

Anna Paczeńskiak

Europeizacja Polskich Partii Politycznych
[Europeanization Of Polish Political Parties]

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Year 2014 was full of numerous publishing houses and events that sum up the decade of Polish EU membership. This anniversary also concerns the presence of Polish MPs in the EU Parliament, and domestic political parties as a fully legal members of party structures on the European level. Have Polish political parties been changed within this period under the influence of EU membership? This question seems to constitute the largest problem investigated in the habilitation thesis of Anna Paczeńskiak from the University of Wrocław titled *Europeizacja polskich partii politycznych* (Europeanization of Polish Political Parties). This is undoubtedly a very interesting, comprehensible and valuable analysis which confirms the author's reputation as one of the leading Polish researcher of europeisation or European integration and political parties in general. She earned this reputation with the entire series of earlier publications, analysing different aspects of europeisation, therefore, the high level of the reviewed publication is not surprising.

The title Europeanization is a very unclear term. The author is fully aware of that fact. Parties are subject to many different influences and the key research difficulty is separation of Europeanisation effects from all other potential sources of party change. The paper starts with a general definition of europeanization understood as transformation of national political parties under the impact of European integration, especially as 'response to changing external surroundings, leading to specific internal results' (p. 228). The Europeanization of a given party is independent of its attitude towards European integration and does not mean that it becomes a supporter of integration (pro-integrative). The authors also provide that from the point of view

of the same parties, the Europeanisation is a 'process boiling down to management performed by party elites, dynamics which is subject to their full control' (p. 44).

The work focuses on three areas of Europeanisation understood in such a manner: structural-organizational, program and cultural. The most interesting I found the cultural dimension of europeanization, in the analysis of which, the author focuses on the potential impact of MEPs on other party members, both as a source of knowledge of Europe and added value as well as potential source of problems (e.g. connected with maintenance of internal unity, including divisions). In the conclusion, she notices a small impact of MEPs as 'agents' for europeanization of their parties as well as, in general, lack of transfer of European cultural patterns to the national level. Referring to all three dimensions, the author notices that the 'traditional party structure is not easily subject to erosion and the observed adaptation changes have a superficial, but probably permanent, nature' (p. 229).

The main advantages of the book are mainly adoption as a basis and effective use of a range of theoretical concepts in the scope of political science or European studies which deserves acknowledgement due to the fact, justly observed by the author on p. 33, that 'the dominant dimension of the analysis of europeanization is the empirical approach, rarely rooted in and supported with a theoretical basis'. The author has fully and efficiently used the accomplishments of the Polish and foreign science (both English and French) as well as collected valuable empirical material based on, e.g. survey study (47 respondents) conducted by her as well as 20 individual in-depth interviews among elites of four Polish political parties (cf. nevertheless below). I also very liked the placement of detailed clarifications regarding every selections and methodological dilemmas which is very rarely visible in the Polish literature.

It seems that with maintenance of very high general evaluation of work, several points which can be a point of departure for further considerations and reflections can be pointed out. Below, I would like to mention only one of them. The author selected four Polish political parties as cases to be analysed: PO, PiS, SLD and PSL. The period of analysis included years 2001-2013. This decision is justified in chapter II and III mainly through relevance of the aforementioned parties in the Polish parliamentary-office system and not through fulfilment or lack of fulfilment, on their side, of certain features useful for the analysis of the phenomenon of europeanization. This leads to the question of specific results that would be brought by the analysis of the parties which, in the referendum of year 2003, openly called for voting 'against', i.e. LPR and Samoobrona. As the author justly notices, quoting the papers of Claudio Radelli, that if europeanization can also consist in active opposition towards Union institutions and regulations, then, it is also worth to focus on the analysis of europeanization of parties which are clearly euro-sceptical.

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