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Political Monopolies between Italy and Sweden

The first half of this paper will be a synopsis and the second will be strictly my reaction. As discussed by Hirschman and reinforced by Forstiere, monopolies can sometimes be a positive mechanism in increasing the amount of voice. Voice increases the opportunities for innovation and growth since simply exiting the system allows, what many economists would call 'free-riding.' Change may still occur, but instead not all members of a society are contributing.

In Italy, the dominant party, the DC party exploited the power of its monopoly and fragmented the entire political system into 'shards' of different groups. These groups were willing to cooperate to an extent, and the DC used this to its advantage to create cohesive locks, establishing their policies as arguably, indefinitely permanent. With the policies and mindset of the DC in place, it had free-reign to do what was felt needed or wanted by them. Voice became ineffective, because the incentive to listen did not exist. This led to policy making that still has had effect 40 plus years after the origination of these cognitive locks, because those locks still remain. The elites in Italy have support from the laws that were once created by the party that they supported.

This process happened similarly in Sweden. Yet, instead of fragmentation, cohesive cooperation occurred with the dominant party, the SAP. Voice became effective, and the number of resources being wasted or unequally divided was likely shifted in a more egalitarian fashion. The Swedish government realized that the metaphorical 'pie' would not grow on its own, and needed the entire support of the voice

of both the SAP, and the minority, party. As the SAP fell out of power later, the cognitive locks continued to remain.

By examining both of these histories, it is interesting to see how there is a clear difference in the end result, simply because of cooperation or polarization. Olson would most likely see the reason for these groups success mainly because they were small and homogeneous. He would say that Sweden formed an encompassing organization, and Italy chose not to. Maybe this is something to stress more, but it is one of the largest differences between the policy making in Italy and Sweden. A strong argument correlates to voice that occurred and the likelihood of forming one of these encompassing organizations. I would need to do more research, but I recall that Japan also has a similarity to Sweden in the instance that three major triads, between Labor, Government, and Business, exist although the three major groups are slightly different and have a different focus. In Japan, it is divided by Government, Bureaucracy, and Special-interest groups, which leads me to believe that voice exists more than it did in Italy, but possibly less than Sweden.

By including the focus on encompassing organizations, it may lengthen the ideas of this article, which I know is something that might be avoided. It would reinforce the comparison between Swedish and Italian politics, and also how a similar example occurred half way around the world. I see that this is done to an extent, but a very strong argument exists in discussing the reason how the Japanese and Swedish governments seem to be more effective in encouraging voice than the Italian counterpoint where exiting is. Since the encompassing organization did not exist in Italy, in little shape or form if any, the cognitive locks put in place were focused on the goals of only one group.