DETERMINANTS OF POLITICAL DECISIONS
IN THE POLISH POLITICAL SYSTEM

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The changes in political life in Poland in the period 2005–2011, which restructured the existing balance of power (dominance of post-Solidarity parties at the expense of the post-communist party) force us to consider whether the party system evolution involves changes in the sphere of ideological divisions. But there also arises another question about the crisis of the left, which could mean the end of the previous model, inter-group rivalry. But there is no doubt that it occurred after 2005 events. Initiated processes took a completely different direction than those in the 90s. The purpose of the article is to explain the ongoing political disputes, and also attempt to answer the question: what factors shape the profile of program-ideological political formations in Poland.

I would also refer to the thesis of Mirosława Grabowska about the continuation of the post-communist division in political life in 2005–2011. According to her, the main criterion in the description of Polish political parties is their attitude towards the communist past. However, among others, it is the dominant position of the post-Solidarity political forces after 2005 and the marginalization of the post-communist left that makes us reconsider the meaning of political identity, based on the assessment of the past system.
In the description of political parties, it is an ideological criterion that is used by many researchers as the tool for classification. Parties, by means of reference to the axiological values, integrated their political environment, specified their views and demands, and thus shaped their political identity. My goal is to answer the question whether the majority of today’s party has lost its identity, or was it merely an evolution by which other issues began to be accented and previous slogans have been absorbed by contemporary ones. Thus, did the twilight of old conflicts, based on the historical affiliation, make the previous divisions less important?

The phenomenon already noticed by Seymour Lipset in Western Europe in the 60’s also took place in Poland in the period of systemic transformation, may provide a certain explanation. What was noticed by Lipset was that both left – and right-wing politics gradually approximated to each other. Does this mean the end of ideology? Of course, every government and action in public space is an ideology, an ideological system, the hierarchy of values. “The history of mankind is a history of ideas. It is the ideas, theories and doctrines that direct human activities and determine the objectives that people head and the choice of means used to achieve those objectives.” Although the modern system of democracy in media brought the level of ideology to the level of marketing activities, it appears that ideology as a way of perceiving the reality is still a reference point for political practice.

The appearance of specific topics, and with them the political disputes during election campaigns, is motivated by many factors, e.g. historical, connected with civilization, international, cultural, economic or religious. In line with this claim remains Anthony Giddens’ observation, who underlines that interpretation and meaning of an idea depends on a particular context and location in time. But it is not always the issues that determine the political background of the processes which are empirical and rational.

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In addition, increasingly important in modern election campaigns becomes an element of uncertainty and surprise, not only in the context of the electoral outcome of the fight, but also in the context of the electoral staffs’ activities\(^5\). This unpredictability can also be a result of events that are independent of human factors such as disasters, floods, tragedies, etc., which may re-shape political rivalry and additionally make it more dynamic. Therefore, the themes and conflicts that exist in the political space are the result of many factors. It is difficult in such circumstances, to state clearly which elements have a greater impact on the occurrence of political topics. However, each of them becomes a weapon in the struggle in the political arena. The topics touched upon by particular parties, and the way they are used in a political discourse, has a significant impact on the parties’ political identity. On the occasion of each election, the political divisions are fully revealed in their sharpness, which is also a catalyst for the topics that are often subjects of public disputes.

The main antagonists are in dispute in the area’s of political image, seriously marginalizing the assumptions of political programmes in such a way that make voters the role of passive observers of television images. Political agendas of many parties turn out to be surprisingly similar and analogous to each other. What we deal with then, is “rhetoric of negation”, which means that parties accuse one another, which is understood in terms of mutual criticism.

The characteristic feature of political campaigns is its confrontational nature, which from the point of view of the media is in their interest. The media have become an active player in the political competition. Thus, the factor that often decides on the uniqueness of choices is merely an ideology or political programme, but image created in media whose main goal is to pay voters’ attention to emotional content. Selectivity of relationships and events is therefore an effective tool to determine and suggest to customers a significant breakthrough moments before the election campaign. In practice, it boils down to the exposure or marginalization of specific events in prime television time. A common phenomenon is also giving an

account of events and situations which by their nature are the most emotional and spectacular, which in turn leads to ignorance of statements or events of greater importance.

Over nearly 20 years of transformation the issues emerged that had remained peripheral to political life up to now, or those which have just emerged as a result of new economic-social phenomena, or technological progress. Issues whose symptoms are getting slowly visible, and which certainly will become more significant in the near future, are those from the borderline of ethics and medicine. Unavoidable medical progress on controversial issues, such as in vitro fertilization, cloning human cells or euthanasia, will regulate the legal obligation, which will bring the necessity of advocating for one side.

**THE INADEQUACY OF THE DIVISIONS “LEFT” VS. “RIGHT”**

The 20-year period of the Polish transformation – as it may seem – has seen a dominant division into two political blocs: the first one listed in the current post-Solidarity, the second in post-communist. However, despite a sustained permanent division, there were conflicts and political disputes that have not formed part of a pattern rivalry of these two political environments. The ideological construction of Polish parties, concerning membership of either the right or the left, in practice, does not reflect the traditional divisions known from the western party systems. In addition, the historical Polish formation is not analogous to the footprint on the axis divisions “left” – “right”. This phenomenon becomes even more problematic when taking into account the dominance of post-Solidarity forces after 2005.

Moreover, the collapse of communism and the disintegration of solidarity in the early 90s helped to reveal many similarities in the socio-economic issues between the formations of post-Solidarity and post-communist roots. Thus, taking into account the illegibility and inconsistency of ideo-

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logical divisions of Polish parties, stating in favour of one party may pose many doubts. Thus, it is difficult to indicate that any of the parties were clearly right-wing or left-wing. Well known conservative political parties lead socialist economic policies, social democratic parties act in accordance with liberal politics, liberals on the contrary act in the moral dimension that largely resembles the conservatives. Consequently, it appears that both the Polish right-wing supporters of socialism can be found in the economic dimension and the secular state model, as well as the sympathizers of the liberal model of economy and moral conservatism can be found on the left. So characterized ideological identifications show that the political environment considering itself as right-wing, has left-wing views, and vice versa, the left-wing environment – consciously or not – professes right-wing slogans. As noted by Miroslaw Karwat: “ [...] if someone is anticlerical, then it is clear that they are the enemy of the church, and even a personal enemy of the Lord. Not really, because a cleric can be an atheist-opportunist person, and in turn a pious man can be anticlerical.”

By the way, it is worth considering how many motifs were taken from left-wing ideology by the parties which consider themselves right-wing groups and vice versa, which rightist issues become the inspiration for the construction of election programs for parties which find themselves as left-wing. In other words, how much of rightist ideology is in left-wing parties and the other way round. When answering this question it is worth

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repeating that throughout the 20 years of Polish political reality there was neither clear right-wing nor left-wing parties both in an ideological and economic sense. Always one of the elements of a political program came from different ideological mainstream, thus created a fragmented image of the party. Economic issues existed before, and polarized the political scene. It is axiological elements that played a primary role in election campaigns, which – in the Polish reality – are attitudes towards: religion, the church and history.

In summary, none of the parties have a clear image of politics. On the side of post-Solidarity parties there could always be seen the environment stressing ideas characteristic of the welfare state. A similar inconsistency is also found on the left. SLD’s economic program over the years evolved from the traditional social democratic position in the direction of the socio-liberal one. It is presumed that such changes are influenced by the fact of the conquest of power, which forces one to correct previous policy statements, which were announced by the group during the election campaign. The period of being in charge corrects the slogans and electoral promises. In the case of electoral defeat there is also a change on the agenda. Defeated groups generally radicalize their language and demands, which becomes sharper in terms of meaning in the language of opposition.

The distinction between political parties on the left and right is still present, although the plurality of positions and political views can be confusing\(^{12}\). Such a dualistic distinction poses some kind of scheme that allows us to organize political life. Tadeusz Szawiel notes that the complexity of politics and the speed of the changes occurring in it, make it compulsory to have specific tools in order to understand the complicated political life. “Category «left-wing» and »right-wing», reducing complexity and giving meaning to the phenomena from the sphere of political orientation, allows individuals to communicate in a political space”\(^{13}\). The


division into right and left allows us to identify the complex political processes. It also categorizes and organizes the identity of political parties, and also describes the relationships between them. These concepts, by defining their place in the political space, allow parties to stand out from the enemy. Often the political elite, used in public debate the opposition left vs. right, makes use of social stereotypes: left-wing is normally associated with communism, and right-wing with excessive religiosity, and in some cases with “paranoia” and “stupidity”. This way of determining their own identity against the enemy does not serve any political party and has negative consequences for the level of political culture, but is still used.

The dichotomy of left and right – in regard to its ease of interpretation – is no longer sufficient to fully reflect political rivalry. To understand the processes that take place in politics, much more complex schemes are needed, which take into account the complexity of political processes. The concepts of right-left are so capacious that they may contain in themselves contradictory political demands. Multidimensionality and complexity of modern processes and phenomena occurring in the political environment, increase the difficulty in their perception. Furthermore, the interpretation of politics only in terms of zero-one does not fully reflect the complexity of the problems. Therefore, you should move cautiously in the intricacies of Polish politics, which certainly is not easy and requires scientific suspicion.

Nowadays it is more and more difficult to find uniform political parties, since each of them refers to the various and different values relative to each other. A common practice – especially in political campaigns – is the submission of inconsistent statements that adversely affects the coherence of the political programmes. For this reason, the researcher encountered many difficulties in defining the directions of party identification ideology. “There is no perfect party, there is no consistently right-wing party, consistently left-wing. Even if we define the notion of »right« and »left«, in every

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14 N. Bobbio, Right and Left, Kraków 1996, p. 7.
science something goes wrong so one cannot occupy their mind these thoughts concerning politics understood in terms of ideology”\textsuperscript{16}.

The concepts of left and right, despite the changing political reality, are very strongly rooted in human mentality. Their strength also lies in the fact that when talking about political life, we always use these terms\textsuperscript{17}. Of course it is impossible to completely reject the interpretation of the political scene through the prism of the division on the right and left. “Let us remember that the word »right« (like the »left«) is not a designatum of some coherent, unambiguous political phenomenon. There is no »pattern of right-wing policy« (and left) […] . Political life is so rich that to describe it, there’s the need of many dimensions. Breakdown »left«-»right« is for a simplified characterization of a much more complicated reality. This division makes it easier to move around in its reality for people with less knowledge. It also allows viewers to identify with the actors on the political scene. […] Hence this is the source of confusion of commentators talking about »left-right«, or – less frequently – »right-left views«”\textsuperscript{18}.

In Polish conditions, the ideological division gains additional meaning.Declared political belonging to one party automatically brings some historical accretions, though of course it does not imply the political agenda – but it constitutes somehow a sign indicating the political affiliation. Two-dimensional perception of life makes it easy to navigate the complicated maze of facts, although it can often lead to wrong judgments or stereotypes, which by their nature do not fully reflect the world. The current diversity on the basis of religious identity, historical-cultural identity and economic issues and the differences resulting from socio-demographic breakdowns are not inherent in the traditional political two-dimensionality.

\textsuperscript{17} T. Godlewski, op.cit., pp. 19–22.
THE POLITICAL PROGRAM

The political program is of course one of the forms of political thought, next to the ideology and political doctrines. It is, like a political ideology, a product of the activity of a human being immersed in political space. Like every manifestation of activity of the human mind, the policy statements are dependent on the category of time and place. As noted by Władysław Kulesza: “The political program is distributed in time and space for concrete political actions which usually are made public”\(^\text{19}\). A characteristic feature of Polish election programs is their immediacy, to a large extent they are created at the time of need. A characteristic feature is that the program documents do not contain the plans and visions, which would be realized for many years. In addition, there is a certain eagerness visible in the setting of objectives and pre-election promises. It can be assumed that the concretization of demands extorts the precise definition of particular measurable categories such as time or money and thus may be the reason why goals are short-term and not clearly determined.

Any vision or idea or dogma – also the political ones – collides with reality. So the political programme usually contains, in addition to the political demands, the current state of diagnosis, evaluation, and ideas and ways to solve specific problems. The political agenda is a hierarchy of values that correspond to specific program objectives. Every action, which in practice is an implementation of the political program, is also legitimized by a specific ideology. Ideology in this sense is a signpost for the political formation as it, firstly, justifies the action taken, and secondly, it sets a framework in axiological space in which the political party works. Contrary to appearances, the space is quite roomy, as an ideology by its very nature is a set of values of a rather general sense, and only at the level of the political agenda it takes a distinctive form. Specific ideas, solutions and evaluation which are included in the program constitutes a reflection of the specific features of the political system, including its history, tradition, experience, and also its real needs. Hence, here is the source of all kinds of misunderstandings as conservatism in Poland and conservatism

in the U.S. have little in common. In other words, the interpretation of ideology in post-communist countries is quite different than in Western Europe, and yet it looks different in the U.S. Though, of course, a common ideological foundation is present. But the concrete solutions to economic or ideological issues may be different. The practice of implementing the slogans can be so differently interpreted and recognized by their political performers.

Often the political agenda ignores some ideological elements, so you can see how some elements of the system of values take on a special significance, and others that are minor get ignored. This phenomenon is largely an emanation of a particular era in which this event of international proportions forces the evolution of political views. Quite a different tone is liberalism in times of economic crisis, and quite another in a period of economic prosperity. Currently, the additional factor is media democratic laws, enforcing and giving rise to certain attitudes and ideological selection, which is done by short-term political interests.

The consideration, on the sequence of factors that initiate the process of formation of the political environment, should also be taken. It turns out that the foundation on which a party appears may be an ideology or a political programme. Thus there is a question to be answered: which is first inspiration in the process of the party’s formation? The reflection upon this topic brings knowledge about the genesis of Polish political formations. Both these forms of political thought – ideology and programme – remain in close relationship, but each of these two may be the motivator to the occurrence of the other. The role of arguments in Polish political life is very significant, as it is easier for parties to create their programme via juxtaposing and via fight than creating this on the mutual foundation of a long-lasting vision.

Additionally, the conflict that constitutes a main axis of political life is to a great extent done on the basis of immediate goals. In the next stage a certain justification and explanation of the occurred conflict takes place. This explanation is done by use of ideological values as a kind of alibi. It

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means that Polish parties are weakly bounded to the ideological sources. The rivalry is often created on the basis of effectiveness and negation rules, and not on ideological factors. Hence, the eclecticism of the ideas is so visible within a single election statement. A Schematic account of political reality in a dualistic form determines the contents of each political programme. A constant feature of the programme demands, although occurring with varying intensity, was an opinion that victory over the opponent would lead to a crisis in the country. Each of the parties placed itself in the role of a unique formation having an idea of how to overcome the crisis. The need for change was also underlined. This promised future is always presented with brightness and superlatives. In contrast to the first part, it can be conventionally held that in this part the description of the future Arcadia is presented.

In the analysis of program documents one question should be asked: whether they are a faithful copy of the image of public debate. How far the content of political programs corresponds to the division line, verbally highlighted, in the media and election rallies? The election campaign is a time where you fight with loud slogans, controversial shows in the media. Thus, where in this case is the room for a political programme? Are these the conditions of media democracy why the marginalization of political programmes takes place?

What shapes the consciousness of voters is political advertising. Election programmes, long in form and content, is less attractive to the voter. Therefore, the program documents are not displayed on such a scale as the election spots. Most effort is aidt to acquire and familiarize yourself with the political content. That is why there is not much interest from the media and voters in this form of media election. It is worth noting that some of the political agenda enriches their spots with photos, drawings, which improve the visual programming documents. So a second important form of attracting the reader’s attention is graphics, which corresponds with the content, and thus creates an integrated election message.

Although the program declarations remain in the shadow of media content, they are present in public discourse. Their selected fragments are synthesized and transformed in such a way that they can be presented to a wider audience. The program is a list or a list of demands, ideas with
which the parties are going to the elections. The programme is also a certain framework within which is the political profile of the formation. Of course, the programmes include many promises and visions formulated with no physical back-up, and only fragments of the program are used selectively in public discourse.

**PERIOD OF GOVERNANCE**

Currently the policy is an extremely complex mechanism of many processes. Filtering the parties’ viewed through the layers of political reality it can be observed that in the end the original values took very different forms in political activities. This is due to many factors, not quite always dependent on the authors of a project or entities that proclaim certain views. What researchers and observers, as well as ordinary people see in the end is the sum of the inevitable compromises and necessary concessions.

Each position and view, by going through successive stages of the interaction of political entities and the inevitable trade-offs, will be deprived of its original meaning, it often becomes inconsistent with the original initiative. So let’s ask, what programmatic assumptions are present at the beginning of a political party, and what views this party has when being in charge or what are the party’s assumptions when in opposition? What criteria determine the activities of the party in opposition, and what criteria determine its activities when in charge?

Significant is the process of correcting the program content, as well as a kind of “digestion” or assimilation to their own hierarchy of values of different slogans and themes. In other words, it often turns out that the announced plans from the election campaign period have nothing to do with the end result, which are the party’s actions at government level. I’m not talking about ordinary, popular and recorded in the public mind the lack of adherence to election promises by political parties, but about a certain set of factors, which any party inevitably will have to face. The possibility of social criticism may be a cause for which the implementation of the announced changes is often abandoned. Public opinion is the judge
(more or less aware) and delivers the verdict on the future fate of the party. Thus it is worth considering what ideas and values a particular party supports and which interests it represents. The interest of a party’s own electorate is certainly present, but the party also expresses and represents the interests of other backgrounds. Hence you can conclude that articulated views and attitudes are not voiced in the authorship of the party entirely, but are the result of specific factors.

The first step is self-determination in the space of political parties, how and where they form the ideological boundaries of their own identity and how they determine the space that is filled with values, with which parties identify. It also defines the objectives to be realized when being a political organization. Here parties also define their place in the political space by setting positive or negative relationships with certain ideas. Here parties actions and conduct are also defined.
STAGE II

Usually, due to the construction of political formations consisting of several different political backgrounds, there are formulated several wings, which represent very different views. A clear example of the representation of different political currents within the same party are right-wing groups. It is very apparent in the case of former formations already AWS, UW, and also present in the PiS and the PO. The official position of a political party is the result of internal battles of different operating environments within a single formation. Of course the left is no exception in this regard. For a long period in the Polish transformation, the left-wing had appeared as very consistent in their views. The differences and the different factions inside the left-wing formations were present, but the survival instinct and pragmatism was stronger. The difference of views articulated by the wings of the party become active in its sharpness only during the political crisis in the SLD.

When organizing a new party the existence of such wings is used to build fuzzy faces that do not alienate the voters. Thanks to such an attitude many more numerous group of supporters of various views can be formed around the party. In such situations the political programmes are not specified. However, in the case of multiple failures of election that the party survives, the activation of the internal differences may be a precursor to destabilize the party. It also happens that reaching the consensus within the party is so difficult that it may lead to the collapse of the formation.

STAGE III

What seems to be the most difficult in relations between political subjects is reaching a compromise by the parties representing different views. You may find it easier to find a political party with a rather fuzzy, unidentified profile. This image of the inevitable compromise on programme is an undoubted advantage. In such circumstances it is easier to make concessions or change the views, because it does not lead to such a liability to the party’s own electorate. The important thing is to separate two images. One is the designed image of the party, and another is the
image that is formed by the subjective social perception. Here it is worth considering what are the factors which determine the party’s actions.

This is an attempt to explain the circumstances in which the party's program may undergo significant changes, who has influence on the political programmes? what determines the activity of political environments and their ideological identity. Is it ideology? Certainly yes, but apart from a very specific worldview there are many external factors beyond the control of the party, which determine its way of functioning in the world of politics.

Another phenomenon in the case of a multi-stakeholder coalition is the loss of responsibility for the decisions taken, in effect blurring the scope of powers and responsibilities of the individual groups. No liability for the decisions of the government was particularly evident in the behavior of the PL party, whose members were part of the Cabinet of H. Suchocka, but the general public strongly distanced themselves from the actions of the government. This behavior is a hallmark of the party making use of demagogy. KPN was not separated from populism. KPN, when forming a coalition in the office of J. Olszewski, set forth unrealistic financial demands.

This was also the case of AWS, the formation bringing together a huge amount of right-wing circles. Divisions within the AWS revealed particularly during the implementation of four major reforms that were to improve the functioning of the state. The Right-wing government's ambitious reform: administrative reform, education reform, healthcare reform and reform of the pension system, were not only enemies among the opposition, but also at the back of parliamentary government. This was clearly visible in the background of the protest of KPN-OP leader A. Słomka, who distanced himself from the reform of the administrative division and also criticized the management of AWS for putting the economic ministries in the hands of UW.

Majority parties are a better option as opposed to the minority parties. The first ones are associated by society with power. In the case of a broad set of small parties, there is a greater temptation to articulate populist demands. In a situation where a political party takes more responsibility it cannot afford a demagogic rhetoric, knowing that society will assess its
activity at the next election. Hence the conclusion that majority parties are more common, they use a moderate political program and are away from controversial political ideas.

STAGE IV

Differences can be seen best in statements of the opposition party activity in relation to the ruling party. Of course, this confrontation is valuable for comparative image formation and also allows for self-determination of a party’s own political identity. This rivalry is also important from the standpoint of the researcher, as it allows him to compare alternative programs through which it is possible to position a specified number on the scale of political divisions.

In the context of the dynamically changing political scene and divisions of the party, any attempt to articulate political differences is also a way of renunciation from recent political affiliation. As it can be seen, equally exciting attacks are carried out on the front line of post-solidarność – post-communism, but also between parties with the same political etymology. A glaring example is the brutal rivalry between PiS and PO, which dates back to the failed right-wing forces coalition in 2005. Since then, both environments constantly fought against each other to build and consolidate a negative image of the opponent. The history of relations between the PO and PiS parties is actually a history of mutual attacks, which once one side occupied the government benches, and the other opposition, and the next time the other way round.

For some politicians, aggressive attacks serve not only to determine the dividing line and its place, but also constitutes a token of loyalty to the new political environment.

Political parties often criticize the opponent’s views, which were previously also their views. Efforts to clarify the identity of the party is further complicated by the fact that the importance of political parties in election campaigns is decreasing, and it is the media whose importance increases. The media makes political life, identity and the profile of the party depending on effective political marketing. Hence, this is the reason of popularity of the catch it all strategy, which in its ideological profile can find a place
for each value, often opposite to the previously existing values\textsuperscript{21}. In this way a political eclecticism emerges, whose message is addressed to the various electoral groups.

Why then to serve the language of war? Certainly, this happens in order to differentiate and polarize the political scene – and often wrongly – accuse a political opponent just to obtain public support. Paradoxically, the political opponent becomes the reference point for the identity of the party. So constructed relation based on the oppositiveness helps to clarify your own programme, to mobilize voters and makes the action more detailed\textsuperscript{22}. This is the program and the image subordinate to the total negation. It was difficult to find one area of life to which both formations are compatible. Thereby, the discreditation turns to a total character\textsuperscript{23}. It is an expression – at policy level – of brutalization of public life.

When analyzing the confrontation of both post – solidarity camps there can be drawn a conclusion that a form of rivalry started to cross the boundaries of once set rules not only in the period of the campaign but also in the period of governance. The time of governance is also subordinate to the political calendar, where almost every year there is an election scheduled. It should be noted that mutual clarifying of one party’s profile in respect to the competitor is assigned to the political system, in which the mutual relations between the entities force those entities to constant emphasizing their own identity in the political sphere. Some variation in behaviour and demands of extreme parties is visible as the smaller the party is the greater tendency it has to extreme demands. The same party, when in charge, uses a safer policy of more rational and balanced slogans. As it can be seen, the greatest privilege of the opposition is proclaiming slogans and at the same time not being held responsible for it.

What is worth asking is whether Polish parties differ from one another very much? In terms of their programmes, differences stem from the


\textsuperscript{22} M. Jeziński, Political Marketing and the processes of acculturation, Toruń 2004, pp. 104–107.

\textsuperscript{23} M. Karwat, A malicious discrediting. Warszawa 2007, p. 53.
legacy of political and personal conflicts. It often happens that political differences are almost created, in order to differentiate one party from its competitor. If one side is for something, the other is against and the other way round. But does this topic suit the context when both parties are of the same origin? The answer is yes. So what is the difference between them?

Political negation is usually aimed at distancing from the other political parties active in the political arena, usually by presenting alternative solutions. Trying to distance themselves from political rivals is characteristic not only of representatives of different political camps.

It is quite common that formations even from the same ideological-historical family are characterized by their critical approach. This phenomenon characterizes the post-Solidarity parties. Negation often takes the form of political bidding, which results in irrational promises.

It is characteristic of the left-wing policy to use negation as the tool of self-identification. Proclaimed by post-communism parties political liberalism is of a rather dubious nature. The usage of liberty slogans has its motivation in PRL times when it was the church that was the one and only opposition to the governing power. This historical mentality formed in the PRL period became a carrier of certain secular attitudes. Thus secularism is an easy tool used in the process of identifying the self-identity, in some cases identity that remains in opposition to the Christian model of the country.

Thus, on the basis of observations, electoral rivalry is a bilans of previous achievements. The party that is in charge is always the subject of assessment. This party depicts its time of power as the time of prosperity. The assessment of achievements is the key issue of each campaign.

STAGE V

There is a trend, that functions and some duties, which are normally carried out by national governments, are replaced by international organizations. The position of a particular political party becomes less important. According to various sources the content of our legal system was directly or indirectly created by EU institutions. Parliament’s partici-
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determination is boiled down to the approval of a mechanic translation of demands. That doesn’t mean that the national authorities do not affect the content of existing EU laws. State governments have not lost their sovereignty. EU law sets a certain legal and economical framework for the national authorities. As put by Wojciech Sadurski: “the system of formal participation of national parliaments in the EU legislative process is in the shape given by the Treaty of Lisbon an important factor in democratization of the Union, but yet limited.”

Legal requirements established by the Union are in some way convenient for national governments. Maintaining economic indicators is an argument that guarantees a stable economic situation, but also a juxtaposition for national governments from making unpopular decisions against their own society. Entry into the EU and the adoption of certain legal and political solutions stored in the European treaties caused the abandonment of a certain area of sovereignty to the EU. “The current maneuver is very limited. Of course, at the stage of the draft directive, the government’s position is drawn to the project (presented to parliament) as it is possible to express the opinion that a regulation or the part of its item is in our opinion redundant. However, this opinion doesn’t stop work on the project, unless we manage to collect the appropriate group of countries which share this opinion.”

Nevertheless, European law sets a framework defining the rules for determining the decision-making on the ground of national politics. Part of the decision coming from the EU affects what must be adopted by a national parliament, and thus determines the action taken by political parties. It turns out that regardless of the profile and the face of political formation which is in charge it is obliged to adapt the EU directives. The role of the party in law is somewhat limited by the Union. Membership in

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the EU structures may provoke some changes and it is Brussels that should be blamed, which may be treated as a sort of justification in this case. The requirement to be fulfilled on the way to standardization of the EU requirements is also that of an economic nature, which was discussed in the form of convergence criteria in the Maastricht Treaty. The aim was to create a sustainable economic policy preventing the growth of a governmental deficit.

The impact is huge. A question about the party’s competence arises. Nevertheless, presence in the EU determines the attitude of the party, affects the articulation of goals and needs. Each of the parties regardless of their outlook and attitude towards the EU is a subject to international politics.

It is difficult today to see political parties as individual. It is rather an evaluation of coalitions of various political constellations, which are in turn the result of agreements, compromises, or rather relationships. Parties, wishing to remain on the surface of political life, are forced to accept certain rules, both in terms of national and international policy.

Attention should also be paid to certain nuances and interrelationships that exist between the parties and that they exert mutual influence on each other. It is impossible to deny that a political party is the impact of the environment. No matter what political profile a party represents various factors determine its message. Thus previously proclaimed slogans change a lot in the final account.

A NEW PHENOMENON IN POLITICAL SPACE

It seems that from the perspective of several years the proposals for the direction of the political system can now be formulated. The last decade in Polish politics is a unique period in terms of cumulative numbers of new phenomena. Personalization of parliamentary elections, aggressive attempt to discredit politicians and political space enter into a new generation of voters in the late 80s. The article is therefore an attempt to diagnose the processes taking place in public space. Recently, a change is not only on the level of government but there is also the evolution of the bipolar model of competition at the level of party electorates.
An important role is the issues that are often overlooked, and which are an important factor in shaping a model of political competition, such as the professionalization of politics and media coverage. The specific shape of electoral change no doubtly has its influence on the shape of rivalry. Certainly, their frequent use of the Internet as a cheap and quick means of promotion and mobilization of political influence in a meaningful way to form the content of political communication. Today, it is difficult to imagine the implementation of the election campaign without the use of that medium. Certainly, the perception and the role of state policies were also affected by European integration, whose direct consequence was the opening of borders for Poles. Electoral rivalry between post-Solidarity parties started in 2005 and revealed the new face of political divisions. The election results have given many reasons to inspire reflection on the issue of stabilizing the political system in Poland. So far political rivalry, based on stable relationship between the post-august and post-communist campaigns, began to lose its importance. An important issue is a further question about the political scenerio and model of political competition between PO and PIS.

In addition to the above-mentioned phenomena, there are themes that also polarize the political scene, as attitudes to modernity, European integration, emphasizing the primacy of the individual or the community in legal and public space, the vision of the economy or political system model. Not without significance is the marginalization of the left of the political scene, which began in 2005 and frustrated the coalition of PO and PIS, which is not without significance for the development of the programmes of the political parties.

SUMMARY

Examination of the party system inevitably forces us to confront the problem of Polish party’s organizational identity. Almost in every subsequent election to the Polish political scene there were new entities that arose, which due to the composition of their personnel, and values on which their activities were based, it was difficult to regard them as com-
pletely new. Thus, ideological disputes between the PO and PIS are nothing new in the environment of Polish right wing policy.

Politics in principle is multidimensional and that’s the reason why it’s worth looking at phenomena and processes that determine it. This in turn requires a broader perspective on political life and the selection of the factors that have a significant influence on its shape. Politics become a unique public space for activities understood in terms of many phenomena and processes. There is no doubt that the processes of social, economic or a political nature set the pace of evolution of Polish democracy.