SUMMARY OF A DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Model of the party government in Poland. Penetration of the institutions of power by political parties

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1. Introduction

‘Party government’ has become the essence of exercising power in many democratic regimes. It is due to party government, among other things, that the party system is increasingly dominating element of the entire political system. In the meantime issues pertaining political parties was very often limited to research on the essence of a party. Party system as one of the fundamental sub-systems of a political system was analyzed in the
context of its genesis, typology or internal relations. The analysis, however, clearly lacked reference to party government. This work can be a germ of a deeper analysis of this subject matter, particularly that presented herein results are innovatory, and in my opinion also fills the research void on the functioning of ‘the party government’ in Polish democracy.

In Polish political research the issue of ‘party government’ has not been fully analyzed thus far, whereas this phenomenon has been substantially influencing Polish political life. It has been ingrained in Polish political system, and the role of ‘party government’ has become even more important after parliamentary elections of 2015. Thus far ‘party government’ could function on the grounds of coalition and minority government, and only as of a few months we are dealing with situation in which the government is based on parliamentary majority consisting of one political party (it is not however a strictly single-party government.)

This dissertation presents an analysis of a phenomenon not sufficiently examined thus far, and yet playing a key role in the functioning of modern democracy. The research pertains most importantly to the functioning of ‘party government’ in Polish political system. Nevertheless other linked phenomena inseparable with ‘party government’ are examined, i.e. patronage and clientelism. In my work I analyzed penetration of institutions of power by political parties. I focus on the determination with which the political parties staff positions with people connected with specific parties in institutions which by definition should be free from political entanglement.

As the subject matter of this work we shall consider the functioning of ‘party government’ in the Third Republic of Poland and its ‘penetration’ by political parties in the institutional state system. The analysis encompasses the period from 1989 to mid-March 2016. However, in some cases it refers to experiences before the beginning of transformation. The analysis of ‘party government’ is not limited only to Poland, since a brief overview of Eastern European systems was presented for comparison. For definition purposes overview of British and American systems were provided.

2. Purpose and hypothesis

The work combines theoretical consideration with elements of empirical approach. The main purpose of this research is to establish in what way elements of political system impact the condition of ‘party government.’ The crux of the issue is to examine the nature of the relation between government institutions and political parties, as well as various forms of
‘party government’ in different regimes. Most importantly, it focuses on the influence of particular elements of Polish political system on creation of ‘party government’ since 1989 including the main political and electoral system changes. In my work I endeavored to present how the condition of ‘party government’ is dependent on such conditions as electoral system, relation legislative-executive and internal division of executive as well parliament structure.

The purpose of this work is also to prove that the phenomenon of ‘party government’ in principle does not exist without the existence of other parallel mechanisms such as patronage and clientelism. In my research I aimed to show the determination of political parties to staff institutions, which should by nature be excluded from party influence, with either party officers or people connected with a given party to various degrees. The penetration of institutions of power by political parties is also defined here on the example of elements of Polish political system. Cases of such party entanglement refer to Constitutional Tribunal, intelligence agencies, as well as the National Bank of Poland and Monetary Policy Council. The dissertation endeavors to present arguments that the phenomenon of ‘party government’ although being perceived as only negative, is a critical element of mature modern democracies.

The key hypothesis of this work is as follows: ‘party government’ is a phenomenon which has become a permanent element of numerous democratic regimes, including Poland. The scale and force of this phenomenon depend on other elements of political system. Political parties exercise the power not only by participating in executive and legislative but also by attempts to gain control over institutions which by nature should be free from party entanglement.

3. Research methods

I employed a deductive method of conclusion in my research. Firstly, I designed conceptual framework and analyzed the ‘party government’ phenomenon, examining at the same time the scale of its dependence on other elements of political systems. In the next stage I analyzed the condition of ‘party government’ in a particular political system. The research prompted more consideration of bodies of power being penetrated by political parties.

During my research I employed systems analysis. I based my research on the premise that a political system is based on a network of mutual connections and none of its elements can exists completely on their own. Thanks to systems analysis I was able to perceive party systems as sub-systems of larger political systems. Ergo a party system becomes a part of a
political system and is genetically secondary having a servient function towards it, and the elements of party system are linked to the whole by specific and various relations. For the purposes of appropriately placing the phenomenon of ‘party government’ in a given political system it is of utmost importance to, for instance treat electoral rules of a given country as political system, which also is a part of a larger system which is parallel to party system, has influence over it and can simultaneously change the whole political system. It is of no less importance that this dependence works in reverse, i.e. party system influences the electoral one, and this fact has significant impact on the entire political system.

I also employed **comparative method** in my research. It was of key importance to compare given political setups to each other, or elements of thereof. The purpose of the comparative analysis was to establish characteristics distinguishing given processes, systems and institutions from one another, or to establish such qualities which in analyzed elements were similar or even identical. The basis here was comparing two or more subject matters or its elements. Therefore, while analyzing the phenomenon of party government’ in the Third Republic of Poland, I referred to cases in other political systems, at the same time aiming to present similarities and differences of ‘party government’ between given countries. It is worth mentioning that at this stage the **historical method** somewhat overlaps the comparative method. I endeavored to present genesis, course and meaning of specific historical and political processes, as well as demonstrate cause and effect relations between them, and consequently to draw conclusions referring to the subject matter of the research. This method has been applied most importantly during description of the influence of the course of transforming processes in emerging democracies and the type of regimes previously exercised on the formation and condition of ‘party government’. Comparative method is enriched by **multiple case studies** which facilitated in-depth analysis of specific elements of a given system. This in turn allowed me to examine the condition of ‘party government’ in specific political systems.

Due to the subject matter of the dissertation and adopted main hypothesis it was necessary to employ **method of institutional and legal analysis**. A significant part of this dissertation is indeed the analysis of premises and effects of actions of political institutions as well as their influence on political phenomena. Without this analysis it would be impossible to examine the effects of the relation between subjects of political system on the formation and evolution of the phenomenon of ‘party government.’ During the examination of the condition of ‘party government’ I had to take into account the legal setting in political systems of not only political parties themselves, but most of all I had to analyze in what way legal solutions
stemming from for instance documents of constitutional nature influence ‘party government’, as well as to what extent the legal solutions allow political parties to penetrate the institutions of the state itself.

During my research I also analyzed numerous legal acts, as well as documents of political nature. It was necessary to analyze in-depth the source literature, but most importantly it was vital to focus on press materials – they were an excellent source of information on actions of each political party in the analyzed subject matter of the research. Moreover, it was essential to monitor the political scene.

4. Source literature

The literature I used for my research can be divided into three categories: scientific literature (Polish-English), legal and political documents, and press materials.

The scientific literature facilitated the conceptualization of notions, such as ‘party government’, patronage, clientelism, concept of political, or partyism. It also allowed to a large degree to define elements determining the condition of ‘party government.’ The English positions were the most helpful, such as The party government and its alternative by R. Katz, the work of J.Blondel and M.Cotta The nature of party government. A comparative European perspective, and finally Party government, Patronage, and Party Decline in Western Europe also by Blondel. It is also worth to mention the work edited by R.Herbut and A.Antoszewski Demokracje zachodnioeuropejskie. Analiza porównawcza [Western European Democracies. Comparative Analysis]. The source literature facilitated the comparison of the political as well as party systems. We should also underline the role of literature on constitutional law which was helpful during the analysis of the functioning of ‘party government’ in Polish political system. We cannot forget positions directly dealing with those Polish institutions which are undergoing the process of penetration by political parties. I am referring here to scientific literature focusing on the functioning of Constitutional Tribunal, intelligence agencies, as well as the National Bank of Poland and Monetary Policy Council.

The document most helpful with the research was the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. Other documents of constitutional nature, such as the act on political parties, or currently changing electoral regulations. Special attention should be paid to the act on Constitutional Tribunal and in particular to the recent changes it has undergone in the last stages of this work. The political documents consist mainly of coalition agreements and settlements between Polish parties and concreators of the government. In these documents
political parties speak directly about specific split of political game between governing factions.

This work would not come to life if not for the thorough and meticulous analysis of press materials, which in the scope of recent years, documented political events pertaining to the subject matter of this research. The main role here played texts, relations and articles from two Polish nationwide dailies, i.e. Gazeta Wyborcza and Rzeczpospolita. It is them who presented during the period of when this research was conducted the most information of which knowledge was essential to creation of this dissertation. It is due to these materials that so many quotations and statements of the main players on Polish political scene could be taken, and which often directly illustrate the political ‘interest’ in staffing the positions in some state institutions, as well as show the mechanisms on which the phenomena of patronage and clientelism are based upon.

5. Structure

The structure of this work is a result of the methods I adopted to conduct my research. It is also connected with specified research questions. The work is divided into three parts, the first one consists of one chapter, the second part comprises two chapters, and the third one is divided into three chapters.

The first chapter titled Concept of Political vs Partyism deals with definitional differences between the notions of ‘concept of political’ and ‘partyism’. The research questions here are as follows: Is everything which is political is also connected with a party? I chiefly focused here on presenting the historical and philosophical views on what constitutes the attribute of the ‘concept of political’ and I endeavored to juxtapose it with the notion of ‘partyism’. My goal was to present a brief overview of the distortions of ‘partyism’ and proving that what is connected with a party should not be by definition considered negative. I wanted here to clearly emphasize that I am aware of the fact that the topic of consideration in this chapter is to some extent parallel to the proper subject matter of the dissertation. Nevertheless, when further parts of this work deal, among others, with appropriation of institutions by political parties, and which institutions should have neutral party-unbiased status, the need to clearly define this partyism arises. It should also be clearly distinguished from the concept of political, and these two concepts are sometimes in the source literature combined and mistaken. This chapter is divided into three sub-chapters: Various definitions of politics; Defining ‘the concept of political’. The notion of ‘ politicization’; the notion of
Next part of the dissertation constitutes **chapter two** titled *The notion of ‘party government’*. The research questions which the chapter answers are: *How to define ‘party government’? What elements of political system influence how ‘party government’ develops? What are the correlations between ‘party government’ and the phenomena of patronage and clientelism?* In this chapter I defined the notions of ‘party government’ which in the course of years has undergone certain changes or additions. The aim of the defining process of ‘party government’ and the way how it was conducted was to above all prove in what way the process of formation of ‘party government’ is dependent on factors such as electoral system, legislative structure or the correlations between legislative and executive. I also provided in-depth description of the correlation between the government and parties comprising it, and how this correlation impacts the subject matter of this dissertation. This excerpt presents the characteristics of the relation between the intensity of patronage-clientelistic practices and the variability of specific elements inside of a political system, in particular a party one. For clarity purposes, I divided the chapter into two sub-chapters: ‘Party government’ and *Patronage and Clientelism vs ‘party government’.*

The third chapter of the dissertation is titled *The Model of Party Rule in Poland*. This chapter was also divided into two sub-parts: ‘Party government’, *patronage and clientelism in East-Central Europe* and ‘Party government’, *patronage and clientelism in the Third Polish Republic*. The research questions are: *Has the phenomenon of ‘party government’ formed in Poland, and if yes, what its scope is, how it has transformed during the political system changes and how it is influenced by the elements of a given system? Have other countries in the region also undergone a similar process? Do patronage-clientelistic practices occur in Poland, and if yes, what the examples are?* While analyzing the condition of party government in this chapter, I endeavored to emphasize the path which Poland took during the post-transformation period. The examples of countries like the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Russia and Ukraine helped presenting the condition of ‘party government’ and comparing it to the Third Polish Republic. The chapter presents a meticulous analysis of Polish system solutions in recent years, and which influenced party system and ‘party government’. I managed to prove that ‘party government’ can develop in Polish constitutional conditions. Electoral system, the relation between legislative and executive and the legislative structure were carefully examined. Moreover, I analyzed the changes of Polish party system which are of colossal importance for this dissertation. I closely studied selected coalition agreements in which parties stipulated the terms and conditions of their cogoverning. It is
clearly visible the way in which the correlation between the government – factions compose it are made, and in what way the parties ‘split the game’. At the end of the chapter I presented a few examples of patronage and clientelism in the Third Polish Republic.

The third part is solely devoted to the analysis of the phenomenon of penetration of institutions of power by political parties. It is divided into three chapters: **chapter four** – Attempts to make Constitutional Tribunal party dependent (divided into hour sub-chapters: Dilemmas connected with the procedure of appointing the judges of the Constitutional Tribunal, Dilemmas connected with appointing the President and Vice-President of the Constitutional Tribunal, Examples of elections of the judges of Constitutional Tribunal in the period between 1985-2012, Elections of Judges of Constitutional Tribunal in 2015. Political and legal crisis connected with CT), **chapter five** – Attempts to make managerial positions in intelligence agencies party dependent (sub-chapters: Urząd Ochrony Państwa [State Protection Office], Agencja Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego [Internal Security Agency], Agencja Wywiadu [Foreign Intelligence Agency], Centralne Biuro Antykorupcyjne [Central Anticorruption Bureau], Wojskowe Służby Informacyjne [Military Information Services], Służba Wywiadu Wojskowego [Military Intelligence Service], Służba Kontrwywiadu Wojskowego [Military Counterintelligence Service], Minter-Coordinator in charge of Intelligence Agencies) and **chapter six** titled Attempts to make the positions of President of the National Bank of Poland and Monetary Policy Council party dependent (this chapter consists of three sub-chapters: The form of electing the President of the National Bank of Poland and members of the Monetary Policy Council; Examples of ‘party’ elections of the President of the National Bank of Poland and Examples of ‘party’ elections of members of the Monetary Policy Council.) In all of the chapters belonging to this part of the dissertation I provided description of the election procedures for each of the positions and I analyzed party rivalry accompanying this personal appointment. Ergo, all research questions in this part were the same: Using what methods do political parties attempt to push through their candidates for positions which by definition should be party un-biased? In what ways are those attempts facilitated by existing election procedures for given positions?

The final stage of the research on account of its subject matter and adopted hypothesis was conducted at a special moment. For the first time in the history of the Third Republic of Poland after the parliamentary elections in 2015 we have a government whose parliamentary base is formed by one faction. Apart from members of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice) party, there PiS parliamentary club consists of more members form other factions (Solidarna Polska [Solidary Poland] of Zbigniew Ziobro and Polska Razem Zjednoczona
Prawica [Poland Together United Right]). However, the vast majority are MPs and senators of the party of Jaroslaw Kaczyński. Besides, politicians from those smaller parties belong to one parliamentary club of Law and Justice, and they started from common list in the elections. The phenomenon of ‘party government’ is visible now like any time before in the political system of the Third Republic of Poland, and the penetration of state institutions by political parties has become almost standard practice. ‘Party government’ has not only become part of Polish democracy but also started to play leading role. It is clearly visible in the fragments presenting the recent events from November 2015 to March 2016.

6. Conclusions

The results of the conducted research lead to significant conclusions. First of all, the phenomenon of ‘party government’ has become a permanent element of numerous democratic regimes. In the places where the political system permits, ‘party government’ appear to be an essential element of the political system. Naturally, its scale and condition depend on other elements of the system. Nevertheless, in democratic countries without presidential or semi-presidential systems we can safely say about strong foothold of ‘party government.’

Secondly, ‘party government’ is not a negative possess as such, nevertheless it leads to practices which are not always commendable. Patronage and clientelism, practices in question, are the result of ‘party government.’ Their scale and intensity depend on numerous factors, and they need to develop along with party government.

The third conclusion is the fact that ‘party government’ is rooted now in Polish democracy. It was slowly developing since 1989 to finally take force in the elections of 1991 and 1993. The solutions connected with the political system adopted in the Third Republic of Poland facilitated the process, and the Constitution of 1997 basically sealed it. Until 2015 ‘party government’ acted within coalition government or minority rule. It was the end of 2015 that created situation in which the phenomenon of ‘party government’ can grow within majority cabinet based on one party, and in strictly talking – one parliamentary club. After conducted the research it is without doubt that the existing conditions will only enhance the positions of ‘party government’ in the coming years.

The fourth conclusion, which is the result of the presented herein research, is with regard to the penetration of institutions of power by political parties. In my opinion the specific and numerous examples successfully prove the determination with which political parties access state institutions. For years Polish parties through their representatives have
attempted to appropriate institutions which by nature be excluded from party influence. In order to aptly illustrate this phenomenon I used the examples of Constitutional Tribunal, intelligence agencies, the National Bank of Poland and Monetary Policy Council. Nevertheless, these institutions are not the only ones which have to struggle with the attempts to make them party dependent. The recent years have shown that this phenomenon has been vastly spread and enhanced its spectrum of institutions influenced: from Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji [National Broadcasting Council] to public media, to companies owned by State Treasury and other central institutions.

It should be again emphasized that from the point of view of the subject matter of the dissertation, it concluded in a very special moment. It is not only the beginning of ‘party government’ in the government whose primary composition constitutes one political faction. It is also a moment of a very blatant attempt to make state institutions party dependent. The commotion around the Constitutional Tribunal has turned into a conflict of constitutional nature which has been widely discussed and analyzed by the worldwide public opinion. Due to this fact this element of this dissertation will need to be subjected to further consideration.