

## POLISH HATRED

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Poland is one of the most effective states in post-Communist Europe. The Poles have managed to make a fast ‘transit to the West’ and enter the major political bodies of Europe as a full-fledged player overcoming a great number of complexes and historical traumas, which threatened to explode the region with new conflicts as far back as the 1990s. But the most important thing is that the Polish nation kept its unanimity in major issues of foreign policy, and managed to establish an efficient system of domestic political democracy.

In the context of the crisis of the inner integration process in the post-Soviet republics, Poland looks like a monolith. And although the conditions for its success were arranged largely by outside forces as far back as the middle of the twentieth century, the ability of the Polish to

become a nation is still worthy of respect. **Nevertheless, only a few years passed after Poland’s integration with the West when the Poles found themselves in an unusual situation of inner opposition and tension of public antagonism.**

This intensity of political hatred in Poland has been getting greater in recent years and rocketed to a fundamentally new level after the plane crash of 4/10/10. But an opposition of the political elite and society is unlikely to be found here; it is rather a conflict of a vertical nature, between different groups of political elites together with their voters. First of all, it is a conflict between the social conservative party of ‘Right and Justice’ (PiS) and the liberal conservative one of ‘Civil Platform’ (PO), and the ‘discourse of hatred’ is the essential feature of the PiS political camp. Still there are social changes, for instance PiS tends to fall back on the rural voters rather than the voters in the big cities, and they are supported more by the elderly than the young. Still the main gap is expressed geographically, dividing the country into the Eastern (PiS) and Western (PO) parts.

In 2005, when both parties seemingly won a common victory over the Left wing, the majority of analysts were expecting a new coalition government to be created, since the ideological differences were seen as inessential in the country of the Conservatives. And now the weakened Left wing is on the

same side of the fence as the Liberals, and the irreconcilable Right wing is on the other side.

The above mentioned ‘discourse of hatred’ evidently characteristic of the PiS political camp (and even more evidently shown at the level of the plain supporters of this party than at the public political one) has a number of reasons. The main slogan the party chose for the victorious elections of 2005 is to create a new Republic (the Fourth one to replace the Third one founded in 1989). Radical rejection of the political system established at the epoch-making Round table in 1989 was first of all grounded in the belief that it was necessary to break with the Communist past.

The same thing applied to the bonds with Russia. The obverse case of the hostility towards it was the home-base prohibition to have any positive contacts with Moscow at the political level. Russia is seen as the direct extension of the USSR. So it is natural for Poland to conduct almost a war-like confrontation, when any relations from our side are treated as inadmissible ‘association with the enemy.’ In fact, **accusation of national betrayal is the main one coming from the PiS when it criticizes the policy to normalize relations with Russia conducted by the current government of Donald Tusk and the whole party of PO.** What shows in this ‘betrayal’ is the essential feature of the ‘post-Communist Third republic’ which is qualified as a type of the republic’s continuing position of dependence.

The plain crash on April 10 last year not far from Smolensk put the Polish society at a new and unexpected level of mutual hatred and enmity. Even five years ago when PO and PiS were seen as two structures within one political range, it was hard to even imagine such a profound social divide between them. The PiS' imagination suggests a collusion of the PO and Moscow to eliminate the 'cream of the nation,' and the 'global Jewry' covering all this operation at the global level. In the context of PO having a plenitude of the power in the country (it controls both the parliament with the government

Church played its role in this matter since the majority of its actors tend to stand for the PiS. Sacred meanings are found in this death, as well as participation of global forces and, at the same time, God's providence, which prepared this martyrdom for the Polish nation. And the conclusion of the official governmental committees that it was human factor coupled with the technical matters are considered by this community to be devilish and treacherous.

The political ideology of the PiS, being rather left in social matters, has extremely right features regarding politics: it sees the ideologically well-consoli-

alone is capable not only to cut off contact with neighbouring Russia completely but also to put Polish society, quite solid until recently, on the brink of open strife.

The ambiguity of Poland's position in the West can be considered the main cause of all these conflicts. During the whole post-Communist period of history Poland was consolidated one way or another by the task to 'escape the East' and integrate into the Euro-Atlantic structures. When this goal had been achieved the country faced the need to establish itself in a new situation. And at that point it was discovered that Europe was far from satisfying the Poles, and the new values of the Western civilization were not much unlike those that Poland had to turn its back to after World War II. **The fear of becoming a full-fledged part of modern Europe and losing a sense of 'Poland as is,'** essentially the fear of losing its recently obtained sovereignty and engaging into the process typical for the West, was very real not only at the level of political elites but also among the wider population.

The conflict between the traditional Poland, with its national specific nature and special historical mentality on the one hand, and the present-day West in its cultural and political aspect, a part of which Poland has become this way or another, on the other hand, shows itself more and more as the main characteristic of Polish socio-political life. And the intensity of the social passion is going to get higher since nothing promises that their causes can lose their topicality. ■

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elected by it, and the presidential office) the old PiS strategy to not recognize the Third republic, that is the whole political system of the present-day Poland, has turned out to be actual in a new way: the state is seen as criminal, and its political form as essentially anti-Polish. But the period of PiS government showed that they are hardly able to fulfill their plans to create a new republic.

The funeral of Lech Kaczynski and his wife (at Wawel, next to Jozef Pilsudski) was a telling example of this. The society was shown that the dead President was not just the head of state but also the founder of the new Republic, as Pilsudski had been. **Everything concerning his life and death has become sacred, up to putting some fragments of the crashed plain onto the most important national shrines and icons.** Here the Polish Catholic

dated society beneath a man fighting for liberation – from Russia and from 'the influence of transnational agents.' But the Polish people are not such a society. The activity of this party only splits the Poles, it does not unite them. Something similar happened in neighbouring Ukraine caused by an extreme right-wing Ukrainian nationalism being imposed on the society under Viktor Yushchenko. But unlike Ukraine, the PiS is supported by half of the people in Poland. And if the rating of the current ruling Liberals falls dramatically, by the end of this year the PiS can come to power again. It ought to be understood that it will be another government of the PiS, although the leader might be the same: the accomplished radicalization of the party cannot just be annulled. And the case on the 'plot to kill' Lech Kaczynski