

How national populist *other* Europe

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WHY IS *OTHERING* IMPORTANT FOR NATIONAL POPULISTS

- *Othering* is here understood as a political top-down **strategy** of differentiation and boundary building allowing to demarcate the clear boundary between in-group and what the in-group stands for and the out-group, “the other” perceived as not only not belonging to the group, but disruptive and threatening its well-being.
- Why is *othering* important for **national populists**?
 - triad of nation-people-sovereign
 - nation as a homogenous community
 - „A nation that does not have its own narrative, strong and reliable information is doomed to failure. I am very glad that the last three years in Polish journalism are among the absolutely best” (Jacek Kurski, 2021)

MECHANISMS OF OTHERING

- Multiplicity of *Othering*:
 - *Discursive othering* (*Othering* of the elites contraposed with “the people”)
 - *Ideological othering* (*Othering* of everyone and everything that is different, potentially disruptive)

Othering has ceased to operate only on the level of group differentiation, but has passed onto the level of the social order and the universe of fundamental values.

LEVELS OF OTHERING

Othering of the **fundamental values** of (post)modernity, such as rationality, pluralism, individualism, liberalism and universalism which are incongruent with the vision of neo-traditionalism based on the notions of uniformity, collectivism, traditionalism and particularism

Othering refers to the **international and civilizational order**:

- 1/ Othering of the EU and its perceived elitist institutions (sovereignty)
- 2/ Othering of (liberal Western) Europe – value-based approach, othering of values of Enlightenment, looking for true European values

Othering refers to the **groups**:

- 1/ minorities that do not belong to the homogenous (i.e. Catholic, traditional, family-oriented) nation
- 2/ (potential) disruptors of social order - those who may threaten the uniqueness and uniformity of interpretation of the world promoted by national populists in Poland and the Polish Catholic church

OTHERING

WHO

Who is being othered?

- Europe?
- West?
- EU?

HOW

Explicit or implicit?

What are the linguistic tools?

Linguistic strategies (words, expressions of othering)

Values implied in the discourse (eb. european bureaucracy)

WHY

What are the grounds?

How is us and them being defined?

DISCOURSIIVE OTHERING

I have the impression that Europe has been hijacked, this time by left-liberal side. If today you hear that someone is European, we imagine them to be liberal, we imagine that they support minority rights, multiculturalism, federalization, immigrants, etc. Meanwhile, this is not a definition of true Europe.

When I started working in European politics, it was with horror that I have watched how many people have the word 'Europe' constantly on their mouth, while the real content of what they were saying had more to do with barbarism, than European culture. It is why the battle on the level of language is so important. (Ryszard Legutko II 2017, W sieci, P. 1: 296)

OTHERING EUROPE. HYPOTHESIS

FAULTY EU

EU IN NEED OF REFORM

TRUE EUROPE IS CHRISTIAN
EUROPE

BRAVE NEW EUROPE

FRAME 1. FAULTY EU

Definition of the problem	EU is built upon centre-periphery logic.
Cause	EU is dominated by Germany and France. They dictate the rules.
Consequences	Poland is doomed to second-category membership.
Solution	We shall rethink Poland's EU membership if the EU does not change.
Language - example	<p><i>We once heard in Poland, not so long ago, people claiming that serving Russia is tantamount to serving the motherland. Jaruzelski even called for help from the Russian army. Now in Poland we have people, even the same as then, who claim that serving the European Union is tantamount to serving the motherland. Well, ladies and gentlemen, the strength of Poland comes from the spirit of the national leadership and today the Polish parliament can give our national leadership a tool to fight hard for Polish interests, and humility and submission only serve to strengthen and consolidate the slavery to which you want to sell Polish interests, proposing us like a golden cage.</i></p> <p><i>(Marek Suski, 2020)</i></p>

FRAME 2. EU IN NEED OF REFORM

Definition of the problem	European integration has gotten out of hand.
Cause	EU is built up of sovereign nation states. It's policies do not reflect this fact.
Consequences	Poland is constantly exposed to foreign interference.
Solution	Poland shall not allow for the breach of sovereignty.
Language - example	<p><i>In my opinion, the European Union in its current form won't survive. It must change.</i></p> <p><i>[Q: How to change it?]</i></p> <p><i>First of all, by strengthening the position of nation states, far-reaching deregulation, the exclusion of all embarrassing bureaucracies, exclusion of all activities in the ideological and moral spheres. The point is to limit the EU's actions to the areas where it really is needed: the common market, the coordination of the common policies of member states. (...) the EEC plus the president (negotiated, not elected, appointed for one long term) plus strong, army (...).</i></p> <p><i>(Jarosław Kaczyński, 2016)</i></p>

FRAME 3. TRUE EUROPE IS CHRISTIAN EUROPE

Definition of the problem

European Union has been hijacked by leftist liberals.

Cause

EU is based on Christian values, but they have been lost.

Consequences

The specter of secularization hangs over Europe.

Solution

Poland shall take upon the mission to stop the spread of secularism.

Language - example

Please remember that in comparison to other European countries, Poland remains a state where the Church's teaching through various social institutions is incorporated to a large extent in the public life. That is why we are under constant pressure from European leftist [originally: "lewackie"] circles. A group of female Members of the European Parliament will visit us to examine the situation of women. Meanwhile, even according to the very unfavorable Western press, when it comes to observing the principle of equality, we rank fifth in the world. If we do not want to fall into these realms of the "leftist spin", which is the norm in the West, then we must conduct a very deliberate policy. We live in a diverse society. I meet Catholics who think their world is the only one, and that's not true. I am also a practicing Catholic and I would like everyone to be guided by Christian values. But I have to accept that there are those who do not recognize them. While we are in power, we will not allow moral revolution under any circumstances. That is why we must maintain in power. (Jarosław Kaczyński, 2017)

We want to transform Europe. It is my dream to re-Christianize Europe back. Because, unfortunately, in many places carols are not sung, churches are empty, and they are turned into museums. It is a great sadness. (Mateusz Morawiecki, 2017)

FRAME 4. *BRAVE NEW EUROPE*

Definition of the problem

Europe is built up of states and communities. It shall not sacrifice the community values for liberal individualism.

Cause

EU has gotten too far with individualism.

Consequences

States do not control the message, they do not provide security for their citizens.

Solution

Poland cannot allow for the dilution of Polish nation.

Language - example

The law is important, but the law is not sacred. After all, you asked about decency - the well-being of the nation is above the law! If the law disturbs this well-being, then we must not consider it as something that we cannot breach and change. I say this - the law is to serve us! A law that does not serve the nation is lawlessness! (Kornel Morawiecki, 2015)
