Liberal and communitarian civic orientation in Poland as antagonistic concepts of the moral community. Do they imply different patterns of social and political commitment?

Abstract: Liberal and communitarian orientation refers to different concepts of the relationships linking citizens with the political community. A significant proportion of Poles combine their various elements, but both orientations are antagonistic in the prototype form. Earlier studies have shown that the distinction between liberalism vs. communitarianism was one of the critical dimensions of the Polish socio-political polarization. These two different concepts of the community imply two sets of hypotheses concerning their moral justifications and specific patterns of civic engagement. The hypotheses were verified in two survey studies conducted on large nationwide samples (N = 710 and N = 1477). Study 1 has shown that the hypothesized liberal orientation's embedding in individualizing moral values found empirical support only for the code of Liberty/Oppression. On the other hand, communitarian orientation turned out to be positively related not only to all components of binding moral values (Ingroup loyalty, Authority, Sanctity) but also to some individualizing moral values (Care, Fairness). Pattern of relationships with moral values largely explains the differences observed in study 2. In this study liberals are better at unconventional activity, which consists in exerting direct pressure on various groups of decision-makers. Communitarianism is more often expressed in helping and cooperation at the local or neighborhood community level. People with a liberal mindset want to be active when they perceive a threat to personal freedoms, human rights, tolerance, and socio-cultural diversity. Communitarians want to protect/cultivate traditional values and the welfare of the local and national community. For both orientations, competing values - liberal or communitarian - seem not even minimally worthy of public involvement.

Keywords: liberalism and communitarianism, individualizing and binding moral values, political participation, civic involvement

INTRODUCTION

The creation of democratic political community is aimed at collective pursuit of the common good. As an emanation of such a community, the state arises due to the self-organization of citizens who want a certain form of public institutions and social relations. Cognitive representations of the democratic political community may differ in concepts of citizenship and the state's role toward the citizen. These alternative concepts can be competitive or even antagonistic to each other because they derive from different worldviews. Moreover, under favorable conditions, competition between them may lead to deep conflicts and intergroup divisions (c.f., Haidt, 2012; Reykowski, 2020).

Liberal vs communitarian orientation as a source of socio-political polarization

The conflict over the shape of the political community, resulting in a robust socio-political division, can be observed in today's Poland. In recent years, extensive empirical arguments have emerged, showing that two strongly competing concepts have dominated Polish disputes over the political community: liberal and communitarian (Radkiewicz & Skarżyńska, 2019; Radkiewicz & Jarmakowski-Kostrzanowski, 2021). Political representatives and supporters of both concepts refer to the fundamental norms and principles of civil society. Behind the declared attention to democracy, there are different visions of the relationships linking a citizen and the political community.
According to the liberal model, a citizen is someone free and morally autonomous. Individual interests should take priority over the interests of the group/community. Liberals postulate building a robust civil society as the only effective counterbalance to the natural advantage of the state in relations with the citizen. In the liberal model, society should consist of people of different beliefs, world views, and religious denominations, coexisting thanks to obeying the law and respecting each other's subjectivity. A citizen has inherent rights to him by the very fact of 'being a human' (human and civil rights). These rights cannot be subordinated to the society understood as a social being having its own developmental goals. In the liberal vision, civil society is a community that protects (and increases) its members' freedom, property, and security (Walzer, 1990; Etzioni, 1993; Szacki, 1997; Wnuk-Lipiński, 2005).

According to the communitarian model, an individual is rooted in a social group and formed through socialization. It cannot exist without being embedded in the broader community. A man deprived of community's norms, values, language, and culture would only be an undefined biological existence. The community is primary because it shapes individual’s identity. Society as a whole is oriented toward realizing the common good, which is primary to the individual's good. The public good should be seen as an added value - it is not only the sum of individual goals and interests. Communitarians believe that the condition of an individual's freedom is the freedom of the community in which one lives. Freedom understood in this way is based on the authority of law, customs, and traditions. Citizens should not only accept communal values and norms but also care for the common good (MacIntyre, 1981; Taylor, 1989; Śpiewak, 2004; Szahaj, 2006).

The strong separation of the PiS electorate from the other electorates results from the combination of a high level of communitarian orientation (CO) and a low level of liberal orientation (LO). Such a combination means the striving for an internally integrated and relatively homogeneous political community in which liberal concepts of the social order should be strictly minimized. On the other hand, the electorate of opposition parties turned out much more diverse - both on the axis of liberalism and communitarianism.

THE CURRENT STUDY

One can define collective political actions as coordinated protests of people linked by common goals and bonds of solidarity, taking place in interactions with the elite and the authorities (Tarrow, 1994). According to political scientists, over the last few decades, this type of collective activity, mainly manifested as long-term social movements, began to replace traditional forms of politics in many Western democracies (e.g., Klandermans & van Stekelenburg, 2013; Lilla, 2017). Increasingly, social movement organizations have been replacing political parties as intermediaries representing the interests of citizens in their collective disputes with the state.

Although in the socio-political realities of contemporary Poland, the process of political appreciation of various forms of collective action is not yet strongly developed, one can also see its manifestations in this country. Over 2010-2022, there were at least four examples of civic movements that could organize mass demonstrations or social protests: the Independence March Association, the Clubs of "Gazeta Polska" the Democracy Defense Committee, and the Women's Strike. It is very characteristic that the first two affirmed the so-called traditional/national values (national independence, the unique role of the Catholic religion in Polish history, and nurturing national tradition/identity). In contrast, the third and fourth were initiated to defend the characteristic values of liberal democracy (defense of the constitution and the rule of law, women's right to abortion). This observation suggests that the dispute between the liberal and communitarian preferences are essentially mutually exclusive (c.f. Appendix A). Therefore, one should expect that their measurements will be negatively correlated. However, in subsequent studies, positively correlated results were consistently obtained (mean correlation coefficient approx. 0.35). Leaving aside methodological flaws in the measurement, it seems that most respondents consider at least some liberal and communitarian beliefs as complementary. It is also worth remembering that, according to some researchers, the quintessence of centrist orientation is the ability to appropriately prioritize and reconcile many, often contradictory or competing values (cf. Tetlock, 1986).

Even if both orientations are not empirically contradictory, the results presented in Figure 1 prove that they can be considered one of the critical dimensions of socio-political polarization in Poland (Radkiewicz & Jarmakowski-Kostrzanowski, 2021). These data were collected in 2018 on a nation-wide representative sample of nearly 2,400 adult Poles. The most striking element of the picture seems to be the distance between the electorate of the ruling party, Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (44% of voters) and the electorates of other parties, including the main opposition party Platforma Obywatelska (25% of voters). The strong separation of the PiS electorate from the other electorates results from the combination of a high level of communitarian orientation (CO) and a low level of liberal orientation (LO). Such a combination means the striving for an internally integrated and relatively homogeneous political community in which liberal concepts of the social order should be strictly minimized. On the other hand, the electorate of opposition parties turned out much more diverse - both on the axis of liberalism and communitarianism.

**Figure 1. Liberal and communitarian orientation in political preferences**

*Data source: Radkiewicz & Jarmakowski-Kostrzanowski (2021)*

Liberal and communitarian beliefs are essentially mutually exclusive (c.f. Appendix A). Therefore, one should expect that their measurements will be negatively correlated. However, in subsequent studies, positively correlated results were consistently obtained (mean correlation coefficient approx. 0.35). Leaving aside methodological flaws in the measurement, it seems that
perceptions of the political community not only polarizes socio-political attitudes but is also a strong motivator of social and political commitment.

Previous research has shown that LO and CO are strongly related to some axiological motives described in Shalom Schwartz’s model of basic human values (c.f. Schwartz, 2006; Schwartz, Cieciuch, Vecchione & Daviddov, 2012). In particular, it turned out that a high level of liberal orientation is most strongly predicted by individualistic values related to openness to change (autonomy, stimulation, hedonism) and self-expansion (power, success). On the other hand, community values related to conservation (tradition, security, conformism) and self-transcendence (benevolence, universalism as concern for other people) most strongly determined a high level of communitarian orientation (Radkiewicz & Jarmakowski-Kostrzanowski, 2021).

As we noted, a significant proportion of Poles harmoniously combine various elements of LO and CO. However, there is no doubt that both orientations are intensely antagonistic in the prototype form because they imply different concepts of the moral community. In the case of LO, the priority of a “good” political community should be to care for the rights of individuals and their broadly understood well-being, and the community becomes something like a procedural and legal contract. Whereas when it comes to CO, the building and protection of the community come to the fore because individual existence can be realized and exceed its biological meaning only in the community.

The individual structures of motivational goals contained in personal values are certainly of great importance. However, the most critical source of natural premises necessary to build complex visions of the moral community seems to be moral judgments expressing what people consider good or bad, virtuous or sinful, praiseworthy or condemned. Therefore, based on the liberal and communitarian characteristics of a good citizen and community, we suppose that the moral values preferred by people with a robust liberal orientation emphasize the role of personal rights and the need to protect the freedom of individuals. In contrast, people with a communitarian orientation emphasize an individual’s obligations towards the community and insist on adhering to the norms that protect group cohesion. Moreover, as a consequence of such different ethical perspectives, LO and CO should predict different patterns of socio-political commitment and different understandings of the common good.

Liberal and communitarian orientation as an expression of individualizing and binding moral values

A look at the relations linking the preferred model of political community with various patterns of moral judgments is possible thanks to a relatively new theoretical perspective in psychology, postulating a naturalistic and descriptive approach to the problem of morality. It was fully developed in the Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) (Haidt & Joseph, 2007; Graham, Haidt & Nosek, 2009; Graham, Nosek, Haidt, Iyer, Koleva & Ditto, 2011; Haidt, 2012). The authors of the MFT see the sources of moral judgments in the development of biologically and evolutionarily determined, functionally autonomous modules of moral intuition that are automatically activated on the basis of affective processes. In the most extensive version of this theory, Jonathan Haidt (2012) argues that there are six foundations of human morality: Care/Harm, Fairness/Cheating, Loyalty/Betrayal, Authority/Subversion, Sanctity/Degradation, and Liberty/Oppression.

MFT-inspired research suggests that moral codes can be divided into two categories of values: individualizing and binding (Graham et al., 2009; Graham et al., 2011). Both have different functions. Bonding values regulate people’s behavior in groups/collectives and help to coordinate behavior in cooperative actions. This category includes loyalty that encourages the subordination of individual motivations to the collective; an authority that promotes respect for rules, leaders, and traditions; and purity that protects members of the community from physical and spiritual contamination, promoting virtues of chastity, righteousness, and self-control. On the other hand, individualizing moral values are based on the “ethics of autonomy” and serve to ensure personal rights and freedoms. These include the values of care (aimed to avoid harming others) and fairness (based on altruism and reciprocity). This category should be completed with the freedom that expresses resistance and aversion to people who want to dominate others and limit their freedom. As a rule, individualizing moral values serve pro-social behavior that is not regulated by belonging to a group.

The above characteristics refer to the moral-ethical goals of competing visions of the political community - liberal and communitarian. Considering the regulating functions of both ethics, we can expect that individualizing moral values should constitute the ethical foundation of the liberal orientation, and binding moral values should be the ethical foundation of the communitarian orientation. If so, LO is positively predicted by individualizing moral values (H1a), whereas CO is positively predicted by binding moral values (H1b).

Liberal and communitarian orientation as different motivators to public involvement

According to our arguments, both liberal and communitarian orientations are predominated by divergent moral preferences. LO seems to be primarily embedded in individualizing moral values, while CO appears to be primarily embedded in binding moral values. Assuming that moral foundations are trans-situational and have rudimentary motivational power (Haidt, 2012), LO and CO can determine/predict individuals’ interests and attitudes concerning the sphere of public affairs. Moreover, due to different axiological and moral bases, LO and CO should predict different patterns of socio-political activity, motivation to engage in public affairs, and concern for the common good. Below we present a series of hypotheses that concretize the essence of the expected differences.

Public activity. Socio-political activity may take conventional and unconventional forms (cf. Skarżyńska,
Conventional activity means actions conforming with constitutional order and falling into the limits of democratic institutions. In practice, it mainly consists in participating in elections (parliamentary, presidential, municipal) or referendums and, much less, in all kinds of local public consultations. Unconventional participation means actions undertaken without the institutional mediation to influence the political authorities or other decision-makers (e.g., participation in manifeststions, signing petitions, mailing politicians). Additionally, the repertoire of activities in the public sphere includes activities that cannot be classified as conventional or unconventional. Their common denominator is that people undertake them in the interest of local communities, often limited to the immediate social environment of an individual.

We formulated three hypotheses (H2.1) regarding the relationships of LO and CO with various forms of socio-political activity. Firstly, because both orientations fit into the broadly understood model of a democratic political community (Radkiewicz & Jarmakowski-Kostrzanowski, 2021), we thought both LO and CO should favor conventional forms of activity (2.1a). Secondly, compared to communitarians, liberals do not appreciate adherence to customary norms and conventions. Based on that, we thought that the stronger the LO, the greater the tendency to unconventional forms of activity (2.1b). Third, due to the predominance of moral values expressing concern for in-group welfare, we thought CO should favor activities focused on local issues and neighborly help (2.1c).

**Pro-libertarian and pro-identity motivation.** Suppose their moral preferences match the hypothesized profile. In that case, liberals, more often than communitarians, should be motivated to engage in public activities promoting/protecting social diversity (e.g., ethnic and sexual minorities) and individual liberties (e.g., secularism of the state institutions, soft drugs legalization). On the contrary, communitarians more often than liberals should be engaged in public activities focused on promoting/protecting local community (e.g., cultivating local traditions), national community (e.g., cultivating patriotism and national history), and so-called traditional values (e.g., "pro-life" organizations).

Thus, in the next set of hypotheses (H2.2), we expected that the stronger LO, the higher probability of involvement in activities aimed at defending individual rights and freedoms (e.g., protesting against the violation of national or ethnic minorities' rights) (2.2a). On the other hand, the stronger CO, the higher probability of engaging in activities aimed at protecting the interests and cohesion of the national in-group (e.g., protesting against the admission of immigrants/refugees) (2.2b).

**Concern for human rights and the common good.** Consistently based on their hypothesized preference profiles, we thought that the differences between LO and CO should emerge when the object of civic concern is, on the one hand, principled respect for human rights and, on the other hand, care for the broadly understood community (H2.3). Compared to CO, LO should be much more closely related to showing respect for human rights and tolerance for social diversity (2.3a), which, among other things, implies disapproval for repressive actions exerted by authorities (e.g., suspending civil rights). On the other hand, we expected that, compared to LO, CO should be much more closely related to sensitivity to violations of social and legal norms protecting the public good of the whole community. Therefore we supposed that CO would be a predictor of sensitivity to such public issues as natural environment protection, transparency of procedures in public institutions (bribery, nepotism), and violations of standards concerning paying taxes and using public services (2.3b).

**Helping people in need.** In the previous hypotheses, we consistently assumed that the moral codes of the ethics of individual autonomy predict a high level of LO, and the moral codes of the ethics of community predict a high level of CO. Moreover, as the authors of the MFT prove, individualizing moral values are more inclusive and universalistic than binding moral values (e.g., Haidt, 2012; Yudkin, Ganztman, Hofmann & Quoidbach, 2021). Concern for someone's well-being, fairness, or freedom is undoubtedly facilitated by emotional closeness to that person or belonging to the same group. However, familiarity, closeness, or joint affiliation are not necessary for inducing moral judgment/attitude. The motivation is different in the case of moral imperatives determined by the ethics of the community. In this case, the bonds of loyalty and respect towards the norms and authorities of the own group/community are the very heart of moral judgments/attitudes.

Based on such argumentation, we believe that the moral universalism of LO (priority for the well-being and rights of the individual) and moral "group-centrism" of CO (emphasizing the group goals of the community and its cohesion) should predict different patterns of helping in the public domain (H2.4). The liberal orientation should be the stronger predictor of helping people in need from an out-group (2.4a), while the communitarian orientation should be the stronger predictor of helping people in need from an in-group (2.4b).

**METHOD**

**Participants and Procedure**

We verified the research hypotheses in two online survey studies on the ARIADNA Nationwide Research Panel, which gathered over 70,000 Polish consumers. Participants in the panel are subject to verification and then participate in opinion and market research receiving a small payment. Every respondent receives an individual e-mail invitation to complete the online survey. Research in the panel is conducted using the CAWI method (*Computer Assisted Web Interview*).

**Study 1.** The sample in study 1 was composed of 710 respondents aged 18 to 65 years (51.4% females). Primary and lower education was held by 3.7% of respondents, vocational - 9.3%, secondary 33.1%, post-secondary - 14.5%, and 39.4% of the respondents had higher education. The overall mean age amounted to 47.4 years.
Place of residence: 30.5% of respondents lived in the countryside, 31.5% in towns up to 100 thousand inhabitants, 21.6% in towns above 100 to 500, and 16.4% in cities above 500 thousand inhabitants.

Study 2. Only respondents showing relatively high public activity were recruited to the research sample. In order to be included in the sample, the respondent had to declare that they had undertaken at least two out of nine socio-political activities in the last twelve months (the complete list of activities is below in the description of the unconventional activity measure).

The sample in study 2 was composed of 1477 respondents aged 18 to 65 years (50.4% females). Primary and lower education was held by 1.5% of respondents, vocational - 3.9%, secondary - 26.8%, post-secondary - 12.4%, and 55.4% of the respondents had higher education. The overall mean age amounted to 41.5 years. Place of residence: 20.2% of respondents lived in the countryside, 30.8% in towns up to 100 thousand inhabitants, 28.3% in towns above 100 to 500, and 20.6% in cities above 500 thousand inhabitants.

MEASURES

Liberal and communitarian orientation

The 32-item instrument developed to measure civic orientation is based on the assumption that within the broadly understood democratic order, one can distinguish two internally coherent beliefs about citizenship and civil society - liberal and communitarian civic orientation (Radkiewicz & Skarżyńska, 2019; Radkiewicz & Jarmakowski-Kostrzanowski, 2021). Among the criteria dimensions differentiating both orientations, the following four categories of beliefs were distinguished: civic liberty, citizen's identity, relations between an individual and society, and view of the state (the exact wording of the scale is shown in Appendix A). Internal reliability in study 1 and 2 amounted to alpha = .88 and .91 for liberal orientation (16 items) and alpha = .90 and .92 for communitarian orientation (16 items).

Study 1: Measure of moral values

We used the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ) developed by Graham et al. (2011) to measure five moral values: care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion, and sanctity/degradation. In addition, we used the measurement of a sixth moral intuition described by authors in later publications as liberty/oppression (e.g., Iyer, Koleva, Graham, Ditto & Haidt, 2012). Each of the six scales included six items: three on the subscale of moral relevance (response options ranged from 1 = not at all relevant to 6 = extremely relevant) and three on the subscale of moral judgments (response options ranged from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). Examples of moral judgments: care/harm - 'Compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue' (α = .77); fairness/cheating - 'Justice is the most important requirement for a society' (α = .72); loyalty/betrayal - 'It is more important to be a team player than to express oneself' (α = .69); authority/subversion: 'Respect for authority is something all children need to learn' (α = .68); sanctity/degradation: 'People should not do disgusting things, even if no one is harmed' (α = .73), and liberty/oppression: 'Everyone should be free to do as they choose, as long as they do not infringe upon the equal freedom of others' (α = .68). For descriptive statistics and intercorrelations amongst moral intuitions see Appendix B.

Study 2: Measures of socio-political activity and interest in public affairs

Conventional activity. Respondents were asked if they had participated in the last parliamentary, presidential, and local elections. They were then asked if they would participate in the parliamentary, presidential, and local elections if they were held next Sunday. The 6-item index was computed as a sum of affirmative answers. Responses formed a reliable scale (alpha = .90).

Unconventional activity was measured by a single question: "During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following?" with a set of 9 responses: (1) contacted a politician, government, or local government official; (2) worked in a political party or action group; (3) worked in another organization or association; (4) worn or displayed a campaign badge/sticker; (5) signed a petition; (6) taken part in a lawful public demonstration; (7) boycotted certain products; (8) deliberately bought certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons; and (9) donated money to a political organization or group" (respondents were asked to answer "yes" or "no"). The overall indicator of unconventional activity was the sum of "yes" answers. The sample included only those who indicated at least two activities from the list.

Local and neighborly activity. The respondents were asked if they had undertaken the following activities in their immediate surroundings in the last 12 months: arranging something for the neighbors (e.g., shopping); taking care of disabled neighbors; participating in cleaning up the area; participation in beautifying the surroundings; participation in arranging the area for games and rest; setting up a joint installation (e.g., cable TV, Internet); asking the administration and commune authorities for something together with others; drawing attention to others not to litter or destroy something; lending something to the neighbors. Responses "yes" to the list of 9 possible activities formed a reliable scale (alpha = .78).

Pro-libertarian and pro-identity involvement. We asked respondents to assess (on a scale from 0 to 100) the likelihood of their public involvement for 12 reasons, half of which we chose to be more important for the liberal or communitarian orientation. Examples of the reasons more important for liberals: "protesting against the violation of national or ethnic minorities' rights" "protesting against restriction of freedom of speech" and "defense of the rights of sexual minorities" Examples of the reasons more important for communitarians: "commemoration of important events in our history" defense of Poles living abroad against persecution by the local...
government" and "protesting against the admission of immigrants/refugees"

Concern for the common good. The respondents' task was to answer the question "How much do you care that ..?" concerning 12 issues divided into three categories: financial frauds and crimes (4 items; alpha = .83), environmental offenses (4 items; alpha = .82) and bribery and nepotism (4 items; alpha = .82). Exemplary items: financial frauds and crimes - "Someone pays less taxes than he/she should"; "Someone avoids paying for public transport"; environmental offenses - "Someone throws away rubbish and waste wherever it falls"; "Someone burns poisonous waste in the furnace"; bribery and nepotism - "For the money, a doctor admits private patients to a state hospital"; "The director of a state/municipal company hires family, friends or protégés" (coded from 1 - I do not care at all to 4 - I care a lot).

Concern for human rights was measured with two instruments. The first was the 5-item Repression Potential Scale (alpha = .86) developed by Marsh and Kaase (1979). It expresses support for the following activities of the political authorities: the police use of force against demonstrators, severe court sentences for protestors, making laws forbidding protest demonstrations, and the use of troops to break strikes (e.g., "The government by law prohibits all public protests and demonstrations"). The items on the scale have been re-coded so that high scores indicated anti-authoritarian attitudes.

The second instrument was the 5-item measure of human rights (alpha = .70). Examples: "Human rights are universal and binding everywhere"; "Our country should not do business with countries that systematically violate human rights" and "In fact, human rights are a body of fictitious laws that were invented by the Western world". In both instruments, responses were coded from 1 - I strongly disagree to 6 - I definitely agree.

Helping people in need from in-group/out-group. We asked respondents whether they would like to reduce, maintain or increase state expenditure for eight different purposes. The exploratory factor analysis revealed that the respondents' answers were arranged into two clusters of items, allowing the computing of two relatively independent scales. The first cluster included items related to help and care for people in need in their own country (poor, homeless, unemployed, elderly and disabled) (alpha = .71). The second scale was made up of items related to helping people from abroad (injured as a result of wars or natural disasters, poor people from the so-called Third World) and immigrants who for various reasons come to Poland (alpha = .77).

RESULTS

Study 1

The general research hypothesis tested in study 1 assumed that individualizing moral values favored liberal orientation and binding moral values favored communitarian orientation. Regarding the six underlying moral codes, we expected that LO would be predicted by Care/Harm, Fairness/Cheating, and Liberty/Oppression (H1a), and CO would be predicted by Loyalty/Betrayal, Authority/Subversion, and Sanctity/Depreciation (H1b).

Descriptive statistics for study 1 are available in Appendix B. In the entire sample, Pearson's r correlation between liberal (M = 4.37; SD = 0.60) and communitarian (M = 4.57; SD = 0.60) orientation amounted to .53 (p < .001).

We preceded the testing of research hypotheses with an analysis of correlations linking LO and CO with sociodemographic factors. Previous studies have pointed out that these relationships are relatively marginal and observable only for age. However, a detailed demographic analysis was necessary for a more realistic view of the studied social phenomena. We took into account the respondent's gender, age, education, and size of the place of residence. Indeed, the only statistically significant associations we found were for age. Since they were positive for both LO (weaker) and CO (stronger), we additionally calculated partial correlation coefficients, correcting the actual strength of the relationships by the covariation effect of LO and CO. Partial correlations showed that LO is not related to age (r = .01; p = .713), while CO significantly increases with age (r = .27; p < .001).

Hypotheses H1a - H1b were verified with several regression models having LO and CO separately as dependent variables. All models had a hierarchical order in which LO or CO (step I) was entered into the model as a covariant before the block of moral values (step II).

In initial model 1, aggregate effects of individualizing and binding moral values were introduced as predictors. The individualizing ethics predicted LO positively (β = .19; p < .001), while the effect of binding ethics on LO was non-significant (β = .05; p = .225). On the other hand, CO was not only strongly predicted by binding ethics (β = .45; p < .001) but also marginally by individualizing ethics (β = .10; p = .002).

Though regression analysis results were consistent with H1a and H1b, we noticed that the predictive effects of individualizing ethics could be strongly distorted due to the internal inconsistency of the global index. It was suggested by exploratory factor analysis and partial correlation analysis. They showed a high internal consistency of the binding ethics index and the inconsistency.
of the individualizing ethics index caused by the slight correlation of Liberty/Oppression with Care/Harm and Fairness/Cheating.

Based on the above analysis, we performed model 2, in which six first-order moral values were introduced as predictors. This time the regression analysis results were fully consistent only with H1b. All three binding moral values, Loyalty/Betrayal (β = .12; p < .01), Authority/Subversion (β = .23; p < .001) and Sanctity/Degradation (β = .20; p < .01) predicted CO positively. Additionally, it turned out that increasing CO was followed by a decreasing Liberty/Oppression (β = -.12; p < .001) and increasing Fairness/Cheating (β = .15; p < .001).

In the case of H1a, the only form of individualizing values that positively predicted LO was Liberty/Oppression (β = .38; p < .001). Moreover, the increasing LO was followed by a decreasing Sanctity/Degradation effect (β = -.15; p < .001).

Model 2 showed that Care/Harm, Fairness/Cheating, and Liberty/Oppression should not be considered compo-

Table 1. Moral values as predictors of liberal and communitarian orientation

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Note. ** p ≤ .01  * p ≤ .05  Δ R² - change in model’s fit over and above control variable  η² - effect size
nants of a single higher-order dimension. It is clearly shown by model 3, in which the individualizing ethics was split into two components: the combined effect of Care/Harm and Fairness/Cheating and the effect of Liberty/Oppression. The former turned out to predict decreasing LO (β = -.16; p < .001) and increasing CO (β = .20; p < .001). Whereas the effect of Liberty/Oppression is the opposite. It predicts strongly increasing LO (β = .39; p < .001) and slightly decreasing CO (β = -.13; p < .001). Overall, our results fully confirmed the H1b hypothesis. The internally consistent effect of binding ethics was a powerful positive predictor of the communitarian orientation and did not matter for the liberal orientation. Meanwhile, the predictive effects of individualizing ethics turned out to be internally inconsistent. Only the positive Liberty/Oppression effect on liberal orientation was consistent with the H1a hypothesis (additionally, Liberty/Oppression negatively but weakly predicted communitarian orientation). On the other hand, the combined effects of Care/Harm and Fairness/Cheating were the opposite of what was expected. They were negatively related to liberal orientation and positively related to communitarian orientation.

Study 2

In study 2, we tested a set of hypotheses according to which the liberal and communitarian orientations should predict different patterns of socio-political activity and motivation to engage in public affairs. The results are shown in Table 2.

The Pearson’s r correlation between LO (M = 3.99; SD = 0.75) and CO (M = 4.09; SD = 0.82) amounted to .32 (p < .001). Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for study 2 are available in Appendix C.

As in the case of Study 1, the testing of research hypotheses was preceded by a correlation analysis of relationships between LO and CO with sociodemographic factors (gender, age, education, and size of place of residence). Once again, the only statistically significant relationships were related to the respondent’s age. However, this time the positive relationship between age and LO turned out to be statistically significant (although weaker than for CO) also in partial correlation analyses. They showed a marginal positive relationship between age and LO (r = .09; p = .001) and a slightly stronger positive relationship between age and CO (r = .24; p < .001).

In the H2.1 set of hypotheses, we expected that LO and CO would have different patterns of relationships with various forms of socio-political activity. As argued, both orientations should be conducive to conventional forms of action understood mainly as participation in elections (H2.1a). Whereas LO should be more conducive to unconventional forms of activity (H2.1b), and CO should favor activities focused on local issues and neighborly help (2.1c).

Overall, the strength of the predicted relationships turned out to be very moderate but as expected. Both LO and CO predicted conventional activity (β = .15 and .18; p < .001, respectively) but only the former proved to be significantly related to unconventional activity (β = .17; p < .001). On the other hand, only CO favored activities focused on local problems and neighborly help (β = .25; p < .001).

The H2.2 set of hypotheses expected respondents with a strong LO to declare a higher probability of involvement in activities aimed at ‘pro-libertarian’ defending individual rights and freedoms (H2.2a) and respondents with a strong CO to engage in activities aimed at ‘pro-identity’ protecting interests and cohesion of the national group (H2.2b). As shown by the results in Table 2, these expectations were fully confirmed. LO turned out to be a strong positive predictor of the propensity to pro-libertarian activities (β = .48; p < .001) and a negative predictor of pro-identity activities (β = -.33; p < .001). In the case of CO the pattern of results was exactly the opposite - negative for pro-libertarian (β = -.28; p < .001) and positive for pro-identity (β = .31; p < .001) activities.

In the H2.3 set of hypotheses, we expected that LO would be a more influential than CO positive predictor of the anti-authoritarian tolerance for social diversity and principal attitudes toward protecting human rights (H2.3a). On the other hand, we supposed that CO would be a more influential than LO positive predictor of the sensitivity to violations of norms protecting the public good of the whole community (H2.3b).

Hypothesis H2.3a turned out to be valid because indeed only LO positively predicted rejection of authoritarian polities (β = .39; p < .001) and principled support for human rights (β = .41; p < .001). Both effects were significantly stronger for LO than for CO, at p < .001.

The verification of hypothesis H2.3b was preceded by checking whether all three distinguished categories of threats to the public good (financial frauds and crimes; environmental offenses; bribery, and nepotism) are sufficiently strongly correlated. The magnitude of Pearson’s r-correlation between them ranges from .62 to .70. It can therefore be assumed that all three distinguished categories contribute significantly and equally strongly to the general concept of the public good. As for hypothesis H2.3b, the observed relationships were small but positive and statistically significant for CO and LO (with one exception). Both liberal and communitarian orientation predicted highlighting harmfulness of the environmental offenses (β = .14 and .19; p < .001) and bribery and nepotism (β = .15 and .20; p < .001). In both cases, the coefficients’ size differences were non-significant (p < .163 and p < .161, respectively). The only noticeable difference was that only CO was significantly related to the sensitivity to financial frauds and crimes against the public interest (β = .22; p < .001), and this difference was significant at p < .001.

In the H2.4 set of hypotheses, we expected that LO should be the stronger predictor of helping people in need from an out-group (H2.4a), while CO was expected to be the stronger predictor of helping people in need who came from an in-group (H2.4b).

Although the predictive effects are moderate, both hypotheses H2.4a and H2.4b have been empirically
confirmed. LO predicted helping people in need from an out-group (β = .21; p < .001), and the CO effect was statistically non-significant. Whereas, in the case of an in-group, the pattern of results was the opposite. Helping people in need from an in-group was positively predicted by CO (β = .25; p < .001), and the LO effect was non-significant. In both cases, the differences between LO and CO effects were significant at p < .001.

**DISCUSSION**

The starting point for the presented research was the general thesis that socio-political divisions observed in twenty-first-century Poland largely determined the conflict between two competing representations of the political community: liberal and communitarian (Radkiewicz & Skarżyńska, 2019; Radkiewicz & Jarmakowski, 2021). We have argued that both orientations refer to different moral regulations controlling large human collectives. Based on Haidt’s (2012) Moral Foundations Theory, we hypothesized that the moral premises of liberal civic orientation should be located in the domain of “individualizing” ethics (1) and communitarian civic orientation much closer to the “binding” ethics (2). Further we hypothesized that due to different ethical preferences LO and CO should predict different patterns of commitment in public affairs.

As shown by study 1, the empirical results primarily disconfirm the first hypothesis and strongly support the second hypothesis. There is no doubt that binding ethics is a strong foundation of the communitarian orientation, while it is neutral concerning the liberal orientation. On the other hand, the hypothesized embeddedness of LO in individualizing ethics was consistent with research hy-
potheses only with the code of Liberty/oppression. While moral judgments reinforcing personal freedom were closely related to LO and relatively not conducive to CO, the essential components of individualizing ethics - concern for other people and fairness - did not favor the high level of LO. Moreover, it turned out that individualizing ethics without the component of personal freedom even slightly favors the communitarian orientation.

The saturation of liberal orientation with the moral value of personal freedom and embedding communitarian orientation in binding ethics may largely explain the differences between LO and CO observed in study 2 (for summary see Figure 2). In light of study 2, decided liberals and communitarians are much more different than they have in common. The former find themselves better at unconventional activities, which generally consist in trying to exert direct influence on various groups of decision-makers, including politicians. In contrast, the latter more often help and cooperate at the local or neighborhood community level. Compared to liberalism, communitarianism is related to the greater emphasis on helping people within their own community, whereas liberalism favors helping immigrants or foreigners in need. Communitarians, unlike liberals, perceive the political community as an emanation of the national community. They need to symbolically emphasize belonging to a nation, which is a derivative of a solid national identification. Their civic activity is motivated by the will to protect/cultivate the welfare of the local and national community and the need to cultivate so-called traditional values (perceived as the foundations of the community). Citizens with a liberal mindset are motivated to be active by the perceived threat to canonical individualistic values, such as personal freedoms, human rights, tolerance, and social and cultural diversity. For both orientations in their pure form, competitive goals - liberal or communitarian - are not even minimally worthy of commitment.

Someone might notice that if liberal and communitarian orientation had no common part, the coexistence of decided liberals and communitarians within one political community would be hard to imagine. Fortunately, they also share some similarities. Elsewhere we showed that liberals and communitarians similarly valued democracy and considered it the best political system. There were also no substantial differences between them regarding understanding democracy in terms of civil rights and liberties or respecting the rule of law in state institutions. As we have shown elsewhere (Radkiewicz & Jarmakowski-Kostrzanowski, 2021), another similarity concerns the pragmatic and instrumental approach to the state institutions to properly fulfill their education, health, and social welfare obligations. Finally, we can recall some
analyzes from this paper suggesting that liberal and communitarian citizens are equally active in conventional forms of public participation (mainly voting in elections) and do not differ much in their care for the common good.

The relative coexistence of liberal and communitarian orientations within one political community may be determined by general mechanisms shaping human identity. They were conceptualized in the theory of social identity (cf. Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and the theory of self-categorization (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987). The former describes the relations between two spheres of personal identity: individual and social. Individual identity manifests one's need for autonomy and uniqueness - it is formed as a result of the processes of individuation, which leads to the separation of the Self from the non-Self. The basis for social identity lies in identification processes, thanks to which we can recognize ourselves as part of a collective. On the other hand, the self-categorization theory emphasizes that group categorization processes allow people to smoothly shift from the level of individual identity (autonomous Self) to the level of group identity and 'switching' different group identities.

The liberal orientation undoubtedly emphasizes the importance of individual identity, and the communitarian orientation strengthens broad group identifications. However, this does not mean that people must think of the political community solely in purely liberal or communitarian terms. On the contrary, our research shows that most respondents tend to combine different LO and CO beliefs. These people seem to represent the category of people described by Ervin Staub (1997; 1999) as 'emancipated'. According to Staub, self-autonomy is essential for the quality and intensity of relationships with other people and social groups. Interpersonal relations and various social identifications are a crucial, integral part of the Self for connected people. However, unlike people who are "embedded" in a group, they manifest a high level of individualism and self-direction. In turn, embedded people, due to the weak separation of individual and group identities, express mainly collectivist attitudes like susceptibility to submission to group authorities, emphasis on group cohesion and homogeneity, or a slight tendency to cooperate with people from outside the group. It can be assumed that they are characterized by a high level of communitarianism and a firm rejection of liberal values.

Following the terminology proposed by Staub, in terms of civic orientations, people equally strongly rejecting both liberal and communitarian orientation would be disconnected, whereas people with a high level of liberal orientation and rejecting communitarian beliefs may probably be called emancipated. The literature on intergroup conflicts (e.g., Reykowski, 2020) clearly shows that emancipated people together with embedded people should constitute the two most active and strongly involved extremes of the socio-political polarization in Polish society. Assuming that the moral preferences declared by both these groups considerably determine their ideas of the political community and their commitment to building it, the question arises: what moral values underlie these two antagonistic cognitive representations of the community?

Two irreconcilable faces of the Polish moral community

There are many studies in the literature showing substantial relationships between personal or moral values and the socio-political worldview. For example, Schwartz and colleagues prove that the structure of values is directly linked with political views and preferences (Schwartz, 1994; Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004; Caprara, Schwartz, Capanna, Vecchieone & Barbaranelli, 2006). In turn, the American research on the MFT shows that the conservative worldview is largely based on all five moral codes (the code of freedom has not been studied yet), while for American liberals only two are important - care for others and justice (Graham et al., 2009; Graham et al., 2011). Results such as in American studies suggest that in the liberal vision of a political community, only the good of an individual matters, and the good of a community is, at best, a matter of social convention.

It can be assumed that the American conservatives from Graham's and collaborators' research and Polish communitarians from this paper are pretty close regarding their worldview. Indeed, one of the main arguments for this thesis would be the striking similarity between them in terms of preferred moral values (positive relationships with the same five moral codes). On the other hand, there are surprising discrepancies between American and Polish liberals. The former highly value individualizing ethical codes (Care/Harm and Fairness/Cheating) characteristic of the ethics of individual welfare, and they are entirely indifferent to the binding moral values. On the other hand, for the latter (people with high LO and low CO), the imagined political community is not related to any of the five codes originally studied by Haidt and colleagues.

Regarding liberal orientation, its proper sense will be clear only when we contrast two historically closely related philosophical concepts - libertarianism and liberalism. Both grew out of the concept of freedom by John Locke and John Stuart Mill, which Isaiah Berlin (1969) later called "negative freedom" The libertarians and liberals parted ways in the early twentieth century. Libertarians have consistently rejected the notion that one's needs and living conditions should place a moral obligation on his/her social environment. Liberals, under the influence of leftist thought, recognized that most people will never be able to use the potential of their freedom and will not achieve complete freedom in striving for their happiness, without the appropriate level of interference and guarantees from the state (education, health care, financial security). The evolution of liberal thought caused considerable confusion in terms of terminology - American libertarians are often called "classical liberals" today, and in Europe the term "liberal" is often used in the same sense as "classical liberal" in the USA (c.f., Iyer et al., 2012). The differences between the egalitarian and libertarian (classical) forms of liberalism...

The above differentiation is necessary to clarify the dispute's essence over the political community's moral obligations. As we have noticed, it can be assumed that emancipated and embedded people are the most active in this dispute. Since LO is associated with moralizing only in the dimension of personal freedom, it seems that emancipated people (high on LO and low on CO) perceive the political community in strictly libertarian terms. Presumably, they attribute high moral values only when it guarantees the broadest possible personal and civil liberties.

On the other hand, embedded people (low on LO and high on CO) seem to moralize the political community (have moral expectations of it) in all possible dimensions, except for personal freedom. Their communitarianism is conservative-traditionalist, anti-liberal, and "nastalgic". It refers to the so-called traditional values being rapidly displaced from the circle of Western civilization by the axiology of liberal democracy. Philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, the most famous advocate of this form of communitarianism, claims that liberals are characterized by a lack of understanding of what the community and the common good are. Consequently, according to MacIntyre, liberals do not know what the homeland is either (MacIntyre, 1999). In the opinion of such conservative-traditionalist communitarians the world-view pluralism promoted by liberals, questioning authorities and rejecting divine laws (which are carried by religion) lead to moral disorientation and general anomie.

**Limitations**

Our inference about the moral determinants of different forms of civic commitment is indirect, as it is based on the results of two studies that combine the measurement of liberal and communitarian orientation. Direct empirical testing of the model of causal relationships between preferred moral values, civic orientations, and the sphere of specific attitudes and behaviors requires additional study. Moreover, we should notice that both studies presented in this paper were correlational. Accordingly, any causal conclusions drawn from them cannot be considered directly proven. The direction of causal inference results from the view well-grounded in literature, according to which personal values and moral judgments determine preferences for ideological orientations, and these, in turn, find their expression in specific socio-political beliefs and attitudes (Feldman, 2003).

**COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS**

Both studies were approved by the Committee for Research Ethics, Institute of Psychology, Polish Academy of Sciences. It was considered as compliant with ethical standards applicable in psychological research. The survey has been carried out by a specialized research company with internal procedures requiring verbal consent from the respondents. Interviewers informed respondents that the research is completely anonymous, aims to get to know their attitudes and opinions about various socio-political issues, and they can withdraw at any time. Then the respondents were asked if they agreed to participate in the study. The respondent's consent was only verbal (it was not recorded) and this form of consent was approved by the Committee for Research Ethics. The authors did not have access to any information identifying participant.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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**REFERENCES**


APPENDIX A

Liberal Civic Orientation

**Civic liberty**

- Human freedom is the most important goal of the civil society, no top-down ideas of 'good life' can be more important than freedom
- Civic liberty is the freedom to choose your own way / lifestyle
- Genuine citizenship is individual freedom to have your own life goals
- Only full freedom of worldview and morality gives the citizen the chance of genuine development

**Citizen’s identity**

- For me, as a citizen, the ability to make free choices is more important than duties related to social roles that I am fulfilling
- Who we are does not depend on our family ties, circle of friends or belonging to different social groups - if they were not, we would still be who we are
- To live well, you do not have to feel as a part of this or that city, country or national group
- Man is what he/she feels at the moment, and attachment to tradition and history is often an unnecessary ballast

**Relations between the individual and society**

- We are a group of private individuals who only share a conscious agreement to create a collective government
- Society is a great gathering of private people for which we cannot be responsible
- As many freedoms and as few social orders and bans are the best way to make ourselves come true as people
- Being yourself or being different than everyone is the best way to self-realization

**View of the state**

- The state exists on the strength of the will of individuals who have agreed to form a collective government
- The state is responsible for many wrongs, injustices and wars. International communities, such as the European Union, are a better way to organize social life
- The state should not engage in world-view/moral issues
- The state has no right to enter into worldviews and moral views of citizens, or to judge whether what people do privately is good or bad

Communitarian Civic Orientation

**Civic liberty**

- Freedom and sovereignty of the whole society is a condition for the freedom of individual citizens
- The most important goal of civil society is to form civic virtues that create a good, stable and fair society
- Real citizenship is a sacrifice of part of your time and energy for the common good, because only the well-being of the whole society gives you the chance to meet your own life goals
- Respect for such social values as authorities, law, customs, tradition - only this gives the citizen the chance for real development

**Citizen’s identity**

- People are who they are thanks to life in society and contacts with people
- It is hard to imagine a good life without feeling that you are a resident of a specific place, region or country and that you have a nationality
- We become who we are because we are members of society, we respect its achievements and strive together for the common good
- Knowing tradition and history of the community in which someone lives is a very important element of the awareness of who we are

**Relations between the individual and society**

- Our life is meaningful in a thousand ways thanks to traditions of hundreds of years. It is these traditions that teach us who we are and how we treat each other
- We are part of the society in which we live, so to some degree we should feel responsible for it
- Every citizen owes something to society, and society owes something to him/her
- Without the norms, values, history and culture that come from society, man would only be a biological organism and nothing more
**View of the state**

The state is a historically formed national community that gives citizens moral support and a sense of security. Even the best organized state will not survive without citizens’ patriotism. The state is much more than efficient courts, police and army - it should have a big impact on the economy and on a fair distribution of general income between all groups of citizens. The state should promote certain ideological values if they are consistent with the beliefs of the majority of citizens.

**APPENDIX B**

**Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations in study 1 (N = 710)**

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**APPENDIX C**

**Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations in Study 2 (N = 1477)**

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**Note.** ***p ≤ .001 * p ≤ .01