The Process of Forming a Party System in Belarus and Ukraine in the early 1990s. A Comparative Perspective

The article is devoted to the process of forming a party system in Belarus and Ukraine during the early 1990s. The two nations share both a history and economic and cultural determinants which distinguish them from amongst the other states of the Eastern bloc.

Besides the many similarities, the formation of political parties in Belarus and Ukraine took a different course. The difference can be discerned in the genesis of the activation of socio-political life and the emergence and institutionalisation of social movements, namely the Belarusian People’s Front and the People’s Movement of Ukraine, respectively, as well as in their relations with the communist authorities.

The characteristic features related to the course of the post-communist transformation influenced the way in which the political scene was shaped in the two countries. In both of them, the party groupings originated either in the social movements or in the communist party. The current political system in these states springs directly from the struggles between the political actors who were active in the early 1990s.