

Abstract (English)

Anti-Establishment Parties: Threat to Democracy or Chance for Its New Equilibrium?

The thesis focuses on the anti-establishment parties from the perspective of constitutional theory, also considering the sociological theoretical approaches of Niklas Luhmann, Charles Taylor, and Benedict Anderson. The primary purpose of the work is to explore how the establishment, as an empirical contextualisation of democracy and structural coupling between the state and the people, might be conceptualised and what role the political parties play in it.

First, the thesis proposes a theoretical conceptualisation of establishment as a structural coupling between the constitutional identity of state and the popular identity of the political people. Both the state and the political people are understood as autopoietic organisational systems defined by their constitutional / popular imaginaries, which are articulated by their organisational structures. The work adapts the integrative theory of Rudolf Smend in the understanding of the organisational structure as a system of personal, procedural, and value elements.

The role of the parliamentary parties is analysed through the examination of their legislative activity in parliament, using the holistic grading method to determine the anti-establishment rate of the bills sponsored or supported by the political parties. In other words, the bills are analysed to determine whether, and how much, they aspire to change the current constitutional identity of the state.

Czechia and Italy are used as case studies to test the theory of establishment constructed within the thesis and explore the role of the political parties in challenging the constitutional identity of the state. The two countries have been chosen because of their similar constitutional frameworks and historic experiences (necessity to deal with un-democratic history in their constitutions, systemic corruption, major political party controlled by a media-magnate billionaire) but also because of the different length of democratic experience.

Keywords:

establishment; political parties; constitutional identity; popular identity; Czechia; Italy; holistic grading