

**Social divisions in discursive approach – political
narrative of Law and Justice after 2015
parliamentary elections**

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Abstract:

Many political scientists treat Poland as a democracy that confront the challenges from the "tyranny of the majority", since Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS) party gained parliamentary majority in 2015. It is also considered that using constitutional amendments, institutional arrangements and new legislation PiS has deeply divided Polish society.

The aim of the paper is to examine the multidimensional nature of hidden social divisions that strongly reappear in Poland after 2015. In the paper authors analyze their historical aspects, visualize them and try to disclose direct impact that political narration of the winning party has on them. By analyzing PiS stance – presented at the official PiS YouTube channel – in the light of classical Lipset-Rokkan theory of socio-political cleavages we are trying to show that discursive strategies adopting by parties might go against existing deep-rooted social divisions due to historical narration adopted by the party.

Key words:

Post-Rokkanian analysis, Semantic Network Analysis, cleavages

Introduction

The category of cleavage plays an extremely important role in political theory, but when approaching it through the historical background of Poland, its interpretation differs from the classical frame proposed by western scholars. Nevertheless, it can be the basis for an alternative explanation going against popular belief that the narrative strategy pursued by PiS has solely populist groundwork.

Our main assumption is that in times of the information revolution, institutionalization of social divisions takes place through the process of their narrative appropriation, ending with what John Petrocik called "issue ownership" (Petrocik 1996). The process of institutionalizations goes therefore through two phases reflected in the internal structure of our paper: firstly, we will argue that cleavages might be politicised – have a visible impact on the shape of the Polish political scene. We will discuss how the phenomenon of spatial dimension of major social cleavages in Poland pair with the parliamentary election results of Law and Justice (PiS). Secondly, we will check if these cleavages are also deliberately politicized – used by party leaders to obtain a stable electorate. We will analyse the content of the videos uploaded on PiS official YouTube channel in search of narrations based on references to social cleavages, presented by different politicians.

Our main aim is to clarify the communicative strategy used by PiS by analysing main elements of: 1. major narratives used after electoral campaigns; 2. main characteristics of communication style used by PiS after electoral campaigns. Together those two elements make PiS communicative strategy more consistent, responding to the needs of the broader socio-political surrounding and creating clear distinction between PiS and other political parties in Poland (Turska-Kawa 2010; Kolczyński 2007). Therefore, we want to ask:

Q1: What were the key elements of PiS political narration created during first year after electoral campaign that made their communicative strategy consistent?

Q2: What were the key elements of PiS style of political communication used during first year after electoral campaign that made their communicative strategy consistent?

In the context of these research questions we test two main hypotheses:

H1 The key element of PiS political narration was the concept of deep social divisions existing in Poland, strengthened by the elements of “classical” cleavages elaborated by West European scholars and politicians.

H2 The key elements of PiS style of political communication were links binding main element of created narration with personal experience of particular politics, what might be identified as a personalization of the party’s politics.

Literature review

Numerous authors discuss the political shift that occurred in Poland after 2015 parliamentary elections as a part of a global-wide populist revival (Hanley & Sikk 2016). The phenomenon of populism, however, has evolved from the “pathology” of the democratic

state to something Cas Mudde called “populistic Zeitgeist” (Mudde 2004; Taguieff 1995). Margaret Canovan, one of the most influential theoreticians working on populism, has distinguished at least seven different types of populism, but the list is hardly exhaustive since the array of different examples varies from the 19th century Russian “Narodnik” movement to what Paul Taggart called the “new populism” describing new kinds of parties and movements at the end of the 20th century (Canovan 1981: 264; Taggart 1995; Walicki 1969). In our work we use a “thin definition of populism”, considering it “as a political communication style of political actors that refers to the people (...) simply a strategy to mobilise support, it is a standard communication technique to reach out to the constituency” (Jagers & Walgrave 2007: 322-323). The latest publications concerning populism in Poland enclosed works such as Paweł Przyłęcki (2012) and a special issue of *e-Politikon* (2017). In our view PiS after their electoral campaign create communicative strategy that goes beyond this populist shift.

As Tomasz Zarycki argues, when analysing the impact of cleavages on the Polish political system, one must first take into account the different interpretation of the communist and early post-communist period, which strongly limited the usefulness of categories developed by western scientists (Zarycki 2000). It is therefore hard to adopt the idea of post-industrial cleavages well described by Ronald Inglehart when cultural dimension of political competition in Poland is still dominated i.a. by the issue of decommunisation of the public sphere (Inglehart 2015). The impact of post-communist elites on process of formation of cleavages raised similar concerns among political commentators all around the region, as Geoffrey Evans and Stephen Whitefield argued (1993). The issue is not limited to cultural sphere – it is also a vital part of an economical dimension – second axis of most cleavages in the region according to numerous authors, though one must mention the work of Herbert Kitschelt as probably the most salient (Kitschelt 1992). Similar to Kitschelt’s comparative works, the idea that two distinctions – between free-market and pro-state supporters and between those supporting liberal and those in favour of more conservative values – is a key to interpretation of socio-political cleavages in Poland could be found in theories proposed by authors such as Radosław Markowski (1997), Adam Przeworski and Krzysztof Ostrowski (1996) and the already-mentioned Zarycki (2015).

In contrast to the aforementioned authors we decided to refer more directly to the classical works of Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan (1967) since our aim is not to produce another interpretation of the ‘Left vs. Right’ distinction described in the post-Rokkanian style as an almost catching all friction, but, in line with some later critical comments, we put more emphasis on normative elements of cleavages (Bartolini & Mair 2007: 216; Hloušek 2010).

Bearing in mind the methodological diversity one can find in the works of Lipset and Rokkan's followers (see: [Bértoa 2014](#); [Karvonen & Kuhnle 2001](#)), we decided to present a different, discursive approach to this issue: we will argue that cleavages might be predominantly understood as a vital component of a political party's narration, aiming not only to gain public support but also to "reproduce the institution, reproduce or challenge its power structures, induct new members, create identity of the institution and its members, adapt to change, and deal with contested or contradictory versions of the past" ([Linde 2010: 518](#)). Using a taxonomical approach developed by Ruth Wodak in the field of the discourse-historical approach (DHA) we will treat appeals to cleavages in political party narration as a part of "discursive strategies" shaping two important dimensions of politics¹: 1. the mass production of politics via media and 2. the impact of politicians' personality on its performance ([Wodak 2009: 24](#)). We accept the general assumption, according to which cleavages are deeply rooted in social practice and therefore can be perceived as tangible and material, but our aim is to analyse them as a part of PiS's political narration, to trace how politicians use them as major "binary codes" in their narration ([Alexander & Smith 1993: 157](#)).

Case overview

The Polish Revolution of 1989 not only contributed to the dismantling of the Soviet Bloc but also founded the predominant socio-political cleavage in Poland, which is still visible when analyzing the Cabinet of Beata Szydło ([Rozwadowska 2016](#); [Waller 1996: 23-44](#)). Jarosław and Lech Kaczyński in the early 1990s adopted a skeptical attitude towards the achievements of the Polish Round Table Agreement, openly questioning the role of its main founders ([Wojtaszczyk 1995: 236-239](#)). As a result of the decomposition of parliamentary representation of the Solidarity movement (Obywatelski Klub Parlamentarny – OKP), the Centre Agreement (Porozumienie Centrum – PC), the first political party of the Kaczyński brothers emerged. The party publicly urged for the acceleration of political transformation, further political scrutiny ("lustracja") and decommunisation of political elites ([Czerwec et al. 1991: 71](#)). PC also openly admitted its attachment to the socio-cultural teaching of the Catholic Church and called for some adjustments to Leszek Balcerowicz's plan for economic revival ([Knyżewski 1998: 79](#)). The remains of those postulates are clearly visible in the current PiS political manifesto (*Manifest polityczny 2001*).

¹ In fact mentioned Wodak and Reisigl distinguish 6 different dimensions in their discursive analysis. Critical reading of this approach one can find in ([Fairclough & Fairclough 2012: 21-25](#)).

PiS was established in 2001 but has become a major political force after 2005 when Lech Kaczyński beat Donald Tusk from Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska – PO) in the presidential election. In this case, the foreseen coalition between the two parties became impossible – a new distinction between “solidarity” (PiS) and “liberal” (PO) Poland emerged (Migalski 2006: 160-166). In 2006 Jarosław Kaczyński became Prime Minister. However, ongoing quarrels among politicians forming the coalition government led by PiS caused an early elections resulting in PO victory (Bojarowicz 2011: 167-169; Kaczyński 2007a, 2007b).

After the parliamentary defeat numerous politicians decided to leave PiS, but the most serious changes in the party structure emerged in 2010 after the crash of a Polish Air Force Tu-154 near Smoleńsk. The death of the party co-founder - Lech Kaczyński - and numerous other prominent PiS politicians, such as Przemysław Gosiewski, Grażyna Gęsicka or Krzysztof Putra, brought Jarosław to the conclusion that there was a connection between the personal attitude of Prime Minister Tusk towards the Kaczyński brothers and a mishandling in preparation of presidential visits that led to the tragedy.

In 2011 PO again won parliamentary elections, what was perceived as a stabilization of Polish political scene – for the first time after political transition in 1989 the same political party remained in power. In this period of time PiS had to face a series of political defeats (local government elections and elections to the European Parliament, both in 2014). Nevertheless numerous political scandals concerning politicians of the ruling coalition and the formation of alliance of the right-wing parties led by PiS were a forerunner of the upcoming political change.

On 25th October 2015, after an intensive campaign, parliamentary elections took place in Poland (Marcinkiewicz & Stegmaier 2016). Two days later the State Electoral Commission announced their official results. Exit polls had already indicated a victory for PiS, but official results just confirmed the survey data. PiS emerged as the sole winner of the election, gaining 235 seats, which allowed them to form a “one-party” government. Apart from PiS, four more election committees held their deputies in the Sejm: PO, Kukiz’15, Modern (Nowoczesna Ryszarda Petru) and Polish People’s Party (Polskie Stronictwo Ludowe - PSL). Detailed results may be found in the table below. It is not without significance that the PiS electoral committee constituted a three-party coalition. Clearly, PiS was the dominant party, while PR and SP commanded approximately 2–3% support each during the two years prior to the election (Markowski 2016: 1314-1315).

Table 1. The results of the 2015 parliamentary elections

Party/Coalition	Seats	Votes (000's)	Votes (%)
Law and Justice	235		
<i>including:</i>			
<i>Law and Justice</i>	217		
<i>Solidarity Poland</i>	8	5 712	37.58
<i>Poland Together</i>	9		
<i>Independent</i>	1		
Civic Platform	138	3 662	24.09
Kukiz'15	42	1 339	8.81
Modern	28	1 155	7.60
United Left	–	1 147	7.55
Polish Peasant Party	16	780	5.13
KORWIN/New Right	–	723	4.78
Together	–	550	3.62
Other	–	113	0.87

Source: PKW (State Electoral Commission), www.parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl

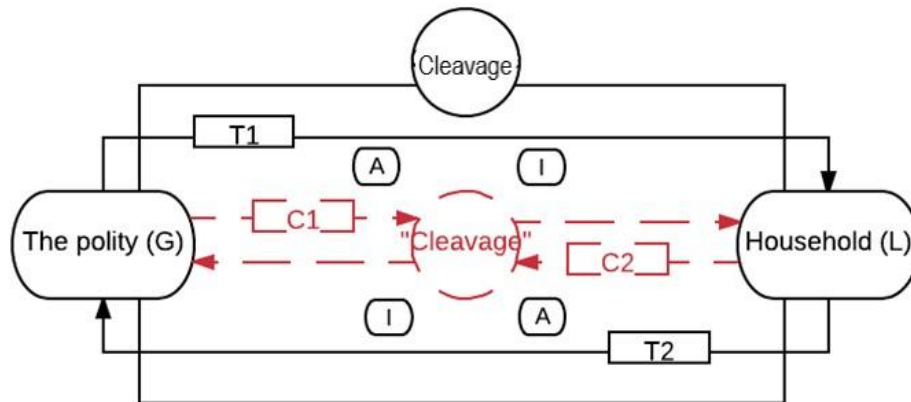
Voter turnout in the analysed election was 50.92%. PiS won the election in most voivodships, while PO only in two. The final outcomes show clearly that higher support for PiS was especially more visible in rather rural and more conservative eastern part of Poland – so called Poland B – a concept more broadly described below (Grabowska 2004). That reinforced our suspicions that different aspects of existing cleavages played the most important role during the first year of PiS government.

Methodology

Lipset and Rokkan placed their analysis of party system and voter alignments in perspective of Talcott Parsons' theory of four functional subsystems of every society (Lipset & Rokkan 1967: 7–9)². Their final goal was to present 1. how lines of cleavages influence the emergence of political representations for specific social conflicts; 2. how pressure of those lines inclines people from different households to support politicians theoretically representing their interests. What is crucial, the whole scheme of their theoretical backgrounds is based on transactional logic.

² They underline in their seminal work that their predominant interest lies in connection between a subsystem of pattern of maintenance („L” - households, schools) and a subsystem of goal attainment („G” - the polity).

Picture 1. Transactional approach to functioning of a political cleavage.

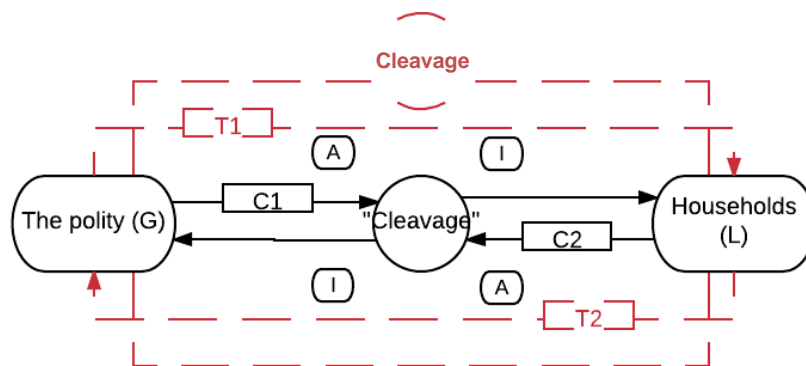


Source: Authors' own elaborations.

According to our interpretation Lipset and Rokkan in their political analysis present cleavages as an arrangement of facilities and boundaries that enable political parties (G) to create a stable „lines of interchange” with their electorate (L). The elements of economical (A) and public sphere (I) are simply parts of particular arrangement. The feedback loop of transactions means that political parties might affect existing scheme of divisions (T1) and in return might be granted with an electorate support (T2). The communication process (C1, C2) in this model is present but plays only a secondary role in the general transaction – treated simple as an information exchange.

To distinguish our understanding of cleavages we propose discursive approach presented below.

Picture 2. Discursive approach to functioning of a political cleavage



Source: Authors' own elaborations.

All the necessary elements of previous model are preserved, but the change in perspective places communication process in the foreground while the other aspects of „material” exchange are visible only as a necessary background. The change of perspective is connected with different understanding of cleavages that are treated as central elements of discursive strategy – *topois* structuring political narration around different concepts of cleavages („cleavage”) (Wodak 2009). We perceived acts of communications (C1, C2) not merely as an information exchange but as a part of the process of social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann 2010).

In our research on political narrations of social divisions in Poland we used data from YouTube to analyse seventy-nine videos uploaded to the official channel of PiS at this portal. There are several arguments that explain the choice of YouTube as a source of information. Firstly, it is the only source of the full-length political speeches delivered by main politicians from PiS during between-election period. Secondly, because of pragmatic reasons – it has over one billion users (YouTube Press), an international reach and open access for every user and even if we refer it only to the Polish context, YouTube still has the widest reach among other video services (Chmielarz 2014). Thirdly, this is the only official video channel of PiS and thus one can be sure that the content posted there is selected directly by members of the party. What is more, YouTube is an example of “hybrid media” - it consist of materials created for both new audience of the Internet users and “old media” institutions (Chadwick 2013: 14). We have focused on all of the videos posted on the YouTube PiS channel for one year from the date of the parliamentary elections – the first video comes from 28th October, 2015 and the last one from 16th October 2016.

The content of the speeches of individual politicians who appeared in the videos were analyzed, appropriately classified and coded by two researchers independently. The results were subsequently compared and in case of matching indications combined into one analytical matrix. For coding purposes we focused on narrative elements indicating presence of politicized conflicts. For this particular need we adopted the classification of socio-political cleavages proposed by Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 14) to mark the use of the most widely recognized socio-political conflicts in the analyzed videos: centre versus periphery (CS), state versus church (SC), owner versus worker (OW) and urban versus rural (UR). Moreover, while conducting our research we decided to add an additional populist cleavage (PC), which proved to be necessary to adequately interpret the speeches. At the methodological part of the article it needs to be

explained that our interpretation of this new cleavage, proposed by PiS members in their videos, refers only to the case study analysed by the authors, although the described division goes hand in hand with theory of YouTube's digital populism, according to which a virtual village is created by a professionally generated content (Kim 2012). More arguments for adopting the cleavage will be presented at a later stage of this paper.

Besides the cleavages described above we have classified the subject of our analysis (e.g. politicians speeches, press conferences) using: a) the temporal orientation expressed in the statements, which were oriented on past (oP) or future events (oF) and b) used attribution of responsibility for past or future events – expressed by adopting a side in the “we – others” dichotomy (rW – rO).

Socio-political cleavages in discursive approach

According to our interpretation, the scheme proposed by Lipset and Rokkan does not perfectly fit to the Polish case – one cannot identify such long-lasting relations between the party system and the society. As stated by the two abovementioned researchers, the national and industrial revolution gave the beginning to mentioned by them classical cleavages. One major factor changing the explanatory power of the Lipset-Rokkan theory in the Polish case is the fact that those historical revolutions were conducted in different ways in different regions of Poland (Zarycki 2015)³. The consequences of this deep division were even strengthened by the semi-authoritarian system of “communist” regime in Poland after the Second World War although not all of them were politicized (Przeworski & Sprague 1986: 7). Long-lasting spatial patterns of the main divisions were noticed by politicians and scientists and by that also visible for public opinion in terms of the general distinction between Poland A and B (Kowalska 2010).

This division contains elements of all major cleavages indicated by Lipset and Rokkan. One of the major elements of socio-economical cleavage might be the unemployment rate. According to the data prepared by the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS) in the October 2015 the unemployment rate was much higher in eastern Poland and fluctuated from 16% to 11.8% (GUS 2015). What is more, five among the twenty poorest regions in EU are situated in eastern Poland (voivodships: Lubelskie, Podkarpackie, Warmińsko-mazurskie, Podlaskie,

³ Mostly because the country lost its independence and was divided between three occupiers for more than one hundred years – through the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Świętokrzyskie) (Piechowiak 2016). This means that the socio-economic division can be combined in this case with other cleavage mentioned by Lipset and Rokkan – centre vs. periphery. As Zarycki (2000) stated, a possible interpretation of this cleavage could be based on the larger, international perspective, where Poland is perceived as a periphery of the European Union area while Poland is the most excluded part of it. On the one hand this assumption could be supported by the interpretation of Polish history in light of postcolonial theory presented e.g. by Ewa Thompson (2006) or by how Eastern Europe is locked on a borderline of Western Civilization due to colonial discourse still present in EU, what argues Nataša Kovačević (2008: 11-20).

Ulf Lindström (2001) argues that in East Central Europe – conflicts both of cultural and economical origins, when appearing on peripheral level are attached to “stationary arenas” while when functioning on central level are occurring as a play of “interactive nodes”. This means that regardless of the historical dependency the conflicts related to changing boundaries of economic and cultural systems are more dynamic and “detached” because of the changes in global economic and cultural landscape (Appadurai 1990; Lindström 2001). The geographical dimension of this distinction is somehow confirmed by the lower support for the Polish membership in the EU in eastern part of Poland – this part of the country which is more detached from the cultural heritage of Western Europe and more dependent on economical support of the state (PKW 2003).

The urban vs. rural cleavage seems to go at least partially in line with described above distinction – rural areas are more often found in the eastern part of the country⁴ although their commonness proved that the distinction between Poland A and B has figurative rather than descriptive character. It needs to be stressed that this urban vs. rural distinction in a particular way influenced the electoral geography of Poland. As stated by Lars Johannsen, who perceived Poland as an example of state in a democratic transition, the political line of post-communist political blocs referring to a paternalistic view on the role of the state was especially supported among the rural population (Johannsen 2003: 296). Tomasz Zarycki and Andrzej Nowak emphasised that apart from the historical division after the Second World War, the urban

⁴ In 2014 official statistics shows that the percentage of rural population stand at 39.7% and the largest part of this population was located in the eastern part of Poland (Wilkin et al. 2016: 40). Also the low rate of urbanization in this part of Poland confirms high proportion of the rural population in the eastern voivodeships, e.g. Lubelskie 46.4%, Podkarpackie 41.2% (GUS 2017: 73, 103).

vs. rural cleavage was the most important factor shaping electoral behaviour in Polish presidential and parliamentary elections after 1990 and, according to *Polska wieś 2016* report, higher support of inhabitants of rural regions was one of the key elements ensuring electoral win of former member of PiS president Andrzej Duda in 2015 (Nowak & Zarycki 2000: 338; Wilkin et al. 2016).

The general division between Poland A and B is also valid when we pay our attention to the “church vs. state” cleavage. First it needs to be stressed, that during communist period this cleavage was especially visible although it was based on “functional” rather than “geographical” dimension to use Lipset and Rokkan’s distinction. Lucyna Stetkiewicz argues that not only the Catholic Church was an important actor during that time on political scene but religiosity in overall could be treated (to some extend) as a “manifestation of objection to the imposed political system” (Stetkiewicz 2013: 5). After democratic transition the special role of Catholic Church was emphasized in the Polish constitution and by the concordat agreement although its political role was limited by this institutional arrangements (Mazurkiewicz 2001). It is well proven that southern and eastern Poland is more populated by people describing themselves as religious or believers and this distinction seems to impact the final electoral results – according to CBOS non-religious persons were significantly less visible among the voters in the last parliamentary elections (CBOS 2015; Rykała 2013).

In the description presented above, we confirmed that different cleavage lines in Poland reinforced each other and therefore in the eastern part of the country there is no cross-pressure phenomenon. Thus, according to the classical theory of Paul Lazarsfeld, there is no presence of conflicting partisan commitments (Berelson et al. 1954: 126). The presence of those cleavages in the PiS political narrative seems to be understandable, especially in order to maintain their stable electorate.

Findings

The most interesting outcome of our analysis is the unveiling of the way in which the populist narrative is used by PiS politicians to allegedly reproduce the more general divisions in society. The general cleavage in Polish society might be described as a division between “true patriots” and “traitors”, which is visible at both levels: of a polarised party system (PiS vs PO) and at a social level (supporters of the aforementioned parties). Appearance of this kind

of political conflict dimension was also predicted by Lipset and Rokkan, who stressed that “friend-foe” binary distinction usually consists of traits of deep ideological or (quasi)religious commitment

“...by strictly political criteria of membership in «we» versus «they» groups. We shall consider the possibility that the parties themselves might established themselves as significant poles of attraction and produce their own alignments independently of the geographical, the social, and the culture underpinnings of the movements” (Lipset & Rokkan 1967: 3).

Taking into account the above comments our findings surprisingly did not confirm the our first hypothesis. The table below contains the data on narration of PiS politicians in the context of socio-political cleavages in Polish society. Our findings proved that populist call was the most frequently used discursive strategy in PiS political narrative, but was rarely strengthened by other important cleavages.

The Urban vs. Rural cleavage proved to be especially insignificant. It was rarely mentioned in the analysed speeches. It might be explained by the assumption presented by Johansen, who indicates that the lack of political protests organised by the rural population led to relative autonomy of the political elites (Johannsen 2003: 292). Such a social situation does not require the ruling party to strengthen this kind of cleavage. Also the Church vs. State cleavage almost never appeared in the videos, which is surprising, since at the beginning of the 1990s the lack of organizational linkage between newly-established political parties and social structures induced a phenomenon of political patronage, meaning high dependency of political parties on influential external institutions such as the Catholic Church (Antoszewski et al. 2003: 152; Szczerbiak 2007: 48-69; Wesołowski 1996: 230). The owner vs. worker and centre vs. periphery cleavages were simultaneously used in describing social inequality in Polish society – especially regarding the impact of the European Union. As stated by Gary Marks and Carole Wilson, it is clear that the European Union creates division between winners and losers in the sphere of national economies, but, for the present, the social bases of support and opposition to European integration are unclear (Anderson 1998: 56; Marks & Wilson 2000: 435).

One can justifiably claim that while the speakers were orientated towards past events they attributed responsibility for those events to “others” (communist, PO), while emphasising the importance of their own activities when talking about the future. Our analysis shows that by using a populist narrative they were strengthening their supporters’ beliefs that the “others” are

responsible for the socio-economic disproportions and divisions in the past, while PiS’s aim is to solve this problem in the future.

Table 2. The matrix of narrative strategies’ frequency in the videos

	Owner vs. Worker		Church vs. State		Urban vs. Rural		Centre vs. Periphery		We vs. Others (populist)	
	Future	Past	Future	Past	Future	Past	Future	Past	Future	Past
We	7	2	2	0	0	1	8	1	8	5
Others	0	8	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	21

Source: Author’s own elaborations.

Our analysis confirmed our second hypothesis. The most “active” actor within the governing party – at least in the context of their YouTube activity – was Jarosław Kaczyński, however some interesting aspects of his activity need to be mentioned. He was the person who most frequently appeared in the videos uploaded to the official PiS YouTube channel, but what is more important, other speakers visible in collected materials were unwilling to express their own opinions on political issues – their role was to establish a clear picture of the current situation.

The leader of PiS did not only set the general framework of the party narrative, but also showed the way to interpret the existing cleavages at political and social levels. According to our findings Kaczyński became the person who most frequently addressed in his speeches a new, proposed by PiS kind of historical-political cleavage, making this division the most salient one. It is worth mentioning that Prime Minister Beata Szydło appeared in the videos only in the context of the electoral campaign and parliamentary elections, however her position in the party (Szydło is vice-president of PiS) could indicate a more active role. In our research we also found that for tactical reasons, only a few main speakers were presented in the videos, although there were no technical limitations nor financial reasons to shorten the number or longitude of posted videos.

During our research we also discovered the marginal number of views of most of the videos uploaded to the official party channel and the high number of only a few of them. The most popular (276,494 views) was “Daliśmy wam słowo” movie posted on 12th March 2016, which refers to the owner vs. worker cleavage in the broader sense: the division between the small, wealthy and influential group of politicians and numerous indignant Polish citizens

deprived of any influence on the current political situation, represented by PiS. What is more, the content of the video is past-orientated and focuses on the prejudicial role of PO politicians, foggily described as “others” (*Daliśmy wam słowo* 2016).

The second video with more than 167,000 views is entitled “Polityka zagraniczna” and was posted on 16th January 2016. It relates to connection between the opponents of PiS and external political forces – mostly the European Union. In the video we can distinguish a past-orientated narrative focused on the “others” (*Polityka zagraniczna* 2016).

The third one, entitled “Pozwólcie nam pracować” gained 76,000 views and was posted on 26th January 2016 (*Pozwólcie nam pracować* 2016). Once again we can observe a past-oriented narrative, which was focused on the “others” - political journalists, politicians of opposition parties and their supporters. In this video PiS directly requests from opposition to let the government work for the common good. The last film, “Silna Polska w Europie” significantly differs from the previous three videos (*Silna Polska w Europie* 2016). Three of the four videos mentioned above were posted at a time of constitutional crisis, when the PiS-controlled parliament passed a series of statutes to weaken the constitutional tribunal. In these videos we observed the use of an anonymous narrator and all of them were accusing and concentrating on the “others”. The last among the most popular videos was posted on YouTube much later – on 7th May 2016 and it refers to the positive sides of EU membership, although it stresses the importance of the growing potential of the Polish negotiation position within the organisation.

What is crucial, only in the last of the mentioned videos one can hear the voice of Kaczyński, who adopts a more conciliatory tone. The video was posted just before Europe Day, which is celebrated on 9th May and it becomes clear that in this way Kaczyński tried to detach himself from the negative campaign conducted by PiS during the constitutional crisis in Poland.

Conclusions

In the end our findings proved only one of the stated hypotheses. Firstly, the analysis of videos posted on the official PiS YouTube channel proved that however electorally PiS is strongly concentrated in some areas of Poland, party leaders, instead of focusing on the existing cleavages decided to transfer the ideological bases of elite divisions into the social structure. What is more, by making clear the links between relatively recent party history (like the tragic

death of Lech Kaczyński) and some distant events (like the actions undertaken by Władysław Anders' army during the Second World War) they try to alter the meaning of both Poland's distinction on post-communist and post-solidarity parties, or the most common right-left division in political theory. It seems that the final aim of Jarosław Kaczyński is to prove the long-lasting division between "true patriots" - nowadays grouped in PiS, and "Poles of the worst sort" ideological heirs of (mainly) the communist regime - mostly PO, Nowoczesna and their supporters (Davies 2016; Lyman & Berendt 2015).

Secondly, PiS politicians used populist narrative as a core part of their discursive strategies to ensure a favourable (for them) division of the party electorate in Poland. The preferable narrative was focused either on negative aspects of past events, when "others" were the most active political actors and, on the other hand, on the positive aspects of the future with PiS as the main political actor. In both cases, at the first level they did not take responsibility for the existing social cleavages and simultaneously they created an image of the party which is functioning above the divisions. It is surprising because at the second level they used a clearly populist narrative, they did not take into consideration the possibility of the positive influence of "others" on the situation of the decreasing level of different social divisions.

Finally, Jarosław Kaczyński has turned out to be the most active actor among politicians using a negative narrative to strengthen social cleavages in Poland. Nevertheless, the party leader raised the negative issue in most videos which were less popular, while he neither appeared in the most popular video nor used a conciliatory tone to separate himself from a negative party image.

The conclusion stemming from the conducted research is that the ruling party is now in the process of creating ideological bases of mass partisanship by using different discursive strategies based on some elements of classical cleavages but mostly on new historical-political divisions, which include features of the populist narrative.

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