

Preface

Politics, Culture and Socialization is entering its third year. The editors are proud to conclude that the journal sponsored by the Research Committee 21 on Political Socialization and Education and the Research Committee 29 on Psycho-politics of the International Political Science Association IPSA has been able to hold up its high standards of peer-review over the past two years. These continuing efforts proofed not to interfere with other claims by the journal that include, besides of the focus on political socialization and education and political psychology, a multi-method perspective and an interdisciplinary view, with high estimation for creativity and new insights. Because we want this journal to continue as a truly international forum for scientists all over the world, authors are encouraged to also submit articles in other languages than English (Spanish, Italian, French, German) for which one place will be kept in every issue. The aims of Politics, Culture and Socialization are, again, represented in the current issue. Scholars from around the globe focus on Socialization, Globalization and Attitudes towards immigrants.

The opening article by Song Yingfa (China University of Mining and Technology, Xuzhou, P.R. China) reviews the development process of China's political socialization research. It all started in the early time of the reform and opening-up in 1982, the year in which one could witness the implementation of a new Chinese constitution. This document initiated by Deng Xiaoping had as a purpose to significantly change the government structure of China in order to guide the country in the direction of modernization and domestic stability. The carefully organized process until now slowly advanced the Chinese population in the direction of more economic freedom and increased social prosperity, even though this process was interrupted now and then by reactionary outbursts as in the case of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests that ended in military repression. The article on "Research on Political Socialization in China since 1982: Literature Review" summarizes China's political socialization research since 1982, and it points out the existing problems, the biggest one of which being Chinese scholars lack of skills in all kinds of empirical research.

The other articles in this issue, present us – as a counterbalance to the opening article – with four quantitative studies two of which are based upon intensive analyses of extended survey data from a series of countries, while two other articles detail theory formation based upon national survey data or original empirical research for respectively the Netherlands and Sweden.

The first of the two broad-scope articles, entitled "Comparing socialization, cultural and individual level effects on attitudes towards nuclear energy – A multilevel analysis of

27 European countries” is by Sebastian Jäckle (University of Freiburg, Germany) and Rafael Bauschke (University of Heidelberg, Germany). The article consists of a model that analyzes data from the 2008 Euro Barometer Special Issue on attitudes to nuclear energy. Socio-cultural factors, political socialization and familiarity (also through Green parties) seem to have important effects on attitudes and risk perception held by citizens to nuclear energy.

In “Consistency of Tolerance, Public Opinion on Immigrants in the Netherlands at the Turn of the Millennium”, Louk Hagendoorn and Edwin Poppe (Utrecht University) come up with rather reassuring figures about tolerance in the Netherlands and attitudes against immigrants. But their data from a 1998 representative national survey shape up as a real challenge when confronted with the political transformation of this country introduced in 2001 by the (assassinated) politician Pim Fortuyn and continued by his populist successors Rita Verdonk and Geert Wilders.

The Swedish study by Sofia Sohl (Örebro University) contributes to theorizing about “political efficacy” (at producing a change in society). The concept itself is discussed with input from both political science and psychology. The case study on Sweden consists of an empirical test of an existing multidisciplinary theory. The conclusion that one may not underestimate the role of encouragement compared to political knowledge is certainly a hypothesis that deserves further attention (“Pathways to political efficacy – Theoretical considerations and empirical illustrations on youths’ acquisition of political efficacy”).

Based upon a detailed analysis of the ICCS 2009 data for 35 countries the closing article addresses the ambitious question in how far the attitudes and openness of young adolescents towards immigrant rights are affected by globalization. The conclusion by Dimokritos Kavadias, Patrick Stouthuysen (Free University of Brussels), Britt Dehertogh and Eva Franck (University of Antwerp) is that the presence of immigrants in the classroom may be a much better guaranty for a non-discriminatory attitude (“Does Globalization Broaden The Mind? The impact of Globalization on attitudes towards immigrant-rights of young adolescents in 35 regions”).

The book review by Russell Farnen (University of Connecticut at Hartford) of ‘Authoritarianism. Conclusions based on a cross-national perspective’ by Sabrina de Regt (University of Antwerp) further stimulates the highly topical discussion on factors that may contribute to anti-immigrant attitudes in the age of globalization.

One final word on the “The research in progress” section that for the first time was included in the journal. The study by Ruth Firer (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) deserves special attention because of the unconventional way it is formulated: a mock trial. In “Case no. 240743: Israelis Versus Teaching History in the State of Israel,” Firer uses her experience as a history teacher and as a teacher trainer and a researcher of textbooks at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to allow “the Prosecution” and “Defense” present their arguments concerning the current state of teaching history in Israel. Let this experimental research method inspire all of us for a thought provoking scientific excursion into our own (national) experiences with history teaching, teachers, and textbooks.

Christ’l De Landtsheer, Editor

Russell Farnen, Daniel German, Co-editors
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