

WORLD POLITICS

Vol. 55

January 2003

No. 2

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ABSTRACTS

RETHINKING RECENT DEMOCRATIZATION

LESSONS FROM THE POSTCOMMUNIST EXPERIENCE

By VALERIE BUNCE

This study compares democratization in the postcommunist region (or the twenty-seven countries that emerged from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe) in order to evaluate some of the assumptions and arguments in the literature on recent democratization in southern Europe and Latin America. Five conclusions are drawn, all of which challenge the received wisdom about democratization in southern Europe and Latin America. First, the uncertainty surrounding the postcommunist transitions to democracy varied significantly. This influenced, in turn, the strategies of transition and their payoffs. This also meant that the most successful transitions in the postcommunist context involved a sharp break with the old order. Second, popular mobilization often functioned to support the democratic project. Third, nationalist mobilization was also helpful, though this depended upon whether it began with the breakdown of authoritarian rule or had a longer history—with the latter compromising the democratic project. Fourth, if the timing of nationalist mobilization was critical for the success of democratization in those cases where such mobilization occurred, then the strength of the opposition was the key factor in the remaining cases. Finally, while democratic consolidation necessarily enhances the prospects for democratic sustainability, the failure to consolidate democracy does not necessarily threaten the continuation of democratic rule. Indeed, as in the Russian case, such a failure may prolong democratic rule. This suggests, in turn, that a key distinction must be made between the optimal conditions for democratization and optimal strategies.

DISTRIBUTION AND REDISTRIBUTION IN POSTINDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES

By DAVID BRADLEY, EVELYNE HUBER, STEPHANIE MOLLER, FRANÇOIS NIELSEN, and JOHN D. STEPHENS

This article analyzes the processes of distribution and redistribution in postindustrial democracies. The authors combine a pooled time-series data base on welfare state effort and its determinants assembled by Huber, Ragin, and Stephens (1997) with data on income distribution assembled in the Luxembourg Income Survey (LIS) archive. In the case of the LIS data, the authors recalculate the microdata in order to remove the distorting influence of pensioners on pre-tax, pretransfer income distribution. They examine the determinants of two dependent variables: pre-tax, pretransfer income inequality and the proportional reduction in inequality from pre- to post-tax and transfer inequality. They test hypotheses derived from power resources theory against alternatives derived from the literature on the development of the welfare state and the determinants of income inequality. The results offer strong support for power resources theory, particularly in the case of reduction in inequality. Union density, unemployment, and percentage of female-headed households were the main determinants of pre-tax and transfer inequality ($R^2 = .64$), while leftist government, directly and indirectly through its influence on the size of the welfare state, was found to be by far the strongest determinant of distribution ($R^2 = .81$).

THE SOURCES OF BUSINESS INTEREST IN SOCIAL INSURANCE

SECTORAL VERSUS NATIONAL DIFFERENCES

By ISABELA MARES

When and why have employers supported the development of institutions of social insurance that provide benefits to workers during various employment-related risks? The analysis developed in this article challenges the dominant explanations of welfare state development, which are premised on the assumption that business opposes social insurance. The article examines the conditions under which self-interested, profit-maximizing firms support the introduction of a

new social policy, and it specifies the most significant variables explaining the variation in employers' social policy preferences. The model is tested in three political episodes of welfare state development in France and Germany, using policy documents submitted by various employers' associations to bureaucratic and parliamentary commissions.

THE POLITICS OF MOTHERS' EMPLOYMENT

FRANCE IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

By KIMBERLY J. MORGAN

Contemporary theories and typologies of welfare states in Western Europe assume that social democratic parties are the engine behind progressive policies on gender roles and on the participation of women in the labor force. The French case challenges these assumptions—this conservative welfare state, surprisingly, provides an extensive system of public day care along with other forms of support that facilitate mothers' employment. This article explains the existence of the French system through a comparative historical analysis of child care policy in France and other European welfare states. The main findings concern the role of organized religion in shaping contemporary public day care policies. In contrast to most conservative welfare regimes, the French welfare state has been shaped not by clericalism and Christian democracy but by secularism and republican nationalism—forces that influenced some of the earliest public policies for the education of young children in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and that later affected the founding of the contemporary day care system in the 1970s. In that latter period of propitious economic circumstances, pragmatic policy elites eschewed moralizing critiques of mothers' employment and established a system of financing that has enabled the long-term expansion of public day care. These findings have implications for our understanding of gender politics and welfare regimes in Western Europe. The secularization of political life—not social democratic power—best explains why public policies in France and in many Scandinavian countries have promoted the demise of the traditional family model.

THE MOTHERLAND IS CALLING

VIEWS OF HOMELAND AMONG RUSSIANS IN THE NEAR ABROAD

By LOWELL W. BARRINGTON, ERIK S. HERRON, and BRIAN D. SILVER

Do Russians in Central Asia and other parts of the former Soviet Union see Russia as their homeland? Do they want Russia to defend their interests? How united are they in their views? This article examines these questions through the analysis of surveys conducted among the Russian population in four post-Soviet states—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, and Ukraine—as well as in focus groups in Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Although many Russians have emigrated from the Central Asian countries, and some from Belarus and Ukraine, those who have stayed do not fit the common assumption that Russians are a potential fifth column who favor interference by Moscow and view Russia as their external “homeland.” There is, instead, a great deal of heterogeneity among these ethnic Russians. Whether they identify Russia or their current country of residence as their homeland depends powerfully on where they were born and how long they have lived in their current country of residence. Those Russian-born Russians who have chosen their current state of residence as their homelands tend to score high on pride in their country of residence, have confidence in its political institutions, and show a commitment to remain in the country. Even those Russian-born Russians who consider Russia to be their homeland do not look positively on the Russian Federation's intervention in local affairs. The results suggest that while the motherland may be calling, Russians who remain in the near abroad are not answering the call.