

Right and left

Abstract

This work is standing on two main pillars, consisting of two parts. The first part describes the left right spectrum, showing possible alternatives, examining whether there is superiority to this concept of classification of the political spectrum and where does it lie. The second part is a look into the history of the left right dualism, its origin and changes through time from its beginning up to the year of 1989, showing the changeability of political conflict, mainly through time but also through space.

First part focuses on left right dualism itself, explaining how we understand it, mentioning some competitive concepts and presenting chosen ones. The outcome of this part is an attempt at synthesis of two to three concepts into a final scheme, that is not letting go of the left right division, while trying to include a level of predictive value.

The historical second part begins with two critically influential revolutions, which shook the western world, but which ended with formation of democracies comparable to ones we see today. The work opens up the question of coincidence regarding the origin of the terminology of right and left. Showing that the terms were dictated by the seating of the representatives of certain political ideologies. The amount to which this mechanism was left to chance and how much it was reinforced by seating arrangements is discussed.

Next stage is a comparison of the American revolution and the French revolution, showing their differences and the causes of these dissimilarities.

The historical section is then concluded by the Springtime of the Peoples, which is understood as a repercussion of the ideology introduced in the French revolution in the rest of Europe, respectively the Western world.

In a direct connection to 1848 there is an interpretation of the consequences of liberal changes and their influence on the working class, or on authors targeting the working class. Socialists appear introducing a new understanding of what it means to be on the left, therefore a selection of socialist authors and their ideas are presented.

The interwar period is then characterized by the stepping back of the original political movements and rise of the radical left, in the form of communists reinforced by the Bolshevik revolution in Tsarist Russia and the radical response of the fascists. The fascist movement is

then discussed with regards to its position on the right-wing spectrum, although not leading to a clear conclusion.

The post-war period essentially closes the whole work and generally points to the historical post-war compromise between the left and the right, especially at the economic level. However, this fragile compromise is shaken by the revolutionary storms of the 1960s, especially in 1968, which meant not only a clash of generations, but also a clash for the focus of political conflict. The Western conception of post-war Europe, however, still triumphed in 1989 with the fall of the Iron Curtain and clear victory of not only economic liberalism over communist totalitarianism.

Klíčová slova: Right, left, history