť tým iným"
Scientific Conference „To Be the Other"

Šiesteho októbra 2022 sa na pôde Filozofickej fakulty Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave, konala konferencia *„Byť tým iným": Formovanie podôb štátu, verejných inštitúcií a politiky po roku 1989.* Usporiadateľmi konferencie boli Ústav politických vied Slovenskej akadémie vied, v. v. i., Sociologický ústav Slovenskej akadémie vied, v. v. i. a Katedra etnológie, Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave. Podujatie bolo venované sociologickému odkazu Pierra Bourdieua. Bourdieu je považovaný za jednu z najvýznamnejších osobností sociálnych a humanitných vied dvadsiateho storočia. Jeho dielo je neustálym predmetom reflexií, diskusií a kritiky slovenských aj zahraničných bádateľov. Aj z týchto dôvodov si myšlienky Pierra Bourdieua zasluhujú pozornosť.

Na konferencii zaznelo celkovo deväť príspevkov v troch tematických blokoch. V prvom tematickom bloku *Teoretické reflexie súčasných spoločenských a politických zmien* odzneli tri príspevky. Jiří Šubrt v príspevku *Bourdieu v kontextech soudobého sociologického myšlení* sa zameral na komparáciu a kritické zhodnotenie niektorých širších kontextov a aspektov Bourdieuovej koncepcie. Druhý prednášajúci Marek Skovajsa reflektoval *Východiská bourdieuovské sociologii postkomunistických společností* s prihliadnutím k súčasnej podobe diskusií o kľúčových súčastiach Bourdieuovej teórie. Tretí príspevok *Morálne emócie a postoje majoritného obyvateľstva k minoritným skupinám vo verejnom diskurze na Slovensku* predniesol Michal Uhrin. Autor upriamil pozornosť na myšlienku integrácie Bourdieuov koncept *Habitus* s koncepciou morálnych emócií.

V druhom tematickom blok *Etnografia premien Slovenska* odzneli dva príspevky, ktoré z metodologického hľadiska spájalo využitie kvalitatívneho etnografického výskumu. Zuzana Sekeráková Búriková uviedla referát *Kresťanské obchody: symbolická ekonomika a katolícka identita na Orave.* Etnografický mikroskop zacielila na problematiku fungovania predaja a nakupovania v malých obchodných prevádzkach v období postsocialistickej transformácie. Dominika Lešková analyzovala interetnické vzťahy v rurálnom prostredí na dolnom Spiši. V príspevku *Reprezentácie príslušníkov nemeckej menšiny z perspektívy lokálnej komunity na dolnom Spiši* naznačila, že reprezentácie etnických skupín v danej lokalite sú špecifické a vyplývajú z konkrétnej historickej situácie.

V poslednom tematickom bloku *Politickí aktéri a efekty politických rozhodovaní* zazneli príspevky Tatiany Bužekovej, Juraja Marušiaka, Daniela Gerberyho a Miroslava Tížika. Tatiana

Bužeková otvorila príspevkom *„Správna strana dejín": morálne naratívy o etnických a náboženských skupinách vo vzdelávaní* tretiu sekciu konferencie. Bužeková prezentovala výsledky obsahovej analýzy učebníc dejepisu na základných školách. Autorka argumentovala, že prostredníctvom učebníc predmetov súvisiacich so sociálnymi vzťahmi a sociálnou organizáciou vzdelávací systém reprodukuje morálne normy a úsudky. V ďalšom referáte Juraj Marušiak reflektoval *Obraz Rómov v agende politických strán v kontexte volieb do Národnej rady SR v roku 2020.* Marušiakovým hlavným zistením je, že protirómska rétorika je aj naďalej súčasťou, aj keď v rozličnej intenzite, mobilizačnej agendy politických strán, vrátane takzvaných strán hlavného prúdu. To podľa autora vytvára predpoklady pre úspech radikálnych zoskupení pri tematizácii rómskej otázky. V následnosti na Marušiaka Daniel Gerbery predniesol príspevok *Konštrukcia cieľových skupín vo verejnej politike: zdroje duality v podpore rodín.* Gerbery venoval pozornosť spôsobom vytvárania inštitucionalizovaných a symbolických hraníc vo verejnej politike a vysvetleniu rozdielov v podpore rodín pracujúcich a nepracujúcich rodičov. Konferenciu uzatvoril príspevkom *Právo je ópium ľudstva. Budovanie štátnosti na Slovensku a v Česku ako revolučný a konzervujúci akt* Miroslav Tížik. Autor analyzoval politické a náboženské aspekty formovania podoby novovznikajúcich štátov Česka a Slovenska po zániku Československa.

Bourdieuove myšlienky doposiaľ zásadným spôsobom ovplyvňujú bádateľov naprieč rozmanitými vednými odbormi. Tento vplyv sa odrazil aj v príspevkoch sociológov, politológov a etnológov prednesených na konferencii. Konferencia sa niesla v znamení interdisciplinarity, no spoločnou črtou všetkých príspevkov boli práve myšlienky Pierra Bourdieua. Jednotliví autori a autorky s nimi pracovali kritickým, no kreatívnym a inšpiratívnym spôsobom.

ONDŘEJ HYNEK

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Conference: Midwest 2022 – International Studies Association

On 18-20 November 2022, the annual conference of MidWest 2022, organised by the International Studies Association, was held at Hilton Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri. The participants were coming dominantly from US universities, and the author of the article belonged to the exceptions as he represented a Slovak university.

The conference's official opening took place on Friday morning at 8.00 am, and the first panels commenced immediately at 8.15 am. On the first day, a long list of panels happened; thus, we could find and listen to contributions for Rethinking of IR Theories, Civil-Military Relations, Conflicts or Alliances. Herein, we can point out the presentation of Clint Work, PhD, who elaborated in detail on the US-South Korean Alliance after the Cold-War environment in his presentation called New Apertures, Fitful Trajectories: The Early Post-Cold War Transformation of the US-South Korea Alliance. Mr Work is the Fellow and Director of Academic Affairs at the Korea Economic Institute of America. Thus it serves as an example that this conference extends beyond universities only. However, it gathers all researchers from the public and private sectors.

Among the panels, the attendees could also visit the roundtables, particularly the one dedicated to Burnout or the panel dedicated solely to Undergraduate students who presented about Human Security. The panels were scheduled from 8.15 am until 5.30 pm, followed by the reception for all guests and participants.

On Saturday, 19 November, the program started again at 8.15 and proceeded until 5.30 as on Friday. Again, we could attend the roundtables related to the student's life as Job Seekers' Roundtable. Herein, we should consider the different environment in the USA than in Europe, which is more competitive; thus, this roundtable plays a vital role in the conference. Besides that, we could find panels regarding terrorism, Russian foreign policy, elections or gender topic. The attendees had a chance to listen to various interesting topics within the panels. Among them, the presentation of Gabriela Okundaye from Midwestern State University and DeAnne Roark from The University of North Texas should be highlighted. The presentation of their research – Is There a Link Sexual Violence and Post-Conflict Women's Rights? – surprised the audience with shocking results saying that gender-based violence during the conflict directly impacts women's political participation. In other words, the bigger the gender-based violence during the conflict, the bigger the women's political participation in the Post-Conflict environment. This mobilisation also brings its benefits to Women's rights in a post-conflict settlement. Saturday concluded with the business meeting in Hilton's lobby, where networking continued almost until midnight.

Although the main program finished on Saturday evening, active participants who did not leave could still attend two morning workshops on Sunday morning regarding computational discourse analysis, colonial responsibility, and international politics.

The conference illustrated that US academia, even in political science, emphasises statistical-oriented research as almost each research presentation was based on statistical methods applied within political science. Therefore, mixed research – quantitative and qualitative – dominated all panels. Also, the participants agreed that PhD students are well-trained in methods and methodological frameworks. According to them, they spend approximately two years of methodological training with at least four courses. The in-depth knowledge was apparent in the methodological approaches applied throughout the panels and all contributions.

MidWest 2022 was held for the second time in a row in a face-to-face set-up; as before, the conference was held for two years in online mode. Compared to other conferences organised by ISA, the MidWest one is smaller, emphasising considerable discussion time with additional activities such as workshops, roundtables and business events – meaning academia networking. MidWest 2022 was taken during the difficult time of the Ukrainian crisis and its associated threats that were reflected in the presented research papers.

TOMÁŠ VOJTOVIČ

Ústav politických vied Slovenskej akadémie vied v. v. i., Bratislava, Slovenská republika

XI: ročník Košických politologických dialógov 2022
11th Košice Politological Dialogues 2022

Dňa 3. novembra 2022 sa v Košiciach konala vedecká konferencia s medzinárodnou účasťou *„Ak má naša demokracia nedostatky, musíme prekonávať tie nedostatky, ale nie prekonávať demokraciu" – TGM.*[1]

Konferencia bola organizovaná v rámci XI. ročníka Košických politologických dialógov, ktoré boli organizované Katedrou politológie Filozofickej fakulty Univerzity Pavla Jozefa Šafárika v Košiciach a OZ Res Publica.

Konferencia sa začala o deviatej ráno oficiálnym otvorením, na ktorom účastníkov privítal prorektor pre vysokoškolské vzdelávanie a akademické obrady UPJŠ v Košiciach *prof. PaedDr. Martin Pekár, PhD.*, dekanka Filozofickej fakulty UPJŠ v Košiciach *prof. PhDr. Oľga Orosová, CSc.,* a *doc. PhDr. Daniel Dobiáš, PhD.*, z Katedry politológie Filozofickej fakulty UPJŠ v Košiciach.

Podujatie bolo rozdelené do dvoch častí, ktoré prebiehali súbežne. Prvá časť sa konala v historickej aule rektorátu UPJŠ v Košiciach, kde v jednotlivých paneloch vystupovali so svojimi príspevkami vedeckí pracovníci rôznych slovenských, českých, ale aj zahraničných inštitúcií.

Nedá sa nespomenúť príspevok Dr. h. c. prof. Marcely Gbúrovej, CSc. *„Po 30 rokoch vývoja…. "*, v ktorom rozprávala nielen o vývoji demokracie v Slovenskej republike, ale aj o tom, ako spolu so svojimi kolegami na rôznych politologických pracoviskách zakladali politológiu ako vedný a študijný odbor.

Doc. PhDr. Vladimír Goněc, DrSc., z Historického ústavu Filozofickej fakulty Masarykovej univerzity v Brne v príspevku *Vrátime sa pred rok 1919? A či pred rok 1948? O skrytom znefunkčňovaní demokracie a nárastu skrytých bariér pre demokraciu* zdôrazňoval paralely v historickom vývoji v spomínaných obdobiach a problémy, ktoré boli výzvou pre demokraciu vtedy a dnes.

Medzinárodnými hosťami boli napríklad Dr. hab. Katarzyna Kuč-Czajowska z univerzity Marie Curie-Sklodowskej v Lubline, ktorá predniesla príspevok *Local government in Poland – problems and trends of recentralization*, Associate Professor Hanna Melehanych, PhD., z Národnej univerzity v Užhorode so svojou témou *Challenges and Perspectives of Civil Society in Slovakia in View of the Increase of the Ukrainian Community after on Act of Russia's Aggression against Ukraine.*

Zároveň s touto časťou prebiehala v malej zasadačke rektorátu UPJŠ v Košiciach študentská časť tejto konferencie, na ktorej sa zúčastnili doktorandi z rôznych vedeckých pracovísk na Slovensku aj v Čechách.

Z Ústavu politických vied Slovenskej akadémie vied sa na konferencii zúčastnili doktorandi: Mgr. Kristína Valášková, PhD., Mgr. Tomáš Vojtovič, Mgr. Peter Telepčák a Mgr. Tomáš Ďuriš.

Príspevok Mgr. Kristíny Valáškovej, PhD., s názvom *Osobnosť ako zamlčaná premisa moderných politických dejín na Slovensku* na základe komparatívnej analýzy porovnával učebnice dejepisu a občianskej náuky od roku 1918 až do súčasnosti a priniesol náhľad na výučbu o slovenských osobnostiach v priebehu dejín. Autorka tiež zdôvodnila dôležitosť výučby o historických osobnostiach ako prostriedku formovania politického a historického vedomia na základe viacerých štúdií zahraničných odborníkov.

Mgr. Tomáš Vojtovič vo svojom príspevku *Výchova k občianstvu ako veda. Problém výchovy k občianstvu v diele Heinricha Rauchberga* identifikoval symptómy spoločenskej krízy, v ktorej sa nachádzame. Autor v príspevku postuloval názor, že je potrebné, aby sme širokú verejnosť v prvom rade zoznámili s fundamentmi fungovania demokratického štátu, v ktorom žije a následne môžeme formovať slobodných, sebavedomých a uvedomelých občanov. Ako praktický návod nám môže podľa autora poslúžiť dielo H. Rauchberga *Bürgerkunde der Tschechoslowakischen Republik* (Občianska výchova v Československu), ktorá bola napísaná ako praktická príručka demokracie a parlamentarizmu.

V príspevku *Aktuálne výzvy demokracie v Čile* Mgr. Peter Telepčák hovoril najme o návrhu novej ústavy, ktorá bola začiatkom septembra odmietnutá. Zameral sa na niektoré sporné body, pomenoval príčiny zlyhania a poukázal na nové výzvy, ktoré toto odmietnutie prináša pre demokraciu v Čile.

Mgr. Tomáš Ďuriš vystúpil s príspevkom *Slovenský euroskepticizmus vo svetle vojny na Ukrajine*, v ktorom sa zaoberal slovenskými euroskeptickými politickými stranami, analyzoval ich agendu od začiatku vojny na Ukrajine a opísal súčasné trendy euroskeptických strán.

V závere by sme sa radi poďakovali organizátorom za výborne odvedenú prácu a príležitosť sa po neľahkých pandemických rokoch opäť osobne stretnúť v Košiciach a viesť dialógy na základnú otázku Košických politologických dialógov: Kam kráčaš demokracia?

STUDIA POLITICA SLOVACA