

Political Preferences

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INTRODUCTION

We give readers the fourth volume of „Political Preferences”, an interdisciplinary journal devoted to the study of voting behavior issues, especially political determinants of identification. Magazine publishers are the Institute of Political Science and Journalism at the University of Silesia and the Center for Innovation, Technology Transfer and Development Foundation of the University of Silesia. Patronage of the project holds Polish Political Science Association and the Society for Academic Initiatives. The research community centered around „Political Preferences” was initiated by the Section at the Polish Electoral Studies Political Science Association and is actively involved in international research projects devoted to electoral behavior.

Journal in his intention promote empirical research in the plane of electoral behavior. Multidimensional and interdisciplinary research in political circumstances of individuals and their motivation to participate actively in political life is important for the development of civil society, one of the important dimensions of the electoral participation. Magazine publishers are particularly keen on cooperation with researchers of different disciplines who take an empirical analysis of the problem of political preferences: political science, psychology, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, and others. The degree of involvement of citizens and ultimately the decisions made in the electoral process is subject to many levels, giving you the opportunity to take the identification and analysis of the correlation existing between them.

This issue of „Political Preferences,” in contrast to the previous, is a report of empirical research, but devoted to the diversity of issues, the common denominator is the study of reality social, political and economic, affecting voting behavior. This is another step in the development of writing, involving not only the extension of the existing formula, but also its internationalization. The international dimension „Political Preferences” has been achieved not only by initiating the release number in the English language, but also by expanding the group of authors and reviewers who write about the people

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COMPARISON OF THE CLEAVAGES DEVELOPMENT IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND POLAND AFTER 1989

Abstract:

The aim of the article is to identify cleavages that have been in Czech and Polish party system located since 1989. These cleavages are compared to determine the hierarchy and degree of their importance. It is also demonstrated the effort to determine the potential future development of the cleavages in these two countries.

In this article as key for the formation of cleavages are considered elections to the lower houses of parliament. Elections to the upper houses of parliament and European elections are not relevant for the purpose of this work, because they are considered as second-order elections, thus they have no direct impact on the formation of cleavages.

Key words:

Czech Republic party system, Poland party system, cleavages

Cleavages theory

The author of the original concept of the cleavages theory is a Norwegian political scientist, Stein Rokkan, who conducted an extensive analysis of party systems in Western Europe, resulting in a work published in collaboration with the American sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset in 1967 *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*. The authors come up with theories cleavages as a result of long-term development and also a response to internal conflicts within the individual companies. Whose existence is manifested in two major historical turning point (critical junctures): national and industrial revolution. And took on two dimensional types - territorial (based on place of origin), and functional.

In short, the theory is built on the assumption that in every society there are conflicting views and interests, which attaches itself to new topics, and that

if they are strong enough and have sufficient support in civil society (as a potential electorate) may escalate in the formation of political party - one that will be given topics to promote and defend the interests of their voters [Römelle 1999]. Such a political party then in the political system it represents the cleavage. At the same time due to conflict lines can form new relationships between existing parties - between political parties and social segments of the society and between political parties and their voters [Kitschelt, Mansfeldova, Markowski, Tóka 1999]. An example of this development is the adoption of new issues in party programs and further defining the other political parties.

The cleavages theory was since its inception frequently revised and particularly adapted to the new conditions in which the Rokkan's original concept was not enough, such as companies professing postmaterial value or development in post-communist countries etc. In Europe, the 60th 20th century individual political parties began to mobilize in order to take a broader cross-section of voters. Unintended consequence, however, was the weakening of ties with indigenous voters. This situation has to change traditional political preferences of voters [Gallagher, Laver, Mair 2001] and membership in a social group no longer unconditional priority of voter decision making.

Cleavages in post-communist countries

During the rule of the Communist Party was not possible in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to talk about party systems. And even in the case of a satellite parties. The communist regime brought significant political and social change, and all political structures, including traditional cleavages were destroyed.

In the early 90 years, so it was necessary to go through the difficult process of transformation and consolidation mode, which also brought new conflicts. It is more than obvious that these conflicts did not correspond to the traditional Rokkan's concept, which was based on the research of social structure and identification of people with different social groups. Leaving aside some really solid anchor (eg ethnicity), we the citizens of post-communist countries to find their new nationality and identity. Which was reflected in voting behavior, which is characterized by unstable political entities support from the electorate negative identification with political parties (I know, who do not want to vote, but I'm not sure who to vote for in reality I) and also a different understanding of the concepts of left and right [Hloušek, Kopeček 2004].

Finally, it is also necessary to mention that in the post-communist party systems does not always necessarily lead to the creation of political parties based on existing cleavages (as the process described Rokkan), but rather leads to the

formation of cleavages based on shape party spectrum. For the above reasons, some researchers proceeded to their own definition of cleavages, which would be more easily applicable to the post-communist party systems. These cleavages are in the Czech environment called "*conflict transformation lines*" [Hloušek 2000: 375]. Cleavage are inherently highly variable and unstable, as the "*social realities emerging*" post-communist societies "*cannot show a strong social stratification and individual citizens' groups are quite heterogeneous and the boundaries between them (and these borders is just possible to identify the cleavage of transformation) therefore, the fluid*" [Hloušek 2000: 375].

In reference to the theoretical part of the article are for the comparison of Czech and Polish party system considered following relevant cleavages:

- Socio-economic,
- Nationalist,
- Materialism/post-materialism,

In their analysis will take into account the specific development of party systems in different countries. Will also be discussed any specific cleavages that have evolved due to specific conditions of countries.

Chronologically, the first line - about the future of the regime between the original Communist Party and the political opposition has established itself at the moment of the fall of the communist regimes (in some cases even a little earlier), played an important role only at the beginning of the transit period and later lost importance. Although we believe that in itself contained a breeding ground for subsequent cleavages (traditional and transformational).

What are the socio-economic cleavage concerns, needless to her in the context of the transformation mode can only see as traditional Rokkanian line owners - working (which is still a part of it), but it contains much more specifically with the transition to democracy-related conflicts: privatization, the form and scope of liberalization economic or personal "result" (profit or loss) economic changes [Hloušek, Kopeček 2004]. It is also necessary to mention the unusual behavior of right-wing and left-wing parties in this context. In the sense that even leftist parties must (if the ruling parties) to promote a change towards a more liberal economy, and conversely right-wing parties are forced to listen to the social requirements of vulnerable citizens.

Nationalistic cleavage of transformation combines mainly regional and ethnic conflict, which is not so connected to the democratic transformation. In the post-communist period occurred mainly because at the time "before" simply did not have the chance. Was based on a sense of identity to the group, which differ in their religious beliefs, ethnic or linguistic affiliation [Hloušek 2000: 379]. Has the ability to exacerbate political conflict and lead to a polarization of the political system. It can be argued that this cleavage had some importance for all the

countries of the Eastern bloc, in an atmosphere of newfound freedom, some groups begin to establish themselves again and radicalized in the desire to create its own peculiar state, or trying to acquire the rights arising from the fact that they are ethnic groups living in the territory of another state.

Another important line of cleavage is materialism/post-materialism, which gives rise to such ecological parties. Green Party may be relevant to the major parties. It should however be noted that this line are isolated and therefore in its program also takes themes that lead to higher electoral gains, but not post-material. The question also remains as to what extent the post-communist countries post-materialist.

Czech Republic

Czech Republic has undergone since its inception complicated history, which is largely different from that of the V4 countries. Right in the middle of the nineties began to establish a strong socio-economic cleavage of transformation, while the other line began to weaken, and the voters identify themselves to the left-right axis [Hloušek, Kopeček 2008].

Whether we are talking about parties located on the left or right side of the political spectrum, it was necessary for all the broad concept of political issues so as to hit the largest group of potential voters. In the Czech Republic is not (and even till today) the place for parties that are profiled on just one topic. Such was the fate of political parties such as the Association for the Republic - Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (SPR-RSČ). Besides, it was a populist party based primarily on personality of chairman Miroslav Sládek, acting as a radical opposition group to the situation in the state and used colorful and against other anti-minority rhetoric. As a side issue so had no chance to succeed and already in the 1998 elections to the Chamber of Deputies received.

But if we return to the consideration of socio-economic lines, we can see that for Czech voters is still essentially the sole indicator of how vote. Not only all Czech political parties relevant topics related to the broad lines accentuate on other topics basically given up and offer them only to specific groups of voters. The main power of the parties to self-identification is focused on socio-economic cleavage of transformation.

Another conflicting lines appearing in the Czech Republic, the nationalistic cleavage of transformation that bore some importance in the early nineties. As representatives profiling at this cleavage is considered already mentioned Sládek's SPR-RSČ and moravist political parties and political movements. However, they soon lost their importance [Pšejja 1999].

Later, the nationalistic cleavage was not in its pure form is represented by any political party that would succeed in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies, although the electoral programs of some pages can be traced back some nationalistic tendencies. For example, the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM) performed in 1999 rather vigorously against the Czech Republic's entry into NATO. And then promote the strategic concept of NATO refusal to conflict with the principles of international law, while emphasizing that its long-term goal is to contribute to the dissolution of NATO as a relic block division of the world [KSCM 2002]. KSCM pronounced even against the Czech Republic joined the European Union in 2002. In nationalist rhetoric in this case can be considered by emphasizing the importance of state sovereignty and independence in relation to the two mentioned inputs.

Nationalist features according to some authors, we found even in ODS. And in the sense that the ODS conceives his "*nationalism in Anglo-Saxon style, as a state nation*" [Pšejja 1999: 74], which coincides with the state within its borders and does not therefore nationalism in the ethnic sense. Similarly to the issues mentioned above and builds Communists.

Some authors in connection with conflicting lines in the Czech Republic even mention the so-called value-oriented "*axiological cleavage*" [Hloušek, Kopeček 2008: 531]. This line, which began to appear as early as the second half of the nineties and beyond gained some importance, is a kind of axis between liberal and statist approach. There is, however, well established enough to be able to compete with the socio-economic cleavage of transformation for dominance in the Czech party-political system [Hloušek, Kopeček 2004].

The other examined cleavages (the form of the regime, church-state, city-countryside) had its importance especially in the nineties during the formation of the party system in the Czech Republic. Cleavage of the form of a scheme was the first dominant cleavages after 1989, when the anti-communist ruling class has put the former Civic Forum. Cleavage church-state and city-countryside were to some extent represented KDU-ČSL (founded in 1992), but later began to focus on a wider range of voters and topics related to rural churches and pushed into the background. I still, however, the party draws its electorate mainly from rural Catholic oriented.

After the elections to the Chamber of Deputies in 2002, perhaps the most important show topics relating to the planned accession of the Czech Republic into the European Union. This "European" cleavage is not mentioned in the theoretical introduction, because it established presence as important whether the revisions Rokkan's original theory or as one of the cleavages described transformation in post-communist countries, and after the Czech Republic joined the EU in fact has lost its importance. As a theme in the election, however, played a major

role, and it is appropriate to mention it. If we take into account relevant political parties, can be seen as eurosceptic ODS and KSČM, although in the case of ODS euroscepticism is considerably milder. ODS has chosen to approach the EU rather realistic, although voting in the referendum on the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU in June 2003 asked his voters to vote for entry¹, stop by to many issues rather negatively. Was (and is) against any attempt to lead the EU towards the federal arrangement, whether political, social or economic areas [ODS 2003]. Another criticism was directed primarily to ODS conditions of entry for the Czech Republic negotiated the then government led by the ČSSD.

ČSSD acted as a staunch defender of the Czech Republic to the EU, even this entry identified as a major national interest of the Czech Republic. “The European Union guarantees the preservation and development of the European social model, which is a great result of policies of social democratic and other progressive movements and parties Europe in the 20th century. And just so this can become a normative model of global justice that is the target of social democratic project for the 21st century” [ČSSD 2007].

The European cleavage after 2003, however, considerably weakened (even if not disappeared), and even in relation to the European elections held in 2004, which are in the Czech environment considered to be a secondary. In the Czech Republic, not EU-related topics to the core of a political party and take them rather as complementary. The European Union is often also becomes alibi excuse for unpopular actions of governments, or the possibility of opposition parties criticize the current government. Problems of European cleavage can be summed up by the fact that while in their signs exist, the Czech Republic, but its importance is not too relevant.

Last conflicting line will be discussed in the case of the Czech Republic lines materialism-post-materialism. In surveys of party preference before the elections to the Chamber of Deputies in 2002 showed growth with some preference (not significant) hopes to join the Green Party (SZ). Even though the election ended in failure, there can be traced the beginning of the formation of cleavage – postmaterialism/materialism.

The Czech Republic became the first of the V4 countries in which they manage to get political entity emphasizing post-material topics. Before the elections to the Chamber of Deputies, and immediately after them, it seemed that SZ has the potential to position itself in the cleavage materialism-post-materialism and affect Czech politics until “tied” dominating socio-economic cleavage of transformation. But it turned out that the Czech Republic is not to “post-material policy” ready. This was partly due to the fact that the SZ was not a priori

¹ Some leaders of the ODS (e.g. Ivan Langer) but declared that they personally will vote against [Havlik 2006].

chosen because of its programmatic focus, but rather as an expression of protest votes of voters who were current Czech political scene tired and wanted something new. As a result, SZ failed to enforce its “green” program and after the elections, has found its place in the socio-economic cleavage of transformation.

Poland

In Poland, as in the Slovak Republic rather than in the Czech Republic showed the party system in the nineties considerable disorder and fragmented. Throughout the nineties led to a consolidation of Polish political parties, which resulted in significant changes in cleavages. It should be noted that this fragmentation of the Polish political system was mainly due to the right side of the political spectrum wired “post solidarity formations”, which in the nineties did not find the way to true unity. An exception may be considered only Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS), which one could term the right hand channel. Conversely tents were left fairly quickly after the transition to democracy fastened. Even at the beginning of 2002 could not be Polish system of political parties mark as a consolidated system [Kopeček 2005]. The proof of this statement is the fact that after the 2001 elections to the Sejm came seven relevant subjects, four of which got there first.

The whole nineties were marked by extreme fragmentation of the party system. For example, in 1991, when the first fully competitive election to the Sejm received a whopping total twenty-nine political groupings. This figure was mainly due to the extremely proportional electoral system that worked with the closing clause. For the first time there showed fragmentation “post solidarity” camp. And then fragmented right has become a major feature of the Polish party system after the nineties.

As it was noted above, nonconsolidate of party system has made it to the Sejm in 2001, had only a fraction of political bodies, which had sat in the previous term. Already outlined center-fragmentation “post solidarity” camp has proven its strength in this period. The ruins of the winner of the election in 1997 of Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) created two major political parties, in the following period, significantly shaped the Polish politics. These were the Civic Platform (PO), which broke away from AWS as its liberal wing a few months before the elections in 2001 and Law and Justice (PiS) Kaczynski brothers, who built primarily on the popularity of the former Justice Minister Lech Kaczynski, who (somewhat populist) promised especially hard fighting crime. The last party of the right of the political spectrum, then the League of Polish Families (LPR), populist oriented political party that draws its voters mainly from orthodox conservative Catholic circles and has also been linked to the

AWS. On the contrary to the Sejm after the 2002 election did not receive the Freedom Union (UW), which was in the previous term with AWS part of the government coalition. Party suffered mainly due to unpopular reform steps and through the creation of PO, which pulled most of its liberal-minded voters.

The left part of the Polish political spectrum, in contrast to the right in the nineties characterized by a relatively high stability. A major player was primarily the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), which was based on the former communist party as an electoral coalition for the elections to the Sejm in 1991. In 1999, the SLD has established itself as a full-fledged political party, which also engulfed smaller left-wing parties and has secured its position as the left-wing hegemony. In the election of 2001, she ran for election coalition with "post solidarity" Labour Union (UP). Besides the SLD stable position also acquired Polish People's Party (PSL). Like SLD has a Communist past. Its modern history to try and restore the foundations of agrarian groupings 19th century [Mlejnek 2000]. Relatively consolidated left side of the Polish political spectrum disrupted in 2001, Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland (SRP). Self-defense is primarily a populist radical formation, which seeks to promote the interests of agrarian peasant population. This party ran like PO, PiS and LPR in 2001 to the Sejm for the first time.

If this is the concept of cleavages, we have observed that its appearance is not so complex and uncertain, such as confused appearance Polish party system. Polish cleavage from the restoration of democracy in the early 90's until 2004, characterized by a crossing [Mlejnek 2000]. Some authors as the main cleavage 90 years, but refers to "the conflict between the symbolic and the symbolic left-right" [Hloušek, Kopeček 2004: 180], which was based on cultural-historical-ideological dispute. This cleavage is seen in Poland as the classic socio-economic conflict, but rather on the intersecting cleavage of anti-communism and the state church. Although at this time was not a conflict between the symbolic and the symbolic left-right direction for Polish policy determining, still retain some significance.

After the elections to the Sejm in 2001 came a certain dulling residue cleavage communism-anticommunism. Guarantor of that shift was UP which went into the election as part of an electoral coalition with the SLD. It was for many still party with the communist past, which some parties provide space to define this axis. Conversely SLD tried to show that the past is not what we should constantly refer Poland and tried to position itself as a rather side with a clear vision for the future. UP as in socio-economic understanding of the leftist "post solidarity" SLD political party gave some legitimacy and electoral coalition has brought the voices from "post solidarity", but left-minded voters. The origin of these two parties was actually the only fact that is distributed.

In other respects, were targeted as well: from the socio-economic point of view it was the left-wing formation, preferred facing churches and more urban, liberal pro-market access than rural protectionism.

Elections in 2005 brought an innovation - to the Sejm joined the same political parties that it had been present in the previous period. There has therefore been no change in terms of its cast, but based on the balance of power. Coalition government in the past formed the leftist SLD and PSL rather centrist, which, however, recorded in the fall elections. This was due to many factors, some of which the most significant was the failure to fulfill election promises and to ensure that economic reforms did not affect negatively the underprivileged population. Certainly played a role and participation in the affair Rywingate SLD² [Kubát 2005].

On the contrary, the huge growth of the vote received two post solidarity right-wing formation - a populist PiS and the second in the order PO (PiS lagged behind only minimally). Both sides of the further development of cleavages in Poland proved pivotal. PiS is already before the election itself as a traditionalist National Party, which put emphasis on the fight against crime, who should start first in government and political circles. This populist proclamation recorded the fact that at that time was part of the ruling SLD several bribery scandals. PiS was aimed at a kind of cleansing, she wanted to be achieved primarily through the introduction of equity returns for people working in government. Furthermore PiS criticism continued growing crime in Poland, which wanted to prevent with the new stricter Criminal Code. This policy is defined as a conservative PiS party, which supports a strong role for the state and order. In foreign policy, recognize NATO as a guarantor of international security and the European Union is built rather pragmatically, i.e. She was aware of its importance and its voters promised to strive for a Europe of Nations, where Poland will be a strong player. For this reason, and then subsequently rejected in its election program 2005 forthcoming European Constitution and joined the so-called "Prague Declaration", which was initiated by Czech ODS [Palovský 2004].

Civic Platform (PO) has stood for election in 2005 (like PiS) due to bribery scandals in the SLD. Unlike PiS but did not use populist rhetoric, but rather tried to take a clear and pragmatic attitude, which is reflected in the pre-election program to revive the economy and bring economic development of Poland.

PO and PiS coincided with the anticommunist rhetoric as. that their members must have a negative vetting, and those who have a communist past, not to the side to enter. And also in international politics stops after pro-European

² Rywingate Affair was established in 2002 when the famous film producer Lew Rywin offered the editor of Gazeta wyborcza possible benefits of prepared media law. Agora Publishing (which publishes "Gazeta Wyborcza") had conveniently get waves on the televithe court failed SLD blame on the bribery case, saying SLD was largely damaged [Szczerbiak 2007].

course. Since its inception, the very positive comment on the possibility of Poland's entry into the European Union and emphasized the positives that this may bring. Entry into the EU saw this as an excellent opportunity to modernize Poland, raising the standard of living and no opportunity to actively participate in the future direction of Europe. PO has also a positive attitude towards NATO (Szczerbiak 2007).

The two strongest parties arising from the elections to the Polish Sejm is profiled at the center of the political spectrum and their programs was common ground. Potential harmonious cooperation undermined presidential election: through polarized presidential campaign and the participation of both Lech Kaczynski (PiS) and Donald Tusk (PO) in the second round of the presidential elections, has been cooperation between the two tent at the governmental level possible. PiS coalition government therefore to invite LPR and Self-defense, which put together a majority government. PO became the main opposition party [Szczerbiak 2007]. This conflict between PiS and PO strengthened the emerging cleavage between national conservative PiS traditionalist and modernist liberal oriented Mon Future political developments only confirmed the existence of this cleavage, which also came in the shadow of the other lines that were in the Polish party system still present in the early 90's. Their residues remained as additional topics by which they can against each PO and PiS define. For example, European cleavage, although earlier showed a tendency in Poland to enforce, although they were relegated to the background (mainly due to the fact that the two main critics of the EU in 2007 to get the Sejm), a certain relevance, however, retained. So do i line of state-church, as both the leading political parties "its" themes emphasize - in PiS can be seen in the context of this axis advocate the interests of the Church, PO supporters in the state.

Regarding the conflicting lines between urban liberal-market-and rural-protectionist regulatory approach that also retreated into the background. The two dominant parties are not defined primarily on her.

Summary

Cleavages occur under long-term contradictions in society and elections bring the dispute to the center of interest, thereby giving people a better way to navigate. This leads either to strengthen the relationship voter and the party that represents his interest, or contrary to the reorientation of voters to another political entity.

Each of the countries has undergone during nearly two decades of democratic regimes to various developments, which correspond to the different cleavage that party systems of these countries contain.

It turned out that the socio-economic cleavage of transformation has played the most significant role in the development of the Czech party system (as well as the entire V4). Analysis cleavages party system in the Czech Republic shows that over the last six years have seen the significant changes since their establishment in the late nineties, when it became the socioeconomic cleavage the dominant of professing transformation that maintain this position today. You can now hardly be expected to be carried on its status in the near future could make a difference. But it is necessary to assess whether this cleavage transformation will be closer to the original owners Rokkanian-line workers, from which it is based or not. There remains a problematic aspect of the already mentioned fact sociological base Rokkan's theory. Social groups as Rokkan's theory assumes in the Czech Republic do not occur, and I dare say that in the future will not occur. Development of the company led to the fact that there has been a blurring of the differences between owners and workers - now it is difficult to distinguish who is the owner and who is working. Socio-economic cleavage of transformation in the Czech environment and political rather refers to the differences between "poor" and "rich" in a purely neutral direction. In other words - rich in this sense can be a hard working.

In Poland, socio-economic line was not so much dominant and is not (both local major parties are considered to be right). The conflict between left and right took the form of a conflict between the symbolic and the symbolic left-right, which was based not only on the social and economic dimension, but its scope was deeper - the roots touch the cultural-historical-ideological dispute. This line (dominant in the election of 2005), but was replaced by another and that is the one under which define the two against each other since the strongest Polish political parties - traditionalist, conservative national approach of PiS and modernist, liberal-oriented approach of PO.

Thus, in Poland classic left-right axis accentuated the cultural, historical and ideological aspects, a platform for rapid formation and subsequent integration cleavage state-church, which is compared to the V4 countries in Poland most entrenched. In the Czech Republic, the church-state line weakest. KDU-CSL accented topics related to this line more in 90 years, but the additional effect compared to a dominant socio-economic cleavage of transformation almost noticeable.

In terms of overall stability in comparison V4 is stable party system just system of the Czech Republic, which has de facto already stabilized in the second half of the 90 years, where the dominance of strong socio-economic cleavage of transformation was not affected by any of the potential new cleavages. Since the end of the 90 years but there is still a axiological value line between liberal and authoritarian approach. It does not seem, however, that this line had the potential

in the future socio-economic status cleavage of transformation risk.

Polish party system is then relatively less stable, which is mainly caused by the fact that the most powerful local political parties are relatively new parties (PO and PiS formed a detachment of AWS in 2001, and dominance as the two major Polish political parties before the elections amounted to 2005).

Both of these countries have gone through in the nineties a dramatic development of party systems and shows that even in the last approximately ten years occurred in these countries in the cleavages some changes. A similar trend is expected to take place in the future and therefore it is not possible to speak with certainty, what is waiting for further developments.

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INDIVIDUALISM AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION – AN ESSAY ON A CERTAIN WAY OF THINKING ABOUT CITIZENSHIP

Abstract:

Individualism, although inherently contrary to the spirit of collectivism, is the basis for the development of modern civic attitudes. For the most part, individualism determines the degree of interest in politics and the quality of democracy. Individualism is also the basis for the development of civil society, as the unique characteristics of each individual impact the civil society dynamics, quality and impact on those in power.

Key words:

individualism, civil society, democracy, participations

Individualism is a concept that not only is the foundation of the liberal way of thinking and acting, but also defines all varieties of liberalism¹ [Bartyzel 2004: 23-57, Chmielewski 2001: 122, Szacki 1993: 40-41, Karnowska 2005: 13-25]. It means faith in the greatest value for the Liberals – in the human being endowed with autonomy, ability to make rational choices, and to define what is good for them individually, independently from the common good [Chmielewski 2001: 133] According to the message of individualism, „every adult should be able to make - sine ira et studio - all decisions concerning many aspects of their own life, as long as they are compatible with the freedoms of other people. This belief is the original and the only defensible meaning of liberalism” [Pietrzyk-Reeves 2012: 21].

The matter, however, is not for individualistic preferences of individuals to be turned into selfish attitudes. In fact, in the modern meaning of the concept, its core is seen primarily through the prism of reconciling individualistic

¹ It is widely known that there are numerous schools of liberal thinking. One can state even that we are living in the veritable thicket of liberalisms – this has been remarked upon by such authors as Jacek Bartyzel, Jerzy Szacki, Adam Chmielewski, Danuta Karnowska.