

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
Faculty of Social Sciences
Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies

Rain Soosaar

**EUROPEAN IDENTITY THROUGH
THE LENS OF THE POLISH RIGHT-WING MEDIA**

Case of the Constitutional Tribunal crisis with the European Union (2016-17)

MA thesis

Supervisor: Vassilis Petsinis, PhD

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I have written this Master's thesis independently. All viewpoints of other authors, literary sources and data from elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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European Identity through the Lens of the Polish right-wing Media.

Case of the Constitutional Tribunal crisis with the European Union (2016-17).

MA thesis supervised by Vassilis Petsinis, PhD.

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INTRODUCTION

European Union has in recent years been hit by multiple problems. Global financial crisis of 2008 led to serious economic difficulties in several member-states, causing Euro crisis as a result. The migration crisis of 2015 demonstrated incapability of the member-states of concerted action in case of mass influx of refugees and migrants, reinforcing anti-immigration stances in several member-states.

These events have had serious political repercussions, especially if compounded by economic difficulties, social tensions and power struggles in the level of nation states. The future of European integration seems to be at stake, as the popularity of Eurosceptic political forces is on the rise both on the Left (mostly in Southern Europe) and on the Right of the political spectrum. As the referendum on leaving from the EU, held in Great Britain on June 2016, amply demonstrated, the results may be momentous. This has led to growing public interest towards the question of to what extent common identity can bind European nations together and facilitate further integration.

In recent years, notable changes have taken place also in the political landscape of Central and Eastern Europe. Even though in most post-communist countries a strong majority of the population still support membership of the EU, „soft” Euroscepticism is gaining ground also there. Importantly, the European and domestic crisis in this particular region seem to translate into problems with the quality of democracy. Indeed, relations between the Union and especially Poland and Hungary have severely worsened after allegations that Poland and Hungary have been moving away from the

principles of liberal democracy and rule of law. Also, anti-refugee attitudes of the ruling parties and their reluctance to accept so-called quota refugees have added to the tensions. As the current governments have gained remarkable public support especially due to their welfare policies and securitizing the immigration issue, they may be capable to legitimize also their understanding of Europeanness and European integration among the voters. It has major implications for the future of the whole Union. Recently there has been indeed rise of academic interest towards the opportunities to tackle the democratic backsliding in the Eastern member-states of the European Union, but there is still lack of in-depth empirical studies. (Kelemen and Blauburger 2017) Furthermore, no attention at all has yet been paid to the question about the effects of the confrontation with the European Union in respective countries. The objective of this study is to fill up the lacuna. In turn, Poland deserves special attention in the region not only because of its size, but also as “a country still undergoing a profound identity crisis, resulting in deep elite divisions” between liberal and conservative camps. (Risse 2010, 65)

Profound changes in the EU-Polish relations have created demand for new meanings and explanations. The aim of this study is to investigate how being European is in rapidly changing environment interpreted by various right-wing circles of Poland – more specifically by the actors who are trying to form and influence public opinion (politicians, activists, journalist, public intellectuals etc.). But the study may also contribute to the theoretical debate about the European identity, as it deals with the applicability of these theories in the particular contexts of post-communist member-states and recent developments of the history of European integration.

The rule of law controversy

Since the accession of the Poland into the European Union, two main political forces there have waged remarkably different politics in the direction of the European Union. Governments led by Civic Platform (PO) have emphasized its pro-European credentials

and prioritized good relations with Germany and other Western European powers (O'Neal 2017, 36). The victory of Law and Justice party (PiS) in parliamentary and presidential elections of 2015 have however brought considerable change also in the realm of foreign policy. While avoiding disintegration of the European Union is declared by the new government to be in the interests of Poland, deepening of the integration is also consistently opposed. The appeals of Poland to give the EU more intergovernmental character have not received favorable reception among most of the other member-states. (Bieńczyk-Missala 2017, 224)

While being clearly more lukewarm in its attitudes towards European Union, the PiS government has attempted to avoid major deterioration of the relations with major member states and the supranational institutions of the EU. Even so, several internal political decisions have considerably tarnished Polish image abroad and also deteriorated its relations with major western powers. Besides nationalist memory political initiatives especially attempts to curb the independence of judiciary and public media are cases in point, leading to the fears that future of Polish democracy may be under threat. (Bieńczyk-Missala 2018, 281-282)

Especially much attention has been payed to the attempts of the government to take the control over the Constitutional Tribunal, which notably led to the reaction of the EU Commission who, using its recently adopted rule of law framework, has first time in the history proposed to trigger the Article 7 procedure of the European Union Treaty. The controversy over the Tribunal began already before the 2015 elections. Parliamentary majority controlled by PO-led government had on their way out right to elect three new judges to the Constitutional Tribunal as the term of their predecessors expired before the general elections. But additionally two more judges were elected, even though according to the Law on Constitutional Tribunal it should have been the prerogative of the next parliament. In order to do it, the law was hastily amended. However, recently elected PiS-affiliated president Andrzej Duda refused to swear in none of the five elected judges. As the PiS gained parliamentary majority after the elections, they elected

five judges of their own. Constitutional Tribunal ruled on December 3, 2017 that even though two judges of the PO were illegally elected, three others should have been sworn in by Duda. However, the president refused to publish the ruling and swore in all five judges elected by PiS instead. Standoff between the government and the Constitutional Tribunal followed, with the Tribunal refusing to seat the judges appointed by PiS. The government in turn retaliated with adopting several new laws which aimed to restrict the opportunities of the Tribunal to operate effectively. The resistance of the Tribunal was broken down in December 2016 when the term of its president Andrzej Rzepliński came to an end. Since then the court has been manned by pro-government judges, using various dubious legal tricks. So it has become effectively subordinated to the government. (Kovács, Scheppele 2017, 154-155)

The Constitutional Tribunal crisis provoked mass demonstrations in support of the rule of law and Constitutional Tribunal. (O'Neal 2017, 33) Besides that it attracted from the very beginning the interest of foreign media and political actors. Already in December 2015 the European Commission appealed for the Polish government to wait the ruling of the Venice Commission before enacting controversial new legislation on Constitutional Tribunal. After this appeal was ignored, the Commission invoked its Rule of Law framework in January 2016. (Kovács, Scheppele 2018, 194-195)

The framework, dating back to 2014, was adopted as a reaction of perceived problems with the rule of law in some member states, notably Hungary and Romania. It involves three stages. In the first step, the European Commission investigates the possible “systemic threat” to the rule of law in a member state. If it is found to be the case, “rule of law opinion” is published, to which the member state may respond. In the second step, the Commission proposes measures to address the problems by means of issuing 'rule of law recommendation'. If the problems are not solved for predetermined deadline, the Commission may propose the European Council to launch the Article 7 of Treaty of the European Union (TEU). (Sedelmeier 2017, 345) It stipulates that a member-state may be suspended some of its rights, including possibly voting rights in

the Council, if systematic breach of the founding principles of the EU¹ is detected. However, not only the consent of the European Parliament, but also unanimity of the European Council members is needed to start the procedure in the first place. (TEU 2007)

As Poland failed to reach agreement with the European Commission regarding the violations of rule of law, the 'opinion' was issued by the Commission in June 2016 and the 'recommendation' in July 2016. The violations were also repeatedly denounced by the European Parliament and Venice Commission. As no concessions were made by Polish side, the European Commission issued the reasoned proposal on December 17, 2017, recommending the European Council to trigger the Article 7 against Poland. (Kovács, Scheppele 2017, 196-197) However, at that time it was clear that Poland would not face any serious sanctions as it is virtually impossible to get the approval of the European Council for that. Also has the European Union been reluctant to find any other means to exert pressure on Poland in order to fix the problems of rule of law. (Sedelmeier 2017, 348-349)

Meanwhile attempts have been made to subordinate also the rest of the judicial system to the government. Especially reforms of Supreme Court have evoked public attention both home and abroad in that respect. Even though the government has occasionally also backed down in some details due to pressure from the side of civil society and the European Union (BBC 2018; Kovács, Scheppele 2018, 196), the process is basically still continuing. **Research aim and research questions**

As the aforementioned Article 7 procedure has been unprecedented in the history of European Union, Poland is a “unique case” for investigation of the implications of a confrontation between a member state and supranational institutions of the EU.² (cf. Yin

¹ These values are enumerated in the Article 2 of the TEU as follows: “respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.”

² In September 2018 European Parliament also voted for triggering the procedure against Hungary, but it is still in its infancy. A somewhat comparable confrontation has occurred only once before, namely in the case of Austria after the representatives of far-right Freedom Party were admitted into

2009, 47) Such a study may add valuable insights to the theory of European identity. It seems plausible that if open conflict with Brussels escalates, attitudes in a member-state towards the EU may change significantly. It may well lead to “a critical juncture” where established ideas about belonging to Europe would lose their appeal and new ones would emerge.

If identities are usually sticky, as the historical institutionalists claim, the new understanding of national and European identities would seal the fate of the nation for a long time. So studying Polish case closely would also have a significant practical importance. It may be even more salient as rather similar issues are also creating tensions between the EU and other member-states, notably Hungary and Romania.

It is important to investigate change in both European identity narratives in Poland. However, it may be assumed that liberal discourse is less liable to change as confrontation with the EU institution may be easily interpreted in terms of existing identity narratives. Launching the rule of law procedure is however presumably inconsistent with the view held by the rightist Poles that despite being in many important ways different from Western Europe, Poland can still be influential and respected member of the EU. As existing rightist discourse about how being Polish can be consistent with being European seems to be explicitly rejected by fellow Europeans, need for new explanations may emerge. Therefore it seems more urgent to investigate possible identity change on the right side of political spectrum. This is the subject of this study, with research questions related to the salience of European identity in the coverage of the rule of law crisis, portrayal of Europeanness and possible changes of it.

Overview of the thesis

The thesis proceeds as follows. In the first chapter, literature overview and theoretical foundations of the study are introduced. Especially this study draws on Thomas Risse's ideas about Europeanization of national identities and the possibility of identity change. One of his main arguments is that European identities are formed differently in different

government, see Merlinger et al. 2001.

national contexts. In critical junctures identity may change if new ideas about it resonate with existing identity constructions and institutional legacies. Therefore much of the chapter is dedicated to the most prevalent ideas about Europeanness in the distant and especially recent past of Poland.

In the second chapter, methodological details of the study are explained. The study is based on the articles of the three most important Polish right-wing opinion weeklies, published in 2016 and 2017. The articles on European dimension of the Constitutional Tribunal controversy are analyzed by means of frame analysis, aiming to identify the aspects of perceived reality which are made more salient by the authors in their efforts to promote their preferred vision about the essence and causes of the rule of law controversy. In the third chapter overview about the empirical data is introduced and in the fourth chapter portrayal of European identity in it is analyzed. The chapter ends with general conclusions and discussion where suggestions for further research are made. After the summary, appendices are added which include tables of the frames and list of the articles.

I EUROPEAN IDENTITY AS A RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1. Literature overview

Literature on European identity

This study draws mostly on the literature of transnational collective identities, while including important insights also from the research on Euroscepticism. According to Neil Fligstein, collective identities „refer to the idea that a group of people accept a fundamental and consequential similarity that causes them to feel solidarity amongst themselves,” which is based on common meanings and values created by means of in-group interaction. A crucial part of its formation is the construction of „the Other”. (Fligstein 2010, 126-127) It is true not only about small groups consisting of people knowing each other personally, but also about the „imagined communities” of strangers (term coined by Benedict Anderson). Especially the study of construction of modern nations has earned much attention of scholars – both social scientists, social psychologists and historians. The study field of transnational identities is however rather in its infancy.

Even though already 1973 foreign ministers of the EEC adopted Declaration on European Identity in Copenhagen, identity issues were for a long time largely neglected both by neofunctionalist and intergovernmentalist schools of European integration scholars. Since 1990s, significant change has occurred. (Švarplys 2014, 8-9) On the one hand, the deepening of the European integration after the adoption of the Maastricht treaty contributed to the spread of the view that „Europe must become not just useful, but also meaningful” (Julia Kristeva, cited in Delanty 2005, 127). On the other hand, constructivist turn in the European identity studies took place. (Švarplys 2014, 9)

Diverse literature has emerged since then, which mostly concentrates on the questions of desirability and feasibility of common identity which would bind together people with different national identities of the EU member-states. View of some scholars that the EU may remain a mere „problem-solving entity” without sense of belonging together between its citizens needed, have found less and less supporters recently. (Delanty 2005, 132) Several authors have highlighted especially the importance of common identity regarding the cohesion of the EU and its effective operation especially in times of crisis, demanding sense of solidarity between the citizens of the member states. (Karolewski 2017, 3) If so, the emergence of common cultural (ethnos) and political community (demos) is arguably needed. (Delanty 2005, 132-133) Opinions diverge among the scholars if such communities are indeed in formation and to what extent. The discussion about the topic has been difficult due to the „communicative islands” separating scholars representing different disciplines and perspectives, while serious conceptualization problems have remained unresolved. (Kaina 2013, Kaina 2017; for general overviews about the scholarly literature and state of the art of European identity studies see Checkel and Katzenstein 2009, Jones 2013, Švarplys 2013, Kaina et al. 2017)

Notably, many scholars of European have fruitfully drawn on interactionist theories based on works of Karl Deutsch positing that common identities are based on sense of community among people which is a result of frequent interaction between them. (Risse 2010, 47-48) As Neil Fligstein has convincingly demonstrated, European identity is indeed more prevalent in case of people who use to travel abroad, command other European languages and therefore have more contacts with people from other European nationalities. Such people represent often wealthy and educated classes of society while members of less-privileged classes tend to remain wedded to national identity. (Fligstein 2008, 147-155, 207) According to Fligstein, the future of European integration depends to large extent on the support of people who hold important both national and European identities. (Fligstein 2008, 144) It seems that transnational communication plays a part of forming common understanding of Europeanness, which has been evident for

example during the debates over constitutional treaty. Also popular culture and student exchange programs contribute remarkably to the common ground between Europeans, especially the young generation (Fligstein 2008, 165-207).

On the other hand, it is now generally accepted that European identity is not going to replace national ones as national identity has not diminished even in the states which have been members of the EU for decades. It has prompted many scholars to concentrate on research how multiple identities, including especially European and national one, co-exist. Several of the studies have shown that European identity acquires different meanings in different national contexts (Rumelili and Cebeci 2017, 33), including seminal works of Juan Díez Medrano (2003) and Thomas Risse (2010). As Thomas Risse has shown, the relationship between them may be described as the Europeanization of national identities, “whereby references to Europe and to the European Union are incorporated into one’s sense of national belonging” In that sense meanings of Europeanness are negotiated and constructed in the nation-state level, drawing on historical, cultural and political context of this specific country. As “references to Europe and to the European Union are incorporated into one’s sense of national belonging“, “marble cake” identities emerge, with national and European identities intertwining or “blending” together. (Risse 2010, 25)

Risse's “marble cake” model is admittedly in line with the empirical evidence. (Risse 2010, 25) But there is admittedly rather few empirical studies which have been dedicated to the Central and Eastern European countries. According to Andrius Švarplys, there have been specific features in construction of collective identities due to „late and peripheral state formation and nation building, very late democratization, economic and cultural backwardness.” Therefore also ideas about Europeanness are there remarkably different from those of Western European, while having some similarities with countries with the Western European countries with authoritarian past (e.g. Spain) (Švarplys 2014, 11) Peter Katzenstein and Jeffrey Checkel have also emphasized that Eastern enlargement led to the “reintroduction” of religion into Europe

– especially due to the fact that Poland was among the new member states. (Katzenstein and Checkel 2009, 215) One of the aims of this study is to provide new empirical evidence on these topics.

Literature on changes in European identity

There is on-going debate both in psychology and social sciences over preconditions of identity change. It is believed that “strong” identities such as national ones tend to be sticky, being liable to change only in case of profound crisis, which are often called “critical junctures” in scholarly literature. Wars, military defeats, but also for example the events of the year 1989 in Europe have been among such instances. (Risse 2010, 32-33) The critical junctures provide “a window of opportunity” during which it is possible to challenge commonly held views about identity and propose new ones. Different actors pursue their perceived interests during the critical juncture, trying to legitimize their actions and promote their interpretation of the events. To be persuasive in the eyes of the public, it is necessary to link new understandings of national or European identity with preexisting symbols and beliefs. However, opportunity to change is limited. Not all dramatic events are perceived by influential actors as a crisis and thus challenging established understandings about identity. And even in the case of critical juncture emerges, change may not happen, if newly proposed ideas about identity do not “resonate” with existing “institutional legacies and identity constructions.” (Galpin 2014, 21)

In case of changing European identities, the example of Germany after Second World War is a case in point. Atrocities committed by Nazi regime and military defeat suffered in the war discredited earlier nationalistic version of German identity. Its own past became the “Other” in the new version of German identity while according to the new consensus being German was inseparably linked to being an (Western) European, which in turn was seen as based on democracy, human rights and social market economy.

(Risse 2010, 68)

Another often cited example is the identity change in France. Shift from the idea of “Europe of nations” towards supporting further integration happened there due to the changing political circumstances in 1980s. After socialist president François Mitterrand began to promote the idea of Europe as built on “French values” following the failures of economic policy, other centrist political forces followed the suit in changing their perceptions on Europe. The exact meaning of Europeanness has however remained contested in France. (Risse 2010, 73-74)

Case studies of other European countries have also shown significant transformation of ideas about Europeanness and European identity. It has been affected by major social and political processes (modernization, nation building, rise and fall of imperialism) and political ideologies. In specific countries, attitudes towards Roman Catholic church as well as towards European or external powers (especially Germany, Russia, Turkey or the USA) have also shaped both the strength of identification with Europe and popularity of different concepts what Europeanness means. (Af Malmberg, Stråth 2002) Since mid-20th century, the European integration process has significantly altered the national debates over European identity. Questions of membership in the EU, relations with Brussels and future directions of the integration have had profound impact on contemporary debate about European identity in the whole continent. Therefore European identity studies have been closely linked to the research on support of European integration.

Literature on Euroscepticism

Euroscepticism studies are relatively new field in the political science as mass-scale opposition to the European integration or membership in the European Union did not emerge before the adopting of the Maastricht treaty. Several attempts to define and categorize Euroscepticism has been made since then. One of the most popular among

them has been the distinction of “hard” and “soft” varieties of Euroscepticism, proposed by Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart. They define hard Euroscepticism as “principled opposition to the project of European integration embodied in the EU, in other words, based on the ceding or transfer of powers to a supranational institution such as EU” In case of soft Euroscepticism the opposition is limited “to the EU’s current or future planned trajectory based on further extension of competencies that the EU was planning to make.” (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2018, 13) However, the meaning of the soft Euroscepticism has remained fuzzy as in practice it has been difficult to distinguish occasional opposition to only some European policies from sceptical attitudes towards further European integration as a whole. Several attempts to coin new terms for more them have not however found general approval nor usage. Despite understandable explosion in interest to the Euroscepticism in recent years, the study field has remained fragmented, with no satisfactory synthesis in sight.

Firstly, the studies have been conducted mostly by scholars of either comparative politics or European integration without sufficient co-operation and cross-fertilization. (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2018a)

Secondly, opposition to the European integration is diverse both in ideological terms and across the specific countries. Charles Bouillaud has distinguished the following ideological varieties of Euroscepticism: right-wing nationalism, strong religious identity, radical left, economic and social neoliberalism. Left-wing Euroscepticism (with far left, communist and neo-communist varieties) rejects the EU as a capitalist project while according to neoliberal Euroscepticists, the EU is imbued by 'socialist' spirit. Right-wing nationalist Euroscepticism comes in turn in two variants. Western-European one is linked mostly to anti-immigration program, while Eastern European is more concerned about „domination of Brussels”. (According to Paczeński 2015, 180) In Polish case, right-wing nationalism is often linked to rejection of European integration on grounds of religious identity.

Finally, also rapidly changing political environment contributes to the complexity. Notably many of the latest studies about Euroscepticism are dedicated to the impact of Euro and migration crisis or the Brexit referendum and its consequences. (Hobolt and De Vries 2016; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2018b) As a result of all of this, fragmentation in Euroscepticism with recent attempts of summarizing the state of the art of the study field highlighting rather different topics and authors (Guerra 2017; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2018a)

For purpose of this thesis, insights from the Euroscepticism studies are relevant in two sense. Firstly, cultural and identity factors are increasingly seen as one of the causes behind Euroscepticism beside the “hard” utilitarian and economic factors. (Van Klingeren et al. 2013, 689) Secondly, not unexpectedly rhetoric used by Eurosceptics is often adopted by Polish right-wing media in the context of covering the confrontation between Poland and supranational institutions of the EU. Especially studies on Euroscepticism in media provide valuable insights about it. (Caiani and Guerra 2017)

1.2. European identity in Polish discourse

There is vast and diverse literature about European identity in Polish context. (Góra and Mach 2010). However, there is widely accepted consensus that Polish elites are deeply divided on European identity issues. These have been by different authors labelled as differences between essentialist and constructivist identity projects (Wojtaszczyk 2011, 40-41), reflecting cosmopolitan-nationalist cleavage (Galpin 2014, 91), Christian and Enlightenment roots (Góra and Mach 2010, 231) etc.

Historical overview

Contemporary ideas and perceptions of Europe draw to remarkable extent on those of earlier time periods (see anthologies: Loew 2004, Maciejewski and Machaj 2011). In the case of contemporary right-wing discourse, two somewhat different approaches may

be discerned in relation to the identification with Europe. According to one of them, Poland has a special mission to save Europe – and hence obviously seen itself as a part of it. Another approach highlights the differences between Poland and Western Europe, stressing the superiority of Polish values. Both approaches date back more than hundred years and have since then been repeatedly adapted for using in different historical contexts, including contemporary debates over Polish place in Europe.

1. Ideas about special mission of Poland in Europe

Throughout the history the peripheral position in Europe has had profound impact on Polish perception of Europe. Hence the sense of inferiority, which has been tried to compensate by promoting ideas that Poland has a special role to play in European history. (Skotnicka-Illasiewicz 1997, 35-41) Often it is related to defending it from external invaders. While due to its early modern wars with Muscovy and Ottomans Poland has been seen as *antemurale Christianitis*, in 1919-21 Poland played allegedly the crucial role in saving Europe from Bolshevism. (Törnquist-Plewa 2002, 217, 230) Different vision was sketched by the representatives of Polish Romanticist thought of the 19th century. For them partitioned Poland had become “Christ of Nations” whose mission was to lead the liberation of all the subjugated nations in Europe. On the other hand, ideas about Poland as the custodian and promoter of Christian heritage of Europe, which are currently popular among right-wing circles, have also its origins in both agrarian and Catholic thought of the 19th century. (Törnquist-Plewa 2002, 224)

2. Differences from the West – backwardness or cause for pride?

Often, however, it has been noted that Poland, while no doubt belonging to the European family of nations, is in important ways also different from Western Europe. Since the Enlightenment and the Polish Positivist school, many authors have referred to Polish backwardness and appealed for the modernization of the country along the Western European lines. (Törnquist-Plewa 2002, 226) These ideas were disputed by the

authors who claimed that there is no need to feel inferior to the West, despite even the obvious gap in material prosperity and civilizational development. The proponents of this so-called Ethnocentrist school claimed that Poland should be proud of its unique national culture that should be allowed to develop in its own track (Törnquist-Plewa 2002, 221). Europe was thus seen by them as “a model and at the same time a threat for the survival of the natural culture” and western ways should have been adopted prudently, not copying those uncritically. (Törnquist-Plewa 2002, 228) Similar divisions regarding the identification with Europe existed in most other peripheral countries of both Eastern and Southern Europe. (af Malmborg and Stråth 2002)

In case of Poland however there were less alternatives to the Western orientation than in case of some other countries. So unlike in the case of Czechs (Hroch 2002), Russian orientation was not conceivable as an alternative to the identification with Western Europe and absorption of German cultural influences was also rejected as both were seen as the main enemies of the nation. (Góra and Mach 2012, 224) Therefore, even though some thinkers tended to see Poland as a unique bridge between the West and Slavic world (Törnquist-Plewa 2002, 221), virtually no-one disputed explicitly the belonging of Poland to the “Latin civilization” or Europe. (Loew 2004, 21)

Polish relations with Europe were however less discussed at all since the rise of nationalist thought, as problems of matching ethnic nationalism with the multi-ethnic and multi-religious character of Polish society became the most pressing public issue. However, after the re-establishing of independence in 1918, international position of the Polish state became the hotly debated issue. As its peripheral position and secondary importance in European politics became evident, idea about Poland as a potential regional leader of countries between Western Europe and Russia gained popularity. The projects of *Intermarum* and *Prometheism*³, promoted among others by the leading statesman of the era Józef Piłsudski, are two outstanding examples about it. Perceived

³ The Intermarium (Międzymorze) project aimed tightening co-operation between Eastern European states, while Prometheism propagated supporting the independence struggle of non-Russian nationalities of Soviet Union – both under the aegis of Poland. See Ištók and Koziak 2009

distance with the Western Europe was also emphasized by prominent national conservative politician Roman Dmowski, who highlighted the alleged flip side of the Western modernization and predicted decline of “liberal Europe”. According to him the partition had even been somewhat beneficial for Poland as it had resulted in being “less European” than would have been the case if it had been an independent state in the 19th century. (Loew 2004, 21-23)

The Cold War years strengthened pro-European attitudes of Polish intellectuals both in exile and (especially since 1970s) at home, since belonging to “Europe” was seen as the only alternative for the domination of the communist Soviet Union. However, even at that time sceptical voices appeared, citing for instance civilizational gap, lack of interest in Central Europe on behalf of Western Europeans or threat of German hegemony. (Loew 2004, 25-33)

European identity in contemporary Poland (since 1989)

Earlier debates over Polish identity were held in the context where the most important issues were restoring Polish independence or, since 1918, strengthening its independence and position among the European powers. European identity issues surfaced mostly in the context of modernizing the country and relations with other European states. Even though European integration projects and Pan-European ideas had been promoted also by some Polish intellectuals, their influence had been negligible. (Loew 2004, 27)

Situation changed profoundly after the gradual dismantling of the communist regime in 1989-90. Since possibility of the membership in the European Union became the issue, it shaped almost entirely the content of European debates in Poland, including that of identity. Besides ideas from the past, these have been influenced by social context. Especially impact of the public opinion, daily politics and perceived Polish national interests should be noted.

Accession debate

As demonstrated above, understandings of Europeanness and European identity in Poland have since 1989 been influenced both by past ideas and political realities of the day. Prominent liberal authors like Adam Michnik and Bronisław Geremek supported wholeheartedly integration with European Union both on the grounds of economic development and in order to promote democracy as well as liberal values in a country with authoritarian and nationalistic past. For the leftist thinkers such as Jacek Kuroń, Europe was also associated with welfare state. Generally the integration with Europe was perceived both by the liberals and leftists as the opportunity to get rid of reactionary and backward Polish national heritage. (Góra and Mach 2010, 122) The conservatives took however exactly the opposite view.

The national heritage was seen by them in positive terms and the attitudes towards the European integration depended on to what extent it was perceived as a danger to the distinctiveness of Poland.

By some, joining the EU was essentially the question about identity. Poland was seen as a “core” or “authentic” Europe and its identity based on Catholic heritage was contrasted with western Europe shaped allegedly mostly by Enlightenment tradition. (Góra and Mach 2010, 231) Many such authors rejected joining the EU as it would be detrimental not only from the point of view of national interests, but as it also allegedly put in danger Polish values and way of life. It was especially characteristic for Christian nationalist circles who were afraid that the EU would impose things “that are not acceptable in the Polish system of values: abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, denying the institution of marriage, promoting neutrality of the worldview while at the same time suppressing Christian values.” (cited by Styczyńska 2018, 72) Others were hesitantly in favor of the accession, seeing Poland once again as a savior of Europe, this time from moral decay caused by abandonment of its Christian heritage. (Góra and

Mach 2010, 231)

On the other hand, it was warned against uncritically copying everything western. Besides highlighting the threat of secularization, western ideas about functioning democracy and free market economy were criticized, referring for instance to the drawbacks caused by the transition reforms. (Góra and Mach 2010, 232) But it was also critically noted that western Europeans had prejudices towards post-communist countries, seen as backward and in need of being “civilized” according to the western guidelines. (Góra 2015, 114) Attempts to use post-colonial theories, including rhetoric about “self-colonization” of Polish pro-European elites have also become fashionable among some rightist intellectuals in analyzing the relations between the western member-states and the EU. (Fomina 2016)

Other conservative thinkers, while principally agreeing that Poland was different and morally superior from the western Europe, argued that identity questions were not necessarily relevant in the context of European integration. European Union was not seen by these “Eurorealists” as a community of values, but rather as a playing field of egoistic nation-states, co-operating because they saw it mutually beneficial. These pragmatists or “Eurorealists” were thus less concerned about cultural or ideological differences with the West, but discussed rather possible gains and losses of the accession for Poland. (Hahn 2007, 42-43) What counted the most was if Poland could in the EU to become an influential member-state or would remain a secondary class member-state, exploited by the more powerful ones. (Lázár 2015, 224) Also concerns about loss of sovereignty and principled opposition to the deepening of the integration were voiced. (Napieralski 2017, 131-137)

To conclude with, there was no unity in the right-wing political scene in the question of joining the EU. Different actors highlighted either identity or interest-related aspects of and had different stances on the accession. No clear-cut distinction may be made even on personal or party lines, because they were subject to change due to the political

context, especially calculations about electoral success. But overall League of Polish Families may be described as a hard Eurosceptic party, emphasizing identitarian and ideological aspects of the EU, while Law and Justice, including in fact politicians with various convictions, promoted generally Eurorealist views with stress on Polish national interests. (Szczerbiak 2008) Beside the politicians, the Catholic church played an important role in Polish pre-accession debate. While influential ultra-conservative media empire of Rev. Tadeusz Rydzyk put its weight behind the Eurosceptical cause, majority of the clergy and the church leaders, however, supported cautiously the EU accession, following the appeal of the Polish pope John Paul II. (Szumigalska 2015, 346-347)

Despite all these differences the right-wing circles had generally in common that they did not consider the West to be “Us” and support for the membership was qualified at best. As Law and Justice politician Artur Zawisza put it succinctly: “[The EU] may ask us to recycle garbage but they can’t force us to [accept] abortion”. (Napieralski 2017, 153)

After the accession

1. In the membership referendum, held in June 2003, 77% of the votes were given on behalf of joining the EU. Since then support for membership of the EU have risen, being also steadily among the highest in the member-states. (Szczerbiak 2012, 14 and 111) According to a recent survey by IBRiS, as much as 84% of Poles wanted Poland to remain the member of the European Union, while 8% preferred leaving it. (IBRiS 2018) The high support for the membership seems to be based mostly on conviction that Poland and its citizens have benefited from the membership. (Góra 2015, 127)

Growing popular support for the European Union led to the decline of hard Eurosceptic parties; since 2007 they have not been represented in the parliament. (Paczeński 2015, 184-189) Importantly, popularity of the membership makes also considerably harder to promote narratives of identity which are inspired by rejectionist ideas.

2. Party positions on European issues have also been to considerable extent influenced by daily politics. Not only ideological convictions, but also pragmatical considerations influence the positions of parties on European issues, as Laure Neumayer has demonstrated on examples of several Central European states (Neumayer 2008). In case of Poland, competition between main parties for the electorate and also intra-party rivalries seem to have contributed to their public stances on European issues. Since 2005 presidential and general elections namely two successor parties of former Solidarity camp, center-right Civic Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska*, PO) and right-wing Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS) have dominated the political scene. Initially seen as natural coalition partners, bitter rivalry between them during the campaign led to antagonism which defines Polish politics to this day. (Dudek 2016, 529-544; Holubec and Rae 2010, 199) In the following elections PO has been successful mostly in big cities and in the areas of former German partition, as well as among educated and wealthy classes. PiS has attracted votes especially in Eastern and South-Eastern Poland, small towns and rural areas, among less educated and poorer people. (Dudek 2016, 599-600; 643-645; 687-690)

Following the preferences of its supporters, PO has started to emphasize its unequivocally pro-European credentials. As for the PiS, its voters appear to be more open for the deepening of the European integration than its leading politicians. (Mach 2012, 199-200) Even so, the supporter base of the party is divided between Eurorealists and Eurosceptics with clear majority of them supporting Polish membership in the EU. Overall, PiS is claiming itself to be an Eurorealist party describing EU as an “international organization” and opposing strongly further integration. (Program PiS 2014, 150) However, the need to appease also its Eurosceptic supporters has prompted PiS emphasize vocally its unwavering determination to defend interests and sovereignty of Poland against Brussels.⁴ (Lázár 2015, Paczeński 2015) These circumstances also

⁴ Notably Marcin Piechocki has turned attention to the fact that during the presidential campaign Andrzej Duda used extensively Eurosceptical rhetoric while at the same time claiming to be a staunch supporter of the Polish membership in the EU – something what he calls “allusional Euroscepticism”.

constrain their options to promote different understandings of Europeanness and identities related to them.

3. Influence of Polish-EU relations

Defending Polish national interests in the EU has since the accession been one of the major goals of Polish foreign policy. Both major political parties have claimed to have a common goal – to ensure that Poland would be an important player in the union. Different strategies have however been applied to achieve it.

During the period 2005-2007, when the government was led by Law and Justice party, Poland adopted tough rhetoric about defending sovereignty and national interests. Famously it slowed down the processing of the European Constitutional Treaty and Lisbon treaty, demanding bigger voting rights for Poland. As a result, relations between Poland and the European Union remained strained and Poland became “an awkward partner” for other member-states. (Szczerbiak 2012, 14-20) The following PO governments (2007-2015) took a different stance, hoping to boost Polish position in the EU by establishing good relations with its leading states, emphasizing its co-operative and constructive attitudes and willingness to compromise. On the other hand, it was tried to strengthen Polish position by taking the initiative in the questions about the future of the Union. Good examples about it are Radisław Sikorski’s appeal to Germany for taking the leading role in deepening the integration, but especially the launching of Eastern Partnership program in co-operation with Sweden. Also, in the years of economic crisis, Poland emphasized its role as a country which could provide leadership in the time of troubles. (Galpin 2015, 165-170) The evidence about reactions to the multiple crisis of the EU confirm the relevance of deep elite division in Poland. While liberals payed attention to the European aspects of the Greek crisis, the right-wing media saw it mostly through the lens of Polish sovereignty and national interests. (Galpin 2015, 172-175)

(Piechocki 2016, 308)

After the PiS has re-gained the power, the rhetoric of the government towards the European Union has been inconsistent, ranging from defiance to emphasizing cooperativeness and constructiveness. Generally it is however assumed that Poland is once again moving towards self-isolation in the Union, while the media debates continue about if Polish interests are better protected by establishing good relations with major European powers or should Poland take more self-assuring, confrontational stance. (O'Neal 2017) Finally it should be noted that neither identity nor national interest questions have been especially relevant for ordinary citizens. According to a popular view among the scholars, remarkably high support for the EU membership in Poland reflects only satisfaction over personal material benefits such as free movement, agricultural subsidies, infrastructure projects and evident improvement of the living standards. (Mach and Góra 2010, 237)

On the other hand, support of the EU membership has not translated into identification with Europe: “What is almost completely absent is a reflection about the EU as a such, and about Europe as a whole. Poles do not identify with Europe, the EU is not ‘us’, even if an overwhelming majority value membership very highly and see much more positive than negative consequences of the accession. ‘Relations between Poland and the EU’ is an expression commonly heard in the Polish media, as if Poland was not a member-state“. (Mach & Góra 2010, 237)

II METHODOLOGY

2.1. Time span

In order to make make robust conclusions about possible rule-of-law controversy-related identity change, it is important to apply a longer time span. Therefore the aim of this study is not to detect the impact of isolated events, but rather the whole process of confrontation between the EU and Poland. This enables to track changes in time and take into account combined effect of the developments. The beginning of the year 2016 was chosen as the starting point of the study, even though controversy over the Constitutional Tribunal began already in December last year. Also the first critical reactions of the officials of the EU date back to that time. However, formally the confrontation with Poland began on January 13 when European Commission launched rule of law assessment of Poland according to the Article 7 of the Treaty of European Union. Also, the time span of this study (years 2016 and 2017) covers only first stage of the rule of law dispute. Making final conclusions about the issue is still not possible as at the time of completing this study the procedure against Poland had not been officially completed yet. Still, December 2017 constituted a major watershed in the dispute. Namely, after two years of futile negotiations, the Commission entered to the second stage of the procedure, issuing its recommendation to Poland to change the controversial legislation. (European Commission 2017) The selected time-span also coincides roughly with the premiership of Beata Szydło in Poland. Next day after she resigned, Mateusz Morawiecki became prime minister of Poland on December 8, 2018. The cabinet reshuffle is highly relevant to this study, as the rationale behind that was according to Aleks Szczerbiak greater emphasis being placed by the governing party “on economic modernisation, political stabilisation and improving EU relations.” (Szczerbiak 2018)

2.2. Selection of sources

Reasons for selecting media analysis

This thesis is based on media analysis, while some previous studies about European

identities in Poland have been conducted by means of elite interviews with domestic political actors (Napieralski 2017) and focus group research involving representatives of general public (Góra 2015, Fomina 2017). These studies have revealed how decision-makers on the one hand and voters on the other perceive essence of being European and its compatibility with national identity, giving also a glimpse to what extent they are motivated by ideological convictions and to what extent by pragmatical considerations. However, in order to detect the attempts to challenge existing identity narratives, it is necessary to analyze the discussion between the elites and citizens. Mass media is usually seen as the main “transmission belt” of this public discussion, as it reports both about words and actions of the politicians, but also about “responses from informed publics and ordinary citizens.” (Schmidt 2013, 204) Even though mass media is not the only forum of public discourse on an issue, its role in formation of public opinion is in contemporary societies crucial. On the other hand, mass media does not merely passively reflect the larger public discourse, but contributes to its creation. Journalists may “draw their ideas and language from any or all of the other forums, frequently paraphrasing or quoting their sources. At the same time they contribute their own frames and invent their own clever catchphrases, drawing on the popular culture which they share with their audience.” (Gamson 1989, 3)

This study is based on the premise that ideas of Europe and identities based on it are formed in the course of communicative action. The participants in the media discussions interpret the ongoing events, drawing not only on their own convictions and identities, but also perceived interests. As “legitimacy of claims about “what is to be done” is open to contestation between elites, and between elites and mass publics, /.../ they must consider what ideas will be persuasive and establish institutional and political support for ideas to translate into policy action.“ (Widmaier 2007, 754)

In doing so, they make also statements about belonging. The aim of this study is to analyze these statements in the specific context of rule of law controversy between Poland and the EU.

Reasons for selecting print media

Even though tabloids have often more readers than quality press, they have not been considered to be so influential in forming public opinion. Therefore similar studies to this one have in the past often relied on data of quality newspapers and public broadcasting. (D'Haenens 2005; Gatterman 2013; Trenz 2004, 292) Also some previous studies about European identity in Poland have therefore been based on weekly news magazines (Żuk 2013, Frankowiak 2016) or daily newspapers (Galpin 2015, 154-190). However, emergence of Internet and especially social media have brought about considerable change in media landscape. For many people, especially among younger generations, online sources have become primary sources of information. The number of readers of quality newspapers and news magazines has been in decline and so obviously their influence on public opinion formation . Therefore social media has been analyzed also in several studies which have similar focus to this one. (De Wilde et al. 2013) However, according to recent studies „online discussions are representative of a small number of people from particular demographics, and women especially are likely to feel excluded from actively participating in debates“ (Galpin and Trenz 2017, 62). Importantly, due to fragmentation of media consumption, but especially to “digital divide”, it is difficult to generalize the research findings which are based on selected online sources to the entire population. According to a recent study by state sociological studies center CBOS, the generational divide is salient also in Poland. For the large majority of the adult population, either television (64%) or the Internet (21%) is the primary sources of information about the events in Poland and in the world. But the Internet was mentioned as the most important source only by Poles aged 18-24 (58%), while it was entirely marginal for those older than 55 (less than 10%). At the same time only 4% of Poles claimed to rely primarily on print media. (CBOS 2017, 2) Furthermore, available data deals only with the proportions of media consumers, but do not give us reliable information about which media sources play the most important role specifically in discursive struggles over Polish and European identity.

Still, regarding the importance of television in the Polish media landscape first option would be analyzing analytical or news programs of state television/radio as well as private right-wing channels. However, regarding the time span of the study, it would be an arduous task well beyond the scope of a master thesis. Crucially, many of the relevant podcasts appear also not to be publicly available any more. So, print media remains the only viable option. Fortunately it seems plausible that conclusions made on its basis may well be generalized to the right-wing media at large as print media, television networks and internet news sites are often interconnected in Poland by means of ownership and staff.

Specifically the media corporations which publish weekly opinion magazines, often run also related web portals. For example, media group Fratria publishes weekly opinion magazine *Sieci* and owns web portal wpolityce.pl, which both have Michał and Jacek Karnowskis as main editors. In the same manner, web portal niezalezna.pl is related to *Gazeta Polska*, mediating a significant part of its content to online readers. Besides, journalists of *Gazeta Polska* and *Do Rzeczy* launched 2013 a common television channel TV Republika. Its audience has however been rather limited. (CBOS 2017, 3) However, since PiS came into power in 2015, public radio and television have also been effectively turned into the mouthpieces of the governing party. Since then, conservative journalists who are employed by or contribute to the right-wing opinion weeklies feature regularly in their publicistic and news programs.⁵ Marcin Wolski, who writes weekly columns for *Gazeta Polska* and *Do Rzeczy*, became even the director of public television channel TVP2. (Skarżynski 2018) In that reason, it seems that we can with due caution suppose that right-wing print media, television and online news portals frame European identity issues similarly. Presumably some minor differences may occur due to targeted audience or specifics of electronic media.

⁵ For the interconnectedness of Polish right-wing media, see Czuchnowski et al. 2017

Selection criteria of the print media outlets

Right-wing media

In case of Poland attitudes towards the communist past, Catholic church as well as related social, moral and identity issues are the most important determinants of self-definition as the supporter of the right. These are quite often combined with socio-economic views which are commonly understood as left-orientated. For that reason, some scholars have abandoned Left-Right distinction altogether in case of Poland. (Lipiński 2016, 80-83) Still, more often the well-known distinction of Left-Right is still used by scholars, albeit in non-traditional way. Importantly, the notion “rightist” is widely used by public discourse in Poland to designate a certain political option, sometimes also referred to as „conservative“. For purpose of this thesis, right-wing in Polish political discourse means broad support for following principles:

1. Moral conservatism (regarding the issues such as abortion, gay rights, in vitro fertilization, gender roles, church and state relations)
 2. Nationalism:
 - ▲ supporting memory policies which glorify the nation’s past
 - ▲ suspicious attitudes towards Germany and Russia
 - ▲ sceptical attitudes about deepening the European integration or desire to return to more intergovernmentalist arrangement.
 3. Anti-communist and anti-leftist stances. Narrative of „flawed transformation” - blaming all the problems of Poland to alleged continued dominance of former communists in political and economical life.
- (Based on Holubec & Rae 2010; Lipiński 2016).

While in the 1990s Polish right was fragmented, in recent decades Law and Justice party has succeeded to become dominant right-wing political force. Therefore in Polish

discourse also terms right-wing media and pro-government media are not infrequently used interchangeably. Still, it should be noted that other right-wing political forces also have occasionally played a certain role in political life of Poland. Notably, the radical right party League of Polish Families was represented in the Sejm between 2001-07 (and was 2005-07 also represented in the government). The elections of 2015 however brought to Sejm several right-wing deputies who had run in the list created by rock musician Paweł Kukiz (Kukiz '15); controversial libertarian politician Janusz-Korwin Mikke was elected in 2014 into European Parliament. Both have garnered remarkable support among young people. (Zbytewska 2017, Kołaczyk 2018, 562-563) Other extra-parliamentary radical groupings such as Ruch Narodowy have drawn public attention as organizers of controversial public manifestations.

However, media outlets linked to the extra-PiS right-wing circles (*Warszawska Gazeta*, *Polska Niepodlega*, *Najwyższy Czas!*) are not included to this study. Not only is their importance in the formation of public opinion much more limited, but also their content is considerably different from that of main-stream right-wing media, including that some of them use to publish overtly xenophobic and extreme nationalist materials.

Also not included are media outlets of Fr. Tadeusz Rydzyk, which are directed towards ultranationalist and conservative religious wing of PiS supporters (Radio Maryja, TV Trwam and daily newspaper *Nasz Dziennik*). However, the importance of these outlets in formation of public opinion may be overestimated. According to a CBOS survey only 2-4% of the Poles listened to Radio Maryja in 2011 (Szumigalska 2015, 345). In the tight political race, gaining endorsement of Fr. Rydzyk is still important for the PiS, but the heyday of his once considerable political impact seems to be over, especially regarding the impact on the program and rhetoric of the PiS. (Napieralski 2017, 144-145) Importantly, the views of this grouping, imbued with a specific variety of religious fundamentalism (Kutyło 2010, 110), are also in many ways different from those of

mainstream supporters of the PiS and indeed most of Polish Catholics. (Napieralski 2017, 145) Finally, more mainstream Catholic media outlets such as *Niedziela* and *Gość Niedzielny* are also not included into sample. Even though much of the content of the magazines is religious, they feature indeed regularly also writings about the politics and society. But their approach to right-wing thought seems to be remarkably different than that of secular media, especially in that they appear to concentrate mostly on conservative morals issues only. As such, they deserve a separate research.

Selection criteria of the media outlets

In order to understand the essence of the identity construction projects, it is most suitable to concentrate on media outlets which concentrate rather on longer analytical pieces, opinion articles, essays and interviews. Therefore so-called Polish opinion magazines were preferred over daily newspapers. According to Tomasz Mielczarek the opinion weeklies are largely an uniquely Polish phenomenon. (Mielczarek 2018, 25) Despite some similarities with weekly news magazines elsewhere in the world, they dedicate namely remarkably much more coverage to opinion pieces of publicists, intellectuals, cultural actors, journalists, politicians and other publicly known figures. Currently ten titles of the opinion weeklies are published in Poland (Kurdupski 2018). Of those, *Gazeta Polska*, *Do Rzeczy* i *Sieci* may be characterized as connected with governing right-wing Law and Justice party (O'Neal 2017, 31). These weeklies also have previously tended to promote right-wing views on Polish and European identity (Lipiński 2016, 38-44; Frankowiak 2016, 383-385). Therefore these three titles have been selected for analysis for this study.

Selection criteria for the articles

All such articles were chosen for analysis, which had EU-Polish dispute about

democracy and rule of law as the main topic. It means that if more than half of the content (most of the sentences) was related to the European dimension of the democracy and rule of law problems, it was analyzed, but if the article was mostly dedicated to domestic politics, it was omitted. However, if the European dimension was dealt with in several paragraphs under separate subtitle, this part of the article was still included to the analysis. As an exception, all interviews with the members of the government, the Sejm (lower chamber of the Polish parliament) or European Parliament were included, even if there was only one single question asked about international or European dimension of the democracy and rule of law issues. It is inevitable as interviews with influential politicians usually deal with multiple topical issues.

2.3. Conducting the study

The selected articles were analyzed, using qualitative frame analysis. Framing is the notion used in media studies since 1970s and refer to meaning creation procedures in the mass communication. According to William A. Gamson, “facts have no intrinsic meaning. They take on their meaning by being embedded in a frame or story line that organizes them and gives them coherence, selecting certain ones to emphasize while ignoring others /.../ A frame is a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue”. (Gamson 1989, 157)

However, there is no generally accepted definition of a frame which has led to considerable fragmentation in theory and its practical applications (Scheufele 1999). For purpose of this study, framing is understood as the action “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the items described“ (Entman 1993, 52)

All paper editions of the three magazines from the years 2016 and 2017 were accessed in the Polish National Library or the library of Warsaw University and browsed page by page⁶. Total number of the articles analyzed was 74 (for distribution across the titles and in time, see appendix 2). Articles which fit to the criteria described above were selected at this stage and copied for further research. The analysis of the selected articles began with first reading of them and identifying the frames. Subsequently, closer investigation of articles followed which included the coding of the frame packages in order to facilitate the comparison of the articles and making robust generalizations. Finally, articles were re-read one more time to double-check possible errors in coding.

2.4. Limitations to the study

Rule of law dispute is selected for analysis as it has been the most important bone of contention between Poland and the institutions of the EU. At the same time other disagreements between Poland and the EU institutions influenced both the debate over Constitutional Tribunal and overall perceptions about belonging to Europe. The scope of this study allows only brief reference to the issues related to the refusal of the Polish government to accept so-called refugee quotas or curb press freedom. Other studies covering these questions should follow to get more accurate picture of possible identity change in Poland.

This study is based on print media sources, but, as indicated above, its findings may tentatively be generalized to the right-wing media as the whole. Further studies based on electronic media and Internet sources could however corroborate the findings. Also, as noted earlier, this study concentrates on media outlets that are directed towards core supporters of the ruling Law and Justice Party. The message to this audience may be considerably different from that of disseminated to the general public. Comparative studies in that field would be needed.

⁶ Paper editions were chosen, because not all the content of the magazines is available in the Internet. Also many online articles are available only for subscribers. It seems however that usually the text which is published in the Internet is in case of these magazines identical to that of paper editions.

Finally, this study is concerned with the frames journalists and politicians use in interpreting the events to the public and promoting their identity projects. It does not make claims about the media effects in shaping public opinion. This could be determined by further quantitative and focus group research.

2.5. Research questions

The research aim was to analyze the treatment of the European identity issues as introduced in the previous chapter, according to the following research questions:

(I) Is European identity (as juxtaposed to Polish identity) a salient topic in the Polish right-wing media and up to what extent?

II) a) How is 'European identity' portrayed in the Polish right-wing media, inside the context of the rule of law controversy between Poland and the EU?

b) To what extent is the portrayal of European identity different than before the controversy?

III POLISH RIGHT-WING MEDIA ON THE RULE OF LAW CRISIS

3.1. Overview about the analyzed magazines

History of the magazines

During the two first decades of Poland's newly established democracy leftist, liberal and centrist media outlets dominated in the media market. Main right-wing weekly at that time was *Gazeta Polska* (established 1993), which initially defined itself as liberal conservative. It emphasized anti-communism, but distanced itself from nationalist Catholicism. (Lipiński 2016, 40) Besides that, media empire of Rev. Tadeusz Rydzyk was built, which became influential among religious ultra conservative circles (radio station *Radio Maryja*, daily newspaper *Nasz Dziennik*, TV station *Trwam*) (Kutyło 2010, 205-206). Profound change on right-wing media scene occurred due to Smolensk air crash of 2010 in which Polish conservative president Lech Kaczyński and dozens of members of political elite were killed. Since then, many followers of the right-wing parties have believed that the disaster was caused by the plot of Russia with the involvement of Polish liberal political elite. These events created considerable spike in interest for right-wing media. So earlier marginal *Gazeta Polska* rose among the most popular weekly opinion magazines (Mielczarek 2016, 150-151). The success of *Gazeta Polska* prompted the launch of another right-wing opinion weekly named *Uważam Rze* by the media group *Presspublika* in February 2011. After the change in ownership of the media group and following conflict with the new owner, leading journalists left the *Uważam Rze*, establishing two new news magazines: *wSieci*⁷ with Michał Karnowski as the main editor (November 2011) and *Do Rzeczy* edited by Paweł Lisicki (January 2012). (Lipiński 40-41, Mielczarek 2016, 52-56)

⁷ Since August 2017 published under the title *Sieci Prawdy* and since January 2018 *Sieci*. Mielczarek 2018, 189

Content

Main content of the magazines are opinion pieces and interviews about social and political issues, while some articles are dedicated to history, culture and entertainment. Main emphasis is on domestic politics.⁸ As for European issues, migration crisis and terror attacks got much attention. In *Gazeta Polska* there is a permanent section for short news from the European Union and permanent column of MEP Ryszard Czarnecki which is usually dedicated to European Union affairs. The same applies to a column of Krystyna Grzybowska in *wSieci* (“Around Europe with Krystyna Grzybowka”). Rather few of their articles deal however directly with the relations of Poland between European Union.

Regarding the seriousness of the rule of law confrontation between Poland and the EU it is amazing how few attention is paid to the issue in the magazines. For example, only one magazine cover of *wSieci* the year 2016 was dedicated to that. In case of all the analysed magazines, it gains coverage usually only in case of major developments (the speech of Beata Szydło in Strasbourg, meetings of Polish and European top officials, launching new official procedures etc.). However, in these rare cases quite much coverage may be dedicated to the issue. In case of rule of law dispute, the magazines contained the following content:

1. Interviews with government representatives and top politicians. Quite regularly the magazines conducted interviews with prime minister or ministers of Poland which rarely ignored the European Union issues. Also interviews with the Polish and foreign members of European Parliament were often published.
2. Reports and opinion pieces of journalists and publicists. These include both contributions from the editorial staff and several permanent co-operators. Some of them are 2-3 pages long thorough analysis while most are short opinion pieces, columns and

⁸ According to the calculations of Tomasz Mielczarek, about 82% of the content of *Sieci* and 69% *Do Rzeczy* is dedicated to domestic issues, while overall about half of the both magazines deals with political topics. (Mielczarek 2018, 196 and 210)

feuilletons. Also their content is rather uneven, ranging from mere repeating the government propaganda to (in rare cases) sophisticated coverage based on inside knowledge or media reports.

3. Analysis of experts and political commentators. While drawing on worldview and political positions of the ruling party, they often include insights from historical and social sciences and provide in a few occasions rather balanced and sophisticated analysis. Texts by professor of sociology Zdzisław Krasnodębski (also MEP of PiS) and former PO politician Jan Rokita are worth of mentioning in that respect.

4. Lists of readers. Only one or two of them are published weekly and they deal mostly with feedback to the stories published before.

Beside the rule of law controversy, the future of the European integration and Polish role in the EU is often discussed. Also the question of re-election of Donald Tusk as chairman of the European Council was a much covered issue.

3.2. Framing of the conflict with the EU

Virtually never is in the analyzed magazines assumed that irregularities indeed occurred in handling the Constitutional Tribunal crisis or even that the opponents of the government themselves sincerely believed in their cause. Generally it is assumed that „the aim of the debate is not finding the truth, but humiliating of Poland by means of forcing it to acknowledge true what is a lie.” (prof. Czaputowicz, DR 12.IX.2016, 63) It is also argued that judicial reforms in Poland were long overdue due to the lack of transparency and corruption in the court system. As the judges were allegedly afraid of losing their unfair privileges, they resorted to urging up anti-government sentiments among the public, using the case of Constitutional Tribunal as a pretext. Allegedly political opposition as well as Polish foreign enemies took advantage of it, launching the campaign against the government both home and abroad. (see DR 12.IX.2016, 63) In explaining the following confrontation with the European Union, five main frames

were used by the magazines, which are subsequently introduced in detail. For a comparative table about the frames used, see appendix 2.

3.2.1. Internal power struggle

One of the most popular explanations to the crisis is that it has to a large extent to do with the internal power struggle in Poland. This frame was used in 50 articles out of total 74. According to this line of thinking the crisis was provoked by the Polish opposition as it was outrageous due to electoral defeat and desperate in finding the ways to topple the government. In other words, the ferocious political conflict between the government and opposition was internationalized. (see for example DR 10.I.2016, 34) Parties of Platforma Obywatelska and Nowoczesna and the popular movement KOD which organized mass protests against the government, are often mentioned in that regard, but also oppositional media is blamed.

Opposition as the initiator of the confrontation with the EU

Sometimes it is suggested that domestic political actors are behind the whole controversy: „If the opposition were not interested in discussion of domestic matters in European forum, if this signal did not come directly from Poland, this debate would not have taken place.” (MEP Ryszard Legutko, GP 27.I.2016, 9) It is not always specified, why opposition politicians are able to persuade European politicians. In many cases, however, intra-faction solidarity in the European Parliament is cited or importance of personal ties emphasized („non-formal influence network,” DR 4.IV.2016, 85). Alternatively it is argued that opposition has considerable influence on media coverage abroad as western journalists tend to co-operate mostly with liberal Polish journalists and media outlets. Western politicians in turn base their opinion on these distorted media reports. (DR 7.VII.2017, 16-17)

Not seldom attention is also paid to the bias of Polish representatives in the European institutions, such as president of the European Council Donald Tusk and commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska. They are effectively treated as an extension of Polish internal opposition: “Most of the Polish representatives in the European institutions are people representing the former ruling camp. They are defending the status quo, I repeat: they are people who have not come to terms with losing the power.” (president Andrzej Duda in an interview, wS 25.I.2016, 10) According to other opinions the bias of the Poles of Brussels is evident at least in the fact that they remain passive in the debate, not using the opportunities to defend Poland against the unfair allegations. Interestingly all of these allegations are made in articles which have been published in the beginning of the controversy (January and February 2016). A big role is allegedly played also by European Parliament members who represent liberal oppositional parties (PO, PSL and SLD). It is believed that besides “snitching” (for example DR 4.IV.2016) they have also covertly contributed to the wording of the resolutions against Poland (GP 20.IV.2016, 21)

Such interpretation treats Polish opposition as the main „Other” while attitude towards European political actors is neutral. They may be depicted as ignorant and naively believing the version of the opposition about the crisis of Constitutional Tribunal. So, explaining the real circumstances would make sense and perhaps be crucial for solving the crisis. Indeed, representatives of the government argued repeatedly that this had proved effective: „European leaders have understood that they did a mistake, trusting the version of the opposition in assessment of current events in Poland”, argued prime minister Szydło in one occasion (wS 13.II.2017, 28). Even some right-wing journalists however disagree, blaming also miserable political abilities and communication skills of the government camp which had helped the opposition to dominate in the foreign media and disseminate therefore successfully their distorted accounts of the events. (Dominika Ćosić, DR 14.III.2016, 32-34)

However, European politicians are usually not referred to as “Us” either. It is presumed

that European politicians may reject the opposition's version about the Constitutional Tribunal controversy simply because they would be sincere in their attempts to find out the truth. It is not assumed that there is a common identity or common values which would drive them to support Polish government.

Co-operation with the external “Other”

More often it is argued that both opposition and European actors use Constitutional Tribunal controversy as a pretext to pressurize Poland. While occasionally described as “parallel attack from outside and inside” (wS 13.II.2017, 29), it is more often understood as coordinated between the leaders of opposition and European politicians. Prime minister Szydło offered the following explanation: “Politicians from PO with Grzegorz Schetyna ahead, who made visits to Brussels and spoke about it that in Poland democratic foundations of rule of law are violated, have their share in the decision of the commission [on launching the procedure against Poland]. But in a certain moment the situation got out of their control” and the EU institutions began to use the allegations for furthering their own ends. (DR 18.I.2016, 14) In some cases the external enemies are influential member-states of the EU, in other cases European institutions or their leaders, and in yet other instances “European establishments” (their alleged motives are described below in respective subsections).

According to this frame, both opposition and Europe (or “the West”) are the “Others”. However, they are not equal in power – in virtually all articles opposition is considered to be a weaker partner who is desperately needing help from their European allies and is therefore dependent on them. For the conservative government it means the opportunity to make deals with Europeans over the head of the opposition. Indeed, some commentators suppose that determination of Europeans to fight against the government of PiS is weaker than that of the Polish opposition. So especially in the summer 2016 when it became evident that the procedure against Poland was progressing slowly, right-wing commentators in Poland rushed to suppose that it was a sign about the intention of

European institutions to back down or compromise (wS 6.V.2016, 28-30). Often it is at least supposed that European Commission is split between hawks and doves in the issue of Poland which may lead to the favorable solutions for Poland if the latter would prevail.

However, willingness of Europeans to compromise is supposed to be linked exclusively to the need for concentrate to more urgent issues for the Union – or perhaps due to the cracks with their Polish partners. So, European politicians are treated as the Other who is easier to make deals with, not inevitably closer or less harmful than the opposition.

On other instances, European actors (meaning either nation-states, institutions of Brussels or “the Establishment”) are however also seen as more dangerous enemy than the opposition. As they are allegedly determined to subjugate Poland, the opposition is seen as co-operating with an external enemy: „Voices of the politicians from PO disseminate well-known message to European political elite: „We will together with you, in accordance with your interests, attack Poland, therefore it pays off for you to return us to the power”.” (Joanna Lichočka, GP 6.IX.2017, 40) Willingness to become vassals of the Westerners means that their activities are “close to treason” (DR 6.VIII.2017, 3).

This line of thinking resonates strongly with history narrative about unique Polish “tradition of treason” in Polish history which has been popular in right-wing discourse. Especially often are the attempts of Polish opposition to appeal to the European institutions referred as *Targowica* – a synonym for the treason in Poland,⁹ used earlier for example also for those who made compromises with the communists during the Round Table talks in 1989 or later for those who supported joining the EU. (Haska 2018, 307-311) So, according to MEP Ryszard Czarnecki (PiS) pursuits to achieve domestic political goals by calling help from abroad have been common throughout the

⁹ Hint to the confederation of Polish noblemen who co-operated with Russia in an attempt to abolish the Constitution of May 3, making inadvertently possible the Second Partition of the *I Rzeczpospolita*. See Davies 1984, 535; Haska 2018, 10-17

Polish history. According to him, it is unique in Europe as in other countries oppositional parties arguably avoid confronting government in issues of foreign policy. (MEP Ryszard Czarnecki, DR 7.VIII.2016, 20)

Needless to say that such an interpretation of the events leaves no room for constructing common national identity with the supporters of the opposition – and also common unity of European nations.

3.2.2. Struggle for power between EU member states

Another popular frame was related to the argument that behind the Constitutional Tribunal controversy was the desire of either „Western Europe“ in general, European institutions or influential member-states to keep Poland weak in the international arena. This frame was used in 51 articles.

International position of Poland

International position of Poland has been important issue for all major political parties in Poland. Civic Platform governments claimed that their co-operative approach had helped Poland to boost its standing, referring for example to the election of its prime minister Donald Tusk to the position of the president of European Council. Right-wing political commentators claim however that it was an illusion as in fact Polish interests were still ignored in the EU decision-making. (GP 18.I.2016, 8)

Language usage in that context often reveals that right-wing Poles feel deeply humiliated due to the international position of their country. Notably, the western politicians are repeatedly labelled as “teachers”¹⁰ who treat Poland as though it were a naughty schoolboy who should unquestionably accept their authority or face

¹⁰ In Polish, colloquial dismissive word 'belfer' is used instead of formally and more commonly used 'nauczyciel'

punishment. (DR 6.VI.2016)

The representatives of PiS government have repeatedly expressed their determination to change it: „For us only one thing is important, already from the days of presidency of Lech Kaczyński: subjectivity [*podmiotowość*]. Poland has maximum and minimum ambitions. Maximum means participation in decision-making in the European Union, minimum - participation in decision-making in the sphere of Eastern politics. Minimum plan has already been realized, now it is time for maximum plan“. (foreign minister Witold Waszczykowski, wS 3.VII.2017)

According to both right-wing politicians and journalists exactly such an assertive stance has provoked the attack against Poland: „Let us not be surprised that suddenly so much interest has arisen in the democracy and rule of law in Poland. After all, this is not all about that. These are the sticks, what are needed to divide Poland and emphatically show us our place in the pecking order [*swoje miejsce w szeregu*] – or rather in the corner as has been the case so far.“ (MEP Ryszard Czarnecki, GP 20.I.2016, 43)

As especially government politicians tend to emphasize, Poland had indeed began to gain strength which made its adversaries even more ferocious: “Without doubt Poland is situated in the first league of key states regarding the future of the EU. We are perceived as a dynamical, ambitious country with a good plan for ourselves. This rise of the importance of our state of course is not liked by all and this is one of the reasons of the attacks against Poland”. (prime minister Beata Szydło, wS 13.II.2017)

As issues of power, prestige and dignity are at stake, there is no wonder that debates on rule of law in Poland turned rather emotional: “Background of the attacks against Poland are the endangered interests, but not only. A big role is played also by mental shock which has been experienced by our former “guardians”. (journalist Piotr Semka, wS 25.I.2016, 3)

Sovereignty and independence

According to some articles not only international position of Poland, but also its sovereignty or even independence was at stake. Commonly it is argued that according to treaties the European Union institutions had no right to meddle in the Polish dispute over the Constitutional Tribunal. So it is interpreted as one of the attempts to bring decision-making in internal affairs of the member states to Brussels. (e.g. MP Terlecki, wS 6.V.2016, 42). However, many commentators go even further, painting a very grim picture about the inability of Poland to make independent decisions. Notably, the European Union is compared with Soviet Union: „Brussels behaves with Warsaw in the manner – one may have such impression – like once Moscow did with its satellites. Threatens with sanctions, teaches, reprimands, shows us our place in the pecking order” (journalist Lisicki, DR 23.V.2016, 3; cf. opinion of German MEP Hans-Olaf Henkel GP 13.I.2016, 16).

In some articles the crucial role that judiciary plays in the defense of state sovereignty is highlighted, which arguably may explain why specifically the issue of Constitutional Tribunal evoked so fierce resistance from Europe. „With the help of courts and Constitutional Tribunal it was possible to block the changes, which would cause Poland to become a sovereign, strong country,” argues Tomasz Sakiewicz. If Polish Constitutional Tribunal would follow the example of its German counter-part and stipulate that the law of Poland takes primacy over European Union one, “The Sejm would do what it wants, and certainly not what the Union wants. German and European bureaucrats cannot afford it for themselves.” (GP 6.IX.2017, 3) However, rather often it is not specified at all, what is exactly meant by sovereignty or danger for independence. (e.g. WS 25.I.2016, 81)

Economic interests

The confrontation between Poland and the influential member-states (or respectively

between western and eastern states) is according to the texts not only about power and prestige, but often also about economic interests.

Firstly, economic growth in the East is faster which means that welfare of the people in the West is in danger: „Behind the ideology of criticizing Poland is money. President Macron, fighting with Poland, fights for the interests of the French. What should the leaders say to the nations who are losing out in the global competition? Go to work? Give up going every day for two-hour-long lunches, take sandwiches with you to the workplace as Poles do?“ (Foreign minister Waszczykowski, wS 3.VII.2017)

Secondly, western states have so far enjoyed opportunities to exploit the poorer member-states in their own interests. In that context the relationship between western countries and Poland is often described as (post)colonial: „In the interests of Germany is not to keep at the shores of Vistula a modern society which knows its rights. They prefer to have here a post-colonial country, with industry which is dying out, low living standards and with politicians who are raising their hand each time when it is favorable to German interests. In Brussels and in Warsaw. In editorial boards and marches for the democracy.“ (wS 18.I.2016, 44) In the similar vein, the perceived anti-Polishness of Frans Timmermans is explained by his attempts to protect business interests of the Dutch. Also, at the beginning of the crisis several commentators argued that allegations against Poland were connected with government plans for introducing special taxes for banks and supermarkets. Foreign entrepreneurs who were afraid of losing their “privileges” and huge unfair profits reportedly got the support of their governments who used rule of law issue as a tool to pressurize Poland to give up these plans. (MEP Ryszard Czarnecki, GP 20.I.2016, 43)

West-East split

While sometimes the dispute is perceived as going on between Poland and the European Union, sometimes it is also described as being between Western and Eastern member-

states as a whole. According to this point of view, “old” European states try to retain their privileged position in the union against the emerging post-communist ones: “Big players in the Union who come from Western Europe fear that Eastern Europe would become more active, and Poland plays in this process an important role, also Visegrád Group and Three Seas Initiative. This may change the architecture of power in Europe. The western side, however, does not want it, being accustomed to have all the cards.” (MEP Ryszard Legutko, DR 31.VII.2017, 33) That is why westerners seek confrontation also with other countries of the region, notably Hungary. But as Poland is the most influential among them, it is attacked most ferociously, which explains the launching of the Article 7 procedure against it. (GP 20.I.16, 2)

Competition between the nation-states

Even though authors tend to agree that the issue of Constitutional Tribunal led Poland to the conflict with “the West”, there are different opinions who is actually in charge there. Still, most of the commentators seem to assume that European Union is an intergovernmental organization which is steered by a few influential member-states. With the words of MEP Ryszard Legutko: „Commission is dependant on main political players, first of all from Germany and France. That Timmermans romps [in attacking Poland], means, that he is allowed to do so“. (DR 31.VII.2017, 33)

In several instances, it is even stated that European Union is in fact under German control (journalist Wolski, DR 25.I.2016, 64) and is used as a tool to achieve its narrow national interests. Such claims are nothing extraordinary, being previously used also by prominent PiS politicians. (Krzyżanowski 2015, 12-13) Therefore also the rule of law dispute with the European Union may essentially be reduced to the issue of German-Polish relations. It may be interpreted as an attack on behalf of „German colonizers” who defend their economic interests (GP 13.I.2016, 12) or part of establishing German dominion over the countries of Central Europe as it is an inevitable precondition of becoming a regional superpower. (GP 6.IX.2017, 3) Even appeals for federalization of

the EU may be perceived as covert attempts to establish German hegemony over Europe. (GP 13.I.2016, 12) However, more often France and Germany are mentioned as the two states which determine the direction of the European Union politics (e.g. foreign minister Waszczykowski, wS 11.II.2016, 30). Once also Great Britain is referred to (GP 27.I.2016, 15). Other states are never mentioned in that context.

This chimes in with the understanding of the European Union in the program of PiS (PiS 2014): “Membership in the international organizations, such as European Union or North Atlantic Treaty Organization should be treated as a tool of realization of Polish national interests and creating favorable environment for us for co-operation with other countries, and not goal in itself or limitation of subjectivity of Poland”. (PiS 2014, 150) The Gaullist ideal of “Europe of nation-states” is also repeatedly invoked by government representatives in the analyzed articles.

As according to this discourse European Union is seen exclusively as a playing ground of nation-states who follow their selfish interests, there is non-surprisingly no talk about common identity between them. However, it is sometimes spoken about solidarity between post-communist member-states or Visegrád countries (DR 25.I.2016). Mostly it is spoken about their common interests, but sometimes also about friendship which is based on historical ties. However, not all commentators see European Union in intergovernmentalist terms, as indicate the opinions quoted above that both “Berlin and Brussels” are to be blamed for the attacks against Poland.

3.2.3. Attack from the side of „the European Establishment”

“The European Establishment”, “European bureaucrats” (“Eurocrats”), „European salons” or elites are also mentioned among them who are behind the attack on Poland. However, this frame is used in 16 articles only. The theme is also not elaborated, being usually only mentioned with one or two sentences in articles which concentrate mostly

on other frames. According to Marcin Wolski “the Establishment” consists of „alienated Eurocrats, financial oligarchs, media magnates and journalistic liars” (Wolski, 6.VIII.2017, 54). Usually however is the term defined vaguely or not at all. But it seems to designate powerful and influential people who thanks to their connections have secured unfair privileges and seek rather their self-interest than national interest or common good. Officials of the European Union institutions (“Eurocrats”) are often put into this category.

The Establishment is believed to be conspiring against Poland because policies conducted by its new government put their privileges, wealth and power under threat. Firstly, planned economic reforms in Poland were not only contrary to the national interest of their home countries, but also against their private business interests. For example in one of the articles it is claimed that „behind the debate about rule of law in Poland are people who are linked to Economic Council of CDU”. Several names of prominent businessmen who belong to the council are mentioned who have business interests both in Greece and Poland. It is attempted to show that they have been successful in influencing the policy of the EU towards both countries. Notably, business interests of the elite are seen as identical with economic interests of the nation: “For the people who control today the key sectors of the economy in many countries of the Union, including Poland and Greece, every national government which does not realize the interests of Germany is a threat. (GP 13.I.2016, 12-13)

But main concern of the “Establishment” is allegedly the fact that in a rather big member-state a government has taken power that represents not the elite, but “ordinary citizens”. According to prime minister Beata Szydło Poland has therefore become their beacon of hope in entire Europe: “I understood that different interest groups, who are losing their unfair privileges would defend them with the help of all possible means,” which explains why the attack against Poland was so ferocious. “But the coin has also another side. For many people not only in Poland, but also in Europe we bring hope of normal politics, whose center is not in the political correctness which endangers even

free discussion, but citizen and its problems.” (wS 1.II.2016, 27) Besides the spillover of the anti-Establishment revolt („Polish virus of freedom”, as one commentator puts it) to the other European states (DR 15.II.2016, 16), there is also the danger that Poland would start to change politics in the European Union level: “Unfortunately these Poles do not want to leave the European Union, they demand reforms of the EU, so that it would serve common citizens, not selected „people of success”, or the Establishment and other groups privileged by Brussels.” (wS 1.VIII.2016, 77)

3.2.4. Power struggle within the European Union

As mentioned above, many right-wing commentators see European Union largely in intergovernmental terms. Still, expressions as “Berlin and Brussels” reveal that not all commentators think that influential nation-states are the sole decision-makers in the EU. It is often not specified, what is meant for the “Brussels”, but one may suppose that by that bureaucrats of European institutions are meant who have either their own or their institutional interests in mind. Their hostility towards Poland may be explained by means of ideological bias (it will be discussed later). But sometimes the top officials of the EU institutions are not even perceived as necessarily vehemently anti-Polish. They are allegedly simply trying to use the debate and the article 7 procedure as a means to enhance their own prestige and power. Following motives are distinguished:

1. Distraction

Attacking Poland is a convenient opportunity to distract attention from the “real challenges” which have been or are faced by the European Union – e.g. Brexit, immigration or Euro crisis. As European Union has failed to tackle these problems, it seeks to direct public attention to the issues of secondary importance. On the other hand, forcing Poland into submission would also help to boost waning prestige of the supranational institutions of the EU. (MEP Poręba, GP 20.IV.2016, 21) Rule of law

dispute in Poland proved to be an ideal case in this respect. (PM Szydło, GP 1.VI.2016, 6)¹¹

2. The attempt of the European Commission to enhance its power

This point of view is presented especially by politicians of PiS: “In the European Union the attitude towards the treaties is quite frivolous. Taking advantage of it, European Commission tries to enhance scope of his authority designated in the treaties. Issues of Poland and Hungary are good examples about it. Commission, using the method of *faits accomplis* and having the approval of the majority, has made of itself a superior authority regarding the nation states (of course those of less important, as they lack courage to confront the important ones)”. (MEP Ryszard Legutko, DR 31.VII.2017, 33) Roughly similar opinion is voiced by Hungarian MEP György Schöpflin who also reminds that at the beginning of its presidency Juncker stated that his commission will be more „political” than previous ones. (DR 24.X.2016)

3. Personal power struggle within the European institutions

It seems that this explanation is used mostly by European Parliament members or prominent politicians though in some cases also by journalists who seem to have exceptionally good knowledge of European Union politics. Even though sometimes it is referred vaguely to inside information, mostly these articles seem to be built on wild speculations. Many times it is argued that the European Commission is split in the question on how to handle the Polish question. Often though not always the president of the Commission Jean-Claude Juncker is seen as willing to compromise. On the other hand, Frans Timmermans, deputy president and at the same time the EU negotiator in the rule of law dispute, is perceived to be a hardliner: “We know also that in the

¹¹ Even though this argument is mostly used in the context of European-level politics, two times it is also claimed that Emmanuel Macron and or Angela Merkel are criticizing Poland in order to distract attention from their domestic problems, namely by MEP Saryusz-Volski (wS 22.X.2017, 34) and by prime minister Szydło (wS 10.IX.2017, 20).

background of this bashing of Poland is the struggle for influence in the Union itself. Clear distance from such behavior towards our country is held by the leader of The European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker. During discussion in that question, the Commission was, according to information we have got, divided in half. And finally the first deputy leader of the Commission Frans Timmermans made the decision about launching the procedure [of article 7 against Poland]”. (PM Beata Szydło, wS 1.II.2016, 28) Usually such assessment of the situation is linked to the hope that the accusations against Poland would be lifted if the faction which is benign towards Poland would prevail. (cf. wS 25.VII.2016, 36)

In one article it is claimed that essentially are both of the alleged factions unfavorably disposed toward Poland and their differences are only tactical. (wS 30.V.2016, 29-30) More often it is assumed, however, that disagreements between Juncker and Timmermans are linked to their personal rivalry. The perceived malevolence and ferocity of Timmermans toward Poland is explained by means of his desire to improve his personal positions in this game for power. According to MEP Ryszard Legutko: “Timmermans raises unceasingly the question of Poland and Hungary, because only by this manner he is able to exist politically. His party has ceased to matter and he himself exists only as far as he can publicly present something which attracts attention. That is why this ceaseless nitpicking in case of Poland. If there were no government of PiS, nobody would know who is that Timmermans”. (DR 21.VII.2017, 33)¹²

4. Power struggle within the European Parliament

Support of the major political groups of European Parliament to the attacks against Poland are often explained by means of solidarity with their Polish member parties or ideological considerations. For example it is emphasized that main opposition parties of Poland (PO and PSL) belong to the biggest political group (European People's Party)

¹² Hungarian MEP György Schöpflin at the same time considers Timmermans to be the most influential person in the Commission and tends to explain his alleged anti-Polish stances by means of his ideological convictions. (DR 24.X.2016, 80)

which also helped to shape overall critical atmosphere in the European Parliament in Polish question. (German MEP Henkel, GP 13.I.2016, 11) However, sometimes it is also supposed that behind the extraordinary activity of Guy Verhofstadt in bashing Poland is his hope that the constitutional crisis would boost the popularity of the liberal party Nowoczesna which took actively part in the oppositional protests. Verhofstadt is allegedly hoping that with his assistance Nowoczesna would win some seats for ALDE in European Parliament which has so far performed very poorly in Poland. (MEP Krasnodębski, DR 3.X.2016, 28)

3.2.5. Ideological conflict

In 30 articles ideological dimension of the confrontation is mentioned. However, in 15 articles it is only referred in passing that those “attacking” Poland are biased towards Poland because of its national conservative government. (e.g. DR 12.IX.2016, 63) In one occasion the hearing on Poland in European Parliament is also simply referred as “a liberal kumbaya” (DR 18.IV.2016, 21) Merely in 14 articles which use the ideological frame, the topic is dealt with in more than 3 sentences. Of those, two somewhat different lines of thought may be distinguished. Some commentators blame namely merely western leftist and liberal politicians for the confrontation, while according to the others there is deeper watershed between the Polish and Western societies.

Liberal-conservative split

The proponents of this interpretation draw attention to the fact that the most furious attackers of Poland represent leftist and liberal parties, political groups or media outlets: “Main forces who attack Poland are not some non-partisan circles, some higher officials who are selected by means of competition by the headhunters. They are leftist and liberal politicians.” (MEP Czarnecki, DR 7.VIII.2017, 21) In that case, liberalism and leftism (socialism) are perceived as similar ideologies and often treated as nearly

synonymous terms.¹³ Zeal of leftists and liberals to intervene to the Constitutional Tribunal crisis is explained in turn in two different ways.

First, specific features of their ideologies are referred to. For example, according to Hungarian member of European Parliament György Schöpflin leftist politicians are concerned about human rights issues and wish to make them central also in the European politics. (DR 24.X.2016, 79) However, more often it is emphasized that leftist and liberal politicians tend to support federalization of Europe and want to diminish the importance of nation-states: “Commission is the representative of leftist majority in the European Parliament. As the representative of this majority the Commission consists of leading politicians of the European Left, whose objective seems to be fight off national governments.” (DR 22.II.2016, 80)

Second, the attacks from the left and liberal politicians against Poland are explained by their intolerance toward conservative views. With the words of then-foreign minister Witold Waszczykowski: “Now Europe is experiencing a shock as it has become evident that parties which are promoting family values or which are related to religion have not only survived, but have in some countries managed to get into power. Therefore some leftist politicians lose their nerve.” (DR 3.VII.2017, 28) Similar is the explanation by MEP Ryszard Czarnecki: “The leader of European liberals Guy Verhofstadt feels very uncomfortable because Polish liberals are so significantly weak. And thus there is clear ideological background to these attacks”. (DR 7.VIII.2017, 21)

Often it is gone even further, claiming that current political positions of some prominent European politicians are explainable by means of the fact that they flirted with different radical left ideas in their youth. Introducing an extensive article which is dedicated to exposing their past, editor-in-chief of *Do Rzeczy* Paweł Lisicki emphasizes in his editorial that many of such politicians were in European Parliament especially ferocious in criticizing Poland during the hearing about the Constitutional Tribunal crisis: „All

¹³ The same is true to the terms conservative and right-wing and national-conservative which are used to designate the ideology of the Polish governing party.

those see in communism positive features, accepting that this criminal, totalitarian ideology was essentially a source of emancipation and freedom“ (DR 10.XII.2017, 49) The supporters of this line of thinking tend to downplay the fact that also many center-right politicians (especially from the political group of European People's Party) have condemned the actions of the Polish government during the rule of law crisis. To the contrary, at least some center-right politicians are depicted in the articles as less enthusiastic in fighting against Poland and more ready for compromises.¹⁴ (DR 25.VII.2016, 36)

On the other hand it is remarkable that ideological considerations are dealt with exclusively in case of explaining the motivation of foreign political actors. In case of Polish opposition, its thirst for power and disloyalty to their homeland is denounced, but as a rule no ideological motivation is seen behind their activities.

Western-Eastern split

According to some commentators not only leftist and liberal forces of the West are behind the attacks against Poland, but due to profound change since the 1960s the whole societies there have been imbued with wicked leftist spirit. It has transformed also political right, which has become “pragmatical, devoid of ideas and tired” (Lisicki, DR 10.XII.2017, 4) and does not differ from socialists any more (Wolski, DR 7.VIII.2017, 54). As Poland has allegedly remained true to the authentic European values, it leads inevitably to conflicts with the West. Rule of law controversy is simply one of these. (Lisicki 2017) Similar ideas are rather often presented in the analyzed magazines. For example, it seems to be one of the favorite topics of Tomasz Terlikowski, author of religious columns for *Gazeta Polska*. Surprisingly however, in the context of Constitutional Tribunal controversy this topic is elaborated only in a couple of articles and never in *Gazeta Polska*. Repeatedly is this frame used by small number of journalists, especially by the editor-in-chief of *Do Rzeczy* Paweł Lisicki, columnist of

¹⁴ This is significantly at odds with the claims that European People's Party is pushing the campaign against Poland as the main opposition parties of Poland are its members. (compare section 4)

Do Rzeczy Marcin Wolski and columnist of w Sieci Krystyna Grzybowska.

In these articles are also identity topics often explicitly dealt with and the West (which is depicted as being in charge in the EU) is seen as „the Other”. Lisicki provides a comprehensive list about ideas which have to his mind shaped it: “First, hate against tradition of Christian Europe. Second, enmity toward nation state as the most important subject of history. Third, fascination with different contemporary „isms“ which have substituted former, fatigued and tired Marxism and its class struggle. So there are radical feminists, genderists, ecologists, supporters of abortion and sex change, promoters of homosexual and lesbian relationships.” (DR 10.XII.2017, 4) In another article he mentions also multiculturalism and anti-racism as harmful ideas characteristic to the West (DR 10.IX.2017, 3).

In contrast Poland is according to Marcin Wolski a good example of successful and modern conservative society proving that also nowadays „there may be a country with open churches and safe streets without islamic maggots [pozbawionych islamskiego czerwia ulic]. World that is proud of the past and confident with the future. World of values based on common sense, where mind have not been captured¹⁵ by the political correctness, this genuinely Orwellian censorship of the modern times.” (DR 7.VIII.2017, 54) Similar ideas are presented elsewhere with a slight variation. (wS 25.I.2016, 93; wS 10.VII.2017, 94, wS 22.II.2016, 81) Christianity or Catholicism is remarkably often mentioned as the component of Polishness, as well as national pride or glorious history.

Occasionally it is claimed that values attributed to Poles are common also for the other Eastern European countries: „Violent reaction of the of Verhofstadt to the speech of prime minister Beata Szydło indicated that ideology imposed to the community is in retreat while more and more matter among the citizens of the EU member states sovereignty and sentiment of national dignity; moreover that in the states of former

¹⁵ „Umysłów nie zniewala...” Probably reference to the collection of antitotalitarian essays by Czesław Miłosz („Zniewolona umysł” (1953), title in English „Captured minds”)

communist camp left-liberalism is not enthusiastically adopted except by the ideological margins while do matter the Christian values, and in that way genuine canons of Europe, in which these nations had their roots” (Grzybowska, wS 25.I.2016) According to Lisicki, it is explainable by means of historical differences. Eastern Europeans have directly experienced the totalitarian rule, including Nazi and Soviet terror. Therefore they are skeptical about attempts to try to enforce in our days allegedly related ideas. Westerners however are not aware about the inevitably grim outcomes of these ideological utopias. (DR 10.XII.2017, 4) In any case, Poland is a „last bastion of freedom” in Europe and „therefore, independently on if Polish government cope with always well or not, defending Polish sovereignty is the same as defending classical understanding of freedom and Western civilization”. (DR 10.IX.2017, 3)

These ideas chime well in with the long tradition of Polish national conservative school of thought with its emphasis on Polish divine mission in saving Europe. If the open conflict with European Union has changed anything, then probably the faith in the feasibility of the mission has diminished. So Marcin Wolski speculates that on the one hand the success of Poland, Hungary and possibly other states may well lead to the overall conservative awakening in Europe. On the other hand however „only one thing is alarming: that in time of trial of the clash with genuinely Christian civilization the false elites [of Europe] choose Islam.” (Wolski DR 6.VIII.2017, 54)

In turn for Paweł Lisicki the pressure experienced by Poland during the controversy of the rule of law had shown that European Union had changed considerably since the Polish accession. As it had allegedly been turned into „instrument of disciplining and punishing the non-conforming¹⁶, a big machine with which it would be possible to realize utopian objectives”, he muses about the idea of leaving the European Union. (DR 10.XII.2017, 4) This is the only detected reference to the hard Euroscepticism in the analyzed articles, showing also despair in attempts to find common ground with the Western European “Other” (cf. Lisicki 2017).

¹⁶ niesforny – literally naughty, unruly

3.2.6. Other frames

Very rarely it is supposed that the European side may have sincerely believed that Poland genuinely had troubles with the rule of law. Exceptional are two interviews with German MEP Hans-Olaf Henkel. He agrees with the suggestion of interviewers that Germans are behind bringing the rule of law controversy to the international arena, but rejects the view commonly held by the Polish right, that they further their economic interests or desire to enhance their power. Rather according to him post-war German generations tend especially due to the Nazi past feel obliged to show their high morality: “The reasons should be searched in the years 1933-1945. From that time on German politicians are as though overtaken by the “syndrome of the helper”. They must demonstrate and prove that today they are better people. And so Germans are saving climate in the world, saving Euro currency, three times saved Greece, and now it was the turn to give Poland some tutorial lessons in democracy”. (GP 13.I.2016, 10, cf. DR 25.I.2016,) Also prof. Czaputowicz seems to think that at least some actors in Europe, while still biased towards Poland, sincerely believe that they are fighting for the right cause. Therefore evidence-based efforts to convince them would make sense. (DR 6.VII.2016, 63)

Also it is often hinted to the personal bias of certain leading EU politicians and officials towards Poland as a factor influencing their attacks against Poland. As mentioned above, this may be explained by referring to their personal, institutional or national interests as well as their ideological convictions. In some cases, the motives are not however clearly specified. Most often are as personal enemies of Poland mentioned Frans Timmermans, Guy Verhofstadt and Martin Schultz, while attitudes toward Jean-Claude Juncker are more ambivalent. Also German chancellor Angela Merkel and French president are occasionally mentioned as influential politicians whose bias toward Poland may play a role during the conflict.

Finally it should be noted that in some articles about the rule of law crisis no attention is paid to its causes at all. Notably former prominent politician of PO Jan Rokita discusses in several occasions the course of the events, being often scathingly critical of the tactical decisions the PiS government had made in defending Polish interests. He himself identifies with Poland in the confrontation with the EU. However Rokita avoids any judgements about who is right in the debate or why the conflict broke out in the first place. (wS 26.I.2016, 43-44)

3.3. Key remarks

According to Polish right-wing media the outbreak of the rule of law crisis and launching article 7 procedure against Poland was linked to opposition of the European political actors to the electoral victory of the national-conservative PiS party and its policies. Almost always it is presumed that the controversy over the Constitutional Tribunal was only the pretext. Genuine reason of the “attack” against Poland was allegedly related to the fact that forming conservative government in Poland was seen as contrary to the interests of different influential actors or unacceptable in ideological grounds.

Much more widespread are interest-related explanations. According to these, Poland is perceived as attacked by domestic opposition, competing member-states of the EU, top leaders of the EU institutions or “the Establishment”. It is common that these actors are believed to co-ordinate their activities against Poland.

In about 40% of the articles there are some references to the ideological dimension of the conflict, but only in very few of them it is dedicated much space. In this case, Poland is usually perceived as attacked by the leftist/liberal, materialist and morally degrading West. The rhetoric in explaining the crisis is derived from Polish history

(*Targowica*, complicated legacy of Polish-German relations), populist and Eurosceptic tradition (confrontation between “the people” and “the Establishment”) as well as earlier European political thought on the essence and functioning of the EU and preferred future direction of European integration.

Explanations to the outbreak of the confrontation between Poland and the EU are diverse and sometimes contradictory. Above different frames are dealt with separately, but in most of the articles various frames are used and combined with each other. One may well conclude for example that both the Polish opposition, other members-states and “Eurocrats” are behind the attacks, each following their own interests or ideological convictions. There are widely different opinions which actors are more influential and how they co-ordinate their activities. Neither is there any coherent and systemic explanation, how the crisis came about in the first place. Most evident contradiction in terms is the fact that in some cases politicians who defend interests of their respective nation-states are thought to be the masterminds of the attacks, while those who desire to destroy nations and nation-states altogether are blamed in other cases. Even the interpretations of the same politicians or commentators may be inconsistent. So in one point MEP Legutko argues that the European Commission is entirely dependent on the will of member-states, while in an another interview he suggests that the European institutions have at least some independence. Paweł Lisicki in turn interprets the conflict in one editorial as caused by diverging interests between Poland and Germany, but in another as a thoroughly ideological confrontation. (DR 31.VII.2017, 3; DR 10.XII.2017, 4)

To conclude with, the outbreak of the rule of law crisis and launching article 7 procedure against Poland was according to Polish right-wing media linked to opposition of the European political actors to the electoral victory of the national-conservative PiS party and its policies. Remarkable is the fact that in *Gazeta Polska* there are very few ideology-related frames. Otherwise there is no significant differences between the frames which are used by different magazines. Also politicians and political

commentators of both journalistic and academic background tend to use similar frames.

IV ANALYSIS OF THE IDENTITY PERCEPTIONS

The analysis of the articles has shown that the Constitutional Tribunal controversy was framed by the Polish right-wing press either as an ideological conflict between Poland and the West – or significantly more often – as an interest-related conflict. Identity issues are explicitly dealt with mostly in the articles which pay attention to the ideological dimension of the controversy. In that case Polish or sometimes Eastern European identity is contrasted to European one. In the context of interest-related explanations identity topics are not usually dealt with in length, but it is implicitly assumed that actors are either self-seeking or following their national affiliations. As a rule it is not even considered that also European identity may exist. In this chapter, portrayal of identity characteristic of different explanations of the crisis are analyzed in detail.

4.1. Ideology-based explanations

West as the Other

European Union is there perceived usually as led by the “West” which is depicted as fallen under “leftist” secular and materialistic ideologies which have brought about rootlessness, moral decline and complacency in facing the Islamist threat. “The West” is arguably trying to impose their values and ideologies to other parts of the world, including Eastern Europe. The electoral victory of conservatives in Poland in 2015 meant a serious backlash for them which prompted the attack of the West under the pretext of Constitutional Tribunal controversy crisis. Poland is contrasted to the West as a country which has remained true to “traditional values” of Europe and also a genuinely free country where everybody can use the freedom of speech unhindered of “political correctness”. Notably, Christianity or Catholicism is often seen as a key component of Polishness in contrast with the secular West.

Such juxtaposition of Poland and Europe is very closely reminiscent of pre-accession axiological debates, especially as it emphasizes attitudes toward religion and so-called family values as important constituents of identity. (see e.g. Styczyńska 2018, 72) On the other hand, labeling the Western Europe leftist or „Neo-Marxist” seems not to have been common at that time (cf. Góra and Mach 2010, Styczyńska 2018) and thus seems to be influence of foreign right-wing discourse. Anti-Islamic identity talk in several articles is most probably partially linked to the refugee crisis and the issue of their relocation which got much coverage in the same magazines at that time. However, issues of multiculturalism and alleged Islamic threat were discussed already earlier (Frankowiak 2016, 379) The rule of law controversy seems however not to been added any new arguments about the differences between Poland and the West at all. It is assumed that the understanding of democracy and rule of law is among the Polish conservatives similar to that of European main-stream and the judicial reforms comply to the usual practice applied also in other member-states. So the controversy is only the pretext of the ideological “Other” to get rid of the new Polish conservative government, representing genuine Polishness (and indeed genuine Europeanness). (Wildstein, wS 26.XI.2017, 3)

Noteworthy are claims of some of the authors (notably Paweł Lisicki) that European Union has profoundly changed since the time Poland joined it, becoming more ideological and oppressive. In fact, their negative portrayal of Europe is very similar to that of the opponents of Polish membership during the accession debates. Presumably the rationale behind these questionable claims is to mobilize those conservative Poles, who so far have supported EU membership, behind the hard Eurosceptic cause. The confrontation with the EU over the Constitutional Tribunal seems to have served them as a good opportunity to highlight the alleged otherness of Western Europe.

All in all, othering of the Europe remains shallow, schematic and declarative, being limited often to enumeration of identity markers, which allegedly separate Poles and

Europeans (see page 58). It seems to be based more on ideological constructions than knowledge about European countries and personal encounters with their people. It is not clarified at all why exactly these aforementioned differences between Poland and Europe are so profoundly important to trigger the alleged deep ideological conflict. Also are both Europe and Poland often treated as monoliths, not mentioning differences of opinions in the societies. Notably Poland is described as a solidly Catholic country, despite the fact that society is in fact divided regarding the issue of the position of church in the society, with religiosity gradually declining especially among young people.

Also findings of this study indicate that the role of Catholicism and church in determining the political stances of Poles may be overstated. Notably, Catholicism or Christianity as a component of Polish or European identity is mentioned only in 9 articles dealing with the rule of law conflict with the European Union (about 1/8 of their total number). Also, nowhere is it evident that religious convictions or feelings inspire opposition to Europe. Adherence of Poland to Christianity or Catholicism is always mentioned only in passing as an identity marker, as it seems, in order to highlight the otherness of Europe.

These findings do not comply with that of Bartosz Napieralski who claimed, based on interviews conducted with leading politicians of the PiS, journalists and church leaders, that main sources of Euroscepticism in Poland are Catholicism and concerns about national sovereignty (Napieralski 2017, 124-125). It is probable however that Catholic component of Polish identity is much more salient for religious nationalist audience of the media outlets of Tadeusz Rydzyk and to some extent that of main-stream Catholic magazines such as *Gość Niedzielny* – both also among the supporters of PiS.

Eastern European identity

As indicated above, sometimes traits which are characteristic to Polish identity are also attributed more widely to Eastern Europeans (meaning post-communist member-states)

or specifically to Visegrád countries. It is noteworthy however that references to Eastern European identity occur usually in two specific contexts. Firstly, it is argued that thanks to assertive foreign policy of the new government has Poland prospects to become a regional leader. The rationale behind such declarations seems to be boosting the national pride of Poles, as their state, despite being sixth member-state by the population, has not achieved comparable political weight in the Union. Thus imagined leadership of at least a part of the Union would serve as a proof of success of the foreign policy of the PiS government. (e.g. MEP Czarnecki DR 7.VIII.2018, 21)

Secondly, it is stressed that Poland stands not alone in the confrontation with the EU, but has allies who have similar background and standpoints. Occasionally it is referred even to alliances in more distant history. For example in a bizarre comment Czech hardline Eurosceptical MEP Petr Mach was praised for his vocal support for Poland and his contribution to the alliance between the nations compared with that of Jan Žižka. (wS 25.I.2016, 93) Non-surprisingly, especially strong support is often expected from the side of Hungary.

Some right-wing commentators and thinkers cling to the hope that similar historical experience of the Eastern Europeans has resulted in similarities in values, too. Especially it is noted that due to communist heritage they may be more resilient to the indoctrination of the leftist ideologues. Such views expressed by Lisicki (DR 10.XII.2017) chime in with the statement of MEP prof. Ryszard Legutko: “the European Union is becoming less and less European in the genuine sense of the term, and /.../ the truest defenders of European identity are now to be found in Eastern Europe” (Legutko 2018)

However, survey evidence suggests convincingly that public opinion is very diverse in different countries of the regions on virtually all of the issues which Polish conservatives hold important. For example, people in neighboring Czech Republic share suspicion of the Poles towards Muslims, but on the other hand are overwhelmingly

secular and supportive of gay relationships. (Religious Belief 2017, especially 27) On the other hand the formation of Eastern-European block seem not to be feasible also due to diverging interests of different nation states. (Zwolski 2017, 175)

Taking this into account, it seems that emerging of common Eastern European identity, based on conservative values and common resistance to the domination of the Western nations in the EU

remains wishful thinking of the right-wing Poles. Not genuine sense of belonging together with the other nations of the region seems to be behind that, but rather seeking reassurance in the confrontation with the EU or dreams about gaining international prestige as a regional power of Eastern-European countries willingly accepting its leadership. Essentially such a vision of Eastern Europe is for the Polish Right an imagined “Poland writ large” as an alternative to the western version of European identity.

Ideas about Eastern Europe as an entity based on common values with Poland as its leader draw on projects of *Międzymorze* from the interwar period. Poland tried at that time in vain to create a bloc of Central and Eastern Europe countries which was however motivated mostly by security concerns. Similar proposals have been put forward also in 1990s, albeit by rather marginal politicians. (Ištók & Koziak 2009) Based on statements presented by some rightist political commentators (DR 10.IX.2017, 3), it seems that lasting confrontation with the EU institutions may lead to attempts of revitalization of these ideas, this time linked also with imagined common identity claims.

If conflict over the rule of law is seen as an ideological confrontation between Poland (or Eastern Europe) and the West, it may foster the image of Poland as the carrier of authentic European heritage and missionary zeal to promote these in Europe. However, as the West is seen at least once as the stronger part of the conflict, possibly capable of imposing its will to Poland, it may also lead to strengthening of hard Eurosceptic views

among certain right-wing circles in Poland. However the evidence is rather inconclusive as these topics are dealt with in depth only in relatively few articles. It should be emphasized that vast majority of the articles about the confrontation with the EU mention the ideological differences between Poland in passing or not at all. The conflict is presented there mostly as being based on diverging national and/or personal interests.

4.2. Interest-based explanations

Frames which explain the conflict by means of power struggle in Poland, in international arena, inside the EU institutions or between the citizens and the Establishment, all see it as being based on diverging interests. In doing so, political actors are seen as either self-seeking or motivated by national identity. Virtually never it is taken into account that they may also feel European and pursue the interests of community of Europeans.

Opposition

In articles where the conflict with the EU is interpreted largely as the internationalization of the domestic conflict, the Polish opposition seems to be usually seen as a group of individuals who co-operate in order to retain or regain their personal privileges and power, not caring about citizens and national interests of Poland. Their exact motives are not as a rule described in much detail. Still, it is clear that their main objective is to topple the PiS government. It would be possible for example if outside pressure would generate economic difficulties which in turn would lead to popular discontent. (e.g. wS 25.I.2016, 3) However the harshest accusation to the opposition politicians is that they have abandoned their loyalty to their homeland and have descended to co-operation with foreigners. It is presumed by right-wing media that national identity should be above all other identities. As government is currently the representative of the Polish nation, opposition should therefore avoid attacking it in international arena. Also Polish officials in the European Union are obliged to defend

the interests of their home country, even despite the fact that formally they should avoid it. (see for instance GP 20.I.16, 13) In other words, the representatives of Polish opposition are obliged to defend national interests, but are putting their personal interests first. This is what differentiates them basically from the conservative government, not ideological convictions or social base.

Only once it is argued that differences between the political camps are related to identity questions. Namely MEP prof. Legutko claimed that the activities of the opposition may be explained also by the fact that they identify not with Poland, but rather with Europe: “Regarding this phenomenon, a certain role is played by Union ideology. As we are in the Union, the interest of the Community is also the interest of Poland. Everything happens in this big European family, therefore it is not a shame to revile the rightist government, whose perspective is different. For some it is simply a moral imperative.” (DR 7.VIII.2017, 17) It is however the only such an observation. As a rule it seems to be self-evident in the Polish right-wing discourse that nation state is the only political entity an individual can strongly identify with. Even the possibility of existence of European identity is often not discussed.

International power struggle

In case if the rule of law dispute is seen from the perspective of conflicts of interests between EU member-states, possibility that some of the actors may identify with Europe is also never discussed.

As already mentioned, the European Union institutions are in case of using this frame fairly often seen as proxies of the influential member-states. Beside that it is presumed that also European Union officials are using their position for promoting the interests of their respective nation-states. For example Frans Timmermans is thought of keeping in mind business interests of Netherlands in Poland. (DR 2.V.2016, 26)

There is only one exception. On January 19, 2016 Prime Minister Szydło's gave a

speech during the debate on Poland in the European Parliament, in which she mainly tried to convince the deputies that the whole dispute over the Constitutional Tribunal is based on misinformation on behalf of Polish opposition. *Gazeta Polska* presented the report on the event under the headline “We defended our freedom and sovereignty” and summarized the speech to its readers as follows: “Prime minister remembered also that in several times Poles have spilt blood not only for ourselves, but also for other peoples of Europe, and such values like freedom, justice and sovereignty are for Poles inalienable values. “We have been and will be a part of Europe, the Europe that develops, the Europe of equal opportunities. This is our future and so we imagine it,” stressed Beata Szydło”. (GP 27.I.2016, 14)

Not only this excerpt, but also the entire speech (Szydło 2016) seems to be carefully designed to emphasize Polish European credentials. However, as is openly acknowledged by a Polish right-wing commentator, this identity statement should not be taken at face value, but as a tactical move to alleviate pressure on Polish government: “In contacts with the West – like always when it comes to the discussion with a stronger partner from whom much depends on, it is reasonable to use the language, which at least creates illusion that we share a common worldview with it, and all the argument is only about temporary misunderstandings.” (wS 25.I.2016, 28; cf. Monika Oboży's opinion in GP 27.I.2016, 14)

Therefore the message of the prime minister seems at this occasion targeted mainly to European and not domestic audience. It is noteworthy that in her interviews for the analyzed magazines she never makes similar claims. Very similar rhetoric which seem to deliberately echo Western understanding of European values and identity was however used also by prime minister Mateusz Morawiecki during the policy statement speech of his new government on December 12, 2017 in the Sejm. (Morawiecki 2017)

Citizens vs the Establishment

At first glance it seems that the elite which according to this frame is behind the attacks against Poland may consist of people who identify with Europe. Indeed, they are occasionally blamed for plots of federalization of Europe which according to users of ideological frames (see previous chapter) involves the conspiracy against national states. However, it seems probable that they are rather acting entirely in their own personal interests which are arguably in danger after the conservatives have taken power in Poland. As “the Establishment” is rather vaguely defined and their motives usually not described, it is hard to judge. In any case, it is never explicitly stated that either “Eurocrats” or other members of “the Establishment” feel European. To the contrary, according to MEP prof. Legutko the members of the „Establishment” identify strongly with their home countries: „Governing establishment has his federalist project, which is realized notwithstanding the victory of the Right or the Left. In general it is well known who governs in this club, who has much and who has little to say. It is clear that few western countries decide, the others have to adapt.” (wS 3.IV.2017, 73)

In turn, “ordinary citizens” or “people” may be treated as genuine Europeans with whom also government supporters of Poland can identify with. However, this theme is not elaborated in the analyzed articles.¹⁷ Statements that Poland is becoming a leader of those Europeans who fight against “the Establishment” are not supplemented by identity talk. In fact, as even some commentators in Polish right-wing media admit, in the confrontation with the European Union the most vocal support to the government of Poland came from “right-wing plankton” (wS 25.I.2016, 3), who have radically different views from PiS in many important issues and therefore clearly not “Us” for the Polish conservatives either. Notably they tended often to be hard Euroscepticists. (DR 25.I.2016, 34)

¹⁷ However, such line of thinking is represented in some of the articles which deal not with the rule of law crisis. In one of these Tomasz Sakiewicz argues: „If it seems to somebody that he outplays the nations of Europe, building supranational non-democratic power, he should meet solidaristic social resistance. If Europe belongs to anybody, then rather to us, Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Brits, Scandinavians and many others than Angela Merkel and Martin Schultz.” (GP 20.I.16, 2)

Power struggle within the European Union

Generally it is presumed that the actions of supranational actors are explainable by means of personal or institutional interests, primarily gaining power. Only very rarely identity-related issues are mentioned in case of dealing with their motivation behind the attacks against Poland. One example of this is the following reasoning of prime minister Szydło: “The point of view shared by this group is more and more evident: we have problems, institutional predicaments and migration crisis, which we are not able to solve. So let us find a scapegoat, whom to lay these our problems. It would be the best, if these would be countries of Central-Eastern Europe which are relatively young members of the EU, have different views than we, the Old Union, to many issues. What is more, these countries demolish the order, the peace and quiet which we have achieved.” (PM Szydło, GP 1.VI.2016, 6)

Here prime minister attributes to the EU decision-makers sense of feeling together on basis of being the citizens of the old member-states while the Eastern Europeans are treated as the Other. As a rule however, no discussion about European identity occurs at all also when the frame of power struggle within the EU is used. It is presumed that people in European Union institutions simply attempt to enhance their personal or institutional power. They need not even to have bias against Poland or its conservative government, but try to take personal advantage of the crisis.

4.3. Discussion

The study has shown that ideas from recent and even distant past about Polishness and Europeanness are surprisingly relevant for right-wing Poles, who, embarrassed about the peripheral position of their homeland in Europe, tend to see European politics as a zero-sum game of nation-states. Alternatively they may hope to compensate their allegedly secondary status by sense of moral superiority or ambitions of becoming the regional leader for Eastern Europe.

The evidence presented in this chapter shows however also that Polish right-wing commentators remain divided over the question to what extent European integration is related to identity questions. Similarly to the preaccession debates Eurorealist ideas are still prevailing and the European Union is mostly seen as based on intergovernmental interest-based co-operation. In that case identity questions are not relevant and the European identity in particular is not a salient topic. There are some exceptions, one of them concerning a speech of the prime minister Szydło which was mainly addressed to the foreign audience. However, in overwhelming majority of the articles not only sense of belonging to Europe is never declared by the right-wing commentators themselves, but even the possibility of its prevalence among other people is not considered. It is in accordance with the findings of Anita Frankowiak that right-wing opinion magazines tend to overestimate importance of national identity among Europeans while overall questioning the feasibility of construction of European identity which is sometimes referred as “artificial” (Frankowiak 2017, 288-290).

However, some authors also represent the view that the controversy with the EU has a strong ideological aspect. In that case also identity differences between (Western) Europe and Poland are more or less highlighted. More often it is hinted to alleged anti-Polish bias of European actors, but sometimes even the whole conflict is described in terms of confrontation between peoples representing two incompatible value system. In that case “Europe” is seen as the “Other” while the rhetoric used is reminiscent of the opponents of Polish accession about 20 years ago.

From the European Commission side the dispute about the Constitutional Tribunal was however presented as being about values. Furthermore, western politicians and media have often treated Poland as the “Other” while dealing with the topic¹⁸. Hence it is remarkable that Polish right-wing media framed the conflict more often than not as interest-driven. Probably it has to do with the fact that most of the right-wing political

¹⁸ More on that, with relevant references see Nougayrède 2018

actors are trying to take advantage of the benefits the EU is offering for Poland and are therefore not interested in escalating the conflict. In case conflict is seen as being rather about interests than about values-based identities, it would obviously be easier to reach compromise agreements which would not put in danger the future of Poland in the EU.

The interpretation of launching the Article 7 procedure primarily as a part of domestic and international power struggle may seem unconvincing for an outsider, but has for right-wing Poles still offered opportunities to make sense of the ongoing events. Therefore there has been no need for looking for alternative ideas which might in turn facilitate identity change. It has to be added that slow pace of the rule of law procedure and low probability of imposing the sanctions against Poland may have also contributed to this. At the beginning of the confrontation with the EU Polish right-wing media followed the procedure closely and some commentators seemed to be rather anxious about the outcome. (DR 25.I.2016) However, as nothing serious appeared to follow, the interest in the subject diminished. If the European Commission would have been more assertive and decisive in its actions, it may well have caused different reactions also from the side of Polish right-wing media, leading possibly for a “critical juncture” needed for identity change.

However, the study has also shown that the construction of European identity may be more complicated than previously thought. Understandings about how the EU functions and attitudes towards Europe varied remarkably, even though all of these may be described as variations of soft Euroscepticism. Even the emphases of the same commentator may vary across the articles. It may indicate that in the case of Poland also views about European identity are still not fixed, but prone to change easily due to changes in the political environment. Importantly, prevalence of the identity talk may also depend on particular context. In many other articles in the same time period on other European issues ideological frames seem to be used more frequently. For example, it is possible that a study dedicated to the repercussions of migration crisis of 2015 in Poland would lead to the different conclusions on European identity than this study (cf. Krzyżanowski

2017). Also it is evident that politicians disseminate very different identity messages to different audiences.¹⁹

Finally, clear distinction should be made between collective identities, constructed by the elites and disseminated by means of media, and individual identification with Europe. Identity construction in the individual level may follow the cues of the politicians and the media, but at the same time be highly incoherent and inconsistent. For example, focus group research show that many Poles echo right-wing rhetoric about sovereignty and “Europe of nation states”. (Góra 2015, 124) At the same time according to Eurobarometer data overwhelming majority of Poles (59% against 31%) agree that “more decisions should be made at EU level” (Eurobarometer 2018, 170). Also the trust towards European Union institutions of Polish citizens remains higher than toward Polish parliament, government and political parties. (Eurobarometer 2018, 42f, 92f). So even though the findings of this study tend to confirm the conclusion of Zdzisław Mach that so far Poles tend not to identify with Europe almost not at all (Mach 2017, 22), it may well be that in the long run obvious benefits of the EU membership prompt Poles to shift their loyalties to the supranational level as Ernst Haas once predicted. (Risse 2010, 15) In any case, it may make even now harder for right-wing politicians to construct the European Union as “the Other” of Poland.

¹⁹ In December 2017, after being nominated the prime minister, Mateusz Morawiecki told in an interview for ultraconservative religious TV station TV Trwam that he dreamt about re-christianization of Europe: <http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/7,114884,22758869,mateusz-morawiecki-ma-ambitny-cel-chcemy-rechrystianizowac.html>, retrieved December 1, 2018. Some days later, during the presentation of the program of his government in the Sejm, religious rhetoric was almost avoided by him. Instead, it was emphasized that Poland is a European country with a long tradition of democracy and tolerance. (Morawiecki 2017)

Conclusions

Multiple crisis which have hit the European Union have profoundly changed the scholarly research on European studies, raising interest in the study fields of European identity and Euroscepticism. Especially events in Central and Eastern Europe have been cases in point. Notably the rise to the power of the national conservative government in Poland in 2015 have lead to several conflicts with the European Union. Among the most important of them is the controversy over Constitutional Tribunal. As the Polish government refused to acknowledge the rulings of the Tribunal, the European Commission decided to launch Article 7 procedure, citing the violation of the rule of law as one of the basic values of the EU.

The aim of this study was to find out how European identity issues were dealt with in the context of the controversy by the Polish right-wing media. Following Thomas Risse's theory about Europeanization of national identities, it was presumed that open confrontation with the EU about a values-related issue might influence the ways European identity was portrayed in the media, leading potentially to an identity change among the supporters of Polish right-wing government. In order to find it out, all the articles dedicated to the controversy in the right-wing opinion weeklies (*Gazeta Polska*, *Do Rzeczy* and *wSieci*) from the years 2016 and 2017 were analyzed by means of frame analysis.

According to the findings, the controversy was almost never dealt with as a meritocratic dispute, but it was perceived instead as a pretext for an attack against Poland. Two different approaches to the causes of the controversy may be discerned. According to the first approach, the conflict was in essence interest-driven. In most of the articles it was assumed that Polish opposition contributed to the provoking of the controversy, hoping to resume the power. According to the other popular explanation, the controversy was about sovereignty and economic interests, with influential member

states trying to impose its will to the government of Poland. Sometimes it was also assumed that vaguely defined “Establishment” of the European Union is behind the controversy or struggle for power in supranational institutions of the EU plays a role in it. Importantly, no explicit identity talk was usually used in the context of interpreting the conflict as interests-driven. Implicitly it is assumed that the behavior of actors may be explained either by referring to personal or national interests. Almost never is even assumed that one can also identify with Europe or the EU.

According to the second approach, the controversy was essentially an ideological conflict, caused by the fact that leftist and secular Western Europe cannot come to terms with the fact that their ideological opponents had gained power in Poland. In case of this approach identity talk is often used. One of the main constituents of Polish identity is considered to be Catholicism or Christianity, other identity markers include attitudes toward homosexuality, abortion, nationalism and multiculturalism (especially regarding the Muslims) and occasionally gender issues, environmentalism and the like. Western Europe is thus seen as the “Other”, representing alien and potentially dangerous values for Poland. In several occasions, similar values to Poland are attributed to the wider region (Visegrád group or alternatively all post-communist member-states).

As expected, ideas and narratives of the past are often used in interpreting the current events. Importantly, interest-based interpretations of the crisis seem to resonate with Eurorealist approach, based on intergovernmental vision of the European integration without stressing identity aspects. Ideological interpretations resemble however axiological and identity-based hard Eurosceptic views of the accession debates. However, both approaches are often combined by several authors, which sometimes leads to incoherence and obvious contradictions.

Against the expectations, the rule of law controversy did not bring any remarkable change to the perceptions of European identity among right-wing Poles. However, if possible future conflicts with the EU would rather be constructed by the right-wing

opinion leaders as being based on ideologies and values rather than interests, it would prompt possibly more Poles to perceive “Europe” as the Other and lead in turn to the surge in hard Eurosceptic views.

Regarding the importance that identity issues play in the future of European integration, it is therefore necessary to continue research on European identity both in Poland and elsewhere. In case of Poland, studies should concentrate on how statements of identity vary in other particular contexts. However, the findings of this study are relevant also in the context of wider European identity studies. Namely it has shown that it may have a profound importance whether a confrontation between the EU and a member state is framed as interest-based or ideological (values based). Further research would be needed to find out, if it may have indeed impact on the support level of European integration and strength of European identity.

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Appendix 1

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<p>GP Nr 2, 13.I.16, 12-13 Wierzchołowski Niemieccy kolonizatorzy kontratakują</p>	<p>International power struggle German hegemony Economic interests Establishment Business interests</p>
<p>GP Nr 3, 20.I.16, 2 Wolski My kontra reszta świata</p>	<p>International power struggle Economic interests Sovereignty/independence Establishment Eurocrats Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners German hegemony Ideology Left-right Genderism-Traditional values Christianity/Catholicism Political correctness-freedom of speech</p>
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<p>GP Nr 16, 20.IV.2016, 21 Poręba PO znów przeciw Polsce w Parlamencie Europejskim</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition as initiator Opposition co-operating with foreigners International power struggle Sovereignty/independence EU power struggle Distraction Establishment Eurocrats</p>
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WS Nr 27, 4.VII.2016, 72-73 Grzybowska Żeby już nie było tak, jak było	International power struggle Economic interests International standing of Poland
WS Nr 30, 25.VII.2016, 36-37 Janecki Dostali „Czarną polewkę”	Ideology Left-right EU power struggle EP
WS Nr 31, 1.VIII.2016, 77 Grzybowska Niech się pan nie rozplacze, panie Timmermans	Ideology Left-right Christianity/Catholicism Multiculturalism Establishment
WS Nr 38, 19.IX.2016, 17 Cywiński PiS musi odejść!	Internal power-struggle Opposition as initiator Opposition co-operating with foreigners International power struggle Economic interests

	German hegemony
WS nr 38, 26.IX.2016, 108 Łaniewska Kornik Drukarz	Internal power-struggle Opposition misinforming Europeans
WS 13.II.2017, 7 Karnowski, Szydło Polska gra w piątej europejskiej lidze	International power struggle International standing of Poland Establishment Eurocrats Internal power-struggle Opposition misinforming Europeans
WS Nr 9, 6.III.2017, 95 Jachowicz Z listów do Timmermansa. Przebudzenie	Internal power-struggle Opposition misinforming Europeans Personal bias Timmermans
WS Nr 11, 20.III.2017, 95 Jachowicz Timmermans nie odmówi	Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners
WS Nr 14, 3.IV.2017, 52 M. Karnowski, R. Legutko To my bronimy Europy	Internal power-struggle Opposition as initiator Establishment Federalist project International power struggle East-West
WS Nr 27, 3.VII.2017, 28-30 Waszczykowski, Karnowscy Odnosimy sukces i świat to widzi.	Internal power-struggle Opposition misinforming Europeans Competition International power struggle Germany hegemony Ideology Liberal-conservative
WS Nr 28, 10.VII.2017, 94 Grzybowska Co zrobić z „tą Polską”?	Ideology Liberal-conservative Political correctness – freedom of speech Christianity/Catholicism - secularism Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners
WS 13.VIII.2017, 91 Makowiecki Tajny plan Brukseli?	Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners International power struggle Sovereignty/independence Postcolonialism Personal Timmermans
WS 27.VIII.2017	Internal power-struggle

<p>Janecki Plan ofensywny przeciw Polsce</p>	<p>Opposition co-operating with foreigners International power struggle Sovereignty/independence Unspecified interests</p>
<p>WS 10.IX.2017, 20-22 J. and M. Karnowski, Szydło Ten szantaż się nie uda</p>	<p>Establishment Spillover International power struggle International standing of Poland Sovereignty/independence</p>
<p>WS 26.XI.2017, 3 Wildstein Potępienie Polski</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners Establishment International power struggle East-West</p>
<p>WS 26.XI.2017, 79 Reszczyński Szok, ale nie bezsilność</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners Ideology Left-right Liberal-conservative International power struggle International standing of Poland Sovereignty/independence Personal Timmermans Verhofstadt</p>
<p>WS 22.XII.2017, 34 Skwieciński, Saryusz-Wolski Unijne gonienie króliczka</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition as initiators Distraction EU power-struggle Distraction</p>
<p>DR Nr 1, 10.I.2016, 34-36 Semka Rok mocnych wrażeń</p>	<p>Ideology Left-right Liberal-conservative Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners</p>
<p>DR Nr 3, 18.I.2016, 14-17 Baranowska, Lisicki, Szydło Nie zrezygnujemy z naprawy Polski</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners International power struggle Sovereignty/independence Intergovernmental power-struggle Economic interests EU power-struggle Distracting Federalization</p>

	<p>EC ambitions Divided opinions</p>
<p>DR Nr 4, 25.I.2016, 14-17 Semka Nie zrezygnujemy z naprawy Polski</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners International power struggle German hegemony Ideology</p>
<p>DR Nr 4, 25.I.2016, 64 Wolski Głupota działań niepotrzebnych</p>	<p>Establishment Eurocrats Ideology Left-right Internal power-struggle International power struggle Regional (V4) International standing of Poland Sovereignty/independence Postcolonialism Ideology Left-right</p>
<p>DR Nr 4, 25.I.2016, 16-22 Ćosić, Henkel Sankcje dla Polski.</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners Ideology International power struggle East-West Federalization German hegemony</p>
<p>DR Nr 8, 22.II.2016, 27-29 Pieczyński, Krasnodębski Oparliśmy szturm</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners Opposition misinforming Europeans Ideology Traditionalism Political correctness – freedom of speech Liberal-conservative International power struggle West-East International standing of Poland Personal bias Prejudices</p>
<p>DR Nr 14, 4.IV.2016, 85 Rybiński Apel do ludzi bez honoru</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners</p>
<p>DR Nr 16, 18.IV.2016, 23 Baranowska, Kolonko Merkel mogłaby Szydło wiązać buciki</p>	<p>Ideology Liberal-conservative International power struggle Intergovernmental power struggle</p>

	<p>Personal Verhofstadt</p>
<p>DR Nr 18, 2.V.2016, 24-26 Czaputowicz Trybunał Niekonstytucyjny.</p>	<p>International power struggle Economic interests</p>
<p>DR Nr 21, 23.V.2016, 3 Lisicki Utrzcć komisarzom nosa.</p>	<p>International power struggle Sovereignty/independence Intergovernmental power-struggle Internal power-struggle Echoing Opposition co-operating with foreigners</p>
<p>DR Nr 21, 23.V.2016, 5 Wybranowski. Awantura po uwagach Komisji Europejskiej</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners Ideology Political correctness – freedom of speech International power struggle Sovereignty/independence</p>
<p>DR Nr 23, 6.VI.2016, 28-29 Semka Nie zaznacie spokoju</p>	<p>International power struggle Sovereignty/independence Intergovernmental power-struggle EU power struggle Internal power-struggle</p>
<p>DR Nr 27, 4.VII.2016, 62-63 Czaputowicz Polska Pollacka</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners International power struggle Sovereignty/independence Personal bias Prejudices Convictions</p>
<p>DR Nr 37, 12.IX.2016, 62-63 Czaputowicz Kłamstwo konstytucyjne</p>	<p>Ideology National – cosmopolitan Liberal - conservative International power struggle Intergovernmental power-struggle Internal power-struggle Opposition misinforming Europeans</p>
<p>DR Nr 40, 3.X.2016, 27-29 Makowski, Krasnodębski Nikt nie mówi, że Polska wszystko robi idealnie</p>	<p>Internal power-struggle Opposition as initiators Personal Verhofstadt Ideology Traditionalism Christianity/Catholicism - secularism</p>

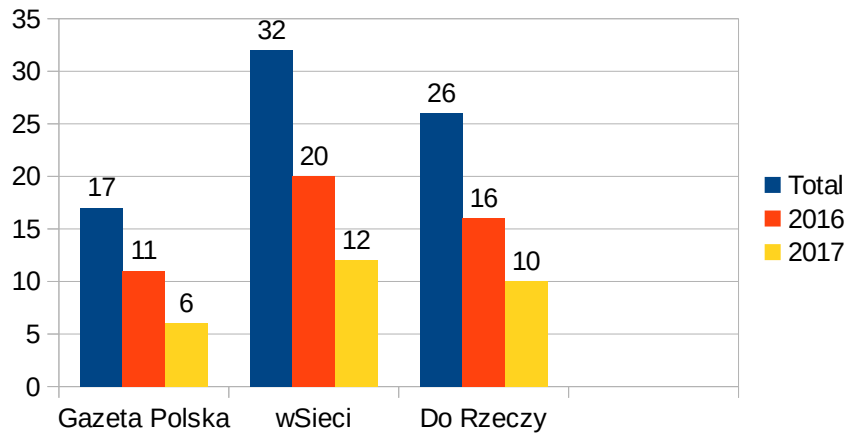
	Liberal-conservative
DR Nr 43, 24.X.2016, 78-80 Ćosić, Schöpflin Polska znalazła się na celownika	EU power-struggle EC ambitions Personal International power struggle Intergovernmental power-struggle East-West Ideology Left-right Human rights
DR Nr 3, 16.I.2017, Makowski, Czarnecki Unia to jeszcze nie „Titanic”	Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners?
DR Nr 2, 9.I.2017, 30-31 Warzecha Co nam robi UE	Establishment International power struggle East-West Personal Convictions EU power-struggle Personal
DR Nr 31, 31.VII.2017, 3 Lisicki Szaleństwo komisarzy z Brukseli	International power struggle Sovereignty/independence Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners
DR Nr 31, 31.VII.2017, 11 Warzecha Timmermans może nam skoczyć, ale...	Internal power-struggle Opposition misinforming Europeans Personal Convictions
DR Nr 31, 31.VII.2017, 31-33 Wybranowski, Legutko Syndrom targowicy	Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with the foreigners Opposition as initiators Opposition misinforming Europeans Personal Prejudices Timmermans Verhofstadt EU power-struggle EC ambitions
DR Nr 32, 7.VIII.2017, 16-19 Makowski Atak pośredni	Internal power-struggle EU co-operating with foreigners
DR 32, Nr 7.VIII.2016, 20-21 Zboralski, Czarnecki Polska prowadzi własną grę i to niektórych	Internal power-struggle Ideology Left-right

boli	Liberal-conservative International power struggle International standing of Poland East-West Intergovernmental power-struggle
DR Nr 32, 7.VIII.2017, 3 Lisicki Mój senny koszmar	International Sovereignty/independence Intergovernmental power-struggle Internal power-struggle Opposition co-operating with foreigners Ideology Feminism Genderism - traditional values Multiculturalism Antiracism
DR Nr 32, 7.VIII.2017, 54 Wolski Dylematy brukselki	Ideology Multiculturalism Christianity/catholicism - secularism International power struggle Economic interests
DR Nr 49, 10.XII.2017, 49 Lisicki Nie do takiej Unii wchodziliśmy	Ideology Left-right National-cosmopolitan Environmentalism Genderism-traditional values Christianity/Catholicism-secularism

Appendix 2

Diagrams

1. Distribution of the articles across the magazines and in time (number of the articles)



2. Frequency of frames used (number of the articles)

