

Polish Party System 1989-2016: A Case of Polarization

Abstract

The dissertation thesis analyses the Polish party system focusing particularly on the issues of polarization and anti-communism. The analysis is partially carried out in comparative perspective, especially in exploring anti-communism. Throughout the post-transition period, Poland has been displaying high levels of polarization, without any substantial link to the fragmentation of the party system. Seeking the sources of the polarizing tensions, the thesis has identified the construction of language of politics, as well as historicising and identity-based understanding of political divisions in Poland. The thesis specially focuses on the issue of anti-communism, as a key factor in creating and launching various polarizing impulses. The periodization of the Polish party system developments, as well as its categorization as a case of Satori's polarized pluralism is also proposed in the text.

Key words:

party system, Poland, polarization, anti-communism, fragmentation, alternation, competition, cleavages, dimensions of competition