

The peripherisation of the semi-periphery

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1. Introduction

A generation ago Poland was the Central European leader in the struggle to abolish communist authoritarianism, labelled ideologically as totalitarianism, advocating its replacement by liberal democracy. Now, however, it is difficult not to notice Poland's position in the avant-garde of an autocratic counter-revolution disassembling the key institutions of free society (*Poland's autocratic...*, 2017). Having gained the support of 18% of the electorate in the democratic election, the ruling right-wing party (PiS), referring to the will of the sovereign, destroys successive institutions: the independent judiciary, free media and civic rights, and even the natural environment. It isolates Poland from the international environment, quarrelling with its neighbours and allies. The government assumes that neither the European Union nor NATO have the effective means or political will to prevent it, even though the actions of the Polish authorities clearly violate the Union's democratic norms.

Analogies with the 1920s and 1930s as well as the communist period should serve as a warning that history can be repeated, although rarely in identical forms. It is therefore difficult not to see the analogies presented by Janusz A. Machejek (2018) between the way of dealing with the Constitutional Tribunal in contemporary Poland and in Austria in the 1930s, between the installation of the PiS's authoritarianism in Poland and Salazarism in Portugal, between the clericalisation of PiS's Poland and Frankist Spain, between the liquidation of the tripartite of powers now and the introduction of the doctrine of the uniform state power in communist Poland, between the PiS's and communist prosecutors' offices, between the television propaganda in the 1970s and in the second decade of the 21st century, between the PiS's verification commission for re-privatisation and the communist Special Commission to Fight against Abuses and Harms in the late 1940s, between marches of current na-

tionalists with burning flares and marches of pre-war fascists with flaming torches (Machejek 2018). In this way a of Poland also proceeds. It is moving away from the West much faster than expected (Sierakowski 2018b). The main symptoms of this peripheralisation and the ideas underlying them have already been outlined (see Rykiel 2018).

2. Populism

The electoral success of the ruling party, called ironically Law and Justice (PiS), and its high public support, have been traditionally explained by the category of *populism*. The nature of populism is the disappearance of the division into right and left in favour of the division into right and bad, i.e. friends and enemies, 'who are denied the right to equal treatment' (Sierakowski 2018b).

The victory of the right wing was thus explained by the disavowal of the issues of inequality and exploitation from the public debate, but first and foremost by the existence of 'the victims of neo-liberal transformation' (Sutowski 2017). It is worth noting, however, that after joining the European Union, Poland experienced a decade of economic growth, seen not only in macroeconomic indicators, but also in personal life experiences, including many supporters of the current ruling party (Gdula et al., 2017), and the party itself is the greatest economic beneficent among Polish political parties. This was accompanied by a general increase in aspirations (ibidem), which resulted, however, not in a sense of relative deprivation, but in a recognition of the active role of the state as an indispensable factor in the implementation of these aspirations. This was a reaction to the neo-liberal programme that excluded this factor. The support for the PiS was expressed by local communities peripheral spatially, but ones that did not lose their economic prosperity in the transformation process, and even appreciating material support for family policy (Gdula et al., 2017).

It was pointed out, however, that the PiS's electorate is not essentially popular. This party had indeed the greatest support among farmers and workers, but these groups are characterised by lower voter turnout than others, and therefore they are – despite their size – underrepresented (Gdula et al., 2017). The high PiS's electoral result is, therefore, an outcome of 'middle class' (ibidem) support, i.e. in fact the lower

middle class in William Warner's terms, although the support of the upper middle class was also significant but not overwhelming. Besides, people from the 'folk class' (ibidem), or rather the upper lower class according to W. Warner's classification, voted for the anti-system parties. This especially applied to young men (Gdula et al., 2017).

3. Neo-authoritarianism

In this context, the category of *neo-authoritarianism* was proposed as an explanatory concept. In this approach, the sources of the mobilisation of the support for the right wing are seen in the dissonance between personal experience and political attitude. Unlike populism, personal experiences are marginalized by political identification, which consists in such a selection of experiences that they fit into participation in the 'social drama' (Gdula et al., 2017) in terms of Victor W. Turner (1982). The political leader is the scriptwriter and director of this drama, and his supporters play the role of *ancien régime* victims – proud, morally pure patriots, pursuing their aspirations to control and rule (Sutowski 2017). The support for the PiS results from the gratification provided by participation in this very drama (Gdula et al., 2017).

The essence of neo-authoritarianism is: (1) the dominance of the party that won the majority of validly cast votes and on this basis considers itself *the* majority and even the representative of the will of the 'sovereign' over the 'minority', i.e. all minorities, 'aliens' and the weak; (2) the reduction of solidarity to one's own national community (Gdula et al., 2017), understood as the majority in the sociological sense. In contrast to classical authoritarianism, neo-authoritarianism refers to the 'democratic imaginarium' (Sutowski 2017), i.e. the voice of the people-sovereign as a mandate to the rule unlimited by law, including the constitution, subordinated to 'justice' as the emanation of the will of the nation (Gdula et al., 2017). Neo-authoritarianism also envisaged competitive elections, it cannot be ruled out, however, based on the experience of the 1930s, that as long as they are useful, i.e. as long as they form the basis for seizing power rather than the danger of losing it.

The three pillars of the PiS's neo-authoritarian offer include: (1) the counting with the elites, (2) belonging to the national community based on a different set of

aspirations than those typical of the middle class, and (3) domination over the weaker (Sutowski 2017). The counting with the elites, which can certainly be identified with the rebellion of the masses in terms of José Ortega y Gasset (1994), results from their corruption, immorality and alienation, which is the willingness to pay for their real, but more often imagined, harms, and thus a sense of moral superiority to the groups so far dominant, interpreted as a restoring of the moral order (Gdula et al., 2017) or, more strictly, the morally legitimised order. The belonging to the national community is based, as always, on the dialectic of inclusiveness and exclusivity. For individuals from the folk class, this affiliation is inclusive, because it allows them to gain a sense of belonging to the group of 'normal people' (Sutowski 2017), who are subjected to the rules of inter-group solidarity, but exclusive to the 'elites', 'aliens' and – philologically nonsensical – 'pathologies', with whom no sense of solidarity applies. Finally, the domination over the weaker, observed especially among the middle class, is manifested in a sense of pride and power against those considered to be morally inferior: refugees, women, the elite of the *ancien régime* (Gdula et al., 2017) and any minorities.

4. A façade mono-party regime

While the notion of neo-authoritarianism describes the phenomenon at the level of social content, at the level of socio-political form the concept of a *façade mono-party regime* was proposed (Siedlecka 2017). The system consists in the fact that institutions of the democratic legal state still formally exist, but their functioning is deformed, limited or paralysed by the actual actions of the ruling party undertaken on the basis of unconstitutional acts and even unlawful activities, i.e. statutory lawlessness. Thus, liberal democracy has already ended and has been replaced, with significant support from the Catholic Church, by 'a system of a single-party dictatorship that does not use terror, avoids the imprisonment of political opponents' (Niesiołowski 2017) and tolerates some areas of civic activity, but does not intend to give up power.

The parliament still exists, but the opposition is marginalized, because it is eliminated from the debate, sometimes even physically excluded from it. Instead of

the Constitutional Tribunal, there is an Unconstitutional Tribunal in illegitimate composition, cooperating with the party power to implement its plans. There are courts, but as a result of their leadership and judicial appointments being taken over by the ruling party and the disciplinary authority over the judges to a member of the government, the party minimises the risk that judges will decide not to follow the party's interests. Free elections are envisaged, but their result is influenced by officials appointed by the party, and a specially created chamber in the Supreme Court is an additional fuse. There is a constitutional principle of subsidiarity of the state and local self-government, but the competences and financial resources of the latter are systematically limited. There is freedom of manifestations, but the priority for using it and protecting against competition have groups supporting the party in power while those that do not are not only unprotected from physical attacks, but are also harassed by law enforcement agencies. There are civil society organisations, but the authorities only support the ideologically 'right' ones, while those critical to the authorities, or ideologically independent, are cut off from financing and denigrated and intimidated by propaganda, control and repression. The cadre's takeover of the institution of the democratic state protects the authorities against citizens' effective enforcement of their rights and freedoms. There are independent media, but the authorities cut off financing or repress them. They support the ideological media and nationalise public media, transforming them into the means of primitive propaganda and political indoctrination.

Democracy is being eliminated (*Produkujemy...*, 2017) because the government seems to have the majority consent to undertake such actions. Through the programmes of redistribution, the government makes citizens dependent on it, transforming them into satiated slaves, which the latter willingly consent to, without a clear awareness of the consequences of this consent, for sated slaves are the greatest enemies of freedom (*ibidem*). The ideological superstructure of these activities are declared 'Christian values' though their actions openly contradict them. And the great-grandchildren of the slaves as part of these values, 'no longer having real masters, are terribly frightened before the imaginary masters' (Hartman 2017).

Much has to change in order to return the situation (Siedlecka 2017) to the times of declining communism – with the leading role of the ruling party, including the slogan ‘the party’s programme – the nation’s programme’. The identity of the PiS’s and communist Polish states are still quite distant from one another, although the dynamics of the situation inspire no optimism.

5. Tyranny

Tyranny is another concept describing the phenomenon analysed herein. This is the tyranny of the majority in the sense of John Stuart Mill (1859) or the tyranny of the masses, which Marcin Król identifies in contemporary Polish conditions with the tyranny of liars and fools (“*Zapanowata...*”, 2017), and therefore with symbolic violence. It is a playing ‘on the feeling of security and the inclination of every person to evil’ (ibidem). It consists in preventing discussion, which must result in resolving conflicts by force.

The goal of the tyranny of the majority is the exercise of power itself rather than achieving any political goals by this power (Szubartowicz 2017). While democracy is not a moral but a political system in which citizens decide their fate, and the authorities follow procedures not limited to elections but also applicable to the manner of governance, in the case of the PiS government one is dealing with a situation in which the majority impose their moral views (ibidem). This is accompanied by a permanent lie, unheard even during communist rule.

In this context, the Minister of the Interior claims that the police are not to judge whether someone is breaking the law (Jałowiecki 2017b); they are presumably to follow the political orders of their superiors – even if against law. It is difficult not to get the impression that this is the case when the prosecutor’s investigation into the public hanging of opposition MEPs’ photographs begins by questioning the victims, the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister praise the march of nationalists and xenophobes (ibidem), and the abovementioned minister ‘did not see’ fascist excesses during this march. According to Karol Modzelewski, this conclusively indicates that Poland is becoming a police state. When this fact is understood by the majority, it might be too late (Jałowiecki 2017b).

6. Propaganda

Strongly ideologised political systems use a *propaganda* apparatus to strengthen their power. The role of the media is then to strengthen and praise party-government policy as well as to marginalize and ruin the views and actions of the opposition. The propaganda model for shaping public consensus contains five filters (Herman, Chomsky, 1988), which in the contemporary Polish conditions can be defined as: (1) size and property, (2) manipulating the advertising market, (3) access to information, (4) disapproval and manipulating with criticism, and (5) fear ideology.

The first of these filters includes both ownership and size. Private media ownership impedes the interference of state power in the content they convey, and the size of individual media companies is related to the number of potential recipients of the content being conveyed. Foreign ownership of the press arouses the temptation of its 're-Polonisation', which in the case of a US-owned television station would be very uncomfortable for the PiS authorities. This awkwardness applies even to the imposition of a financial penalty on the station for incompatibilities with the party-governmental version of the national news, because, on the one hand, punishment is to 'discipline' the unruly, and, on the other, it exposes the ruling party to conflict with its only declared and powerful foreign ally. The public media, transformed into party ones, although renamed as national, are the propaganda tube of the PiS, and their journalists are politically hired or fired.

The manipulation of the advertising market consists in the withdrawal of advertising offers of government agencies and state-controlled companies for the media representing the opposition-oriented political attitudes towards the PiS and directing these offers to the right-wing media. The same applies to subscriptions to newspapers and magazines by government agencies. This manipulation is important because the advertising revenues constitute a significant part of the incomes of media companies.

The possibility of conducting a policy of diverse access of various media to information is not particularly exposed by the party-governmental authorities of the PiS. At most, it is manifested in providing exclusive interviews to friendly media.

The expressing of disapproval and manipulating with criticism is essentially limited to the extreme politicisation of journalistic programmes in 'national' media, including the production of untrue, manipulated or biased information, with the hope that the 'ignorant folk' will accept it. More subtle methods of influencing the views of recipients involve the partial selection of participants in political medial debates, which are often more quarrels than discussion. In this context, it is not difficult to see a symbiosis between the media and politicians. The latter have information and disclose it, whereas journalists accept this information and transmit it to the recipients, but in the case of the 'national' media they do it uncritically, if not adoringly. The policy of more sophisticated disinformation in the form of fake news is conducted by foreign centres rather than by the PiS government. The PiS's anti-state billboard propaganda of 2017 for public money aimed at discrediting the courts as a third power was a spectacular exception from this rule.

The ideology of fear is widely used. The government's customary gun scare are the refugees from the Middle East, but the majority of Poland's neighbours and the European Union also serve in this role.

At the technical level, ten media manipulation techniques can be distinguished (Admin 2017), which, after a transformation of the original proposal, can be presented as: (1) distracting, (2) solving problems created by themselves, (3) grading of changes, (4) postponing changes, (5) infantilisation of the recipient, (6) concentration on emotions rather than reflection, (7) maintaining ignorance, (8) the cult of mediocrity, (9) a conversion of rebellion into a sense of guilt, and (10) in-depth knowledge of the recipient by the 'system'.

Distraction is a key element for control of society. This strategy is to divert attention from important matters by continually disseminating irrelevant information. Thus, the adoption of political control by the PiS over the courts at the end of 2017 was covered with tertiary information, e.g. the long-term alleged reconstruction of the government. The strategy of distraction is essential to prevent public interest in reliable knowledge. This is also the case for the interest of information portals in social gossip and 'sensations', e.g. which underwear has recently been unveiled unin-

tentionally by a 'star' unknown to a wider audience, although it is not the government that deals with littering the infosphere with such 'sensations'.

An example of solving problems made by themselves is the belittling, and indirectly even supporting, street manifestations of the extreme right, which serves as a pretext to increase repressive law, enforced, however, against real or potential political opponents of the appropriation of public space by the neo-fascist right.

The gradation of changes serves to protect against the outbreak of revolution, rebellion or riots, if these changes were introduced at once. When, on the other hand, electronic media were taken over, the Constitutional Tribunal was destroyed, the parliamentary opposition was calmed, the state-controlled companies were filled with 'our fellows', a purge was carried out among the generals of the Polish Army, the freedom of free demonstrations was restricted, the judiciary was politicised, territorial self-government was restricted, and a 'de-communisation' of local spaces was carried out through centrally imposed totems (monuments, street names, etc.) of the current regime, and the electoral code was changed, there was no revolution. At least not yet.

Postponing change serves to familiarise society with the knowledge that unpleasant changes are inevitable. Future sacrifices seem less real, and certainly less threatening. The PiS uses this strategy with caution. An example of this was the withdrawal of the ruling party under the influence of mass protests of women from the project of further restriction of – already drastically limited – rights to abortion. However, the promise made by the former health minister to increase expenditures on health care in the distant future has a different function in the tactics of postponing change.

The infantilisation of the recipient results from the belief that if you speak to him like a child, he shall react like one. Thus, when the rulers express and argue points they use the patronising tones employed to speak to children or the mentally ill (Admin 2017). It is difficult to resist the impression that many members of the PiS government communicate with listeners as if it was the speakers who suffered from the abovementioned ailments. The only optimistic element in this reasoning is the hope that it can only be the impression of the recipient.

The concentration on emotions is based on the use of emotionality as a technique to circumvent rational analysis and the common sense of the recipient. The use of emotionally charged speech allows for the subconscious instilling of ideas, desires, fears and impulses which the sender cares about, and on the induction of desirable behaviours by the recipient (cf. Admin 2017). The PiS's hate speech, parliamentary fights, the 'Smolensk menstruations' every tenth day of the month after the Smolensk aircraft catastrophe of 2010, and fascist marches under the pretext of the Independence Day are all good examples of this.

Keeping people ignorant enables easier manipulation of the foolish. Education offered to lower social classes should be as primitive as possible, to make these classes easier to indoctrinate. The historical policy of the PiS government, consisting in exchanging the ideologically 'unlawful' national heroes in textbooks and in public space for generally unknown ones who are 'ours', and the cultural policy of this government, deprecating high culture which requires thinking for one's self, for bigoted patriotic intellectual chaff are examples of such activities. And the *thinking class*, devoid of public funding, could easily be depreciated and marginalized by means of coarse propaganda.

The cult of mediocrity consists in the reversal of the meaning of words, slyly changed by swindlers, and in the pseudo-reform of education, which consists of preventing the danger of independent thought amongst students. When the idea of the elite is depreciated and conviction instilled that one is in the mainstream when one is stupid, vulgar and uneducated, the control over the 'ignorant folk' becomes easy. They may even appreciate, if not delight in, this perspective for some time.

The conversion of rebellion into a sense of guilt applies to *those still thinking*, who in this context will feel the discomfort of detachment from the 'folk'. The 'folk', on the other hand, should believe that they owe their failures to a lack of intelligence, ability and effort. Instead of rebelling, they will fall into depression and apathy. This cannot be assumed for all time as the 'folk' have been unpredictable.

The in-depth knowledge of the recipient by the 'system' is now possible even though the individual has no chance to get to know himself/herself. The techniques of big data use allow for the total enslavement of individuals. Some optimism is

aroused by the fact that the conservative government – facing the past and focused on resentments – will not be able to cope with such opportunities. The next government, however, may be neither so conservative nor so kind.

7. Dictatorship

An analysis of the notion of dictatorship also seems useful here. A dictatorship is the power of an individual or a narrow group beyond the actual control of society. Dictatorship is characterised by the use of violence against political opponents, lack of respect for civil liberties and freedom of constituting law. A mono-party system is not necessary in a dictatorship.

The opposition points out that the legally elected PiS government is not a dictatorship for this reason, but its actions are moving towards a system that could be described as a *creeping dictatorship*. Law is constituted arbitrarily – in violation of the constitution, without public consultation, and even actual parliamentary debate, hurriedly, often overnight, and sloppily. For example, for the draft bill on amending the electoral code, notified to the Sejm in December 2017, the applicants immediately brought a hundred self-amendments, and during the debate in the Sejm committee – a hundred further corrections to these self-amendments. Civil liberties are systematically limited. The opposition is subjected to restrictions on the legislative process and symbolic, although not yet physical, violence.

The process of moving towards dictatorship includes seven characteristic elements (Reich 2017). After certain transformations of the original proposal, these elements can be represented as follows: (1) exaggerating one's mandate to rule, (2) battling on critical media, (3) lying as a method of shaping public opinion, (4) pointing to 'scapegoats' of power failures, (5) deprecating the motives of the critics of the current authorities, (6) nepotism and (7) political criteria for the distribution of public finances.

The exaggeration of their mandate to rule, the PiS manifests in that the party received only 18% of those entitled to vote, a fact that is not exposed, yet it has a parliamentary majority allowing for the formation of a self-dependent government. Although it is not a constitutional majority, i.e. one that allows a change in the constitu-

tion, the latter is being broken by adopting unconstitutional acts that change successive elements of the state system. These actions are justified by the 'will of the sovereign' who gave power to the PiS, although did not authorise them to change the constitution, much less break it.

The battling on critical media is done by deprecating their intentions labelled as 'lying' or 'hostile', serving to ridicule the party and government programme, which is supposed to serve 'ordinary people', as opposed to critics who represent the *ancien régime*, 'detached from the trough'. There are few invectives that representatives of the ruling party would hesitate to use against their actual, potential or imagined opponents.

Lying is a standard method of shaping public opinion by the ruling party. According to the principle formulated by Joseph Goebbels, 'a lie repeated a thousand times becomes true' (Goebbels, n.d; cf. Orwell 1949). If the facts are contrary to the declarations of the ruling party, all the worse for the facts. The PiS conducted their election campaign under the slogan 'Poland in ruins', which should be 'get up from the knees'. The slogan was developed in the exposé of the former Prime Minister and announcements of her ministers. After a few months of her rule, it turned out that Poland suddenly changed into a country flowing with milk and honey with effective foreign policy, the spectacular symptom of which was the 27:1 vote loss in the European Council against prolonging the term of office of Donald Tusk as the Council's chairman.

Searching for 'scapegoats' of actual and potential governmental failures is an indispensable element of any dictatorial power, especially when feeling threatened. Created in hate speech at rallies and even during parliamentary debate, they produce deep social divisions between neo-tribes and they incite violence. 'Communists and thieves', the 'elite detached from the trough', 'the gauche', 'dudes', 'treacherous mugs', 'knives' and 'political lumps' are amongst the insults commonly used by the PiS against its opponents.

The depreciation of the motives of critics of the PiS authorities serves to transform the opponents of the ruling party into the enemies of not only the party but also Poland. The permanent anchoring of Poland in the Western world is thus interpreted

as a conscious act to her detriment, and in favour, and even on behalf of, forces hostile to Poland. The opposition against the destruction of the independent judiciary is interpreted as a resistance against the introduction of the pro-family '500+' programme. Emphasising the existence of powerful 'domestic enemies' is used to validate the expansion of the security apparatus and the restriction of civil liberties.

Nepotism consists in appointing to government positions, public administration and state-controlled companies individuals lacking proper substantive qualifications, but even those who do not meet formal requirements, the mediocre, passive and loyal executors of political orders, those 'greedy for power, money [and] honours losers, often quacks, [the] frustrated, nationalists, ordinary dunces' (Niesiołowski 2017). Employment of relatives and friends in these positions is explained by the fact that 'they have to work somewhere', and the conflict of interest is not taken into account. Assigning the previous government team of corruption cases justifies more advanced corruption in their own ranks.

The distribution of public finances is based on political rather than substantive criteria. Independent and non-governmental organisations, including cultural institutions, are deprived of financing that is generously granted to politically or socially friendly organisations and even to members of the government (the Trough Plus programme, ironically named by the opposition). Legal persons of the Catholic Church are generously financed, which – traditionally not subjected to external financial control – are a good school of unethical public action and a subject of expected public gratitude for the ruling party through institutionalised voters' indoctrination.

8. Ur-fascism

The concept of fascism refers to a special case of dictatorship, and it appears as such in the discourse over the challenges of contemporary Poland. Despite differences between the various historical forms of fascism, a list of 14 characteristics typical of what Umberto Eco (1995a, b) calls *eternal fascism* or *ur-fascism* can be drawn up.

It is not a coherent system, because its individual elements are sometimes contradictory and, besides, typical for other types of despotism and fanaticism. However, one of these elements is enough to become the germ of fascism (ibidem). Other authors, however, set higher requirements for the definition of fascism with a 'fascist minimum' based on cultural hegemony (Griffin 1991), i.e. a vision of total cultural homogeneity (Pankowski 1998). It can be said, however, that fascism is a blurred totalitarianism, a conglomeration of various, often contradictory, philosophical and political ideas. Generally, however, philosophy is replaced by rhetoric, i.e. a public scream, which conceals the lack of thought behind it. Legislative power is a fiction, because laws come from the executive which controls the judiciary and the media (Eco 1995a), although the forms of this control may differ.

Following the narrative of Umberto Eco, the basic features of fascism with their references to the contemporary political scene in Poland are presented below, paraphrasing the classic rather than citing it.

(1) The basis of ur-fascism is the cult of tradition and syncretism. The latter, being a combination of various forms of faith or practice, must not only contain contradictions but also tolerate them. The basis of the germinal core of fascism in Poland is, and has always been, the ideology of schismatic actually, though not formally, Polish folk-nationalist Catholicism. Representatives of the ruling party are basically confined to perjury, swearing allegiance to – and broken immediately upon swearing – the constitution and sealing it with reference to God's help. The second form of support for this schism is the organisational and financial support of the activities of legal persons (especially one) of the Catholic Church, which explicitly ignores Polish law. This was supported by all right and centre-right governments after 1989. The explicit call to recognise the leading role of the Catholic Church in the state, including the coronation of mythical figures, is now limited to the extra-parliamentary extreme right. In the post-transformation period, it was, however, also displayed, sometimes noisily, by parliamentary parties.

(2) Traditionalism means rejecting modernism. The Enlightenment is considered the beginning of modern depravity. In this sense, fascist traditionalism is irra-

tional. The criticism of the Enlightenment tradition is alive in post-transformation political discourse in Poland.

(3) Ur-fascism is the cult of unreflective action. The action is beautiful in itself, especially if it is not preceded by reflection. Thinking is considered a form of effeminacy. Normatively understood culture is suspect because it is associated with critical thinking. This results in a lack of trust in intellectuals in all forms of fascism. It was in this context that 'deep' intellectual confessions appeared ('When I hear the word culture, I reach for my gun') and anti-intellectual epithets: 'eggheads', 'intellumps', 'the gauche', etc. As shown in the recent examples, the PiS political environment brought its 'intellectual' contribution to the rhetorical treasury of ur-fascism. Fascists were always involved in attacking modern culture and the liberal intelligentsia for betraying traditional values.

(4) Differences in views are unacceptable in ur-fascism. Controversy is betrayal because no syncretistic faith can withstand analytical critique. Criticism points to subtle distinctions, which is a feature of modernism, while ur-fascism is based on dichotomous distinctions: us–them, ours–aliens, solidarity–liberals, friends–enemies. The PiS ideology is based on such dichotomies. Their attachment to the 1970s Polish communist concept of the 'moral-political unity of the nation' is not surprising, although they do not use its terminology.

(5) Dispute is a sign of diversity, while ur-fascism seeks consensus, exploiting the fear of diversity. Protest against intruders mobilises fascist movements. Fascism is thus, by definition, racist. PiS's speech of hatred against dehumanised refugees fits well with this characteristic.

(6) Ur-fascism stems from individual or social frustration. It appeals to the frustrated petty bourgeoisie, suffering because of economic crisis or political humiliation, and frightened by pressure from the lower classes. At present, the role of petty bourgeoisie is played by the lumpenproletariat as the de-classed part of the former working class, a fact that manifests in Poland in the extreme right-wing slogans written on the walls in former workers' quarters (Rykiel 2016b).

(7) Nationalism meets the need for a clear social identity. Belonging to the nation is the only privilege of the frustrated. National identity can only be sustained by

its 'enemies', thus the obsession with 'conspiracy', preferably international, is inevitable. The sense of the besieged fortress is also inevitable, and the simplest way to suppress the conspiracy is to refer to xenophobia. However, the conspiracy must also come from the inside, the best targets are therefore Jews who have the advantage that they occupy a liminal position, i.e. they are both inside and outside. On the Polish political scene, such attitudes and behaviours are presented by the extreme non-parliamentary right. The PiS's power, while downplaying these attitudes and behaviours, in fact supports them with institutionalised consent (cf. Gostkiewicz 2017).

(8) Proponents of ur-fascism must feel humiliated by the ostentatious wealth and strength of their enemies, but they must also be convinced that enemies can be crushed. Traditionally cast in this role – also by the Polish extreme right – Jews are perceived as the rich. They assist each other through a secret network of mutual help. Enemies in fascist rhetoric are therefore both too strong and too weak. Fascist regimes are doomed to lose wars and even diplomatic disputes, because they are structurally incapable of assessing the enemy's or opponent's strength. The diplomatic 'successes' of the PiS government are a good example of this.

(9) In ur-fascism, one does not fight for life, but lives for the fight. Fighting gives life purpose. Pacifism is thus a pact with the enemy. This is where the Armageddon complex comes from. Because the enemies must be defeated, the final battle is inevitable ('this is *their* final struggle', as Polish anti-communists paraphrased the International), after which the party will take control at least over the country and society, reduced to the nation, if not over the world. This 'final solution' means, however, another era of peace and calm, the golden age after the victory, which is contrary to the principle of permanent war, because it demobilises supporters. If, then, the PiS's 'Smolensk menstruations' are about to end, and the 'Smolensk attack' explained as inexplicable, other forms of mobilisation of the iron electorate will be needed. However, the issue of inevitable demobilisation after victory has yet to be solved by any fascist leader.

(10) The typical aspect of any reactionary ideology is elitism, if it is aristocratic, which means contempt for the weak. Ur-fascism can only be an advocate of folk elitism. Every citizen then belongs to the best people in the world, party members are

the best citizens, and every citizen can (or should) become a party member. However, patricians cannot exist without plebeians. The leader knows that his authority has a weak democratic legitimacy, even if he has won his power as a result of an electoral victory, because he may not win the next one; he also knows that his strength is based on the weakness of the masses who are so weak that they need, and deserve, a leader. This strengthens the sense of the elitism of the masses, which – as the elite – chose their leader, who basically thinks that ‘you did not choose me, but I chose you’. Because fascist parties are organised hierarchically (according to the military model), the officer at each level of power despises his subordinates, which strengthens the sense of mass elitism. In Poland, the main political parties are organised according to the chief model, their hierarchical structure does not resemble a military model.

(11) In this context, everyone is brought up as a hero. In every mythology, the hero is an exceptional being, but in the fascist ideology, heroism is the norm. This cult of heroism is closely related to the cult of death. The motto of the Spanish *falangistas* was *Viva la muerte* (Long live death). In non-fascist societies, secular people are told that death is unpleasant, but must be endured with dignity; believers are told it is a painful way to achieve eternal happiness. On the contrary, the fascist hero wants heroic death, praised as the best reward for heroic life. The fascist hero waits impatiently for death. Because of this impatience, he often sends others to death. In the contemporary Polish political scene, the cult of heroism is more visible than that of death. The Polish national mythology has long exhibited defeated uprisings, the archetype of which was Henryk Sienkiewicz’s ‘refreshing of hearts’ by describing the beginning of the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the mid-seventeenth century. The PiS’s historical policy creatively expands this national mythology, shifting the accent towards the armed anti-communist right wing during the Second World War and after.

(12) Since both permanent war and heroism are difficult tasks, the fascist moves his lust for power to sex. This is the basis of *machismo*, and thus both contempt for women and intolerance, as well as condemnation for non-normative sexual behaviour – from temperance to homosexuality. However, even if sex is a difficult task,

the fascist hero prefers to play with arms, which, in doing so, has a substitute for phallic exercises.

(13) Ur-fascism is based on selective qualitative populism. In democracy, citizens have individual rights, but citizens as a whole have a political influence only from a quantitative point of view, reflecting the decisions of the majority. For fascism, individuals as citizens have no rights, and the people are perceived as a quality – a monolithic being expressing common will. Because no group of people can have a common will, the leader aspires to the role of its interpreter. After losing the power to delegate their representatives, citizens do not function as such, but are only called to play the role of the people. In this way, people are but a fiction in the theatre of events. Nowadays there is television or internet populism in which the emotional reaction of a selected group of citizens can be presented and accepted as the voice of the people. Because of its qualitative populism, ur-fascism must be against the ‘corrupted’ parliamentary rule (‘plutocracy’). If a politician questions the legitimacy of the parliament because it no longer represents the voice of the people, one can speak of the ghosts of fascism. On the Polish political scene, one can notice the growing cult of the president of the PiS as a leader (‘the President of Our Nation’, to paraphrase the 1970s communist propaganda), while a rhetorical de-legitimisation of the parliament has not yet been observed, which cannot be said about the de-legitimisation of the current constitution.

(14) Ur-fascism uses newspeak in the sense of George Orwell (1949). Elements of ur-fascism are, however, common to various forms of dictatorship. All Nazi and fascist textbooks used poor vocabulary and simplistic syntax to limit the instruments of comprehensive and critical reasoning. One should be ready to recognise other types of newspeak, even if they take the seemingly innocent form of popular talk shows. You need to be vigilant, because ur-fascism is still around us, although sometimes in inconspicuous costumes, and can come back well camouflaged. It is our duty, therefore, to dismiss him – wherever and whenever it appears. Because *this* spectrum constantly circulates around Europe. This obligation completely applies to contemporary Poland, where the PiS’s newspeak consists in reversing the meaning of the words slyly changed by shufflers.

One might think that the symptoms of ur-fascism described above are culturally conditioned, so they explicitly refer to Italy of the first half of the 20th century, and not to Poland at the beginning of the 21st century. Historical experience indicates, however, that fascism often appears in grotesque forms to reveal its dismal face when it is too late for effective resistance. Hence warnings emerge (Nizinkiewicz 2018) that 'today fascism is born in Poland' (*Róża ...*, 2018), that the whole world can see (*Bp Tadeusz ...*, 2017).

9. Spontaneous and cynical ignorance

In the spring of 2017, journalists from a non-public television station managed to penetrate the structures of the extreme right-wing neo-fascist organisation which had been registered as a legal association. In January 2018, a report was broadcast on TV with local activists of the association celebrating the birthday of Adolf Hitler, hailing with the Nazi salute, dressing up in uniforms of Nazi military formations, burning a wooden swastika in the forest, and laying on the table another one of chocolate wafers (*Dziennikarze zrobili...*, 2018). The neo-fascists from this group believe that A. Hitler was a gentleman because he did not curse; they do not see any contradiction, either, in raising the salute 'For Hitler and our homeland, beloved Poland!' (Lis 2018). It is perhaps shocking for thinking people, but not surprising if one considers that historical knowledge, consistency of speech and logical thinking have never been the strongest suits of fascists (cf. Chapter 8), where horror mixes with the grotesque (Podgórska 2018) as a symptom of social marginalisation (ibidem).

In reaction to this television programme, internet users and both the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary opposition demanded that the government stop ignoring the problem of the extreme right in Poland and take vigorous action aimed at the actual penalisation of illegal neo-fascist activities. The problem, however, is that the PiS government has not only belittled neo-fascist groups from the very beginning, but has also directed warm words towards them (*Dziennikarze zrobili...*, 2018; Mystkowski 2018). In fact, it has supported them with leniency as well as harassing groups opposing breaking the existing law by neo-fascists. Moreover, the PiS government made numerous legal and organisational steps – specified elsewhere (Bez-

czelny Lewak 2018), to make 'dumb troglodytes raise their fascist blockheads' (ibidem), while members of the current government repeatedly appeared in public accompanying the leading anti-Semites, and the prosecutor's office discontinued proceedings against neo-Nazis and anti-Semites (ibidem).

The official response of the PiS government to the broadcast report was conventional. It included: (1) downplaying the case, (2) distorting the facts, and (3) relativisation.

The downplaying consisted in emphasising that fascist tendencies are marginal in Poland (Leszczyński 2018). The report showed only a handful of neo-fascists (Bezczelny Lewak 2018), and the fact that the recorded group of neo-fascists hid in the bushes, rather than paraded through the streets, was evidence of their marginality. In this sense, this statement was correct, it ignored, however, the actual support of the PiS government for numerous previous xenophobic excesses, including those during the March of Independence in November 2017.

The distorting of facts included a claim to the TV station that it broadcast its report many months after the incident instead of immediately informing the prosecutor's office, which makes the station destabilise the situation in Poland (Bezczelny Lewak 2018). The second element of distortion was to transfer responsibility to predecessors, which means that the incriminated association was registered under the previous government (ibidem), while the current government detains the members of this association, and, besides, the neo-fascists 'threw the opposition a lifeline, giving it breath in the anti-Polish campaign' (ibidem).

The relativisation, in turn, had two aspects: international and domestic. Within the former, it was pointed out that there are far more neo-Nazi excesses in Germany than in Poland (Bezczelny Lewak 2018).

The domestic aspect consisted in opposing right-wing hate crimes to unspecified crimes against politicians, mainly of the ruling party. This opposition put the rulers in the role of martyrs. There were, however, 1632 crimes of the former type and 46 of the latter (Prończuk 2018), and proceedings in the former cases were often discontinued (ibidem).

The domestic aspect of relativisation also included the claim that fascism has nothing to do with the right wing (i.e. that it is ideologically alien to the current ruling party), because it is related – at least titularly – to socialism (Leszczyński 2018), and therefore the current government is determined to pursue the manifestations of all totalitarian ideologies, a statement which is another manifestation of distorting the facts. The new minister of the interior published a statement that ‘in Poland there is no consent to propagate a fascist, communist or other totalitarian state system. There is also no agreement on the appearance of fascist, communist or other totalitarian symbolism in public space’ (Mystkowski 2018). The same procedure was carried out by the new prime minister, who said that the ‘propagation of fascism or other totalitarianisms is [...] incompatible with Polish law. [...] There is no consent for this type of behaviours and symbols’ (ibidem). Meanwhile, in the last quarter of a century, no communist demonstrations were organised in Poland, but only neo-fascist. The PiS government therefore resorts to relativism to weaken the power of expression of the TV report and thus to protect neo-fascists, to whom it sends a clear message that the government is unfortunately forced to condemn them, but it understand them (Mystkowski 2018).

On the basis of the relativistic distorting the facts, one would think that the characteristic of fascist ignorance entered the arsenal of arguments of the PiS government, although it can be assumed that it is used instrumentally, if not cynically. The current minister of the interior said that A. Hitler drew on leftist ideology, so the minister focused on ‘austere treatment of the hammer and sickle as a symbol of Soviet communism’ (Leszczyński 2018), which means that law enforcement agencies will focus on pursuing phantoms rather than real threats to the legal order.

Interestingly, the pre-war Polish nationalists, who adored both B. Mussolini and A. Hitler, would be appalled at the attribution of leftist thinking to them, which is undoubtedly an obsession of the PiS. The National-Radical Camp (ONR), currently cherished by the PiS, admired A. Hitler in the 1930s. It gladly compared itself with the Nazi party NSDAP (Lipski 2015) and praised the Hitlerjugend as a model of a youth organisation (Leszczyński 2018).

Equally interesting is the fact that 'leftist' – according to the minister – A. Hitler came to power thanks to the support of the ultra-right German National People's Party (DNVP), he placed communists and socialists in concentration camps, retained private ownership of the means of production and did not confiscate aristocratic property (Leszczyński 2018). Referring to the well-known saying, it can be argued that the left's socialism was as much to do with national socialism as a chair with an electric chair.

The point, however, is obvious, although not very optimistic. For the past two years, the PiS government has been persistently working on awakening the demons of xenophobia and fascism, so it will now take effective media actions to solve the problem it has created. The final seems simple; perhaps the association of the wafer swastika in the bushes will be outlawed and the other neo-fascists will be allowed to conceal deeper and act further. Every PiS politician well knows that it is not worth overdoing the repression of his own electorate (Bezczelny Lewak 2018; Lis 2018; Podgórska 2018). In addition, 'the ONR is no longer needed for ONR people since the PiS became an ONR' (Sierakowski 2018a), and the nationalists are part of the mainstream (Gruszczyński 2018), because PiS politicians 'do not hesitate to speak out fascist slogans publicly or put them into practice' (Lis 2018).

10. The Bolshevik right-wing infantile disorder

In 1920, Vladimir Lenin (1970) published a book entitled "'Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder'. In this book, the author criticises the criticism of the Bolshevik tactics and defends the iron discipline in his party and democratic centralism as a means of enabling the party to succeed. Importantly in the context of the present work, V. Lenin indicates that methods appropriate in times of (social) peace must be re-evaluated during war, and therefore also during a sharp fight for power. David Ost (2017), analysing the heritage of the October Revolution in Russia, indicates that the goals and methods of action of V. Lenin and Bolsheviks have now been taken over by the populist right, which also applies to the PiS party. Following the trail of D. Ost, the main points of his arguments filtered through the views of the present author are presented below.

The populist right wing rhetorically opposes 'us' to 'them', with 'them' including not only political and economic elites, but also a large part of society, pushed into the Leninist category of 'enemies of the people' and right-wing 'enemies of the nation'. Such a right wing favours a strong state and militant nationalism, calling for national unity only on its own terms, rejects liberal democracy together with the protection of minority rights and the rule of law and accepts the welfare state, provided that it only supports those who are considered part of the 'nation' (Ost 2017).

After its electoral victory, PiS introduces an anti-liberal system based on unlimited executive power, conceptually referring to the communist concept of the 'uniform state power', rejecting the tripartite power. After previous failures to maintain power, Jarosław Kaczyński began to admire the organisational skills of the Bolsheviks for their effectiveness, including the creation of a 'party of a new type' (Kaczyński 2016). In V. Lenin's practice, the right wing admires: (1) his determination to gain power in the state despite the alleged inability ('impossibilism'), (2) the courage to not only manipulate the system, but also to break it down, and (3) emphasize that the power of the 'proper' party will be more democratic than any democracy resulting from elections. For the right wing, 'limitation of the existing liberal democracy is the only way to achieve true democracy' (Ost 2017), which was also present in Bolshevik practice (*ibidem*). Because the European left, after A. Gramsci, focused on the takeover of institutions and the construction of civil society, the populist right followed V. Lenin, smashing these institutions, making a counterrevolutionary breakthrough and introducing the principle of the leading role of the party and its control over society (*ibidem*).

The radical right in the post-war period was marginalized in Europe due to its more or less obvious connections – against the imagination of the current minister of the interior – with Nazism. It lost its potential because of the success of the social democratic welfare state. Globalisation, however, changed this situation in the era of neo-liberalism. The collapse of this system in 2008 began a period of unrest and restored the significance of the radical right as the only stream that has no relation to the post-war socio-economic system, the only one 'that can present itself as new and fresh' (Ost 2017).

In East-Central Europe, the increase in the importance of the radical right resulted from the support that capitalism met with the collapse of state socialism. The crisis of neo-liberalism took place earlier than elsewhere, because 'it was not built there on the basis of social democratic capitalism, but it was its only form' (Ost 2017), which in this part of Europe re-appeared after 1989. The association of the left 'with the oppressive power of the communist party and the resulting cult of capitalism as the "enemy of our enemy" created' (Ost 2017) a fertile ground for the emergence of a strong anti-democratic right (*ibidem*).

Programmatically, the anti-communist PiS is determined to refer to voters who long for the collectivist ethos that state socialism provided. In his presidential campaign of 2010, Jarosław Kaczyński expressed his sympathy with the times of Władysław Gomułka as the peak period of national communism. The most characteristic feature of the PiS government – the most strongly associated with classical Bolshevik practices – is 'a consistent effort to consolidate all power in his own hands' (Ost 2017). The opposition was excluded from the key parliamentary commissions, public media was changed into government propaganda outlets, the courts were deprived of independence and, without public discussion, laws changing the system of the state were passed (*ibidem*).

While the modern left wing unanimously condemns all attempts to limit democracy, the Leninist aspect of the October Revolution, which focuses on taking control over the state and eliminating the opposition, now finds strong support on the right. The latter admires the ability, determination and focus on the goal, which for the Bolsheviks was to gain power. The right does not want changed people to change the world, but, like V. Lenin, they want to change the world itself, and change people by the way (Ost 2017). In this context, the radical right is much more reminiscent of political Bolshevism than the left.

The connection between the right and the Bolshevik revolution becomes clear only with regard to its cultural aspects. In the cultural heritage of the revolution, four projects can be distinguished: enlightenment, revolutionary, civilising and nationalising.

The *enlightenment project* is associated with the elimination of illiteracy and propagation of the scientific, i.e. secular, worldview, which had to collide not only with the religious worldview but also with the anti-secular activities of church institutions. The Bolsheviks were modernisers and Occidentalists trying to transfer backward people to the world of science and technology (Ost 2017), while the Polish post-war communists were only the former, since the sense of Occidentalism was also deeply rooted in the doctrine of the Catholic Church. The Occidentalism of Polish communists was limited, conditioned historically and geopolitically by the Soviet Union. The communists' attachment to mass public enlightenment, both in Russia and in Poland, enabled them to win intellectuals at this stage. Before the revolution, the elite oscillated between ignoring, entertaining and repressing the 'masses'. Later, the nationalists and fascists tried to seduce the masses with spectacles, panache and a new cult of faith (Ost 2017). The populist right remained, however, hostile to the enlightenment project, as indicated by its discriminatory rhetoric, racism included (*ibidem*).

The *revolutionary project* in culture refers to the rejection of existing institutions – schools and scientific and professional organizations – for 'proletarian' culture, with underlined fidelity to the revolution as the only acceptable guiding idea. It resulted in an anti-intellectual campaign of the party's lower strata. Bolshevik radicals sought to overthrow the existing bureaucracy, dissolve schools and universities, and replace the 'bourgeois' intellectuals with workers from social advancement, which showed that appeals for moderation were groundless and anti-socialist. This was the case both in the Soviet Union after the death of V. Lenin, in Poland after 1948, and especially in China during the Cultural Revolution. Professional organisations of teachers, architects, historians, sociologists and many others were taken over or dissolved, while writers were ordered to become fighters for a just cause (Ost 2017) and soul engineers.

This revolutionary project has been adopted by the current populist right, which also rejects intellectuals and professionals from before its rule. While Russian cultural revolutionaries tried to remove the non-Bolsheviks, in present Poland 'the right is trying to clean up the courts, media, civil service, schools and professional

organisations not only from “communists”, because this happened a long time ago, but [also] of the “liberals” and all those nominated in the rule of the present opposition’ (Ost 2017). New bureaucrats do not have to have professional experience, because it is enough that they are ‘supporters of the ruling party deprived of certainty of employment’ (ibidem). Like Stalinist cultural revolutionaries, J. Kaczyński ‘accuses his predecessors, aware of the restrictions Poland is facing [...], of promoting “impossibilism”. If reason suggests [...] that the goal cannot be achieved, the worse it is for reason’ (Ost 2017). Reality can be changed quickly, if only there is enough determination. The right is now making a cultural counterrevolution to get rid of the social democratic and liberal-progressive left, and not – already long non-existent in Europe – the communists.

After reaching the assumed stage of socialism in the Soviet Union and then in Poland, people and institutions that contributed to this historic success were to be rewarded. People were to live a ‘normal’ life. Material consumption and family values were promoted and discipline was praised. The time of the *civilising project* has thus come (Ost 2017). After the cultural revolution, the cultural superstructure proper to the new socialist base, with industrialisation and urbanisation, was conservative. This upheaval in culture has made it more accessible to traditional and apolitical citizens, tired of the endless politics of everyday life and less psychologically predisposed to change. Traditionalists critical of the work and lifestyle of radical artists of the previous period appreciated the official support for calmer, more conservative, less engaging and thus more ‘popular’ art. For these groups, cultural change normalised state socialism (Ost 2017). However, this part of the legacy of the October Revolution has now been taken over by the right wing, which praises traditionalism as a source of the new society (ibidem). The current right reaches for a cultural revolution to introduce counterrevolutionary traditionalism. Thus, the *civilising project* is also part of the legacy of the revolution, which the right wing has mastered (ibidem).

Bolsheviks had a schizophrenic approach to the *nationalising project*. At the first stage, they stimulated nation-creation processes and the policy of rooting (*korennost'*), i.e. of the supporting of non-Russian nationalisms. After their stimulation, however, the policy was changed drastically for the violent extermination of ‘right-

wing nationalist deviations', which was in fact a return to the practice of Great Russian nationalism. In the ethnically homogeneous communist Poland, there was no the first stage. Besides, in the Bolshevik project, it is difficult not to notice the analogy to the culture-forming practice of the French Revolution, where in the first stage the legal acts of the revolution were announced in all the languages and dialects of France to bring them closer to the people, while in the second stage these languages and dialects were regarded as tools of the counterrevolution which were contrary to *la langue universelle de la République*.

The common element of both stages was the continuity of nationalism instead of the rejection of the nation as a key social and political category which would be expected on Marxist grounds (Ost 2017). The Bolshevik obsession with the nations (ibidem) inevitably intrigued right-wing nationalists. In Poland, the pre-war leader of the ONR-Falanga movement became an enthusiastic supporter of the communist regime, which had asserted that the will of the Polish nation was being implemented (ibidem). The contemporary right 'loves this tradition' (ibidem), an outstanding example of which is the law on the protection of the dignity of the Polish nation, passed in February 2018 in an atmosphere of scandal, called officially the new law on the Institute of National Remembrance. Generally, therefore, the nationalising projects of the Bolshevik Revolution are convergent with right wing projects.

The populist right also shares the view of economic policy with the Bolsheviks, demanding state control over the economy to serve the nation. Therefore populist right-wing parties are perceived as left-wing because they call on the state to discipline the markets. The current populist nationalist right wing uses some of the leftist slogans. The Law and Justice party therefore adopted laws introducing several employee-friendly political instruments: a higher minimum wage, pro-family allowance (500+) and new taxation of banks. The government uses the language of anti-imperialism, and PiS ideologists often talk about Poland as a 'post-colonial' country, exploited by the West. They condemn the European Union for carrying out 'neo-colonial' policy in the east, which makes their arguments reminiscent of the hated Marxist radicals of the Third World. The right wing is now anti-system and as such close to the heritage of the Bolshevik revolution. In politics, culture and the economy,

it is easy to find surprising connections between the contemporary right and the heritage of the Bolshevik Revolution (Ost 2017).

The PiS propaganda claims that this party meets the expectations of the majority of the nation. The party cites the fact that it went into power with a programme that was supported by voters, and is now being implemented (Janicki 2017). The critics of the PiS government argue, however, that the party has conquered the Polish state and now occupies it, treating it as the territory of the enemy. This applies to three main areas: centralisation of power, poor quality governments in almost every area, and dilettantism of the cadres (Kasprowicz 2017; Szubartowicz 2017) – mediocre, passive but loyal, and above all impatient at the long wait for political spoils.

The opinion poll of November 2017 (Janicki 2017) indicates that reality is more nuanced. Firstly, the majority, sometimes overwhelming, of Poles do not accept PiS's ideas in the sphere of values and ideology: democracy, state system, division of power, Poland's place in the European Union, the Church, and abortion. Secondly, in the sphere of the economy and social benefits, the majority, less clear, however, than in the case of ideological issues, generally accepts PiS's ideas. Thirdly, strong supporters of the overall PiS's programme are just over 20%. On this basis, one could argue about the 'false awareness' of the electorate, voting against its views (Janicki 2017). On the other hand, a more convincing explanation seems to be that: (1) voters voted against the neo-liberal economic programme, but not against liberal democracy, and (2) left-wing views prevail among voters – both in the economic and ideological sphere. There is, however, no modern left in contemporary Poland, i.e. one expected by voters. PiS is a determined cadre party with limited public support, which can impose full power over the silent majority of society (Janicki 2017).

11. Nationalism

Nationalism is an attitude or ideology that recognises a nation as the highest social and political good. Regardless of the concept of the nation, nationalism implies social solidarity and assumes that the good of the nation stands above the good of the individual, which should therefore sacrifice for the good of the nation, and one's own nation is by definition more valuable than others. The nation is therefore the

sovereign in the state, and the nation state is the most appropriate form of social organisation (Bocheński 1987). The ideology of nationalism is a reaction of influential social groups to historically conditioned anomie (Motyl 2001) and the frustration that nationalists try to overcome (ibidem), creating the nation as an imagined community (Anderson 1991). It is difficult to disagree with the view that nationalism is an expression of group psychosis based on nationality (Konarski 2004).

Polish nationalism in the nineteenth century developed as a reaction to anomie caused by the lack of its own statehood and, in the inter-war period, as a reaction to the frustration caused by the size of national minorities, and especially of their economic position and organisational efficiency, which concerned predominantly Germans and Jews. The concepts of inter-war nationalism of the National Democracy were, paradoxically, implemented in communist Poland as part of the ideology of nationally homogeneous Poland. Freedom of speech, manifestations and association in post-communist Poland has, paradoxically, resulted in the rebirth of various – seemingly outworn – ideologies that were impossible to express under communism. Thus, the rebirth of nationalism in this context can be interpreted in terms of frustration with the former inability, as well as the relative deprivation of lumpenproletarian circles as a result of progressive de-patriarchisation (Rykiel 2016b). An additional source of frustration turned out to be the process of globalisation, aimed at the Europeanisation of societies at the expense of their nationalisation and implying the nonsense of nationalism without national minorities.

The second aspect of globalisation was the multiculturalisation of Europe by the inflow of immigrants from outside the continent, incidentally marginal in Poland, but forming a good basis for the crystallisation of the form rather than social containment of nationalist frustration and the acceptance of, paradoxical in Poland, anti-Muslim rhetoric. In the conditions of freedom of association, the openly fascist National-Radical Camp (ONR) was reactivated in 1993, which had been outlawed in 1934, but is cherished now by the PiS government as its potential paramilitary (cf. Niesiołowski 2017) support (Stankiewicz 2017) despite the ban on the propagation of fascist ideology in Poland; in this way, the sense of impunity of neo-fascists is strengthened.

On 11 November 2017, a large March of Independence took place in Warsaw. In line with the tradition growing since 2010, it was dominated by a radical, xenophobic nationalist right wing. During the governments of the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish People's Party (PSL), these demonstrations were guarded – not always effectively – by the police, which resulted in clashes between the protesters and the police, assaults on outsiders and the devastation of Warsaw's city centre. After the Law and Justice (PiS) seized power, the police protected the demonstrators rather than guarding them, which resulted in the lack of downtown devastation, especially as a result of the changed route of the march, instead, however, illegal fascist slogans and behaviours were manifested with impunity. At that time, the police – in line with the new customs of the ruling party – did not detain nationalists, but much fewer counter-demonstrators defending the democratic legal order.

Fascist and racist slogans, symbols and banners of demonstrators, and above all spectacular, since numerous, though illegal in the city centre, torches were the focus of media coverage in Poland, Europe and beyond. US media reported – with due exaggeration – about 60,000 Nazis massing in the centre of Warsaw (*„60 tys. nazistów...”, 2017*). Other foreign journalists believed that the demonstration did not look like a celebration of a national holiday, but an 'aggressive call to war' (*ibidem*), and Poland's independence day turned out to be the largest European, and maybe even world, 'show of supremacist power' (*Warszawa: Największy...”, 2017*). Polish extremists 'in a public display of xenophobia and white supremacy' (*ibidem*) were joined by extremists from other European countries (*Szczygiel 2017*).

The Polish Minister of the Interior declared that he 'did not see' racist slogans (*„60 tys. nazistów...”, 2017*), and the deputy minister of justice noted on an internet portal his positive reaction to the xenophobic commentary on the march (*ibidem*). The eye of the former minister improved only after hearing the reaction of foreign media, because it was difficult not to notice that the march proved to be catastrophic for the reputation of the government (*Donald Tusk ...”, 2017*). The President of the Republic, on the other hand, condemned the racist slogans of the demonstrators, but also rebuked the foreign media for airing this uncomfortable truth for the ruling party (*Jałowiecki 2017c*). The president of the ruling party verbally cut himself off from the

nationalist slogans of the march, adding, however, that the slogans could be a provocation to discredit the 'march of real patriots' (Stankiewicz 2017). During this time, the number of discontinuations of prosecution proceedings concerning hate propagation crimes (Ambroziak 2017a) increased as the PiS government withdrew police instructions and procedures directed against hate speech and propagating prohibited content (Ambroziak 2017c).

Interestingly, although by no means surprising in the Polish context, the slogan of the march in 2017 was 'We want God' (Szczygieł 2017). Since the right-wing neo-pagans also took part in the march (*Warszawa: Największy...*, 2017), it was not clear what god the protesters wanted (cf. Giertych 2017). Theoretically, it was the Catholics' God who was referred to, which would be a reference to the ideology of Roman Dmowski, treating Catholicism as an immanent feature of Polishhood, from which the Catholic Church never distanced itself, and often supported this ideology. It was referred to as the pseudo-Catholic ONR programme (Pankowski, Łopat, 2017) from 1934: 'Great Poland as a Catholic state of the Polish nation', where Catholicism was a heretical totem rather than theology. It is worth noting, however, that the choice of a declarative god was a secondary issue, with the first the manifestation of detachment from atheism and agnosticism as the correlates of communism and liberalism. In this approach, the pseudo-religious declaration vividly conjured the Nazi declaration: 'I believe in God', which in the practice of the SS meant theoretical neo-paganism. In essence, however, this is not a question of an ideological declaration, but of a demonstration of strength and aggression, for nationalists, like the Nazis, 'are not subtle creators of social thought and philosophy' (Pankowski, Łopat, 2017), but primitive frustrates who have a vague concept of the history of Poland, including the fact that for much of her history Poland was the most multicultural country in Europe, especially at the climax of her magnitude.

Neo-fascists are not, of course, intellectuals, and the logic of their ideologies cannot be faulted either. They claim, therefore, that they are for Great Poland, although they invite Slovak nationalists for the march of independence, whose predecessors attacked Poland together with Hitler. Contrary to the organisers' intentions and declarations, the march of nationalists looked more like a jumble of potential col-

laborators of the occupation authorities, and the pro-independence rhetoric was to cover this unpleasant fact or even the intellectual emptiness of the organisers.

Moreover, the symbiosis of the PiS's state and its law enforcement services, neo-fascist organisations and the Catholic Church begins slowly but surely to become reality. The independence march in 2017 began with a black mass of nationalists, during which the celebrant referred to the thought of John Paul II. A participant of the mass then hung the banner with a quote from John Paul: 'Racism is a sin that is a great insult to God' (Chrzczonowicz 2017). She was dragged out of the church and kicked by the nationalists while the priest watched passively. Xenophobic slogans during the march were opposed, not by the passive police, but by 12 women who were also beaten (Chrzczonowicz 2017; *Obywatele RP...*, 2017). So in practice this is what declared 'Polish, healthy, Christian nationalism' looked like (Ambroziak 2017b). The police protected the ONR march, but counter-demonstrators were jostled, removed from the route of the march and held in custody (*ibidem*), incidentally not for the first time (*Zatrzymały narodowców...*, 2017). For the first time, however, the nationalists' march was supported by government media (Giertych 2017). Particular attention was paid to indifference 'to banners, shouts and gestures that directly related to Nazi ideology, racism and nationalism' (*ibidem*).

The ONR is an organisation conducive to the Church. Polish folk-nationalist Catholicism, in fact pagan (Czarnecka 2018), attacks everyone who is different, despite the declarations of love and mercy. Therefore, clerics not only generally do not condemn the ONR, but even support it, because the intolerance of this organisation fits well with the strategy of the Church (cf. Podgórska 2018). The expectation of condemnation from the Episcopate of Poland results from the erroneous assumption that the Catholic Church represents some higher values, whereas its actual goal is to be listened to by as many citizens (Swoboda 2017), or rather subjects, as possible.

The intensity of nationalism in contemporary Poland begins, however, to threaten the long-term interests of the Church, whose most far-sighted representatives are beginning to clearly indicate it as 'sick nationalism, which believes that respect for the country is expressed in hatred towards strangers' (*Pierwszy tak mocny...*,

2017). For now, however, this is a 'margin of the margin', as the representative of the ruling party says in another context.

In general, the black wave of nationalism and fascism is rising, based on 'the cult of youth, bravery, hope, mobilisation' (Giertych 2017) and racial, ideological, religious and sexual 'purity' (ibidem). It can be assumed that this wave will reach some time those who indulge its issuers, and even prepare law for the benefit of nationalists (Gostkiewicz 2017), because anti-PiS slogans already appeared in the march, though still timidly (ibidem).

Historical analogies are gloomy. When religious wars plagued Europe, Poland was a country of religious tolerance. When Jews were expelled from successive West European countries, they were received in Poland. When kings were assassinated and beheaded in England and France, in Poland they were elected. The only political murder of the head of state in Poland was made by the right wing in 1922 on the wave of hatred which they unleashed (Brykczyński 2017).

During the two years of their rule, Law and Justice (PiS) strengthened control over public media (Shotter, Huber, 2017). Since the PiS took power, Poland has fallen in the ranking of press freedom (WPI) from the 18th place to 54th out of 180 analysed countries (*Polish regulator...*, 2017). After the party took control of the public media, the norms of reliable journalism decreased drastically (ibidem). In December 2017, the National Radio and Television Council, cast by PiS (*Poland. Private TV...*, 2017), imposed a 1 479 000 PLN (ca 352 000 EUR) fine on US capital controlled private television (*Verhofstadt...*, 2017; *Poland's autocratic...*, 2017) for reporting the protests in and out of the Sejm (*Póttora miliona...*, 2017) a year earlier against the attempt by the ruling party to drastically restrict media access to the parliament (*Poland. Private TV...*, 2017; Shotter, Huber, 2017). The penalty stemmed from the fact that the TVN did not undertake the narrative imposed by the PiS about the alleged putsch (*Polish regulator...*, 2017) of the defenders of the rule of law violated by PiS (*Póttora miliona...*, 2017).

The imposition of the punishment was widely heard among Polish journalists of various political options, who considered it an attack on media freedom (*Póttora miliona...*, 2017), as well as abroad (*Poland. Private TV...*, 2017; *Poland slaps...*, 2017),

where the PiS attack was considered to be 'extremely biased and careless' (Shotter, Huber, 2017), 'fragments of broadcasting were apparently based on a thesis adopted in advance' (*Polish regulator...*, 2017) and 'no single mistake or substantive error was indicated' (Shotter, Huber, 2017) in the disputed broadcast. Apparently, it was intended to bring independent media down to the level of the propaganda of 'national' TV (Flis 2017; cf. Shotter, Huber, 2017), which seriously violates EU values (*Verhofstadt...*, 2017), and is even considered 'an autocratic counter-revolution' (*Póttora miliona...*, 2017), aimed at silencing criticism of the ruling party (*Poland slaps...*, 2017).

Interestingly, the penalty was imposed on the basis of an expertise from a theologian (*Póttora miliona...*, 2017) from a Catholic school (*Kim jest...*, 2017) misidentified with a college. The author of this expertise is a co-worker of the monthly „Egzorcysta” ('Exorcist') - (*Póttora miliona...*, 2017). She found the penalty imposed as a warning 'for all [TV] stations and journalists' (*Kim jest...*, 2017). In her expertise, incidentally covert (Flis 2017), 'nothing points to a distortion or a factual error' by the accused TV station (*Poland slaps...*, 2017), while her expertise is full of errors and manipulations (Flis 2017). The Council realised that, but apparently considered that the unreliability and partiality of the expertise was not to its disadvantage (Flis 2017).

The actual attack by the decision of the Council of the only ally of PiS's Poland showed a grotesque incompetence of officials in the quasi-authoritarian state whose actual leader was dismayed by this decision (*"Kaczyński był...*, 2017). As a result, the Council itself published a statement with instructions on how the punished TV station could appeal against the imposed penalty, which the Council may not do (*ibidem*).

The PiS's political environment, in the framework of folk justice, seems to implement the programme of Jean-Jacque Rousseau, consisting in the annulment of the entire existing legal order and its replacement with the will of the people as the highest sovereign, the emanation of this people being the party, which 82% of citizens did not vote for (Rykiel 2016a). This can be considered a dangerous phenomenon, but also ridiculous and bizarre, as well as a symptom of the semi-peripheral mentality with

its frustrations and complexes (*ibidem*), which is also a part of the clash of civilisations within one nation (Rykiel 2016a).

One element of the PiS's cultural counterrevolution is the improvement of history through indoctrination and symbolic violence. One tool of these activities is the act on de-communisation, which prohibits the display of symbols of totalitarian regimes, including communism, in public places. The way of implementing the provisions of this law is to remove monuments disappointing the ruling party and ideologically 'unjust' names and surnames of patrons of public facilities. The actual results of these projects are threefold. Firstly, the government administration through voivodes interferes in the powers of local self-governments, changing – without consulting citizens – the names of streets and other topographic objects. Secondly, the names of people and left-wing organisations that are disliked by the current ruling party are removed from public space, even if they have no connection with communism. Thirdly, places hitherto 'emptied' of particular figures are assigned to the political favourites of the ruling party and its imaginary heroes (Niesiołowski 2017), i.e. – on the one hand – right-wing and even fascist activists, and – on the other – the former president, Lech Kaczyński, whose cult is officially promoted, as is his family.

The current ruling party is trying to impose on citizens its ideology and assessment of history through its 'proper' interpretation. In this way, through its allegedly anti-totalitarian narrative, the PiS falls into its own trap, because the ideological state, attempting to control the minds of its subjects, is a totalitarian state (Jałowicki 2017a). As part of its erasing of 'unjust' patrons from public space, the Masovian voivode decided to de-communise 47 streets in Warsaw, including Dąbrowszczacy street, dedicated to the 13th (Dąbrowski) International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War. This change is particularly scandalous, and it therefore met with protest from Varsovians (*PO chce...*, 2017). The voivode dislikes the Dąbrowszczacy, who fought against the fascist putschists in Spain, and in 1996, on the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the civil war in Spain, all veterans of the International Brigades, and thus also Dąbrowszczacy, received honorary citizenship of Spain. The Dąbrowszczacy's song claimed that 'We will not miss one, / to destroy fascists and crush them'. In this context, one should understand the statement of the Masovian

voivode that his de-communisation campaign is the 'symbolic ending of the era, which should be long overdue' (*PO chce...*, 2017). It must be obvious that the fight against fascism is clearly a scandal in the PiS state.

In the city of Łódź, with its multicultural tradition, the voivode has de-communised Victory (over Nazi Germany!) Square (Gałczyńska 2017), proposing instead the introduction of two 'heroes' to the public space. The first was a pre-war activist and a symbol of Polish anti-Semitism, who demanded a de-Judeisation of public life in the city (*ibidem*), similar to the PiS's demands of de-communisation. The second 'hero' was John Wayne - a declared racist. After the wave of criticism, the voivode withdrew his decision regarding the honour of the former 'hero', but not the latter one (Gałczyńska 2017).

The decision to honour the nationalist-antisemite by the voivode should not be surprising, because it is a part of more extensive activities, i.e. the fact that PiS 'cherishes fascist, racist patterns' (*ibidem*), and the voivode 'gave such a worldview clear, unequivocal support without mincing' (*ibidem*). The voivode, moreover, 'together with the former vice-mayor of Łódź [...] and now a councillor of PiS, participated last year in the march of neo-Nazis, members of the ONR [...]. Then also the hateful slogans were written, but the voivode apparently did not bother' (Gałczyńska 2017). 'Apparently for the PiS and its representatives, the de-communisation act was just a pretext to impose "values" on the rest of Poland and the admiration for the far-right people and organisations that support this government, such as neo-fascists and nationalists' (*ibidem*). Even though the de-communisation act prohibits the promotion of 'another totalitarian system', the ruling party does not take it seriously.

12. The patriotism of pseudo-patriots

Patriotism is a concept frequently used or even appropriated (cf. Zybertowicz 2013) by the political right wing in Poland, including the 'archipelago of Polishhood' (*ibidem*). Non-adjective patriotism refers to the ideological mother country rather than private homeland and more often to the nation than the state, and especially to society. In politics, patriotism is more typically the subject of declarations than behaviours. In the political practice of the Polish right, the concept of patriotism is con-

nected with the primordial rather than the modernising concept of the nation (cf. Rykiel 2006), which results from the aversion of the traditionalist right to modernism and modernisation, indicated above.

Andrzej Zybertowicz (2013) attempted to establish a 'patriotic minimum' which – after a discussion – he reduced to three main theses. '(1) We need our own sovereign and efficient state that cares about the national interest. (2) One can be a good Pole, not being a Catholic, one can be a good Pole without being a believer, one can be a good Pole with leftist or right-wing views or not possessing [!]clarity in this matter. But one cannot be a good Pole, underestimating the cultural and organisational role of the Roman Catholic Church in the history of Poland. (3) One can be critical of the tradition of our nation, but it is not allowed to turn away from this tradition or to falsify it' (*Prof. Zybertowicz ...*, 2014).

This 'minimum' raises numerous doubts and voices of opposition (Rykiel 2018). Firstly, it implies that one can be a good Pole, appreciating the cultural and organisational role of the Roman Catholic Church in the history of Poland, but this role cannot be falsified by omitting dark and even shameful episodes in the history of the Church in Poland. The most important of these are (1) the canonisation of the traitor Cracow Bishop Stanisław in the 11th century and (2) the fateful participation of the episcopate in the Targowica confederation of 1794, de facto created in St. Petersburg under the Russian protection and aimed at the – finally successful – overthrow of the liberal constitution of 1791, the conspiracy for which the Church dared to demand, after two hundred years, the independent Polish state, rather than Russia, to pay for the construction of the Temple of God's Providence in Warsaw, which had been promised to construct as a symbol of the national reconciliation among the liberals and conservatives, the reconciliation broken by the confederation. This is to say that the descendants of traitors made their betrayed mother country to pay for being betrayed.

Secondly, the question arises who is authorised to state when the tradition is falsified, and whether it is the state that decides who is the hero and who is the traitor. The contemporary PiS state does just that – on the basis of an ideological as-

sumption about the leading role of the Church, and thus from the position of imperious domination.

Thirdly, the 'patriotic minimum' serves to build the hypostasis of 'Polish patriotism' as a concrete individual being, which becomes an instrument of symbolic violence and ideological usurpation. This minimum is in fact a demand for homage to right-wing political Catholicism from citizens with different views and worldviews, of which political profits are drawn by those in power, and ideological and economic profits are given to the folk-nationalist Church which is dominant in Poland.

Fourthly, it can be concluded from the 'patriotic minimum' that in contemporary Poland one can be a patriot even if one is a Catholic, although it is by no means easy (Rykiel 2013).

This right-wing patriotic minimum can be contrasted with a liberal patriotic optimum. Instead of complaining that nationalists deprive Poles of their independence day, this optimum deprives the right-wing monopoly on the narrative of Polish history and shows Poland not frustrated and fearful, but open to others, interested in herself and the world – in the adult version (Jażdżewski 2017), i.e. without cheating and displacing uncomfortable facts – Poland without xenophobia, which offends real patriots. This is the only Poland we can be proud of (ibidem).

Along with the seizure of power by the party that considers xenophobic slogans as a 'margin of the margin', but chases journalists for quoting slogans from the march of this margin and citizens attempting to counter-demonstrate, *the ours* are more and more allowed for, i.e. the equivalent of Russian *nashists*, referred to ironically as *Putinjugend*. In Polish case, they were originally football hooligans who are familiar to the authorities, then nationalists and even overt fascists, i.e. a radical minority who is trying to fight for hegemony, appropriating national holidays and tradition (Pankowski, Łopat, 2017). The narrative of *the ours* of Poland is a slave tale, who dream of belonging to the race of masters. This story is a conditioner for a rapid increase in muscle mass for the intellectually weak, whom the gym will not help with the sunken chest, and especially the ego. Only an extreme lack of self-confidence can lead to pseudo-patriotic prattle on the level of comic books with imaginary heroes and politically ordered traitors, about always sinless and oppressed Poland, whose

innocence the neighbours, communists, capitalists and all international organisations are dying for (cf. Jażdżewski 2017).

Instead, the real, modern patriotism in the adult version proposes building it to the challenges facing Poland and not the infantile constraint of muscles and misogynistic national fiction from right-wing magazines (Jażdżewski 2017). One can be proud of the greatest Polish kings, the Prussian and Russian tributes, the republican Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Polish language as the lingua franca of the upper classes in the East Central quarter of the European continent, the liberal constitution of 1791, the independence tradition of the Polish Socialist Party, the majority of Polish trees in the Garden of Righteous Among the Nations in Yad Vashem and the political wisdom of the first Solidarity, but also remember the trade of domestic slaves by Poland's first rulers, the embarrassing system of serfdom, the anti-national egoism of borderland kinglets, the renegade traitors in the 18th century, murder of the first president in 1922, the bloody coup d'état of 1926, bench ghetto, *numerus clausus* and *numerus nullus* in universities of independent Poland, murders of some Jews by their Polish neighbours in places during the Nazi occupation, shmaltsovniks, the post-war pacification of Ukrainian villages and forced resettlement, the post-war looters in re-joined western Poland and 'workers activists' beating protesting students in 1968. The real, modern patriot does not have complexes because of their national history, but (s)he has the courage to face the history as it was – with its magnitude, weaknesses and pettiness. In this context, there can be no consent to the appropriation of history by *the ours* (cf. Jażdżewski 2017).

The right-wing conviction about the patriotism of contemporary Poles in the comic version can be questioned on two levels. Firstly, it is difficult to regard as patriotism the use of Polish national symbols in nationalist marches that desecrate them, presenting hatred and contempt for the differently thinking, though usually silent, majority. And the use of these symbols as ornaments in physical and intimate space is a manifest denial of patriotism.

Secondly, the declared patriotism of the right, understood as a defence against subordination of sovereignty to a foreign state, never included defence against the influence of the state which for the longest time violates the sovereignty of Poland, i.e.

the Vatican. It is amazing that the right wing, which rightly said of the communist left that proletarian internationalism meant for the greater part of the twentieth century a subordination to a foreign state, the Soviet Union, itself did not want to see that the subordination of the Polish state to the Catholic Church is not a subordination to God, or even to 'our man in Rome', whom John Paul II was recognised as, but to a foreign state, which is the Vatican, and especially its liege – the Holy See. The symptomatic sign of the Church's domination in the state is the concordat, which includes Poland's unilateral commitments without serious reciprocity by the Vatican, on the basis of which the church hierarchs have a higher position than the state authorities (Swoboda 2017). Even the preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland is a church formula about non-believers! (ibidem). The goal of the Church is to expand its influence, called euphemistically evangelisation, and the narrative of charity is only a means to that goal, if not an element of church marketing (ibidem).

The issue of restricting the freedoms of Polish citizens at the request of a foreign state, through its representatives in Poland, is a taboo in the public discourse (Hartman 2017). It means that Poles do not value freedom as they declare. Moreover, they cannot even see the dependence of their state on the 'archaic theocracy, which the Vatican is' (ibidem). For 'as long as the average Pole does not see Poland's dependence on the Vatican' (ibidem) – in accordance with the right-wing pseudo-patriotic ideology – Poland will not be independent and patriotism will only be an empty declaration. For whom 'dependence on foreign interests and coercion exerted in the name of foreign interests do not interrupt, (s)he is still not Polish in the soul' (Hartman 2017), but a serf without national consciousness (ibidem).

In this context, 'in this poverty of national consciousness' (Hartman 2017), arrested at the nineteenth-century stage of 'mythomania and religiosity, being a Polish patriot is an almost heroic task' (ibidem). Similarly as in the times of national uprisings, it is now possible to identify the 'patriotic elite and millions of Poles *in spe*' (ibidem). The paradox is that there are few chances that the nation creation processes in Poland, understood as entering into the nation of successive social classes (Chałasiński 1968) and regional collectivities (Rykiel 2006), will have been achieved before the inevitable wave of globalisation that is already coming. And when it

comes, it will dissolve the nations in the transnational melting pot. 'Poles have every chance to dissolve as one of the first' (Hartman 2017) – with the right-hand whimpering, unaware that it contributed to this process by its traditionalist omissions, actions and short-sightedness.

An embarrassing example of right-wing patriotism was the ceremony of swearing in the government of Mateusz Morawiecki on 11 December 2017. All appointed members of the government called for God's help in submitting oaths of fidelity to the constitution, which after the previous swearing of the then prime minister, several of its ministers, and the president, soon broke. Of the members of the M. Morawiecki's government, only four persons were able to use grammatically correct forms of the Republic in their oaths, which perhaps results from the concern of the 'avoidable' rather than unique Polish culture mis-announced by the new prime minister. It can therefore be assumed that the patriotism of the contemporary Polish right wing includes – apart from other vices discussed earlier – ignorance and perjury.

13. Perspectives

In 2004, entering the European Union, Poland made a long-awaited and mythologised 'return to Europe' as the core of the global socio-political system. Currently, through a conservative counterrevolution, it has become a haven of traditionalism, shifting to the periphery of the European Union, and perhaps even the global capitalist system, and sinking in the beltway of the new Middle Ages (Czarnecka 2018). Meanwhile, civilisation is accelerating faster and faster.

The biological stage of civilisation begins to pass in favour of artificial intelligence with a digitised consciousness-avatar on an immortal hard disk (Cielebiaś 2017). In the clash of various civilisations, those that are less developed are in a losing position. 'There is a danger that all biological organisms will be deemed unnecessary by artificial intelligence from space. [...] The civilisation of robots can [...] recognise that our existence is useless, meaningless and brings losses to the ecosystem. They can either knock us out systematically, or make the Earth something like a laboratory park, in which one will be able to observe funny, slightly stupid people dreaming about their power. Anyway, maybe we are already residents of such a reserve'

(Cielebiaś 2017). And this thought is worth dedicating to those who go through life staring into the distant past, drawing the whole country in addition. Not in our name.

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