

## Evolution of Party System in Poland: From "Political Pendulum" To Manipulative Practicing

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### Abstract

*In research the formation process, and development of Poland party system is considered from the moment of post-communist transformation to the present. Estimating an initial stage of the Polish parties emergence under conditions of democratization and introduction of new representative institutes in political life, it should be noted the shown functional deformation which served further as the reason of instability for both party system in general and its separate elements in particular. Functional deformation of the Polish political parties was that newly created Polish parties of liberal and democratic sense unconsciously copied the management elements which developed in communist party and, at the same time, pursued the only aim – the of communists elimination from political arena. Since the end of the 20th century development of the Polish party system represented the pendulum movement, the power consistently concentrated at first in hands of pro-communistic forces, then liberal and democratic ones. Gradual development of parliamentarism institute, distribution of the civil rights and freedoms, political pluralism – all this led to the population support loss by parties of communistic sense. Thus, the political range of modern parliamentarism in Poland was displaced to the right side. As a result of the modern party system functioning analysis, a row of manipulative practices which purpose was to preserve imperious positions and the political authority of party or its certain representatives was also revealed. Use of formal manipulation mechanisms within political institutes was also the case. It is common that in the last decade parties of various ideological orientation resort to political manipulations.*

**Keywords:** political system, political institute, party, party system, manipulations, democratization.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Among European political scientists the opinion that post-communist systems of the countries of CEE are predisposed to policy of patronage and clientism as reforms of democratization preceded creating structure of uniform administrative facilities here is popular. Israeli political scientist P. Vankhyusse, operating with numerous empirical data, calls clientism the actual common to politics in Central Eastern Europe, focusing attention on essential defeat by this illness of political parties [1]. The Russian researchers hold the same opinion, in particular I.N. Tarasov, he focuses attention on the fact that existence of manipulative practice in development of party system in general is common to political parties of the East European region [2]. This circumstance is defined, first of all, by historical conditions of the region states development. The socialist past of the CEE states still exerts direct impact on a trajectory of their political development, in particular, the settled elements of command administrative management significantly slow down development of the introduced democratic political institutes [3].

The similar picture is observed in political systems of the majority of the post-communist countries of the Central and Eastern Europe. Also application of manipulative practice in political system in general, and political parties in particular is common to all of these states. The Hungarian party system, for example, prevails practice of an informal manipulation, based on nonverbal methods of influence in the course of the electoral companies; feature of Poland in turn is development of institutional manipulation formal methods.

The party system of Poland, unlike many other countries of CEE, historically gravitated to two-party membership. The policy of patronage and clientism was distinctly traced during initial post-communist transformation of the Polish statehood that found the reflection in activity of pro-communist left-wing parties, after series of political instability and high level of party fragmentation in parliament in the mid-nineties., the similar "state and party" relations are again common to modern Poland [4].

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Object of research was processing formation of party system of the Polish state. Object of research is the mechanisms of management and control in the Polish political parties of the post-communist period. Relying on the methodological bases of neo-institutional approach, in research the analysis of development dynamics of party system is submitted for Poland since the end of the 20th century up to date. Authors used the historical method allowing to reveal prerequisites and relationship of cause and effect between manifestation of clientism policy as well as by manipulative practices in the Polish political parties and historical development of the Polish statehood. The comparative analysis is realized in parameters of divergences, in particular, it indicated the essential distinctions in party-building mechanisms distinguishing Poland from other post-communist states of the Central and Eastern Europe. For detailed research of party system formation process in the Republic of Poland, authors allocated the chronological stages allowing to estimate the dominating political tendencies and arranging political forces at each subsequent time-point.

It should be noted especially that authors studied program documents of the Polish parties, and also transformation of the legislation on elections and activity of political parties that is the major elements within a formalistic approach to research of process of party construction in Poland.

### 3. RESULTS

Declaration of political pluralism and ideological variety was recorded in accounting instruments of a meeting of the Round table of 1989. Negotiations of communists and opposition ended with the conclusion of the pacts regulating new order of the power key institutes functioning [5]. The provision on elections and political parties became one of the most important results of the Round table negotiations. During this period in political arena of Poland there were two key players - the Communistic coalition (The Polish integrated Labour party, the Integrated peasants party) and the movement "Solidarity" which represented the integrated progressive anti-communistic forces which main objective was transformation of political system of Poland, the beginning of democratization. As a result of negotiations communists managed to win preferences and to include in situation point on obligatory mandates for communist party. The provision on elections of 1989 divided all mandates of the Seim on reserved for the communistic coalition and received during free elections on the basis of two-tour vote on majority system in one-mandatory districts. It is impossible to call elections of 1989 free and democratic as free mandates within the small list were divided between partners of the communistic coalition. After elections of 1989 the Polish Seim entirely consisted of pro-communistic forces. In spite of the fact that the majority of places in the Senate belonged to "Solidarity", domination of communists in the Seim gave them a number of essential advantages. The president of Poland, according to negotiation provisions, was elected by two chambers of parliament, thus, the communistic coalition could establish complete control over executive and legislative branches of the power in Poland without effort. However, the movement "Solidarity" and democratic party of Poland initiated the second round of negotiations with the purpose to revise the provision on elections and political parties.

The new provision on elections gave the opposition parties a chance to go to Polish Seim. The provision on elections of 1990 provided that the quota of the mandates submitted for free elections has to make no less than 33% of total number of mandates in the Seim. "Solidarity" and "Democratic party of Poland" tried to obtain such percent of mandates. This percent made critical size, in case of a smaller share of free mandates pro-communist parties would have an opportunity to reject the veto of the Senate, and also to create the communistic government, to elect the president, to change the constitution and to remain in power, even in case "Solidarity" and pro-democratic forces occupied all remained free mandates in the Seim and the Senate [6]. Opposition parties could not reconcile to a role of political puppets of Poland communist party therefore the provision on increase in a share of free mandates after long negotiations was accepted.

Elections of 1991 were held under the new law and in absolutely different political situation. The bipolar deal of political forces which resulted from agreements of "a round table" did not last long, and in camp of communists, and in camp of their opponents there was a split, the parliament became more and more fragmented, with a large number of the deputy fractions and groups not concordant with policy of the ruling parties. And outside parliament there was an active ongoing process of the party system formation: there were more than hundred registered political parties, and the majority was represented by parties of cartel type and were organized on the basis of trade-union, youth and human rights organizations. The majority of parties conducted vigorous propaganda activity and sought to get to parliament for the solution of necessary economic and social problems of a transition period in own favor.

The parliament elected in 1991 existed two years. For this period two coalition offices were replaced, the parliament endured series of protracted political crises, and the largest

political parties "Polish Labour party" and the movement "Solidarity" broke up into a number of smaller ones. The party system of Poland in the early nineties was extremely fragmented that did not promote effective work of new democratic institutes, created additional barriers in adoption of the major political decisions. In 1993 as a result the parliament expressed a non-confidence vote to H. Sukhotskaya's government, it was dismissed and new elections, under the new law adopted on May 28, 1993 took place.

The new law on elections and political parties pursued the only aim – to fight against party fragmentation and instability of the Polish parliament. The essence consisted in preventing the small insignificant parties capable to complicate parliamentary procedures essentially into the Seim. During the same period destruction of "Solidarity", the union of democratic forces of Poland begins. Lech Walensa, holding at that time the post of the President of Poland openly declared "war at the highest levels" and "unreasonable behavior of leaders of the political parties sacrificing stable and safe development of Poland to their ambitions" [7]. As a result of inner-party fight deployment in camp of "Solidarity" left-wing parties became election favorites in 1993. Despite the fact that the coalition of the parliamentary majority consisted of two left-wing parties existence of the considerable non-parliamentary opposition which developed the company for the purpose of the left government discredit became the destabilizing factor. Due to anti-communistic promotion and merging of the Democratic Union of Poland and the Liberal and democratic congress in 1996, the Union of Freedom won right elections of 1997 with big overweight.

The party system of Poland returned to the condition of stability, the period of the accusatory PR companies passed, by the beginning of the 21st century political parties of Poland unambiguously returned to model of two-party opposition that confirmed parliamentary elections of 2001 which again sharply changed a configuration of political forces in Poland, undoubted leaders became left, and the Union of Freedom did not go to parliament at all.

From 2005 to 2011 left-wing parties gradually lost popularity among the Polish population and their extent of influence in the Seim. At parliamentary elections of 2011. "The union of democratic left forces" received only 8% of votes. Nevertheless, the two-party configuration remains permanent in Polish Seim, as the main opponents two right-wing parties are: "Civil platform" of Donald Tusk and "Right and Justice" of Jaroslaw Kaczynski. The fact is that in Poland there is an extremely low level of party electorate identification, therefore the major role in arrangement of political forces is played by selective technologies and powerful public relations of the company, the drawing voices from rival party is observed [8].

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Summing up the analysis result of party construction in Poland in the period of "post-communism", it is necessary to allocate a number of the manipulative tendencies taking place in party system [9]. First, quite frequent change and addition of the law on elections and political parties is common to Poland that often reflects interests of party parliamentary majority, secondly, the party system of Poland remains unstable and extremely fragmented, in need of forming the coalitions with political rivals imports elements of the bargaining and manipulation into the inter-party relations. Also important problem is the existence the clientism relations both in parties, and in the relations of "state party" [10]. More than 50% of deputies of each convocation are "new" deputies, as a rule, not professional politicians, and representatives of various branches of economy, and inevitably there is a problem of

professionalism and a question of lobbyist activity regulation. After a number of infamous cases, in 2000 the law "About Publicity of Decision-making Procedure , about the Interested Groups and Public Access to Information" was developed. Also at the beginning 2000 the code of parliamentarian ethics was developed. As impulse to creating the code the charge of violation of moral standards (unselfishness, publicity, care of preservation of a reputation of diet, honesty, etc.) by 35 deputies of the III and IV convocations served. It is remarkable that most often violations were connected with certain financial problems. Most often deputies of the Union of democratic left forces and the selective stock of "Solidarity" were made responsible for similar violations.

## 5. SUMMARY

As a result of the conducted research it is possible to draw a conclusion that process of party system construction in post-communist Poland represented "pulling of a rope" between communistic and liberal and democratic forces. Currently it is possible to speak about an unconditional victory of progressive forces, decrease in level of socialists popularity, as well as about the shift of a political vector towards "right". Also it was revealed that extremely frequent change of the legislation on elections is common to the Polish political system that creates additional difficulties for neo-genic parties, besides, similar changes often play into the hands of political elite and allow to strengthen its power. Use of manipulative practice, both in the inner-party relations and in the course of the electoral companies and implementation of public work is also common to the Polish political parties. In recent years these tendencies amplify, even more often in the Polish press questions of corruption in party structures are brought up, the public response indulges in the incidents connected with sale and purchase of deputy mandates in Polish Seim. The separate modern phenomenon of the Polish "party" life is the manipulation of public opinion in the course of the electoral companies which occurs by means of manipulative rhetoric and aims at gaining votes.

## 6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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