

Federalist Concepts in Polish Political Thought on the Background of European Integration Ideas

Abstract:

The ideas of federation and integration were of the highest importance in the European and especially Polish political thought. Ancient Greeks initially conceived those ideas in the early classical period. At that time, these ideas were implemented in the form of association of polis (states) and religious associations of states, called “amphictyonies.” Greek ideas were later continuously developed in the Middle Ages. During that period, the idea of Christian universalism became political. It resulted in the enhancement of integration principles of European political thought. Already then, during the Carolinian period, Charles the Great tried to restore the Roman Empire in a partially new and distinct form. His doctrinal assumptions were later realized in practice by the early German Empire.

Polish political thought is also to be found in the West European integration currents already since the Piast era. But the idea of integration reached its theoretical and practical maturity during the Jagiellonian period. Polish principles of the political integration referred strongly to the Roman solutions. In general, those principles were based on the estate civil society, Christianity as the axiological foundation and common legal system which maintained regional separateness. These ideas and principles were always important components of Polish political thought and still are up to modern times. These principles are visible in the theoretical assumptions of Polish political parties of the 19th and 20th centuries, and among some Polish political writers of the 21st century.

Under the influence of civilizational and social changes in the world, Europe and Poland, some theoretical assumptions of integrational concepts have changed, among others: the notion of civil society, as well as the content of concepts like federation, confederation, and superpower. Likewise, the conceptualization of relationships between politics, economy, and the axiological system also evolved. However, core assumptions of the integration have been preserved in European and Polish political thought, which can be seen in the contemporary politics of Poland. Integration of Central Europe is a more complex and specific question. Practical implementation of it begs distinct theoretical considerations.

Keywords: European political thought, Polish political thought, ideology, and political praxis, integration, federalism, universalism, civil society, Jagiellonian Idea, Central Europe.