

Intra-Party Democracy and Experience Gained During the First Czechoslovak Republic on the Example of the Agrarian Party

Abstract and keywords

The author investigates the topic of intra-party democracy during the First Czechoslovak Republic. He focuses primarily on the Agrarian Party. To be specific, he examines internal structure of the Agrarian Party and its compliance with the principles of intra-party democracy. He also carries out an analysis of legal environment of the First Republic with respect to the regulation of political parties and evaluates its potential impacts on intra-party democracy of political parties of the time.

In Part One of the thesis, the author describes the internal situation in the Agrarian Party. He explores all the areas of the party's activities, namely in the order they are addressed in the organisational rules. The author takes a closer look at the greatest leaders of the party, intra-party disputes or political situation of the party in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. In chapters dedicated to the Agrarian Party, information is provided to which theoretical concepts are applied by the author later on.

Part Two deals with the legislation applicable to political parties in the First Republic. The author considers it inadequate. Therefore, the author analyses mainly the related legislation, applied in many ways to political parties. The author looks into the details of the federal and electoral law. He provides a thorough analysis of the case law of the Supreme Administrative and Electoral Court of the First Republic, which was crucial for the existence and functioning of political parties at that time. Special attention is paid to the law on the suspension of activities and dissolution of political parties. The aim of this part of the thesis is to illustrate legal conditions governing the existence of political parties in the First Republic as well as their potential effects on intra-party democracy in those days.

In Part Three the author focuses on political science concepts related to internal functioning of the parties in general and intra-party democracy in particular. The political parties are viewed through the lens of their typology, and conclusions arrived by Maurice Duverger are described in detail. While the current approach to intra-party democracy is explained in the thesis through the opinions of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, the historical approach is demonstrated for example by the viewpoints of Edvard Beneš and other authors. This part of the thesis aims not only to present different approaches to intra-party democracy and possibilities of its investigation, but above all to evaluate the conclusions of the first two parts of the thesis from this perspective.

intra-party democracy, Agrarian Party, The First Czechoslovak Republic