

Plurality of Liberalisms. The Parliamentary Liberal Groups in the Third Polish Republic: An Analysis of Party Programmes and their Differences

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Introduction

In his classic work *Liberalizm po komunizmie* [*Liberalism after Communism*], Jerzy Szacki emphasizes that “the very transfer of ideas to another social environment changes their meaning and function” (Szacki 1994: 19). This problem closely relates to liberalism, which in Polish conditions was lacking in “a tradition and an infrastructure” (Szacki 1994: 19); for centuries liberalism functioned in an ineffective way, without a natural social basis or the necessary historical circumstances. The result was a state which is described by Roman Tokarczyk (2010: 94) as lacking a separate and fully self-sufficient liberal doctrine in Poland; it was subsidized, at best, with the reception of various elements of Western European liberalism.

Even when we consider an opposing view on this subject, expressed for instance by Krystyna Rogaczewska, who defends the Polish

liberal tradition and its achievements (Rogaczewska 2014), it can be concluded that the main problem with liberalism after 1989 was its ambiguity and imprecision. As the party system was being rebuilt, political parties of a liberal ideological profile emerged, simultaneously facing the challenge of relating to indigenous traditions. Moreover, after 1989 we should also refer to a plurality of liberalisms rather than a singular liberalism (Szacki 1994: 48–52). This plurality was undoubtedly influenced by endogenous factors, and the diversity of liberalism had been shaped throughout the centuries (Bartyzel 2012). It had also been influenced by the circumstances of political transformation, and its effects on the development models of the emerging political parties; these could evolve as:

- (a) post-communist parties maintaining the affiliation with parties active before 1989;
- (b) post-Solidarity parties established during the dissolution of the Civic Parliamentary Club;
- (c) parties formed from anti-communist opposition outside the Solidarity movement;
- (d) historical parties referring to the Interwar Period in their names and policies;
- (e) new parties established as a result of new socio-political divisions (Sokół 2003: 197–198).

It was also essential, for the shape of both the liberal doctrine and the parties which represented it after 1989, that most political parties of the transformation period were established top-down, without being influenced by the social foundation. This resulted in a lack of party background and structure; in other words, a lack of parties firmly rooted in the society (Bojarowicz 2013: 69–71; Antoszewski 2008: 60). This situation also determined the ideological profiles of these parties—they were much more dependent on the viewpoints of political leaders than on the beliefs of the potential electorate.

This article aims to define the nature of the diversity of Polish liberal parties in the Third Polish Republic. In other words, the research problem the author addresses is expressed in the following question: which degrees or versions of liberalism have been represented in the Polish parliament after 1989, and which main characteristics may be attributed to them?

The research subject will be the concepts and political thought formulated by particular parties in their political programmes and party documents. The parties in question were considered or considered

themselves to be following the liberal doctrine, and were elected to the parliament at least once.

According to the problem and subject of research specified above, I will focus on the main elements of “the liberal spirit” present in the political thought of particular parties; that is, on the very item of political thought which lets us define a party as liberal. Hence, this article will not be a detailed analysis of the entire political thought of various liberal parties.

In order to solve the research problem, it is necessary to determine a definitional minimum for the liberal doctrine. In this context, as Szacki suggested, I will consider the issue of the individual’s rights as “the Archimedean point of liberalism” (Szacki 1994: 38–41). Thus, the assessment and characterization of liberalisms represented in the Polish parliament will be concentrated on matters concerning the individual, their rights, liberties, role and place in the social system.

The research will be conducted with the use of a qualitative content analysis, which takes into consideration the existence (or lack thereof) of characteristic content, rather than the content which occurs most frequently (Szczepaniak 2012: 95–96). According to Hanna Palska, it can be concluded that by means of qualitative analysis, “we are only to sensitively and clear-headedly analyze what is specific (*qualitative*) in the text, rather than what is frequent (*quantitative*)” (Palska 1999: 166). Taking this methodological approach makes it possible to meet the requirement of a multifaceted and contextual investigation into the political thought of modern Polish liberals (Ponczek 2015).

Due to the topic of the article, matters connected with the genetic approach to the issue of liberal parties and the factual background of their formation will not be discussed herein. Thus, I will not take into consideration the genesis and structure of particular parties, but will focus only on their ideologies.

Liberal parties in the Third Polish Republic

In recent decades, specialists in political sciences have found it increasingly difficult to discuss ideologically homogeneous parties. The emergence of the catch-all party type (Herbut 2002) has made political parties’ programmes ever more ambiguous. The essence of the problem

is reflected in the formation of European parties, which Paul Lucardie (2000) describes as purifiers searching for or reviving traditional ideas and political doctrines. Hence, it is not surprising that political scientists face escalating challenges in defining a particular party as “liberal,” for example. For the purpose of this article, I selected liberal parties according to two guidelines:

- (1) experts’ opinions;
- (2) the verification of having a parliamentary representation in the Sejm (the lower house of parliament).

Using these guidelines has made it possible to specify political groups which, for the purpose of this text, are accepted as political parties. However, it should be noted that when characterizing the main political models, authors of texts on the Polish political scene and political thought treat the liberal model in an ambiguous way.

For instance, the authors of *Antologia współczesnej polskiej myśli politycznej* [*The Anthology of Modern Polish Political Thought*] placed such groups as the Liberal Democratic Congress, the Freedom Union, and Civic Platform, among liberals. On the other hand, the Real Politics Union was classified as a conservative party (Meller, Radomski & Wojdyło [eds] 2012). The editors of the collection of sources relating to external security divided political groups according to the categories of liberal, conservative and conservative-liberal. They considered the Liberal Democratic Congress, the Freedom Union and Civic Platform to be liberal, but the Real Politics Union was classed as conservative-liberal (Lewandowski & Tomaszewski 2012).

In the introduction to the publication titled *Polskie ugrupowania liberalne* [*Polish liberal political groups*], Łukasz Tomczak (2010: 7) stated that the Polish parties which should be counted as liberal were the Civic Platform, Freedom Union, Liberal Democratic Congress, Democratic Party, and the Real Politics Union. Alicja Wójcik (2008: 184), however, when specifying the liberal option (the author actually uses the term “liberal-democratic”), finds the following parties among its representatives: the Democratic Union, the Liberal Democratic Congress, the Freedom Union (which was formed out of the former two parties), as well as the Civic Platform. Łukasz Danel suggests a slightly different typology, counting the above-mentioned parties as liberal-conservative. Nevertheless, he does stipulate that within the liberal-conservative option, there was a division into parties attempting to connect economic liberalism with ideological conservatism, and typically liberal parties such as the Freedom Union or Modern (2016: 102).

Grzegorz Kucharczyk (2009: 268) states that “the liberal thought in the Third Polish Republic was dominated by two circles:” conservative-liberal, centred around the Real Politics Union; and liberal-democratic, whose character was reflected in the policies of the Liberal Democratic Congress and later Civic Platform.

A party which should be added to the liberal parties mentioned above is Palikot’s Movement (later renamed “Your Movement”); of the parties referring to liberal values, this was the last to appear on the scene in the period researched.

I have not analysed the potential liberal character of Modern in this article, as this party seems not to have offered its political self-definition yet.

The mentioned liberal parties were elected to the parliament after 1989, as presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Dates of gaining parliamentary representation in general elections by parties considered as liberal.

PARTY NAME	YEAR OF ELECTION TO THE PARLIAMENT
<i>Unia Demokratyczna, UD</i> (Democratic Union)	1991
<i>Unia Wolności, UW</i> (Freedom Union)	1991, 1993, 1997
<i>Kongres Liberalno-Demokratyczny, KLD</i> (Liberal Democratic Congress)	1991
<i>Unia Polityki Realnej, UPR</i> (Real Politics Union)	1991
<i>Stronnictwo Demokratyczne, SD</i> (Alliance of Democrats)	1991
<i>Platforma Obywatelska, PO</i> (Civic Platform)	2001, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2015
<i>Partia Demokratyczna—demokracy.pl, PD</i> (Democratic Party)	2007
<i>Ruch Palikota, RP</i> (Palikot’s Movement)	2011

Source: self-study.

Economic liberalism

Among all the liberal parties active in Poland after 1989, it is undoubtedly easiest to characterize the ideology of the Liberal Democratic Congress and the Real Politics Union. Both the Congress, with its roots among the Gdańsk liberals, and the Union have strongly accentuated liberal ideas in their political programmes and documents. The liberalism presented by these parties, however, has mostly concerned economic issues, which influenced other areas of the parties' political thought.

Waldemar Wojtasik, describing Congress's ideology, expressed a view that

... the party whose policy was equivalent to the ideas of economic liberalism to the greatest extent in the first part of the system transformation was the Liberal Democratic Congress. (Wojtasik 2010: 54)

Danuta Karnowska, on the other hand, defining the Congress's profile, suggested that it was

... the only political party with such an unambiguously neoliberal political and economic program and a distinctive ideological identity and policy. At the same time, its political thought was characterized by an almost dogmatic approach to the main ideas as devoid of alternatives. (Karnowska 2005: 108)

How should one characterize Congress's liberalism in the context of the research problem presented in this article? The foundation of liberalism and its main characteristic, according to the Liberal Democratic Congress, was the individual's freedom being treated as "a superior value and the first rule of social cohesion" (Program Cetniewski 1991). The free market and private property were equally important and were supposed to constitute a guarantee of freedom, but they also demanded responsibility on the part of the individual (Siedziako 2010: 115; Program Cetniewski 1991). As stated in *Deklaracja programowa Kongresu Liberalno-Demokratycznego z 1991 r.* [*The Political Programme of the Liberal Democratic Congress of 1991*], "in freedom, property finds its justification and limitation" (*Deklaracja programowa Kongresu Liberalno-Demokratycznego z 1991 r.* [*The Political Programme of the Liberal Democratic Congress of 1991*], 2001: 191).

When specifying the essence of freedom in Congress's political thought, one should notice that the individual's assumed possibility to act in the economic sphere was supposed to determine freedom also at the social and political level. As Karnowska emphasized (2005: 110),

according to the Congress, the consistent introduction of free-market principles would lead to the development of the country, and the revival of a civil society in which free and responsible citizens would be certain of their rights (Program Cetniewski 1991).

The idea of economic freedom also had its systemic consequences. The Congress's liberals assumed that Poland's political regime should be based on a limited role of the state and simultaneous activity by the individual (citizens) and local governments. At the same time, the authors of Congress's programmes allowed the state to be involved in the economy, especially in the time of transformation, when it was necessary for the state to initiate liberal change and lay the foundations for the free market and capitalism (Siedziako 2010: 114). (2001: 192). *Deklaracja programowa Kongresu Liberalno-Demokratycznego z 1991 r.* [*The Political Programme of the Liberal Democratic Congress of 1991*] states:

The role of the state would be solely to provide and ensure a framework of fair competition, to ensure a stable currency and to facilitate market entry for new business entities through systematic programs of promoting entrepreneurship.

The last phrase of the citation emphasizes the necessity for the state to intervene in the advance of capitalism.

Nevertheless, it may be concluded that Congress was among the supporters of restricting the state's power, on the basis that the state should primarily allow and encourage its citizens to be active in all spheres of social life (Siedziako 2010: 116–117).

Comparing the above-mentioned suggestions with proposals formulated by the Real Politics Union, one should notice a distinct difference. In the case of the aforementioned party, long led by Janusz Korwin-Mikke, it seems that economic liberalism was associated with the individual's freedom to an even greater extent. One may risk claiming that in Mikke's party, liberalism, especially in terms of economics, was treated almost doctrinally. Hence, it is unsurprising that the party's main value was individualism (Karnowska 2005, 140). Nevertheless, it functioned alongside a conservative approach to the social sphere. Karnowska emphasized that in the case of the Union's political thought, such values as freedom, property and a strong state were held in parallel to the respect for tradition. Thus, economic liberalism was combined with Christian morality, values and tradition, which were supposed to integrate the society even more closely (*Ulotka wyborcza UPR z 1991 r.* [Real Politics Union's electoral leaflet of 1991] 2001; Karnowska 2005: 139–140, 146).

As in the case of the Liberal Democratic Congress, here too, the economic liberalism determined how the system should be changed. The main characteristic of the Union's thought related to the principle of a democratic state being inferior to the proposal of a free business activity run by the individual. According to Łukasz Danel, under this rule, the basic liberal values (freedom, private property, justice and a limited state) were preserved regardless of the state's political system. (*Ulotka wyborcza UPR z 1993* [Real Politics Union's electoral leaflet of 1993] 2001; Danel 2016: 120–121).

It is worth noting that for a while, Gdańsk liberals also held the view, as expressed by Leszek Balcerowicz, that democracy would not replace capitalism in the economy; this meant that applying the principles of economic liberalism was given primacy over democracy. In the first years of transformation in Poland, the Congress's politicians entertained the idea of democracy being merely the background for the real value—i.e. the free market (Lew 2011: 408). As Anna Lew points out, the Congress's liberals assumed that the democratic system could not exist without capitalism, while capitalism could exist without democracy, at least in the current situation. Eventually, however, both social phenomena were considered to exist in parallel (Lew 2011: 408).

When specifying the differences between Congress's and the Union's liberalism, one should focus on the relation between the individual (treated as an entity active in business) and the responsibilities of the state. In Congress's view, the state, with its role ultimately limited to serving basic functions during systemic transition, could take intervening action. The Real Politics Union, on the other hand, presenting this issue doctrinally, concentrated on restricting the state's role without exception (*Ulotka wyborcza UPR z 1993* [Real Politics Union's electoral leaflet of 1993] 2001).

Towards modest liberalism?

Slightly different aspects of liberalism were accentuated by groups represented in the 1990s, such as the Democratic Union; and later, as of 1994, after the Democratic Union merged with the Liberal Democratic Congress, by the Freedom Union. It is worth emphasizing that both the Democratic Union and later the Freedom Union were often deemed to be liberal parties; however, they were not necessarily internally uniform and consistent (Karnowska 2005: 118; Nyzio 2014; Winćławska 2010).

In terms of the economy, the Democratic Union's liberalism was a milder, more social version, in comparison with the ideas of the parties described above. It focused on the socialization of the economy (the social market economy), proposing an institution of social dialogue, and the ideas of an equal footing or access to culture and education. The Democratic Union accepted the state's involvement in economic matters (*Stabilizacja i rozwój* [Stabilization and development] 2001: 269–270; Danel 2016: 134–135). Danuta Karnowska even suggests that due to the ideological profile of the Democratic Union's proposals, this party, as well as the Freedom Union, should be considered as representing Christian liberalism (especially in the sphere of axiology), and social liberalism (in the sphere of economy) (Karnowska 2005: 118).

Nevertheless, in its political programme of 1993, the Democratic Union accentuated the meaning of personal freedom as the fundamental value in social life, being both indivisible and indispensable. Civil freedom itself, understood in the political sense as the individual's liberties, minorities' rights and the equality of all citizens, should be protected by the state. Its meaning was emphasized mainly from the systemic perspective, but also from the community's viewpoint:

We believe in the creative power of freedom, thanks to which the individual may freely participate in shaping their own destiny and the destiny of their community, especially in shaping political cooperation in their own country. (*Stabilizacja i rozwój* [Stabilization and development] 2001: 260)

Merging with the Liberal Democratic Congress and forming the Freedom Union caused changes in the programme, including further developing liberal themes. Dominik Szczepański characterized this newly formed party as “moderately liberal in its viewpoint, pragmatic, pro-transformative and expressing a vision of a new Poland” (Szczepański 2014: 197).

The value which the Freedom Union considered superior was the freedom of human being, treated as the guarantee of human being spiritual and material growth. Personal freedom was to be exercised in a democratic state of justice which would guarantee its citizens the possibility of claiming their rights (*Freedom. Safety. Growth* [Polish: *Wolność. Bezpieczeństwo. Rozwój*] 2004: 67; Szczepański 2014: 198; Wójcik, 2008: 187).

The Freedom Union's electoral programme of the year 2000 read:

The Freedom Union rejects left- and right-wing statism and the excessive dependence of citizens on their country. We see the source of human initiative and the society's growth in freedom The situation when the state has too

many functions does not foster the clarity of rules of operation, but it weakens the civic control over the state and facilitates corruption. The Freedom Union has been the main political power which favors broadening the freedom zone on the basis of clear legislation. (*Deklaracja programowa V kongresu Unii Wolności 2000* [The Program Declaration of 5th Congress of the Freedom Union of 2000])

The quote above, regarding freedom in the economic as well as political dimension, was translated into reflections concerning the system, which, as Szczepański suggested, may be called “democratic liberalism” (Szczepański 2013: 70). In this system, the idea of a democratic state was considered a fundamental value, while democratic procedures and their meaning for the society’s growth were additionally emphasized.

Focusing only on the economic aspect, one should conclude that in comparison with the Democratic Union’s proposal, the Freedom Union’s programme was “dominated by liberal rhetoric” (Danel 2016). A competitive market economy based on private property, the abolition of monopolies and lowering taxes, privatization and economic freedom, are proposals which laid the foundations for economic thought. It was also stipulated that the freedom to make economic decisions was necessary for the existence and development of free economy ([*Freedom. Safety. Growth*] 2004: 73–75).

There were disputes concerning ideological matters within both the Democratic Union and the Freedom Union; a modest or even moderately conservative approach prevailed in most cases. However, it is worth remembering that the proposals for the liberalization of social life were present in the ideology described here (Szczepański 2014).

The Freedom Union was succeeded, both personally and ideologically, by the Democratic Party. The latter was elected to the Sejm in 2007, running as part of the Left and Democrats [Polish: Lewica i Demokraci, LiD] list. In the declaration titled *Dokąd dążymy? Kim jesteśmy i do czego zmierzamy* [*Where are we going? Who are we and what are we aiming at*], its authors pointed out that the state’s most crucial duty was to protect its citizens’ freedom, and the state itself should be governed on the basis of and in accordance with the law. On the issue of the economy, it was declared that private property was an essential and valuable element of the market economy. Moreover, it was emphasized that the individual needed to be free in the economic aspect:

The state must support its citizens rather than limit them. ... Let’s allow people to be enterprising—let’s unleash our citizens’ energy, making Polish economy dynamic. Free market and healthy public finance are

a requirement and an opportunity for our country's growth. (*Dokąd idziemy? Kim jesteśmy...* [*Where are we going? Who are we ...*])

Free-market aspects were balanced by proposals for providing equal opportunities to all citizens, in order to encourage their participation in economic and social growth. The Democratic Party understood the individual's freedom also as being free of poverty. However, the party declared that the best way to provide equal opportunities was not through intervening actions and redistribution by the state. Rather, the Democratic Party suggested limiting the state's task of providing social aid, and instead was prejudiced in favour of the state's cooperation with civic organizations, in order to create ways of mobilizing people who were excluded (*Dokąd idziemy? Kim jesteśmy...* [*Where are we going? Who are we ...*]).

Civic Platform's electoral liberalism

Formed in 2001, and standing for election for the first time in the same year, the Civic Platform party was considered a successor of the Liberal Democratic Congress and the Freedom Union (Karnowska 2012: 229). This fact was reflected in the first policy declaration of 2001. The presence of liberal doctrine is visible in this document, especially in economic matters regarding the provision of entities' freedom. The declaration included proposals for facilitating business activity, limiting bureaucracy or lowering taxes (including the flat tax) (*Program Platformy Obywatelskiej* [*Civic Platform's Programme*] 2001).

Economic liberalism was also present in Civic Platform's policy in the years to come. The programme presented in 2007 included a few entries on entities' freedom, entrepreneurship or private property. Indeed, it stated that free citizens were supposed to be the Platform's foundation. Furthermore, economic freedom based on private property was considered an essential element of civic freedom (*By żyło się lepiej. Wszystkim. Program Platformy Obywatelskiej RP 2007* [*A Better Life for All. Civic Platform's Programme 2007*]: 17, 19). Donald Tusk confirmed that the party was focused on economic issues, in the introduction to the party's programme of 2007, titled *Polska zasługuje na cud gospodarczy* [*Poland deserves an economic miracle*] (2007).

In the first years of its presence in the political arena, Civic Platform's programmes advocated both liberal solutions (in the economy)

and conservative ones (in axiology), mentioning for instance family values and tradition (*By żyło się lepiej. Wszystkim. Program Platformy Obywatelskiej RP 2007 [A Better Life for All. Civic Platform's Programme 2007]: 8–9*). The party refers directly to liberal doctrine in matters regarding economic activity. Individual initiative and entrepreneurship leading to social wealth, as well as free market as a value in itself, or the conviction of the value of creative and active human effort in the economic process, exemplify the above-mentioned statement. The party clearly declares in its programme that

The return to freedom is the way in which the country develops and succeeds. ... There is no other effective economic policy but the one entailing the introduction of competition policy, the protection of private property and the state dealing with the causes of economic paralysis. (*By żyło się lepiej. Wszystkim. Program Platformy Obywatelskiej RP 2007 [A Better Life for All. Civic Platform's Programme 2007]: 8–9*)

The importance of liberal ideas in the economic aspect is also emphasized by the fact that the right to property was mentioned alongside the right to life and to freedom, as being fundamental human rights and the basis of a legal, economic and social order. Property was also deemed to be the condition of maintaining civic freedom (*By żyło się lepiej. Wszystkim. Program Platformy Obywatelskiej RP 2007 [A Better Life for All. Civic Platform's Programme 2007]: 19*).

In order to fulfil the idea of property and strengthen the free-market model of the economy, the Platform called for changes in the property ownership ratio, so that the highest number of citizens could become owners (of apartments, houses, stocks, shares, etc.). Property was assumed to “make Poles free and independent, at the same time letting them effectively participate in economic processes;” this in turn would lead to the growth and development of the middle class (*By żyło się lepiej. Wszystkim. Program Platformy Obywatelskiej RP 2007 [A Better Life for All. Civic Platform's Programme 2007]: 20*).

Between 2007 and 2011, when the party was the major coalition partner in Poland's government, Civic Platform's programme was modified as the party moved to the political centre. Donald Tusk's introduction to the electoral programme of 2011 seems to clearly characterize the programme changes:

Since the day it was formed, Civic Platform has welcomed various political groups, associations and organizations which share our ideology and undertake

activity in their local communities and regions. Our platform is created by the synthesis of various styles and traditions of thought on the state and democracy. That is why our group consists of both advocates of liberty and change and supporters of stability and authority; there are conservative liberals and Christian democrats, traditionalists and social democrats. We are neither a right-wing, nor a left-wing party. We are a party which welcomes everyone that believes in the idea of a civil state. Such a state does not impose its views on citizens, does not patronize or exclude anyone. Such a state accepts a complex reality, rejects radical political thought and violence, protecting what we hold most dear—freedom and solidarity under the rule of law. We have become the “New Center.” (Tusk 2011: 9–10)

While the change of profile did not disconnect Civic Platform from liberal ideology, liberalism became one of many ideologies adopted by the party, rather than a dominant one. The Platform became an electoral party trying to muster support from various voters who share different political viewpoints.

Cultural liberalism

Yet another dimension of freedom can be found in the political thought of Palikot’s Movement (renamed “Your Movement” in October 2013). Political programmes of this party include references to freedom of opinion and the idea of a secular state.

Nevertheless, in Your Movement’s document titled *Deklaracja i tezy programowe (Declaration and programme theses)*, its authors, listing the most important values, mention individual freedom as the most crucial. They argue that every person has the right to live in accordance with their beliefs and make autonomous life choices, provided they do not hurt other people while exercising this freedom. The state is tasked with protecting its citizens’ freedom and taking action to give them greater personal and civil liberty. The state should avoid implementing authoritarian systems, taking actions dictated by the ideology or opinions of politicians, or lecturing people on how they should think and live (*Deklaracja i tezy programowe [Declaration and programme theses]* 2013: 9).

Freedom should be complemented by equality, defined not only as “a liberal equality of opportunities but also as a left-wing equal access to specific benefits” (*Plan zmian 2014–2019 [Plan of changes for 2014–2019]*, Your Movement Programme 2014: 2).

The proposals discussed in this article entail left-wing suggestions concerning the economy. Thus, it is not surprising that Palikot's Movement adopted a rather critical attitude towards liberal ideas:

The convictions shared by Polish governments over the last 25 years that “the invisible hand of the market” will regulate everything, or that international corporations will create millions of well-paid jobs in Poland and modernize the country, or that privatizing everything for good money will be the cure to all mismanagement, or that we do not need industry, or that we will all get rich if the GDP grows, or that the only thing we should do in times of crisis is cut the costs, preferably by taking away from the poorest, because there are so many of them—all of these ideas turned out to be wrong. That is why we want the state to actively use the instruments of economic policy available. We are not afraid of economic interventionism or investment in public economic entities. Poland needs to take “a technological leap” and to implement a long-term economic policy. A developmental breakthrough in economy is not possible without the state's active participation. (*Deklaracja i tezy programowe [Declaration and programme theses]* 2013: 10)

Referring to the matters concerning worldview, which were mentioned at the beginning of this section, one can conclude that Your Movement opted to extend freedom of opinion. This proposal was formulated as follows:

We have had enough of situations in which somebody makes a decision for us, in which somebody tells us how to live, how to love, how many children to have and with whom. We have had enough of men in black deciding who can have children, who should be buried at Wawel, who to vote for in the elections or who a Polish citizen is supposed to be. (*Ruch Poparcia Palikota. Program wyborczy: Nowoczesne Państwo [Palikot's Support Movement. Electoral Programme: Modern States]*. 2011: 1)

The idea of a secular state was also expressed in the proposal to cease financing the Church from public funding, or the proposal to forbid the clergy from participating in secular events. Among other proposals relating to cultural liberalism, it is worth mentioning the legal recognition of civil partnerships and legalizing soft drugs, as well as liberalizing the abortion bill and ensuring equal rights for men and women.

Conclusion

The liberal parties presented in this article have introduced their own specific flavours to the Polish parliament over the last 30 years. The article's structure proposes a division of the liberal ideology into economic, modest, electoral, and cultural liberalism, thus reflecting the basic classification that has existed in recent decades. All these types of liberalism share the principle of individual freedom, which constitutes the fulfilment of the fundamental liberalist criterion (in accordance with Szacki's proposal).

Nevertheless, each of the above-mentioned liberalisms have located individual freedom in different aspects of social life. The elected liberal parties have seen the necessity to extend individual freedom in the economic sphere, but each of these parties has defined the extent of this liberalization in a different way.

Translated by: Paulina Jeziorska

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**Plurality of Liberalisms.
The Parliamentary Liberal Groups in the Third Polish Republic:
An Analysis of Party Programmes and Their Differences**

Abstract

In this paper, the problem of the variety of liberalisms in the Third Polish Republic is discussed. First, the objective is to determine the versions and degrees of liberalism that emerged in the Polish Parliament after 1989, and the characteristic features that can be attributed to them. The paper distinguishes the following types of liberalism: economic, modest, electoral, and cultural. Within each of them, some main characteristics are found to be decisive for labelling a political party according to the aforementioned scheme regarding the analysis of the political thought. The analysis is accomplished by drawing upon Szacki's idea of the liberal minimum, as well as referring to the rights and liberty of individuals.

Keywords: liberalism, liberty, individuals, free market, liberal thought.

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