

A large, light blue globe graphic is centered in the background. It features a map of the world in a slightly darker shade of blue. The globe is partially obscured by the title text.

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Editorial Note

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The year 2020 marks the hundredth anniversary since the passing of Max Weber, one of the most prominent scholars for studying authority relations. Weber was the first to draw attention to the different sources of authority in societal ordering, and thereby the conflict that may emerge within and between them, with potentially devastating consequences on peace and progress. Today, around the world, the primacy of rules as the source of authority is eroding, and observers witness the (re)empowerment of Weber's two alternative sources of rule: traditions, frequently, although not always directed against progress and development, and charisma, centered around political leaders who may or may not feel bound by laws or traditions.¹ Legitimacy, then, tends to be reduced to a simple consent of the people, understood as the majority at the ballot box, and rules as amendable or at least unenforceable, often to the detriment of the many minorities in contemporary diverse societies (for an exception, see Sadurski, Sevel, and Walton 2019).

Weber's legacy is nowadays abundant in the core of political science scholarship although explicit references to his work are not always present, for instance, in contemporary studies of democratic deterioration. The problem of *reason versus emotions* in contemporary (not only constitutional) politics (see Sajó 2013) leaves much to be uncovered, and this year is likely to supply a rich array of new data for such investigations from many countries which face significant elections or other historical milestones. *IAPSS Politikon* adopts a global focus in offering a platform for analyses, recognizing that there remain several regions of the world that receive comparatively lower scholarly attention and therefore need to be covered in greater proportion of future political science research. As such, the Editorial Board is particularly pleased that the current issue assembles several articles focusing on electoral and party politics in selected African countries and hopes that the current issue demonstrates this focus.

This issue offers primarily empirical studies adopting a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods. Still, it has something to offer to readers interested in political theory as well—they should be particularly invited to study Jessica Nuske's article, a fascinating piece on revisiting the concept of representation in contemporary times when the 'electoral connection' between citizens and representatives alone is woefully inadequate to capture the complex relationship between these two subjects. Via critical engagement with current scholarship addressing this challenge, Nuske advocates a revised constructivist account. Here, it is the stipulation of representative claims made by various interest groups and the acceptance (or denial) of these claims by their (themselves constructed) constituencies that are critical for understanding the nature of contemporary representation.

International studies are represented in the issue by the article by Justinas Lingečius, who, similarly to Nuske, uses constructivist theorising to make sense of the changes in Lithuanian foreign and security policy after the Crimean annexation. Analysing outputs by relevant decision-makers, he identifies that the Lithuanian self-identification gradually changed after the annexation because of the increased threat perception of Russia. Security concerns became more central in the policy agenda and Lithuanian independence as a small state has been repeatedly emphasised in

¹ See extensive literature on the rise of populism and nationalism (e.g. Halmai 2019, Bugarić 2019).

foreign policy discourse. This case, Lingevious argues, highlights that state identity in foreign policy can change due to relevant external events.

The series of texts on African politics in this issue opens with Professor Pieter Labuschagne, whose article studies new political parties in the South African party system. His analysis of voter volatility in South African elections does not identify significant differences compared to 'consolidated democracies' as highlighted in existing studies. Although new political parties are rarely successful in South African elections, for reasons Labuschagne terms 'political opportunism' and 'political naivety', they continue to emerge in increased numbers.

The fourth article in the issue, by Kenyan scholars Thomas Ibrahim Okinda, Benson Oduor Ojwang, and Charles Ongadi Nyambuga, is located at the intersection of electoral and gender studies. It uses survey data from female voters in one of the counties for the Kenyan general elections to investigate how socio-democratic and attitudinal variables correlate with their electoral participation. It finds that variables from both categories were relevant for the outcome although it admits limitations in data collection and analysis. Still, the contribution covers a neglected area of research and paves the way towards the authors' recommendations for increasing female electoral participation in Kenya that could narrow the gender gap and facilitate gender equality in the electoral context.

Next, Harrison Adewale Idowu and N. Oluwafemi 'Femi' Mimiko study the relationship between election management systems and peaceful alternation of power in Ghana and Nigeria. They notice that power alternations in both countries were peaceful after the last election where such an alternation occurred, despite the difference in credibility of the election management system that is considered to be significantly more deficient in Nigeria as opposed to in Ghana. Subjecting the relationship to a qualitative explorative analysis inspired by electoral governance theory, they find that the credibility of the election management system has been conducive to the peaceful alternation of power in Ghana. At the same time, other factors explain why despite the lack of such a system in Nigeria, there was a peaceful alternation of power as well after the 2015 presidential election.

The issue concludes with a book review by Idris Buta of an edited collection analysing electoral violence in nine African countries. The review praises the volume for its scope as well as the capacity to recognise the uneven distribution of electoral violence in the cases covered. Buta lists the recommendations provided by the volume but raises the point that they are focused to a large degree on international rather than domestic actors in Africa, which points to a continuing research lacuna on the subject.

As always, this issue has been made possible through the exceptional voluntary commitment of the members of the Editorial Board, helped by the Editorial Assistants and the external peer reviewers. Thanks go to all of them but at this point, particular recognition is due to outgoing members of the Board, Gergana Tzvetkova (Editorial Board member and Senior Editor since 2017) and Karla Drpić (Editorial Assistant since 2018, later Junior Editor and Editor). The contributions of our outgoing Editorial Assistant, Eszter Sággy (Editorial Assistant since 2019), is also much appreciated. As they all become our former colleagues, we are pleased to have some of them continue as external reviewers for the journal.

Last but not least, an announcement: while our journal focuses primarily on individual unsolicited manuscript submissions, we welcome proposals for special issue projects, primarily those offering a set of manuscripts focusing on a particular research subfield or series of related puzzles, ideally adopting an interdisciplinary approach within and/or across the manuscripts. We

also consider special issue project proposals on manuscripts that are tied together by being presented at an academic event. It will be considered an advantage if the special issue project proposal contains coordinators and manuscript authors from diverse backgrounds in terms such as affiliation, academic seniority, and gender.

As each stand-alone issue of the journal features around four manuscripts, for a special issue project at least eight manuscripts should be initially submitted, with those successfully passing the editorial and the external double-blind peer review process being published together in one issue. The coordinators of the given special issue project may submit an introductory, lead article bringing together all the manuscripts that are to appear in an issue, provided that they are meaningfully related. Such a lead article will also be subject to the full peer-review procedure. Provided that fewer than four manuscripts belonging to a special issue project are published, a special section can be created.

Special issue project proposals may be sent through [e-mail](#) and they should clearly outline the rationale behind the proposal, the types and the number of manuscripts expected. Depending on this rationale, the Editorial Board may request further information from the initiators of the proposal. The Editorial Board, however, cannot be expected to conduct active promotion for concrete special issue proposals, as there are nowadays multiple avenues through which the initiators may advertise such an idea in order to receive preliminary expressions of interest from among the members of scholarly communities.

Max Steuer
Editor-in-Chief

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