

KİTAP İNCELEMESİ / BOOK REVIEW

**LEADERS, FACTIONS AND THE GAME OF INTRA-PARTY POLITICS, ANDREA CERON,
ROUTLEDGE, NEW YORK, 2019, XIV+212 PP., ISBN: 9781138550001**

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Political parties are often examined as unitary actors. The assumption that political parties are unitary actors relies on a premise that parties are formed by individual members who want to reach common goals. In fact, parties are not monolithic actors but usually composed of members who have different interests, policy preferences, and personal career ambitions. For this reason, those party members who share most similar preferences and common interests may come together and create subgroups called as factions within a party to influence internal decision-making processes. Moreover, some of them may be formed by formerly created factions. From this perspective, many parties are also considered as coalition of factions (Leiserson, 1968 cited in Ceron, 2019).

Indeed, there is a growing literature on factions of political parties. Andrea Ceron in his *Leaders, Factions and the Game of Intra-Party Politics* book aims to contribute to intra-party politics literature by relaxing the assumption that political parties are unitary actors, in his words, opening "the black box". For this aim, Ceron presents a game theory to explain intra-party politics as the interplay between a party leader and minority factions. In his model, he investigates intra-party decision-making processes by understanding outcomes of factional competition on the allocation of pay offs within a party, risk of party split, and survival of a party leader. Then, he argues that directly elected leaders by a consensual wide electorate can preserve party unity and have larger autonomy on factions.

In his PhD Dissertation titled *"Intra-party Politics and Party System: Factional Conflict, Cooperation and Fission within Italian Parties"*; Ceron (2012) had studied intra-party politics in Italy. And, in this book, he adds France and Germany to make a comparison. With this aim, the book examines 254 factions that competed in 83 congresses of 19 parties in Italy between 1946-2010, 151 factions that competed in 39 congresses of 5 parties in France between 1971-2016, and 33 subgroups of 2 parties in Germany between 1985-2018.

The reasons why the author chose these countries are as follows. He considers Italy as a political laboratory to examine intra-party politics since Italy has a large number of political parties with a high number of factions that allow the collection of data and this large dataset can be used in the large-N study. Also, the high instability rate of cabinets allows investigating building and dissolution of alliances, party policy positions, and allocation of office payoffs. Furthermore, the Italian electoral system has ruled under four different categories since 1946 which provides information about electoral payoffs and effects of the electoral laws. In addition, the author emphasizes that there are large amounts of documents related to the internal dynamics of Italian political parties. In the case of France, Ceron considers the French case suitable to compare with Italy since many parties in both countries have numerous factions and there are contested congresses to select their leadership. However, the German case has differences. In contrast to Italy and France, German political parties have fewer factions and more stable coalition governments. Yet, the author claims that the German case is significant to analyze non-factional intra-party organizations and evaluate the internal conflicts other than factionalism in party congresses.

However, since intra-party politics is often a kind of "invisible politics" (Sartori 1976 cited in Ceron, 2019), it is hard to find reliable information. The author aims to contribute to filling this gap by analyzing almost 500 intra-party documents about 3.5 million words in these three languages. He uses text analysis to gather information on the policy preferences of intra-party factions. He benefits mostly from primary sources but in case of lack of information, he also uses secondary sources especially in the German case. He uses quantitative methods as text analysis and benefits from the automated scaling technique that produces estimates of policy positions comparing several textual documents. When doing that, he prefers to use "Wordfish" Programme.

The book consists of eight chapters including the conclusion. In the first chapter, the author presents its theoretical approach "the game-theoretic model". Then, in the second chapter Ceron shows the history and characteristics of party factions in Italy, France, and Germany by emphasizing the recent party splits. And, in the following five empirical chapters, he tests 21 hypotheses. There are no single dependent variables and each of the five chapters has its own dependent variables. For example, Chapter 3 deals with determinants of factionalism while focusing on party organization, statutes, and internal rules. Chapter 4 analyzes the party platforms and the role of the electoral cycle. Chapter 5 investigates portfolio allocation, cabinet stability and coalition government building. Actually, the author uses different models. For example, Chapter 3 uses Heckman's Model and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression, Chapter 4 uses Downs' Model and Gamson's Law, Chapter 5 uses Bargaining Theory, and Chapter 7 uses Cox's Model. In the conclusion chapter, Ceron discusses his general theoretical hypothesis and findings. At the end, there are also implications for real world politics and directions for future research.

Having benefited from his PhD Dissertation, the author had a deep literature review, and his efforts need to be appreciated. He lists dependent and independent variables and hypotheses very clearly. In addition, he draws limitations and explains their reasons well. The author illustrates his findings with tables and figures. He concludes by proving the validity and reliability of the estimates, as well as the robustness of the results of textual analysis to alternative strategies. In his words, Ceron claims that “[t]his book is also intended to show them that robust political science theories can really be useful to predict political events.” Indeed, the author has successfully used “the game of intra-politics” to interpret and predict the behavior of political actors across the book.

One can also find some drawbacks of the book, who are not interested in quantitative methods, and weighted theory and models may consider it as a heavy-going text. It also needs to be noted that the author does not give equal importance to each case as Italy is part is larger than France and Germany, and the latter cases are utilized as explanatorily. In addition, he complains about the lack of information in the German case throughout the book. Moreover, he uses different time periods in Italy (1946-2010), France (1971-2016), and Germany (1985-2018). Although it proves his theory free from time limitation, it would be better to choose the same period

The conclusion may surprise the reader as it suggests that party factions are not evil. The author does not consider factions as conflict but even a resource for the party, as long as they push the leaders to make the right choice in the intra-party game. So, the book also has normative sides by having policy recommendations and suggestions.

All in all, *Leaders, Factions and the Game of Intra-Party Politics* book will be helpful to scholars and students of political parties, political institutions, comparative politics and European Politics as well as text analysis quantitative methods. The book can help those who want to use the intra-party game theory in different cases such as Turkey would be a great choice. His models can also be tested for different organizations such as trade unions, even for the analysis of the terrorist groups.

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