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PROJECT

Aleatory Politics

Der Zufall hat in der Politischen Philosophie und den Sozialwissenschaften in der Regel keinen guten Leumund; Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftler haben den kaum zu bändigenden Impuls, das Phänomen Zufall unter ihre Kontrolle zu bekommen. Dies gilt auch für die Politik: Die Basismodule des modernen Politikverständnisses sind "Vernunft" und/oder "Interesse" und damit das genaue Gegenteil vom blinden Spiel mit dem Zufall.

Demgegenüber möchte ich in meinem Projekt am Wissenschaftskolleg mit dem Titel "Politik des Aleatorischen" dazu beitragen, das Moment des Zufalls auf produktive Weise als Instrument der aktiven Gestaltung von Gesellschaft und Politik zu betrachten. Mit diesem Vorhaben möchte ich meine bisherigen Überlegungen zu Losverfahren und Demokratie in drei Richtungen weiterführen. Erstens ist beabsichtigt, das Phänomen "Zufall" in seinen philosophischen, historischen und konzeptionellen Dimensionen genauer in den Blick zu nehmen und von hier aus nach Verbindungen zu aktuellen Debatten über "Kontingenz" in der Politik zu suchen. Zweitens ist vorgesehen, Vorschläge zu erarbeiten, wie sich mithilfe von zufallsgenerierten Entscheidungen bei der Besetzung von Ämtern die viel beklagten Repräsentations-, Transparenz- und Effizienzdefizite in supranationalen politischen Gremien abbauen lassen. Und drittens möchte ich diese Überlegungen schließlich in ein Vorhaben einmünden lassen, das den provisorischen Titel "Eine allgemeine Theorie politischer Verfahren" trägt.

Lektüreempfehlung

Buchstein, Hubertus. *Demokratie und Lotterie: Das Los als politisches Entscheidungsinstrument von der Antike bis zur EU*. Frankfurt/Main, New York: Campus, 2009.

- (zusammen mit Michael Hein). "Randomizing Europe. The Lottery as a Decision-Making Procedure for Policy Creation in the EU." *Critical Policy Studies* 3, 1 (2009): 29-57.

- "Reviving Randomness for Political Rationality: Elements of a Theory of Aleatory Democracy." *Constellations* 17, 3 (2010): 435-454.

Give Chance a Chance: Aleatory Politics

In certain of the lectures that we have heard from other Fellows thus far this year, chance has played a not unimportant role - recall that of Atac Imamoglu on physics and that of Ulrich Steiner on biology. With my own work in the field of aleatory politics I should like to interface with their thoroughly consanguine views regarding the chance factor and ask whether and to what degree political decisions might not profit from the application of chance. At center of my interest as a political scientist in the subject of chance is thus the question as to the potential for rationality and the practical advantages of those decision-making processes in the sphere of politics that are steered by chance.

On the technical level, one can deliberately induce chance-based decisionmaking processes by means of lottery. It would of course be idle thinking - and simply create an infinite regress - were we to decide as to the implementation of lotteries in politics through the implementation of lotteries. There is no escaping the fact that we must find good reasons for lotteries as an instrument for decisionmaking. There are a total of five arguments that can be forwarded with respect to the implementation of lotteries - arguments that I will be outlining and discussing in my lecture.

Very little has been ascertained thus far regarding whether and how the implementation of lotteries has proven useful in the context of modern democracies and what conclusions might be drawn for debates on future reforms. It is to this purpose that I will be undertaking intensive research and reflections in my coming months here at the Wissenschaftskolleg.

First of all, it is my intention to learn more about the social-political contexts with respect to the implementation of what might be called lottery-committees in modern democracies. My hypothesis is that the political committee comprised of citizens chosen by lot makes primary sense within modern democracies as a kind of "democratic-deliberative pouvoir neutre" (e.g. in the context of electoral law reform, constitutional reform, the constitution of diets, the regulation of campaign financing).

Secondly, I am interested in a problem that has been largely neglected in the research, namely that of the mental acceptance of decisions by way of lotteries on the part of those affected by these decisions. Apposite cases for analysis would be the allocation of scarce resources through lottery (e.g. the awarding of slots at schools and universities by way of lotteries that are either weighted or based on quotas) and the debates on such in the public political sphere.

A third facet of my work at the Wissenschaftskolleg is my preoccupation with a kind of empirical research that can be termed "virtual empiricism." The best example of what I have in mind is a reform proposal that bears the title "EU-Commission Lottery." It is in the interest of the EU Commission's greater work efficiency that the proposal seeks to reduce the number of commissioners to fifteen (as foreseen in the Treaty of Lisbon). In order to arrive at this lower number I suggest the holding of a weighted lottery on a regular basis in determining those countries among the member states that might put forward a commissioner (for details, see the handout). The EU presently has its hands full with other concerns, and this proposal may look like a mere academic exercise with no real chance of being implemented; but in the course of future debates on reform of the EU's political system, this situation could well change. With the help of various computer simulations, I am attempting to calculate what EU-Commission lottery "results" will be produced under changing parameters and in what way the proposal can be optimized in procedural terms.

In a later phase of my work at the Wissenschaftskolleg, the aforementioned inquiries into and reflections on chance-based decisions will issue in a work with the provisional (and perhaps overly ambitious) title "Toward a General Theory of Political Procedures," where I will be examining not only lotteries but elections, votes, auctions, etc., with respect to their specific procedural features.

Buchstein, Hubertus (Wiesbaden,2018)

Auf dem Weg zur Postwachstumsgesellschaft – Von der Resonanztheorie zur aleatorischen Demokratie

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1677361573>

Buchstein, Hubertus (Manchester,2017)

The Eschenburg Controversy in German political science

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Buchstein, Hubertus (New York, NY,2015)

Public voting and political modernization : different views from the nineteenth century and new ideas to modernize voting procedures

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1678131776>

Buchstein, Hubertus (Frankfurt, New York,2015)

Wählen, abstimmen und lösen : auf der Suche nach Wegen aus der Formkrise der repräsentativen Demokratie

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1676816291>

Buchstein, Hubertus (2015)

Elective and aleatory parliamentarism

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1042518955>

Buchstein, Hubertus (Wiesbaden,2014)

Deliberative und aleatorische Demokratietheorie

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1678130397>

Buchstein, Hubertus (Bonn,2013)

Braucht die repräsentative Demokratie ein Update? - Wege aus der Legitimationskrise

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1681506939>

Buchstein, Hubertus (Wiesbaden,2013)

Moderne Demokratietheorien

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1678131350>

Buchstein, Hubertus (Berlin,2013)

Die »Gnade der späten Geburt« : Politikwissenschaft in Deutschland und die Rolle Theodor Eschenburgs

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1678130877>

Buchstein, Hubertus (2013)

The concept of "self-binding" in constitutional theory

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