

Patchwork Parliaments. Post-imperial Field of Power in the Second Republic of Poland and Greater Romania After the First World War

Interwar Poland and Romania emerged in a new form out of the bygone empires. As a result, they displayed high cultural and institutional variance. They were inhabited by religious or national 'minorities,' and people previously living in various empires used to different legal realities. Their governments rejected the idea of federation and were reluctant to acknowledge the demands of the national minorities. My project studies representative assemblies in post-imperial states after 1918 to understand the morphing field of power characterised by high cultural diversity, shifts in ethnic hierarchies, crippling regionalisms, and nationalising integration. The two patchwork parliaments served as vehicles to integrate their diverse territories into unitary states. They did so by re-presenting the heterogenous populations in chambers embalmed with symbolic representation of the sovereign body politic of the nation. Simultaneously, these chambers were arenas where various elites debated the polity and traded their diverse resources. Comparing two patchwork parliaments staged as national assemblies, the project zooms in on transitory biographies and capitals of their members. It aims to understand the dynamic interaction between personal, regional and state-polity parameters by merging new parliamentary studies, historical sociology of imperial form and post-Bourdieuian field analysis.



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