

Mateusz ZIELIŃSKI

University of Wrocław

ORCID: 0000-0003-1958-3683

Bonds not Claims. Political Representation as a form of Political Relationship¹

Abstract: In the article, I argue that Michel Saward's popular approach to political representation leads to its particularly problematic understanding as a potentially coercive form of political relationship. Drawing primarily on the experiences of feminist theorists, I argue that beyond analyzing the mechanism of 'claim-making', it is also ethically necessary to consider the possibilities and consequences of 'claim-breaking'. Situations where political representation is broken illustrate how even institutionalized forms of representation often stem from the emotional needs of specific individuals, which politicians cynically exploit. To illustrate this, I utilize and critically assess Saward's general explanatory model, analyzing the example of Donald Tusk's resignation from the position of Prime Minister of Poland to assume the role of President of the European Council.

Key words: representative claim, political relationships, representation

Introduction

The theoretical redefinition of political representation carried out by Michael Saward in *The Representative Claim* (2010) can be seen as an attempt to address the challenges facing representative democracy (see also Saward, 2006, 2014, 2020). It is also arguably one of the most widely discussed theoretical works in this field in recent years (de Wilde, 2013; Disch, 2015; Guasti, Geissel, 2019; Näsström, 2011). Saward begins with the assertion that we should try to 'understand what representation does, rather than what it is; to explore the effects of its invocation rather than its institutional embodiment' (2010, p. 4). Such an approach opens up new avenues for studying informal, non-electoral, or self-appointed forms of representation (Meardi et al., 2021; Montanaro, 2012, 2018; Willis, 2018). However, as I will argue, it is difficult to reconcile this approach with the vision of representation as a form of political relationship in which political subjects mutually recognize each other (Dovi, 2007).

I believe it is challenging to fully embrace Saward's remarkably insightful proposition because it does not provide a satisfactory answer to the question: what kind of political relationship arises is simple claimed? In the article, I argue that such a relationship is laden with a barely perceptible but ever-present threat, a form of veiled symbolic violence. To better illustrate my argument, I contend that in addition to Saward's proposed study of representative 'claim-making', we should also analyze the possibilities and consequences of 'claim-breaking'. This allows for a better understanding of how political

¹ The article is the result of the implementation of project number 2017/27/B/H5/00507, funded by the National Science Centre (Poland).

representation can be conceptualized as a form of political relationship, and what are the benefits and limitations of such an approach. I believe that among the many ways to envision representation, this approach has numerous advantages, but the crucial one is that it allows us to view representation as something we should *work on*.

To clarify this point, I employ a straightforward definition of political relationships as those that 'promote mutual forms of recognition,' based on Suzanne Dovi's work in *The Good Representative* (2007, p. 88). Dovi suggests understanding such relationships as aspects of democratic advocacy that generate recognition 'one that links the fate of democratic citizens' (Dovi, 2007, p. 147). In my view, the task facing contemporary political theorists is the necessity to rework key patterns of constructing political relationships in such a way that these relationships provide crucial support for marginalized groups.

The article has mainly a theoretical aim, but I agree with Saward that: 'All performance is situated and particular, and the study of performance and performativity of representative claims is necessarily the study of actual performances.' (Saward, 2020, p. 63). Therefore, I will critically investigate the claim-making approach and use it to briefly analyze the resignation of Donald Tusk, who relinquished his parliamentary seat and stepped down as Prime Minister of Poland in 2014 to assume the role of President of the European Council. I believe that studying the abandonment of an elected position will not only demonstrate the value of my approach but also contribute to a deeper understanding of the underlying factors behind the democratic backslide in Poland, making it a crucial subject for both theoretical and empirical studies.

The article consists of three main parts, excluding introduction and summary. I will begin with a 'benevolent reading' of Saward's claim-making perspective (Critchley, 1999), placing it within the broader context of the so-called constructivist turn in political representation theory. Then I will explore some 'breaking points' within his text, in order to demonstrate how he addresses the issue of threat and its possible justification. This will help me to further discuss the advantages and limitations of the proposed 'relational perspective'. Finally, I will present the analysis of the example of a claim-breaking in Poland and some concluding remarks.

Representative claim-making

Michael Saward's representative claim has become the most well-known expression of the constructivist turn in the field of political representation theory (Disch, 2015; Disch, 2019; Urbinati, 2019). Instead of focusing on the historically heavily debated 'principal-agent' framework and the distinction between 'delegate' and 'trustee' (see Pitkin, 1972; Severs, 2010, p. 412), Saward proposes a general analytical framework consisting of several elements: 'A *maker* of representation ("M") puts forward a *subject* ("S") which stands for an *object* ("O") that is related to a *referent* ("R") and is offered to an *audience* ("A")' (Saward, 2010, p. 36; see also Saward 2020, p. 55).

Critics argue that part of the popularity of this approach stems from Saward's ability to bypass the need for defining representation in the first place (de Wilde, 2013, p. 287; Schaap, 2012). There is also an ongoing debate as to whether the set of components in the claim is final (de Wilde, 2020; Decreus, 2013; Thomassen, 2022; Zicman de Barros,

2021). Nevertheless, the framework has gained significant recognition and has been effectively applied in numerous empirical studies (Severs et al., 2013; van de Bovenkamp, Vollaard, 2018).

On the theoretical level, Saward's main message is that representation must be performed; it is not something that simply awaits discovery and placement 'inside the frame' (2014, p. 11). In a more than metaphorical sense, representation requires the entire stage: it is not only 'inevitable that representation involves performance' (2010, p. 68), but it is also a performance in the 'theatrical sense,' one that 'it is both done and shown to be done' (Saward, 2014, p. 735; see also Saward, 2020, p. 54). The representation originates not as a result of formal elections, but rather as an outcome of creative artistic-like display of claim-making:

Political figures (and their scriptwriters and spin doctors and party supporters, etc.) are in this sense creative actors. They may well be 'agents', as representatives are conventionally understood, but equally or more importantly they are 'actors', makers of claims (Saward, 2010, p. 47).

Saward explains that the aim of his work is 'to place at center stage the idea that representation is constructed, and as a key part of that, also to highlight the necessary figure of the maker of representation' (2010, p. 16). This discursive shift is, according to Saward, crucial for ensuring a state of 'constant potential for any citizens to assert themselves as representative of certain positions without an immediate or stipulative ruling or assumption of its illegitimacy' (Saward, 2010, p. 166).

However, this seems to be ethically problematic since, as Mark Devenney correctly points out, such an approach fails to consider the ongoing material inequalities that fundamentally shape the ability to make effective representative claims (Devenney, 2019; see Celis, Childs, 2020, p. 72). The romanticised portrayal of politicians as theatrical artists also clashes with the reality of professional image producers and the political marketing industry, turning the concept of a claim-maker into a rhetorical figure with an ideological undertone (Compare Urbinati, 2019, p. 187). Saward fails to adequately problematize how the disparity in resources and power in the process of claim-making affects individuals and groups to whom the political relationship is somehow imposed. If representation arises from a performative event, at specific time and place, then its result is specific experiences and emotions linking actors and spectators. This raises simple but fundamental question: what kind of relationship emerges from such claim-making?

Recognition and misrecognition

At some point Saward argues that:

in principle representative claim is neither good nor bad. Representative claims can activate and empower recipients or observers, even if that is not the intention of the makers. Recipients are 'on the map' by being invoked in representative claims, even if an initial effect of a claim is a silencing one. (2010, p. 55)

Saward acknowledges the risk of silencing or misrepresenting previously excluded groups; however, he somehow justifies this by arguing that at least they will be 'on the

map' [sic]. Aylon Cohen defines this type of argumentation as the 'epistemological defence' (2023, p. 47), in which political representation is conceived primarily as a tool for uncovering the identity of the represented groups (see also Severs, 2010, p. 414). The benefit of submitting to this process is, of course, the inclusion of individuals or groups, their hitherto non-political corporeality, and previously unrecognized needs into the body of the political community (Rancière, 1999, p. 35). The cost, however, is the possible symbolic violence that is triggered as part of the process of 'adapting' the identity of represented groups to the existing political order. The epistemological defense of Saward's position thus implies an acceptance of the threat of violence inherent in claim-making, in exchange for the recognition of previously excluded or marginalized groups.

The question, however, is whether subjectification carried out in this manner indeed leads to political recognition, to inclusion as equal members of the political community. Lisa Disch suggests that there is a growing concern regarding 'how constructivists might sustain a nonfoundationalist epistemology while maintaining their political commitments to democracy' (Disch, 2015, p. 488). Similarly, Eline Severs and Suzanne Dovi advocated for the search for 'substantive-snapshots' as a basic form of universal criteria for assessing the democratic legitimacy of a claim, 'conditions that enable citizens to evaluate their representatives' (Severs, Dovi, 2018, p. 310; see Saward, 2014). The experiences of feminist theorists indicate that political representation, which is simply claimed, becomes problematic when we consider the quality of the *presence* of represented groups (Phillips, 1995, p. 1–26; see Celis, Childs, 2020, p. 71–72). In this context, Severs points out the lack of responsiveness in Saward's work, which she considers a crucial 'systemic indicator of the quality of representation' (Severs, 2010, p. 417). Strengthening her argument, one could say that Saward's theory prompts us to consider to what extent unwanted claim-making could possibly be a moment of misrecognition that directly affects embodied emotions and psychological states of targeted groups.

Saward's work helps recognize the importance of claim-makers in representative politics, but to some extent, his theory also reproduces a form of political *objectification*, reestablishing at the theoretical level the structure of epistemic injustice, which excludes marginalized groups (Fricker, 2007, p. 132). It follows a painful blueprint that was applied to various marginalized groups seeking recognition through political representation: It is not what you wished for, it is not what you agreed upon; it is abusive, but at least you are visible, you are 'on the map.' This overlooks the fact that representing someone without consent or request can be an act of symbolic violence that cannot be automatically erased by rejecting the claim.

Claim-breaking

The problem with Saward's theory does not lie in its adequacy – representation indeed often begins with imposed claims. The issue is that, at the theoretical level, it justifies the inherent threat within them. Dovi, in her work dedicated to 'good representation,' argues that:

To see the relationship between representation and advocacy as simply either a threat or a positive political activity is to ignore how democratic citizens need to

reflect on and try to improve the behavior of those who advance public policies on their behalf. And paying attention to the nuances of the activity of advocacy offers some important guidelines for evaluating democratic representatives (2007, p. 87).

The threat mentioned by Dovi does not constitute a legally prohibited act, and the task is not to prove the intent necessary to indicate a 'true threat' (Crane, 2006, p. 106). It is also somewhat the opposite of the philosophical approach that seeks to objectively determine the nature of the threat by appealing to general concepts such as natural rights (see Steiner, 1975). The threat here has a rather discursive nature as it results from a specific structure of power relations: (1) the ability to publicly represent others is a form of political power, and (2) in the context of modern liberal democracies, claiming this power without the initial consent of the targeted groups can be perceived as threatening. Therefore, a representative claim is always a claim for power, placing the represented in a position of subordination (Rancière, 2009, p. 13). This becomes particularly problematic if we assume that political representation, at some level, generates also a relationship between individuals. Saward's merit was shifting the question from what representation *is* to what *it does*. However, it seems that to grasp representation-as-relationship inclines us to take a step further and inquire about what can be done with representation – how to build a good relationship based on it?

In her study, Dovi suggests that political representation might 'promote mutual forms of recognition' (Dovi, 2007, p. 88). It is a form of political relationship that generates recognition 'one that links the fate of democratic citizens' (2007, p. 147). As a consequence, we must recognize that representation not only has an institutional character but is also subjectively experienced. The outcome of such endeavour will always be *subjective*, depending on the perspective and life experiences of the interpreter; *contextual*, requiring knowledge of the cultural and historical context in which the claim arose; *creative*, demanding imagination and the ability to engage with the symbolism and aesthetics embedded in the claim. It will focus on the past while looking into the future. Such analysis will, to some extent, be personal.

I argue that this is particularly evident not in claim-making but in claim-breaking, when a specific form of representation is disrupted. The idea of representation-as-relationship helps to open new perspectives on the dynamics of the relationships between the entities forming representation, but portraying them as inherently entangled in an ethical and emotional predicament is especially needed in crisis situations: it underlines that representation – especially when imposed – can be traumatogenic, and its impact does not necessarily end immediately with the conclusion of the representation itself.

Such an experience, although potentially unpleasant, prompts us to ask a serious question: Is political representation possible as a satisfying relationship if both sides do not actively *work on it*? Of course, it is essential to recognize that actions will be asymmetrical and dependent on the resources available to each side – this highlights the problem of the illusion of reciprocity in such relationships. However, such approach still opens up the theory of representation to a broader debate on the emotional and psychological well-being of individuals, questioning whether political representation can serve as a 'supportive system' for them, and how future representation can fulfil such functions. The idea of representation-as-relationship facilitates bridges between various

types of interpersonal and group relationships, forming a network of dependencies that structure our lives. Translating this into systemic analysis is challenging. Furthermore, there is no straightforward connection between the concept of representation-as-relationship and democratic values and norms. An attempt to prove the superiority of democratic standards in the process of forming such representation has yet to be undertaken.

From claim-making to claim-breaking

On 11 September 2014, during a meeting at the Belvedere Palace, President Bronisław Komorowski officially accepted Donald Tusk's resignation as Prime Minister in front of the gathered media. At that time, Tusk was the only Polish politician who managed to serve two consecutive terms as Prime Minister. The rule of his liberal party, Platforma Obywatelska (PO), represented an unprecedented stability in the Polish party system after 1989. However, during his second term, PO started to visibly lose public support due to numerous political scandals. Amidst a profound government crisis, Tusk announced his intention to seize the opportunity and become the President of the European Council.



Picture 1. The main moment of Bronisław Komorowski's claim-making

Source²: *Uroczystość przyjęcia przez Prezydenta RP dymisji Rady Ministrów* (2014), https://www.prezydent.pl/storage/image/core_files/2021/10/13/39ec186b19be0e5ae515d75c6ca6bec9/jpg/prezydent/articles-single-lg/o545811389.webp.

Komorowski, who not only served as the constitutional guardian of the state's stability but also was a former party colleague of Tusk, chose to present this as a form of

surprising... representative claim-making. Komorowski highlights the positive aspect of Tusk's decision and described the situation as an 'unprecedented event... A crowning point of 25 years of Polish freedom and 10 years in the EU... a favourable circumstance also for raising the Polish point of view on the most important issues... a great opportunity to act according to the logic of the Polish presence in the integrating Europe' (*Prezydent przyjął dymisję Rady Ministrów*, 2014). In other words, he presented his decision as a new form of the mission to represent Poland.

His performance changed the character of the event from a procedure formally ending Tusk's representation, to a performance delivering a new claim. It was performed in the theatrical sense as it was delivered amidst the splendour of the palace décor and the crowd of journalists (Saward, 2014, p. 725). We might say that: President Komorowski (maker) presented a fresh ex-prime minister Tusk (subject) as an embodiment of Polish presence in EU (object) to the whole nation (audience). Tusk did not openly support this interpretation, but neither did he denied it. He vaguely mentioned that his 'reason, and heart, and thoughts, and feelings, as they were and are, will be white and red' and focus on thanking his former colleagues and co-workers. As a subject, but not a maker, he only allows the narrative to emerge and to be maintained by others – above all by a sympathetic audience.

From a theoretical point of view undoubtedly the legitimacy of such change-shifting representation – linking Tusk elected by citizens ('hard case' representation) to Tusk elected by EU governments (non-electoral representation) – could be challenged since 'the constituency empowered to authorise and demand accountability is different from the constituency whose interests the representative claims affect' (Montanaro, 2012, p. 1095). Furthermore, favouring Poland over other EU countries is against the fundamental objectives of the President of the European Council office, of which both the President and the former Prime Minister were obviously aware.

But more importantly, such a one-sided narrative, presenting the entire situation according to the claim-making model, only masks the potentially painful experience of the people Tusk represented. It does not allow their voices to be properly heard. For decades, Tusk has been more than just representative; he has been a symbol of liberal Poland. It is crucial to understand, that in light of the increasing threat of authoritarian right-wing parties, the liberal spectators HAD TO accept the offered justification because left without any explanation they would simply be... abandoned. More than 300,000 people who directly voted for Tusk in previous parliamentary elections was deprived of their representative, without any form of consultation. Tusk's decision emerged during a period of general chaos when compromising wiretapped conversations of key politicians of his ruling party came to light. But at least, thanks to Tusk's 'extraordinary journey', Poland made its way 'onto the map' of European politics.

Nine years later, before the next parliamentary election, the media reported what Komorowski had envisioned long before: the successful return of Tusk to domestic politics resulted in increased support for the main opposition party. The way in which Komorowski presented it indicates his deep understanding of the necessity for change-shifting representation. But the whole process was ethically worrisome. Tusk's decision to abandon the post of Prime Minister, the role of the leader of the ruling political party, and his position as an MP has contributed to the marginalization of democratic representa-

tive politics in Poland, a process that later became the hallmark of Jarosław Kaczyński's semi-authoritarian partiocracy. The timid attempt to cover this with a story about his new form of representation seemed extremely unbelievable to me. But perhaps for many people, this relationship, thanks to this claim, survived.

Conclusion

The analysis of the structure of the representative claim became the basic tool of the constructivist turn within political representation theory. It helps to take a fresh look at representation as a 'general heuristic for understanding political reality' (Näsström, 2006, p. 326). The debate surrounding Michel Saward's approach has led me to the conclusion that while there is no single correct perspective defining what representation is, the dominant theoretical framework does not reflect the experiences of the majority of individuals who are not active makers of representative claims.

My main thesis is that political representation is a political relationship. I argue that, first and foremost, we must acknowledge that representative claims often start as 'threats'. This is because the ability to publicly represent others is, in fact, a form of political power, and making such a claim without the initial consent of the targeted group or individual may be perceived as a threat. But, more importantly, the defensive mechanism in this situation is the search for political representation that will serve the function of a supportive relationship.

In my work, I illustrate the opportunities and challenges that such an approach unveils. I indicate that, on the one hand, it primarily reveals the image of representation-as-relationship that we can and even should *work on*. On the other hand, it significantly expands the realm of challenges related to defining 'good representation,' opening up the theory of representation to questions about the care for the psychological and emotional well-being of the individual, which classical works tend to dismiss (Pitkin, 1972, p. 140). This radically changes our understanding of representative politics, providing a different perspective on the dynamics of relationships between the subjects involved in representation as entangled in – in fact – a problematic relationship.

To illustrate my points better, I discussed an example of political representation in Poland, where the main leader of the liberal political camp left the country to become the President of the European Council. As a result of this situation, an attempt was made to reconstruct his representation at the international level. This highlights the lack of proper theoretical tools for debating the responsibility of politicians who abandon their representations, but also raises the question of the extent to which weak political bonds and the liberal claim-making strategy contributed to the deterioration of the quality of democracy in the country.

If Saward's work serves as an example of a perspective that justifies representative claim-making, this article presents a radical perspective that challenges it. However, it does not do so solely for the purpose of criticism. In line with the main objective of this work, I firmly believe that to address the threat of violence generated by some representative claims, we must consider the potential inherent in representation understood as a political relationship. Without empathetic recognition, we run the risk of suffering

the consequences of what inevitably happens when individuals are exposed to threats without emotional support and the capacity to resist – they become numb.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization (Konceptualizacja): Mateusz Zieliński

Data curation (Zestawienie danych): Mateusz Zieliński

Formal analysis (Analiza formalna): Mateusz Zieliński

Writing – original draft (Piśmiennictwo – oryginalny projekt): Mateusz Zieliński

Writing – review & editing (Piśmiennictwo – sprawdzenie i edytowanie): Mateusz Zieliński

Competing interests: The author have declared that no competing interests exist
(**Sprzeczne interesy:** Autor oświadczył, że nie istnieją żadne sprzeczne interesy)

Notes: The photograph was obtained and used in accordance with the policy of the official website of the President of the Republic of Poland available at the following link: <https://www.prezydent.pl/dla-mediow/pobieranie-zdjec>.

Bibliography

- Celis K., Childs S., Kantola J. et al. (2014), *Constituting Women's Interests through Representative Claims*, "Politics & Gender", vol. 10, no. 2.
- Celis K., Childs S. (2020), *Feminist democratic representation*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Cohen A. (2023), *The inter-est between us: Ontology, epistemology, and the failure of political representation*, "Contemporary Political Theory", vol. 22, no. 1.
- Crane P. T. (2006), 'True Threats' and the Issue of Intent, "Virginia Law Review", vol. 92, no. 6.
- Critchley S. (1999), *The ethics of deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- de Wilde P. (2013), *Representative claims analysis: Theory meets method*, "Journal of European Public Policy", vol. 20, no. 2.
- de Wilde P. (2020), *The Quality of Representative Claims: Uncovering a Weakness in the Defense of the Liberal World Order*, "Political Studies", vol. 68, no. 2.
- Decreus T. (2013), *Beyond Representation? A Critique of the Concept of the Referent*, "Representation", vol. 49, no. 1.
- Devenney M. (2019), *The improper politics of representation*, in: *The Constructivist Turn in Political Representation*, eds. L. Disch, N. Urbinati, M van de Sande, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- Disch L. (2015), *The "Constructivist Turn" in Democratic Representation: A Normative Dead-End?*, "Constellations", vol. 22, no. 4.
- Disch L. (2019), *Introduction: the end of representative politics?*, in: *The Constructivist Turn in Political Representation*, eds. L. Disch, M. van de Sande, N. Urbinati, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- Dovi S. L. (2007), *The good representative*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden.
- Fricker M. (2007), *Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- Guasti P., Geissel B. (2019), *Saward's Concept of the Representative Claim Revisited: An Empirical Perspective*, "Politics and Governance", vol. 7, no. 3.
- Laclau E. (2005), *On populist reason*, Verso, London–New York.
- Meardi G., Simms M., Adam D. (2021), *Trade unions and precariat in Europe: Representative claims*, "European Journal of Industrial Relations", vol. 27, no. 1.
- Montanaro L. (2012), *The Democratic Legitimacy of Self-Appointed Representatives*, "The Journal of Politics", vol. 74, no. 4.
- Montanaro L. (2018), *Who elected Oxfam? A democratic defense of self-appointed representatives*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Näsström S. (2006), *Representative democracy as tautology: Ankersmit and Lefort on representation*, "European Journal of Political Theory", vol. 5, no. 3.
- Näsström S. (2011), *Where is the representative turn going?*, "European Journal of Political Theory", vol. 10, no. 4.
- Noë A. (2004), *Action in perception*, MIT Press, Cambridge–London.
- Phillips A. (1995), *The politics of presence*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Pitkin H. F. (1972), *The concept of representation*, University of California Press, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London.
- Prezydent przyjął dymisję Rady Ministrów* (2014), The official website of the President of the Republic of Poland, <https://www.prezydent.pl/kancelaria/archiwum/archiwum-bronislawa-komorowskiego/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/prezydent-przyjal-dymisje-rady-ministrow,15454>.
- Rancière J. (1999), *Disagreement: Politics and philosophy*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis–London.
- Rancière J. (2009), *The emancipated spectator*, Verso, London–New York.
- Saward M. (2006), *The Representative Claim*, "Contemporary Political Theory", vol. 5, no. 3.
- Saward M. (2010), *The representative claim*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Saward M. (2014), *Shape-Shifting Representation*, "American Political Science Review", vol. 108, no. 4.
- Saward M. (2020), *Making representations: Claim, counterclaim and the politics of acting for others*, ECPR Press and Rowman & Littlefield, London.
- Schaap A. (2012), *Critical Exchange on Michael Saward's The representative claim*, "Contemporary Political Theory", vol. 11, no. 1.
- Severs E. (2010), *Representation as claims-making. Quid responsiveness?*, "Representation", vol. 46, no. 4.
- Severs E., Celis K., Meier P. (2013), *Representative claims and beyond: A study of Muslim women's inclusion in the Flemish headscarf debate*, "Politics, Groups and Identities", vol. 1, no. 3.
- Severs E., Dovi S. (2018), *Why We Need to Return to the Ethics of Political Representation*, "PS: Political Science & Politics", vol. 51, no. 02.
- Steiner H. (1975), *III–Individual Liberty*, "Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society", vol. 75, no. 1.
- Thomassen L. (2022), *All Claims Are Representative Claims: Response to Tomás Zicman de Barros*, "Representation", vol. 58, no. 2.
- Urbinati N. (2019), *Representative constructivism's conundrum*, in: *The Constructivist Turn in Political Representation*, eds. L. Disch, M. van de Sande, N. Urbinati, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- van de Bovenkamp H., Vollaard H. (2018), *Representative claims in practice: The democratic quality of decentralized social and healthcare policies in the Netherlands*, "Acta Politica", vol. 53, no. 1.
- Willis R. (2018), *Constructing a 'Representative Claim' for Action on Climate Change: Evidence from Interviews with Politicians*, "Political Studies", vol. 66, no. 4.

Zicman de Barros T. (2021), *'Not All Claims Are Representative Claims': Constructing 'The People' in Post-Representative Movements*, "Representation", vol. 57, no. 4.

Zicman de Barros T. (2022), *Making Claims with No Subjects: A Reply to Lasse Thomassen*, "Representation", vol. 58, no. 2.

Więzi, nie roszczenia. Reprezentacja polityczna jako forma relacji politycznej

Streszczenie

W artykule wskazuję, że popularne podejście Michela Sawarda do reprezentacji politycznej prowadzi do jej wyjątkowo problematycznego ujęcia jako potencjalnie przemocowej formy relacji politycznej. Korzystając głównie z doświadczeń teoretyczek feministycznych, argumentuję, że poza analizą mechanizmu „tworzenia roszczeń” reprezentacji konieczne jest także etyczne rozważenie możliwości i konsekwencji „łamania roszczeń”. Sytuacje, w których reprezentacja polityczna jest zrywana, ilustrują, jak nawet zinstytucjonalizowane formy reprezentacji często mają korzenie w emocjonalnych potrzebach konkretnych ludzi, które politycy cynicznie wykorzystują. Aby to zobrazować, wykorzystuję i krytycznie oceniam ogólny model wyjaśniający Sawarda, analizując przykład rezygnacji Donalda Tuska z funkcji Premiera Polski, aby objąć stanowisko Przewodniczącego Rady Europejskiej.

Słowa kluczowe: roszczenie reprezentacyjne, relacje polityczne, reprezentacja

