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Re-framing Serbian identity within a global imaginary:
Nation building through the Belgrade Waterfront project

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Abstract:

The Belgrade Waterfront real estate development project has attracted a considerable amount of interest among scholars from various disciplines in a short period of time. Nevertheless, these works are limited in scope. This paper draws upon existing literature on nation building by first contextualizing it before adding insights from party strategies and cultural studies (with a particular focus on identity issues) research streams. It thus aims to contribute to the nascent debate about how the new ruling elite of Serbia uses such urban projects to emancipate from the nationalist rhetoric and supporting symbols of the 1990s. The main argument of this paper is that state narratives, media coverage and branded icons of Belgrade Waterfront illustrate political regime's switch to the global to contain the national in order to build and publicize its own 'revitalized' idea of the nation and legitimize its take on power. The underlying strategy consists in manipulating individuals' preferences by marginalizing opposition parties. The research design relies on a multi-method approach crossing participant and ethnographic observation over a period of 7 years, as well as a critical analysis of the Serbian regime's discursive strategies and project's branding efforts using an original visual material.

Keywords: nation-building; national identity; party strategies; nation branding; Belgrade Waterfront; Serbia

Introduction

Scholarly studies examining the political purposes and related concerns of large infrastructure projects (comprising real estate and mixed ventures as well as events, such as the Olympic Games and their supporting infrastructure) outside the Western world have substantially increased during the last decade. More specifically, Alekseyeva (2014) outlined the possibilities and risks of trying to build a 'new self-image' without necessarily changing social realities. Her work also adds further arguments to the need to understand the motivations of local authorities

within an extended framework that includes economic concerns as well as branding and image-making models. The debated Sardar Sarovar Dam in India reflects a worldwide concern for developing countries enticing and maintaining foreign investment. The creation of so-called world-class infrastructure contributed to the nation-building project, although not explicitly visible in state narratives (see Luxion, 2017). Chinese authorities have somewhat solved the dilemma between nationalism and consumerist values by opting for a 'global rather than local' architectural platform to spread their national aspirations (Ren, 2008). Using Rogun Dam as a case study, Menga (2016) demonstrated how the Tajik political establishment has used a large hydraulic infrastructure as a political legitimacy building instrument and a vector to settle its idea of the nation into public minds. This body of research has both implicitly and explicitly contributed to informing how nation-building processes and infrastructure projects overlap (leading sometimes to redesign the urban landscape) and the controversies they have generated.

Recently, Serbia 'joined the fray' with Belgrade Waterfront (BW[i]), a "megalomaniac project backed by the promise of Abu Dhabi money" that was "forcefully pushed forward by sidestepping laws and ignoring existing urban fabric, in order to secure the future identity of Serbia and its capital" (Slavković, 2015). In a very short period of time, in addition to massive media exposure in both local and foreign newspapers, it has attracted growing attention from scholars belonging to various disciplines who have devoted substantial efforts to investigating its various facets. As an instrument of urban planning and development, the BW megaproject is a local emanation of the "world city entrepreneurialism" trend in which state actors, real estate developers and foreign financial investors work alongside the other (Koelemaij, 2021). Zeković and Maričić (2018) highlighted associated top-down governance issues such as restricted public participation and growing contestation, which have also been emphasized by Koelemaij and Janković (2019). Ultimately, the project illustrates authoritarian interference and is depicted as a spatial expression of neoliberalism in a post-communist society (Perić, 2020).

The aforementioned studies set out the rationale and objectives of this paper, but because the precise meanings of BW hold between the intricate overlapping of 'post-Yugoslav, post partition, post-conflict' (see Horvat & Štiks, 2015), and post-nationalist issues, renewed international ambitions, and at the same time intelligentsia's authoritarian neoliberal modernization and legitimacy building goals, I suggest looking beyond partisan discourses in order to fully grasp its true scope. This is to argue that the BW aims to assist the Serbian ruling

elite and the Serbs to "[re-]synchronize their historical watch" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 2) with the World. The brutal sequence of events and international sanctions that followed the end of the Yugoslav federation forcefully opposed the philosophy of unity which governed its composition and finally led to the isolation of Serbia (Kulić, 2014). The BW has been contended as the most symbolic modernizing action instigated by Serbia's ruling elite since then, and as such, represents a fertile ground for investigating the discursive strategies applied by the Serbian regime[ii] to support its renewed vision of the Serbian nation since 2012.

I implement an analytic approach to questioning and interpreting the interplay between the gradual evolution of state narratives and the development process of BW from 2012 to 2021. Accordingly, I concentrate on "the meanings that shape actions and institutions, and the ways in which they do so" (Bevir & Rhodes, 2000, p. 2). Specifically, the nation building meaning-making processes underlying the BW project are explored from a constructivist posture of the triadic statement "*x* represents *y* as *z*" (Fossen, 2019, p. 824) in which 'BW portrays the Serbian nation as cosmopolitan'.

What I have in mind is the dynamic intertwining of globalization and cosmopolitanism. By globalization, I adhere to the following definition: "A process (or set of processes) that embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensivity, intensity, velocity, and impact–generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power" (Held et al., 1999, p. 16). I also endorse the view of Held (2003) for whom cosmopolitanism "defines norms of political regulation and law-making that create powers, rights, and constraints that transcend the claims of nation-states" (p. 514) complemented by that of Levy and Sznaider (2002) who consider cosmopolitanism as a process of 'internal globalization' whereby global matters become part of the local experiences of a growing number of individuals. Conveniently, I do not see a hierarchy between both concepts, but a domain between 'the national' and 'the global', whose *contour* depends on the ways political elites in their respective countries articulate, instrumentalize, and favor them in their daily exercise of power. This is based on the premise that Belgrade is viewed as a "symbolic expression for modernity, resistance, openness and democracy" in which "Us, the City Cosmopolitans" and "Them, the Rural Nationalists" are opposed (Volcic, 2005, p. 639). I also extend this 'new articulation and scale of belonging' by inscribing it in a constructivist political process that integrates the outcomes of globalization[iii]

that are 'de-territorialization' and 'reterritorialization' (Swyngedouw & Cox, 1997), as well as its local historical and socio-cultural legacies and manifestations.

The body of the material produced in this study came from multiple sources. I first methodically examined the documents registered in the official website of the Serban Progressive Party (https://www.sns.org.rs/), Belgrade Waterfront (https://www.belgradewaterfront.com/en/) and Brash agency and specifically the webpage dedicated to the Belgrade Waterfront project they have been working on (https://brash.agency/projects/belgrade-waterfront/). I have supplemented these sources with the archives (using the '*Beograd na vodi*' entry) of the most popular daily newspaper in Serbia, Politika (https://www.politika.rs). The study period spans from 2012 to 2021.

Then, online articles from various newspapers covering the widest possible range of sensitivities, such as *Radio Televizija Serbije*-RTS (https://www.rts.rs/), Mondo (https://www.mondo.rs), SrbinInfo (https://srbin.info/), Novosti (https://www.novosti.rs), Telegraf (https://www.telegraf.rs), Blic (https://www.blic.rs), and pieces published online in local and foreign newspapers, including Deutsche Welle (DW, Germany), Bankar (Montenegro), and The Guardian (United Kingdom), and news agencies such as Beta and Reuters were screened. Finally, articles and reports from Istinomer, an online fact-checking portal, TV news, and broadcast interviews on YouTube and Studio B (https://studiob.rs) were added.

Visual material comprising pictures taken by the author 'on the spot' was included in the analysis. To the best of our knowledge, a public billboard represents an original material that has not been previously used and analyzed. During the analysis of BW advertisements, I followed the recommendation of Schroeder (2006). I first described the visual layer before interpreting it.

Participant observation was conducted on-site since the first maquette or master plan of BW was unveiled and directly accessible to the public in January-March 2015[iv], and notes from participant observation performed in various locations (the river promenade, cafés, restaurants, etc.) were taken and then analyzed.

Contextualizing nation building in Serbia[v]

Research on nation-building in Serbia, like in the post-Soviet space (see Seliverstova, 2016), has brought to the fore the role of state actors and their influence on the formation of national identity in the society (e.g., Kolstø, 2014; Kuzio, 2001; Leshchenko, 2004; Kolstø & Blakkisrud, 2005).

Within this framework, 'nation building' is embedded in the consolidation of the state through the development of a shared national identity using symbols and propaganda, and by promoting traditions and folklore (Kolstø, 2006). These processes, according to the 'etatization of nations' model (Gross, 1989; Jovanović, 2014; see also Neuberger, 1977), have driven the creation of modern states in Central and Southeastern Europe, such as Serbia.

At least since Antiquity, the building of nationhood is rooted in the practice of distinguishing one's group from other out-groups (see Hall, 1998). Political communities have been formed by emphasizing national culture and buildings, an authentic "Self" while creating a "significant Other" (Kuzio, 2001, p. 343). This concern, even this necessity, will be found at least since the Peace Treaty program defined by United States President Woodrow Wilson, the 'Wilson's Fourteen Points', whose main principle was the "principle of national self-determination and the right of peoples to 'round of' their nation states" (Jakovina, 2017, p. 300).

As a political entity, the 'second Yugoslavia' was established on November 29, 1945, and was settled on the patriotic doctrine of interethnic 'brotherhood and unity' (*bratstvo i jedinstvo*) (Perica, 2001). Although Yugoslavia left Cominform in 1948, there was no consensus among Yugoslavia's ruling elite over how to relate their ideology to a 'significant Other' that was implicitly the Soviet bloc. Emancipation came quickly (1950s) in the form of an "economic democracy and decentralized, market socialism" (Woodward, 1995, p. xiii) in which mass consumption, inspired by the United States, was a crucial economical and symbolic part of the Yugoslav League of Communists' political agenda. Nevertheless, for better and for worse Yugoslav identity was a construction and, as such, was meant to disband, apart from the economic and social limits of the Yugoslav model. Djokić's (2012) argument is that the existing collective identities of the three dominant ethnic groups–Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes–are the main impediments. As the days of the Yugoslav federation have started being numbered, the alteration in the status of the 'supranational' Yugoslav identification led to a redeployment within the identification matrix and finally to an outbreak of extreme nationalism (Godina, 1998). Fueled by grievances, frustrations, and feelings of oppression, particularly towards Serbian centralization, nations in the various republics finally established their identity by means of delineation from other nationalities (Bruckmuller, 2018).

Progressively, the challenge for Serbia's ruling elites, whether they came from democratic or right-wing camps, was to reimagine the national identity outside its the 1990s nationalist

heritage and distant from emotionally charged historical references. Over the last decade, Serbia's political establishment under the leadership of Aleksandar Vučić has solved the dilemma between political ideology and economic pragmatism (Gertner, 2007) through mega-infrastructure projects, such as the BW. The latter represents an opportunity to reconcile the supposed conflict between cosmopolitan ideals and national sentiment (see Beitz, 1983). At first glance, the (authoritarian) modernization and more inclusive ideology carried by the Serbian ruling elite through the BW borrows from the Yugoslav integration of liberal universalism into a bordered nation-state (see Kuzio 2001), but without any ethnocultural alterity. Moreover, as I aim to show it, state narratives and the BW branding campaign illustrate a clear dichotomy between those that support the modernization (the 'moderns') and those who 'resist' it (the 'ancients'). Furthermore, the BW, like all actions undertaken by the government, has been transformed into a life-size and quasi-permanent test of legitimacy, due to the relatively low legitimacy resulting from the ballot box.

Building a new horizon for Serbia

Subsequent to the breakdown of communist one-party systems and the end of the Yugoslav experiment, the Western Balkan region experienced an intensive period of collective introspection, during which political elites reinterpreted their current identity bases to suit the new nationalist agenda (Pauković & Raos, 2020).

During the years that followed the post-5th October revolution, broken promises and the assassination of Prime Minister Đinđić finally led anthropologist Zagorka Golubović to bitterly comment "We are still without a vision' (Sretenović, 2008), as Serbian society struggled to reconnect to the rest of the world. Paradoxically, the homogeneous ethnic and religious structure of the Serbian state, as well as macroeconomic indicators such as GDP per capita (at least in 2008, before the financial crisis hit the country) and a high unemployment rate (a peak – 24% - was reached in 2012[vi]), were structural prerequisites for nation-building (see Jovanović, 2014) and conceivably opened the way for a regime 'switch'.

Since its first tenure in 2012, Alexandar Vučić has yearned for the modernization of the country under the banner of containing nationalist penchants. The ideological re-composition that followed has blurred the boundaries between the different ideologies that have marked the historical course of the country since the break-up of Yugoslavia, which predominantly

materialized through a form of competitive authoritarianism (Tournois, 2021). One of its most salient aspects is the political reorganization of the urban space, with the BW being at the forefront of this strategy.

The built fabric of the BW and its associated state and media narratives carry the labels of a 'global-cosmopolitan' discursive prose in which Serbian political establishment has inscribed its political agenda. In short, the global contains the national through BW. This embodies a shift from the territorial nationalism typical of the Milošević era (Kostovicova, 2004), to becoming a major political instrument that aims to create a 'new' (national) imaginary and project a modern and 'open to the world' image, but without the long-time ingrained cultural enmities that lie in the mythical Serbian stories or songs (Hudson, 2003).

Retrospectively, even before the first stone was laid, the visit and the encouraging speech given by former New York mayor Rudolf Giuliani, could be hailed as a landmark in the development of BW and, by extension, the country. To avoid any accusation of bribery or abuse of public money that would have been used by the local opposition to the government, he first declared: "I came to Belgrade privately and we never talked about getting paid". He also pointed out that he was honored to be able to help the Serbian Progressive Party project 'Belgrade Waterfront' and added that the latter is "extraordinary," that it can change the capital and Serbia, and that it will attract investments (RTS, 2012). He could finally be considered as the instigator of the 'new horizon' whose progress will mark the different mandates of Aleksandar Vučić under the "Only a great leader has big dreams and dreams of big changes" seminal statement (TV Studio B, 2020).

The BW then became the recipient of these dreams. Following a long tradition of political leaders who ruled the country, Alexandar Vučić also aimed to create a historical figure in the development of contemporary Serbia. This contends that, unlike illustrious characters such as Charles the Great, whose renaissance has a divine origin, his mission is more pragmatic and consists of converting skeptics, 'ancients', etc. to the new politico-economic orientation of the Serbian government.

As Schnepel (2005) put it, "a dream is to be made true in waking, it will there initiate, support and legitimize actions directed towards achieving this goal' (p. 209). Since 2012, state narratives have been designed to bring the vision of the dream into the life of every Serb by walking in the alleys of Belgrade Waterfront, sitting in cafes with Ana Brnabić, Serbia's first

LGBT prime minister and ruling elite's incarnation of country's modernization politics, and from the terrasse of the Belgrade Tower contemplating the city and the construction of a new history in the manner of a Napoleon addressing his soldiers facing the pyramids of Egypt.

Another aspect of state narratives refers to the return of Serbia to the world concert of nations. During his presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Marshall Tito was primarily portrayed as a 'Citizen of the World' instead of a 'regional leader', which had an indirect influence on both the self-understanding and self-respect and pride of the Yugoslavs (Tournois & Đerić 2021). Since the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the wars that followed, Serbian citizens fell again in the negative imagination associated with the Balkans: "one of the West's most significant others" and, along with South American drug cartels and the predatorial Japanese economy, the region was represented as the 'civilizational antitype' (Hammond, 2005, p. 135).

Figure 1. The first maquette of BW exposed to the public (2015). Photo taken by the author.

In a nutshell, the BW project (Figure 1) was assigned the role of "a new kind of spatial imagination capable of confronting the past in a new way and reading its less tangible secrets off the template of its spatial structures - body, cosmos, city, as all those marked the more intangible organization of cultural and libidinal economies and linguistic forms" (Jameson, 1991, p. 364-365) in order to bear the burden of post-war grievances and reduce internal resistance to economic and social progress.

The onset of Belgrade Waterfront

The rather unexpected support received by the ruling party likewise brought to the fore the legitimization issue that appears to be one of the recurring issues political elites face when it comes to transforming the country. Since the drastic regime change that followed the fall of Slobodan Milošević, Serbian heads of state have suffered more or less continuously from the 'weak' political support of voters. For instance, in the presidential elections held on April 2nd, 2017, less than one-third (29.93%) of the electorate supported Aleksandar Vučić, which represents 13.46 percent fewer votes (2,012,788 vs. 2,326,063) than a coalition around the ruling party in the parliamentary elections held in April 2016. While he publicly claimed it as a "victory pure as a tear", various opposition media qualified it as a Pyrrhic Victory (Nikolić, 2017). In comparison, in the 2017 presidential elections in France, Emmanuel Macron was supported by 43.61% of registered voters[vii]. Consequently, legitimacy mostly comes from the outside and less from the ballot box. In 2001, the newly elected Zoran Đinđić received support from world figures, such as George W. Bush, Tony Blair, and Jacques Chirac. 16 years later, Aleksandar Vučić was congratulated by Russian President Vladimir Putin and the President of Hungary, János Áder speaking of a 'convincing victory' and a 'decision made by a large majority' (Nikolić, 2017).

This situation has raised an important matter about the capacity of Serbia's ruling elite to enact its vision of the 'upcoming' Serbian identity which would take the appearance of a reinterpretation of the original identity containing the representation and validation of subjects, state and individual actors within global narratives binding neoliberalism and multiculturalism (Andolina et al., 2005). However, unlike what happened during Yugoslav socialism, when the political elite entered in a constant process of interpreting-reinterpreting all formal aspects of a certain social reality, so as to justify the relevance of the Yugoslavian market-socialist model

compared to present (or conceivable) alternative institutional forms (Ivković et al., 2019), in contemporary Serbia, the politics conducted since 2012 aim to deal with the remains of Yugoslav market socialism, contrast to the economic *laisser faire* and tentative Europeanization of the 2000s, economic catch-up and nationalism containment while enforcing an "active transformative politics of framing" (see Beck, 2007, p. 691) or, more precisely, re-framing Serbian identity within a global imaginary by focusing on boundary crossing.

So as to break the 'glass ceiling of transformation', discursive practices then entered into a process of legitimation by action, the new horizon being the fulfillment of a dream. The latter objective was then merged in the BW ideology in order to reduce the tensions between the country's leadership and its citizens, particularly Belgradians, by justifying efforts to modernize the course of the country, discard and overpower competing claims, and ultimately legitimize the already existing balance of power (see Schnepel 2005). On March 17, 2015, Aleksandar Vučić then Prime Minister promised on the main Serbian public service channel (RTS), that: "In, say, four years, the last house from the model will be built. You will see serious results by the end of the year. You will see the 200-meter promenade and you will see the first two towers we are talking about, I think, in a year." (Manojlović, 2015).

On September 27, 2015, at 17.13, the first stone of what will soon be named "an unlikely place for Gulf petrodollars to settle" (Wright, 2015), the BW project, was officially laid by Muhamed Alabar, director of the emirate private investment and real estate company *Eagle Hills*, and Aleksandar Vučić, then Prime Minister of Serbia. The event was followed minute by minute in the media in the manner of an opening ceremony for the Olympic Games, as reported in government media.

Few minutes earlier, at 16.31, Aleksandar Vučić, declared: "It is at this place that we are writing new pages of the history of our country and city". He emphasized that a small number of people believed in that project, but that it is becoming a reality today. He called on everyone who doubts this project to put their doubts aside because it is becoming a reality today. "I respect everyone who is against Belgrade Waterfront," said Vučić, and he emphasized that "that piece of land" has never interested anyone for 70 years and from whom everyone looked away. He added: "Our job is to change that, to make Belgrade and Serbia better, and not to enrich the government." (Mondo 2015).

Transparency rhetoric progressively became an integral part of the nation-building performances of the ruling elite. Although the BW is not explicitly represented as a hegemonic project of a country's neoliberal social transformation, in the face of enduring corruption in the public sector and through its projected job creation[viii], it serves as a means of promoting neoliberal policies as a remedy to the immoral reallocation of societal resources (Mikuš, 2016). However, because it includes neither participation nor empowerment of the public and other non-state actors, propagating a discourse of justification that legitimizes undermining the conditions of democratic practice for the sake of economic efficiency (Matković & Ivković, 2018) may have framed the emergence of anti-neoliberal movements and, primarily, public mistrust.

The enemy within: ancients vs. moderns and the 'new Others'

However, after nearly three years in power (2012-2015), this period was marked by little progress on various significant macroeconomic issues, such as higher salaries and pensions, opening of chapters as part of the EU accession process, (BW) towers and apartments, new projects, healthier Serbia, better life and dynamic growth. While Aleksandar Vučić portrayed himself as a 'reformer', he added that reforms have started in difficult times: "We are all skeptical, we are waiting for someone else to solve everything. We have accepted hard work; the worst floods in history have hit us, but we have also embarked on harsh economic reforms. We have started to change our attitude towards Serbia everywhere in the world," Vučić said (RTS, 2015). In a certain way, this declaration has posed the first milestones of the reforming rhetoric that the government will maintain thereafter.

In parallel, criticisms of the Serbian opposition vis-à-vis government initiatives have since become a form of ritual or oratorical contest. Moreover, the early construction phase of the BW provided substantial legal and financial resources to opposition parties to confront the regime in power, with their definitive goal being regime change. Representatives of the opposition parties in Belgrade pointed out in a debate on Istinomer entitled 'let us not lie, held in the Belgrade Youth Center, that the project 'Belgrade Waterfront' will be subject to revision after they come to power: "Someone will end up in prison for 'Belgrade Waterfront', and the Democratic Party (*Demokratska Stranka*) will, after coming to power, repeal the *lex specialis* about that project. We will not terminate the contract because Serbia would probably have to pay huge penalties. We advocate for the institutions to function, and the Attorney General's Office and the Public

Prosecutor can declare this state project null and void. I can say that we will remove the illegal building 'Savanova, said Balša Božović, President of the City Board of the Democratic Party (Istinomer, 2015).

Although the Serbian opposition effectively contributed to make BW an internationally controversial matter, the latter has served as an outlet for an opposition in search of a 'second youth' after the failures years of power following the departure of Slobodan Milošević. Indeed, the mediatized grievances that may have aroused popular distrust tacitly ignored the opposition's structural failings rooted in the post-October 5th period of democratic change. The latter is mostly viewed by the public as "a great missed opportunity for the true transformation of Serbia. The main reason is the fact that there was no lustration, and that the previous political establishment did not go through that process" (Petrović 2015).

One of the unplanned outcomes is that it further persuaded the Serbian ruling elite that BW, like the Rogun Dam in Tadjikistan, can be presented as a symbol of self-determination and achievement (Menga, 2015), a symbol that has the power to bond Serbian citizens around a (new) national ideal beyond ethnic cleavages and in opposition to a shared adversary that are 'all those against the modernization of Serbia'. Serbian opposition and all those voicing against the project thus became the 'enemy within'.' This postulate will serve as a basis for the construction of the BW ideology and its two pillars, which are ethnic underbidding and alterity, that is, demonizing (internal challengers), strategy. First, the BW does not aim to defend block interests (Coakley, 2008, p. 769) but to reposition (not to say 're-brand') a 'new' party[ix] on the political scene along a neoliberal and protector-of-the-interests-of-the-nation pragmatic position to gain voters' support. Here, the adopted stance, ideologically not extreme, aims to distance the ruling party from its rivals, particularly those that have been in power since the 5th October Revolution as well as from the far-right ones[x]. Secondly, the corollary of the underbidding strategy relates to 'destabilizing' or 'demonizing' the internal challengers (Gagnon, 2013) in order to manipulate voters' preferences. It rehabilitated the old debate between 'ancients and moderns' and took up this old opposition by radicalizing it, affirming two conceptions of the construction of identity. Some, turned towards the past, believe that it is appropriate to imitate their predecessors, because they have reached the perfection of their art. Others, fixed on the present, think that it is necessary, on the contrary, to innovate to find solutions that correspond to the spirit of the time. Between the two camps, the conciliators try to harmonize the positions, and if they take into

account previous contributions, they must also be adapted to new situations, used as a springboard that allows progress to be made (Fumaroli, 2001).

Serbian government then regularly heightened its own self-assessment by differentiating itself with the constructed 'Others' over 'hostile stereotypes, distortions, and caricature' (Gruen, 2010). The Prime Minister of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, stated in the TV show *Upitnik* that he does not see the elements of the coup that the media have speculated about in recent days, but that there is a constant intention to collapse the Government of Serbia: "These are the ones who don't want change, different political factors", he added (RTS, 2015). The 'political factors' in question are represented by the Serbian opposition parties.

However, the vilification, even demonization, of the project detractors to affirm the superiority of the policies conducted by the government in place may not necessarily generate public support. Consequently, at least in the short run, such politics may reinforce the advantages and capabilities of Serbia's political establishment at the expense of opposition forces. 2017 onwards, BW branding efforts have grown in power to build and foster the 'new' national identity that diverges from a previous form of an imagined Serbian community by lessening the conflict between inward- and outward-directed elements of nation branding (see Ståhlberg & Bolin, 2016).

Branding BW as a transformative process

Besides RTS, Blic and other state-supporting medias working together, Brash, the British 'brand, communications and experience agency', was mandated to increase the visibility of BW and by 'channeling official statements' that reflect the government's vision for the city of Belgrade and, by extension, Serbia.

> *"We positioned Belgrade Waterfront as the smart city for the future, taking urban renewal to new heights. A lively mixed-use quarter, right to the water, will bring pride and passion to the city's new heart.*
>
> *Our brand idea, 'Where prosperity flows', captures its aspirations as a tourist attraction, commercial hub and lifestyle destination. The creative expression, 'Uniquely Belgrade', plays on the city's special history, art, culture, food, and attitudes toward fashion and fun of those who live in this vibrant city.*

From the iconic Kula Tower and the Sava Promenade to the Belgrade Boulevard (the backbone of the district), Belgrade Park and the Mall, the Historic Waterfront Plaza, Round-house Arts Venue and Commercial Districts–all these places work seamlessly together to add up to the brand promise and deliver an experience that celebrates history, tradition, and pride."

(Source : https://brash.agency/projects/belgrade-waterfront/)

A cultural (re)construction of the Serbian nation?

I start from the premise that BW's uniqueness and symbol of success encapsulates in the above statement that invites (citizens, tourists, etc.) to 're-discover the national essence' of the country. However, uniqueness is culturally constructed; in other words, it produces a new reality, given that these places did not exist before, or did not exist as such. The branding of BWs iconic features that aim to 'celebrate history, tradition and pride' through a back-and-forth process actually "re-manufactures the authenticity of the nation and grants legitimacy to those who hold the power to articulate its realness" (Kaneva, 2018, p. 639-640).

As portrayed in various media campaigns (whether online or using public billboards), the BW operates to convert individuals into consumers. The hectic increase and even duplication of cultural events, award-winning spaces, and shopping malls, intend to approximate the domains of affect and built assemblage, and to create emotional atmospheres encouraging new forms of civic and cultural life to arouse (Miller, 2013). Ultimately, the highly mediatized New Year's celebration made the 'new' city center representative of "globalized forms of cultural production and consumption" (Gotham, 2005, p. 242).

Media representations of BW's key aspects are about 'nationalizing the global' (Fernandes, 2000). Indeed, the only tradition the project refers to is a foreign one: the Chinese Lantern Festival which brings 'the spirit of tradition and symbolism of ancient China'[xi]. On the one hand, such festivals, in addition to cultural events and New Year's Eve celebrations, may certainly benefit Belgrade economically by widening extra-local exposure[xii] (see Schuster, 2001). On the other hand, one can wonder whether cultural signs, symbols, and traditions imported from abroad contribute to the creation and deployment of a new (nationalist) imaginary. In short, could a political and cultural community be formed around such unrequited (cultural) material (see Tallentire, 2001)? This question remains open, but what can be taken for granted is that BW personifies Serbia's shift from ethnic pointers that were once the more powerful foundations of identity (Nagel, 1997) to 'global culture'[xiii] markers.
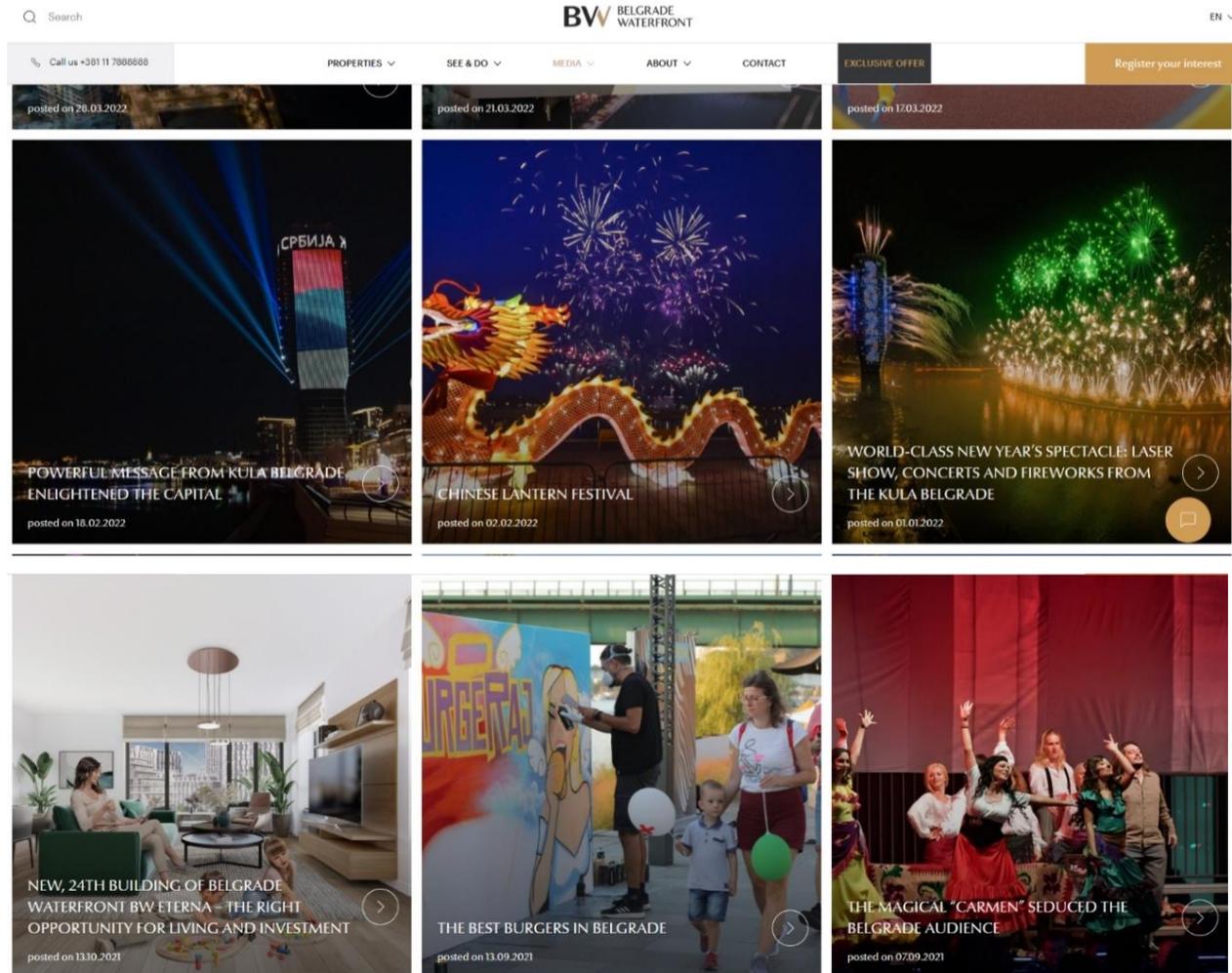
Figure 2. Screenshot of BW-media webpage[xiv].

This suggests that from now onward, this space represents the template from which the traits of the new reality for Serbia are to be read. Interestingly, the location where the Belgrade Waterfront project is built, the Savamala district, was depicted as a 'real mockery of the city, overgrown with bushes, damaged by the cemetery of ships, and neglected huts'[xv]. This very selective reading masks a richer reality and history, which, to some extent, epitomizes the modernization of Belgrade that began after the restoration of principality during the first quarter of the 19th century. Later on, diverse cultural actors fostered freedom of expression in this genuine area by deploying 'narrative myths' in order to safeguard its historical and cultural legacy (Milovanović & Vasislki, 2021). State officials have not considered it as a 'place of memory' and no attempts were made 'to sacralize' it although the location's significancy was

stricto sensu re-framed into a symbolic setting which to some extent proceeds from the nation building process using 'invented traditions' as articulated in their pioneering study by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983/2012) and implemented in diverse political and cultural settings (e.g., Ma, 1998; Kong, 1999; Moreno et al., 1998).

'Relations of difference' are grounded in a socio-economic and political divide
One of the fundamental theoretical underpinnings of the politics of identity is that the latter [identity] "is a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative" (Hall, 1991, p. 21), therefore assuming relations of difference. One would probably not expect that discursive and branding practices spinning around the need to renew the Serbian nation have concealed its divisive nature and have 'internalized' the necessary 'Other'.
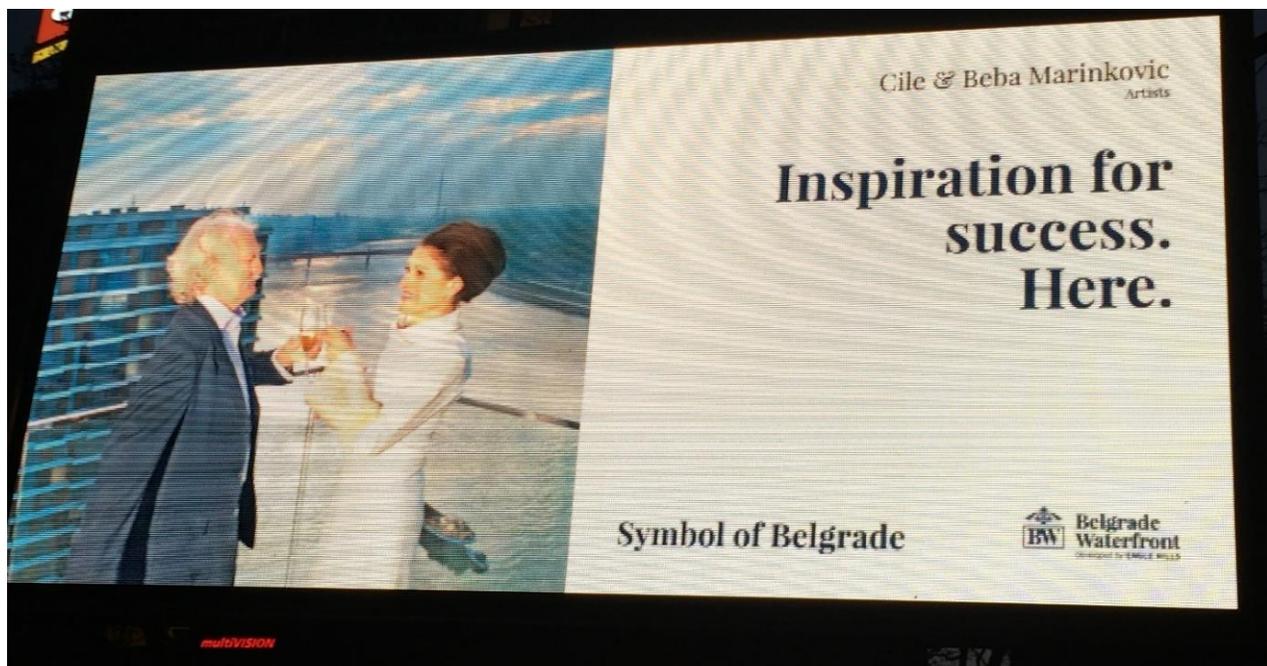
Figure 3. BW advertisement on a public billboard present around the BW complex. Photo taken by the author.

Chosen symbols of BW (Figure 3), Cile and his wife Beba Marinković presumably drank a glass of champagne on one of the smaller tower terrasses, portraying an abstruse picture of success. In fact, the difference implicitly conveyed does not refer to an ethnically, but a socio-economically and politically constructed 'Other'. Cile Marinković is a famous Serbian painter

who received in 2010 the National Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Culture of the Republic of Serbia. In 2017, he was one of the 600 eminent personalities that initialed the proclamation "For a better Serbia" in which, as they say, with their name, knowledge, and achievements, they support the candidacy of the leader of the progressives, Aleksandar Vučić. The text of the proclamation, among other things, states that 'everyone is ready to fight with Vučić for a better Serbia, as he is the guarantor of a decent and orderly country' (Srbin.Info, 2017).

Although coherent with state narratives, BW does not fit the statement that nationalist projects are built on the homogenizing developments that form 'national sameness' but is inherently grounded in the processes of individualization that organize subnational differences (e.g., Medina, 1997). At this point, 'national sameness' is not represented in terms of race and/or ethnicity, but in terms of, said in a trivial way, the 'poor' vs. the 'rich' and supporters vs. opponents to the nation-building project of the ruling elite.

From the preceding analysis, we can conclude that BW is, in essence, selective and exclusive. Given the local living standards, BW talks to the privileged, those that would finally benefit from the 'new' nation building project. It is interesting to note that they do not predominantly line Serbia. So 'who are the buyers?' "These are our people, the diaspora and we have a number of foreign customers. We have a lot of buyers from the EU, we have a lot of buyers from China, we also have buyers from the Middle East", said Nikola Nedeljković, director of BW. Nebojša Nešovanović from the International Real Estate Consulting House CBRE added that: "We need to stop looking at our real estate market as a standard residential real estate market anywhere in the West. The real estate market is a capital market. We can compare our residential real estate market with stock exchanges in New York or somewhere in the West. The profits are quite satisfactory, and all investors are willing to enter new investments." (B92, 2021). Contrary to what happened since the late 1980s, economic liberalization ultimately expressed in BW did not lead to a (re-)affirmation of certain ethnic identities and loyalties (Volcic, 2007), but brought back ancient 'abstract-universal designations' such as 'working man', 'poor', 'poor" rich', 'rich' and, in the end, transition winners and losers.

As the project finally has come to end, Aleksandar Vučić declared, after quoting the famous French writer Victor Hugo, that:

"Dreams create the future! Dream big dreams! Serbia can progress only with great work and learning. I am convinced that if we work hard and learn, we can progress in the future and that Serbia can be a leader in the region in terms of economy and progress." (Telegraf, 2021).

This statement somewhat concludes the nation building process that has started in 2012 and finally illustrates that the 'national' faded into the 'cosmopolitan' here understood as a "an intrinsically classed phenomenon, as it is bound up with notions of knowledge, cultural capital and education: being worldly, being able to navigate between and within different cultures, requires confidence, skill and money" (Binnie et al., 2006, p. 8).

Conclusions

Over the past twenty years, academic debates about how nation building processes have been challenged by globalization in many post-communist countries (e.g., Kostovicova & Bojičić-Dželilović, 2006) and may have appeared as competing priorities for political elites (e.g., Janmaat, 2008; Ren, 2008) have received growing, but scant attention.

This paper arises in this discussion by delving into the ways in which shifting narratives of authenticity and success within transformative political agendas (Andolina et al., 2005) are assembled through the BW project. Renewed nation building attempts have taken place in the context of a political strategy of 'de-ethnicizing the Serbian nation' and the economic liberalization policies introduced gradually since 2012 in Serbia, while accounting for post-conflict trauma, grievances, and international sanctions. State narratives, media coverage, and branded icons of the BW have increasingly contributed to the creation of an authoritarian and overtly open-to-the-world political culture, one that has emancipated from the nationalist rhetoric and supporting symbols of the 1990s by switching to the global to contain the national.

The empirical material we analyzed revealed that, while political elites have been inspired by folk texts that use a variety of old-fashioned clichés and bring with them 'popular mythology' and 'collective beliefs' (see Čolović, 1990) in the 1990s, the branding of BW and associated arguments have provided a new manifesto for self-discovery and the construction of a national identity (Kaneva, 2021). What we discovered is that by bringing the global to Serbia, ruling elites' nation-building project would be free of ethnic dissensions and national disputes, firmly rooted in the belief that ethnicity and nationalism will be swiftly outdated by a 'global culture' (see Smith, 1990). From the perspective of autocratic rule that has dominated the various

mandates of Aleksandar Vučić, state and local actors' discursive practices that aim to represent the national essence at the same time ensure its realness (Kaneva, 2018). On December 28, 2021, the President of Serbia published a video showing the Belgrade Tower in the BW, where the final preparations for New Year's Eve were made. He posted a video on his Instagram profile under the name 'futureofserbiaav' (@buducnostsrbijeav), in which he had a message for the citizens of Serbia:

> "The only limit we have is our dreams! From the mockery of Belgrade [Savamala, the area in which the BW is located], we have made Serbia proud. We could do all that, only because we were united in the fight for a better and more beautiful Serbia. What you see is the last preparation for a spectacular New Year's Eve. Welcome to Belgrade, welcome to the world!" The president wrote in the description of the video on his Instagram account 'buducnostsrbijeav' (Tanjug, 2021 in Blic, 2021).

Nonetheless, given the controversies the project has generated, 'we were united' looks more like a forced march towards urging the Serbs to share the same (national) 'map of meaning' and to interpret the world through the lenses of the ruling elite/BW. It somewhat refutes the self-determination viewpoint although, at the same time, it displays competing meanings, partly because governments deploy frequently contradictory regimes of sovereignty, knowledge, and identity building (Gibson, 1998). Moreover, unlike the rock and roll phenomenon, all things being equal, the 'cultural apparatus' of BW does not provide its audience with sufficient empowerment practices, and the various performances held at BW may have little power to generate" 'affective alliances' (Grossberg, 1984).

The underlying narrative scheme also hides the divisive nature of the project and, therefore, contests the egalitarian conception of nations along a horizontal versus vertical axis (Smith, 2013). Metaphorically, BW may thus represent the transition from 1990s horizontal obsessive expansionism ("liberation of all Serbian lands") to XXI century's vertical deprivation of cities and their resources from citizens (see Pančić, 2018)[xvi]. The BW (ideology) has progressively 'carved in stone' the definitive rift between those negotiating modernity (the 'elite'[xvii]) and the detractors (democratic opposition and anyone not supporting or voting for the party in power), far away from any national consolidation in a country that has faced the consequences of ethnic divisions. This situation is reminiscent of the dynamic that forged the modern Belgrade between 1830 and the late 1860s when the ruling group's "negotiation of modernity" finally lead to frame "the city as a site of conflict between mutually defining forces"

(Jovanović, 2013, p. 32). The installation of the monument of the Serbian medieval ruler Stefan Nemanja at the very entrance to the BW district adds to this debate as a possible final concession to far-right parties where Russian aesthetic canons dispute it with the desire to hang on Serbia's past, its national roots (not to say nationalist) roots to the globalist wagon[xviii]. This situation offers potential for further inquiry by examining, for instance, the sources of support/rejection of BW operating at the representational level and, broadly speaking, to what extent BW's branding campaign has created a 'simulation nation' (Kaneva, 2018).

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Endnotes:

[i] Given the number of academic papers using the acronyms BW (Belgrade Waterfront) or BWP (Belgrade Waterfront project), we identify Belgrade Waterfront with its Serbian commonly used name '*Beograd na vodi*' (BNV) which literally means 'Belgrade on water'.

[ii] I used the terms 'Aleksandar Vučić', 'ruling party', 'political elite', 'ruling elite', 'government' and 'political establishment' indifferently.

[iii] The underlying assumption borrows from Giddens (2003) and other scholars for whom globalization is a commanding transformative force behind rapid and massive social, political, and economic shifts that have remodeled modern societies.

[iv] In June 2014, state and non-state officials from Serbia and the UAE revealed the master plan of the BNV project. (Accessed April 13, 2022. https://failedarchitecture.com/belgrade-waterfront/).

[v] By 'Serbia', I mean the historical reality resulting from its inclusion in the second Yugoslavia in 1945.

[vi] Accessed April 4, 2022. https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/SRB/serbia/unemployment-rate

[vii] Accessed March 30, 2022. https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Elections/Les-resultats/Presidentielles/elecresult__presidentielle-2017/(path)/presidentielle-2017/FE.html

[viii] Serbian government expected up to 20,000 workers to be employed in the construction of BNV according to various official sources (e.g., Sekularac 2015). This figure will subsequently be denied several times.

[ix] The Serbian Progressive Party or SNS (*Srpska Napredna Stranka*) rules the country since 2012. It was founded in 2008 following a scission from the far-right Serbian Radical Party (*Srpska Radikalna Stranka*).

[x] More precisely, SPP strategy can be characterized as 'lateral underbidding' meaning that the "party widens its appeal beyond the ethnic group and shifts towards more moderate policy positions on the ethnic dimension" (Zuber 2013).

[xi] https://www.belgradewaterfront.com/en/chinese-lantern-festival-2/

[xii] To what extent it would increase the prestige of local goods and cultural institutions remains to be validated.

[xiii] This argument derives from the idea developed by Smith (1990) that the nation is somewhat outmoded by a 'post-industrial global culture', resulting from "a process of depoliticization, a 'withering away' of nationalism" (172). The author also stressed the limits of this approach.

[xiv] https://www.belgradewaterfront.com/en/bw-media/

[xv] Accessed March 4, 2022. https://mondo.rs/Info/Drustvo/a833830/Polaganje-kamena-temeljca-za-dve-kule-Beograda-na-vodi.html

[xvi] I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this suggestion.

[xvii] This refers to the notion of 'Serbian elite' or '*Srpska elita*' in line with the works of Olivera Milosavljević (e.g., Milosavljević 2002).

[xviii] I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this suggestion.

Dimensions of Religiosity and Perception of the Importance of Religion in Everyday Life and Politics

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Abstract:

The Catholic religion has been inextricably connected with the Polish state through numerous historical experiences. Being an important aspect of connecting society, it can be used in an instrumental way on the political agenda. Moreover, religiousness is an important determinant of electoral decisions. The aim of the research (N=238) is to check whether religiosity affects the perception of the importance of religious principles in everyday life and religion in political life. In the presented approach, religiosity was a multidimensional variable and was conceptualized using a modified five-point Religiosity Centrality Scale (Huber 2003). It was confirmed that all dimensions of religiosity are significantly related to the assessment of the importance of religious principles. The dimension that showed the strongest correlation with the created variables was the dimension of religious cult, and the dimension that correlated the least was the dimension of reading the Catholic press.

Keywords: religiosity; centrality of religiosity; political life; social life

Introduction

The term 'electoral behavior' refers directly to the elections and how individuals are legitimized to play important roles in the state. Currently, elections in Poland embody the principle of national sovereignty, meaning that the nation holds supreme power. It is worth noting, however, that certain phenomena, such as religion, can unite the nation and extract a commonness from the diverse group of citizens. In Poland, the Catholic religion is the most prevalent denomination, with 32,496,513 people declaring themselves Catholic in 2020 (GUS, 2021).

The popularity of Catholicism in Poland may be due in part to its strong roots in the country's tradition and culture. Even during the times of partitions, which were a difficult period for the Polish people, the Church served as a cross-partition structure that united Catholics and

supported the national identity of Polish society (Gaworski, 2019). The Church's history in Poland also continues to influence the current reality. The significant role of the Catholic Church during the democratic transformation, including the instrumental use of its teachings by politicians and the negotiation and signing of a concordat between the Holy See and Poland (in this matter, the position of the church regarding the autonomy and independence of the religious and political spheres was undoubtedly adopted), as well as the adoption of a new Constitution and the papacy of Polish Pope John Paul II, strengthened the union between the Church and the Polish state (Glajcar, 2012). In later years, the Church was again used in political battles. The presence and expansiveness of the Church during the transformation period shows that it played a significant role in shaping political relationships and was inherently connected to politics. Religion can unite parts of society, imposing separate rules of conduct and a specific set of values. In this regard, political scientists cannot ignore the importance of religion in everyday and political life.

When it comes to the perception of the Church by Polish citizens in the public sphere, numerous studies have been conducted on the subject. Currently, there is a widespread acceptance of the placement of crosses in public buildings (CBOS, 2022). In addition, a decade ago, there was also public acceptance of the religious character of the military oath, religion lessons in school, the participation of clergy in state ceremonies, and the consecration of public utility places (CBOS, 2013). However, in the study cited, it can be found that a large number of people are bothered, when priests tell them how to vote. A similar study conducted in 2022 confirms this trend. These studies show some inconsistency, as it appears that Poles generally accept the placement of crosses in buildings and public places, which combines the sacred and profane spheres, but when it comes to the Church speaking out and fulfilling its mission to proclaim faith and teach life according to it, many voters oppose it.

In this matter, the Church's position on the autonomy and independence of the religious and political spheres is not clear. The model illustrating the relationship between the state and the Church is one of autonomy and cooperation. This model is based on specific provisions in the constitutions of these countries or in bilateral concordat agreements. These provisions define the relationship between the state and the Church as one of friendly separation or graduated cooperation. Based on the principle of non-identification with religious organizations, nation states respect their independence and autonomy and guarantee freedom of religion and religious

practices to all. At the same time, they declare their willingness to cooperate with religious organizations, recognizing the historical religiosity of their citizens and the social value of religion. This is why references to God can be found in the constitutions of these nation states (Grabowska, 2003). The formal separation of the religious and political spheres is defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which in Article 25 establishes the principle of respect for the autonomy and mutual independence of the Church and the state. Of course, this does not mean that the practice of worship is unrelated to political life. Article 53 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland contains provisions on the freedom of conscience and religion. These freedoms are considered personal freedoms and their recognition by the state is inherently linked to the obligation to protect human dignity. Therefore, the freedom of conscience and religion is not only granted to citizens of Poland, but to everyone. The second paragraph of this article refers to "accepting religion according to one's own choice", which refers to the unrestricted ability to adopt any worldview. The freedom to choose one's own religion is an expression of freedom of conscience.

Currently, there are several different positions that Polish political parties present connected with the Catholic Church. The Left and Law and Justice (PiS) are completely opposed, when it comes to religious issues. The Left advocates for treating the Church like any other non-governmental organization, that is, giving it some independence and autonomy. On the other hand, representatives of Law and Justice claim that religious values are inherently connected to Polish culture and tradition, so the Left's demands do not fit the reality (Kolenda-Zaleska, 2019). In addition, Law and Justice's election program states that "the Catholic Church is the custodian and preacher of the widely known moral teaching in Poland and also plays a unique role in Poland" (Election Program of PiS, 2019). Moreover, Law and Justice is currently the strongest party in Polish politics and its electorate is largely made up of Roman Catholic believers. Civic Coalition has a more moderate approach. Although like the Left, it separates state and Church affairs, it is in favor of maintaining the concordat. The leader of the party Poland 2050 - Szymon Hołownia, released demands that are supposed to help in the orderly relations between these two entities. Specific recommendations by Hołownia include the liquidation of the Church Fund, the removal of grades for religion from school transcripts, and shifting the financial burden for these lessons to the Church. It is important to note that Hołownia is not in favor of a decisive separation of the Church from the state, but rather wants to introduce order in this matter. The

leader often emphasizes the historical and current merits of the church during the historical Polish People's Republic era (Makarewicz, 2022). Confederation is a party that believes that the separation of Church and state is fiction. However, this does not diminish the undeniable merits that the Church has had in the past. Despite its strong desire to separate Church and state, Confederation ideologically wants to protect life, which aligns with Church teachings. The party is also in favor of removing religion from schools and replacing it with ethics, where students would learn about Christian sources of ethics (Dudkiewicz, 2022). Polish People's Party (PSL), in terms of the Church, wants to defend the Christian roots of Europe. As a conservative party, the PSL expects the Church to unite people and reactivate the brotherhood of people. The leader of the group, Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz, proposes that the Church should not get involved in political battles and take sides with any party. Nonetheless, Kosiniak-Kamysz supports the separation of Church and state, but wants to maintain cooperation to create a Christian community (Szczęśniak & Sitnicka, 2022).

Information about the influence of religion on electoral behavior can be explained using a sociological model of electoral decision-making. This model shows that voters who are part of a religious group are likely to vote in a similar way to that community (Olszanecka-Marmola, 2020, p. 22). The theory of two-step flow is also relevant to voting based on the sociological model. This theory posits the existence of opinion leaders and recipients of messages. The two-step nature of this process occurs, when opinion leaders are the primary recipients of mass media information, which they then edit using their knowledge and pass on to further recipients (Katz, 1957). In the context of voting, such opinion leaders may be members of the clergy who are more involved in politics, while further recipients are less active individuals. The sociological model of electoral behavior also identifies social contact as a determinant of class voting (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954). Members of various religious groups express their needs and exchange information through interactions with each other, deepening their political awareness. Access to information, such as through Catholic media outlets that circulate news (often of a propaganda nature), is an example of the process of social contact that can lead an individual to unite with members of a given community and solidify their beliefs and views.

Another important connection between religion and politics is the politicization of various aspects of social life (Legutko, 2012, pp. 249-251). Depending on how representatives of liberal tendencies and agents with Christian views understand different issues of individual and

collective life, ideological conflicts may arise, particularly when discussing ethical issues such as euthanasia, abortion, or the legalization of civil partnerships. If a voter who is considering these issues has a strong connection to the Catholic Church, they may be more likely to adhere to the views proclaimed by the Church. Additionally, research shows that religious people are more likely to vote. Participating in religious practices at least once a week increases the probability of voting (Cześnik, 2009). This can be explained by the mobilization of clergy members and the process of social contact with others in the church community, which supports the assumptions of the sociological model of electoral behavior.

Another example of the inseparability of religion and politics is that religiosity, or the frequency of participation in religious practices, is the best predictor of political sympathies, especially toward right-wing and left-wing politicians (Jasiewicz, 2003). This was demonstrated in 1995 when analyzing the presidential election. A model was developed to explain voting behavior based on objective socio-demographic variables, and it was found that religiosity had a stronger connection to support for Lech Wałęsa, than other socio-demographic variables. Similar conclusions were reached several years later, when researchers created a socio-economic model to explain electoral decisions. This model posits that the likelihood of supporting certain parties is influenced by factors such as religiosity, size of place of residence, economic status, education, age, and gender of voters (Żerkowska-Balas, Lyubashenko, & Kwiatkowska, 2016).

The academic community is interested in studying how religion is manifested in the modern world. Researchers debate whether religiosity is shaped by the upbringing, tradition, and environment or whether it is an inherent part of human nature. Some view religiosity as an intrinsic value that is determined by the individual's level of spiritual maturity. The opposite of mature religiosity is immature religiosity, which refers to an inability to fully adopt a religious belief system (Allport, 1963). This theory has been referred to as the Religious Orientation Scale, but it has been widely agreed upon by researchers that this dualistic approach should be abandoned (Hunt, 1971). In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, discussions about the distinction between religious beliefs and religious practices, deeds, and feelings arose. As a result, a multidimensional concept of human religiosity was developed that included dimensions such as ideology, ritual, consequences, experience, and intellectual dimension. This led to the conceptualization of religious commitment on a five-dimensional scale. In contrast to religiosity as an intrinsic value, religious commitment extends beyond individual boundaries as it is

characterized by a social and relational dimension. This means that it exists concerning something or someone, such as people, sacred objects, or rituals. This understanding of religiosity is easier to understand than psychological concepts that describe religiosity as a subjective feeling. This understanding has been further refined through the psychological concept of religiosity as a system of personal religious constructs, which combines the approaches of Allport and Ross (1967) and Stark and Glock (1968). In this synthesis, the mobilizing aspect of religiosity mentioned by Allport is considered by Glock using four structural dimensions of religious involvement. The dimension of religious practice is divided into two separate constructs: cult and prayer. The intellectual dimension is also modified, as it was previously difficult to accurately describe religious knowledge. Instead, the dimension of interest in religious issues is used. The final dimensions are religious experience, cult, prayer, religious beliefs, and interest in religious issues. The Religiosity Centrality Scale is an operationalization of this new model of religiosity. It consists of a survey with specific questions about each of these dimensions, and responses are given on a five-point scale (Huber, 2003). With the author's permission, the Polish version of the Centrality Scale was prepared using a translation procedure, and the obtained psychometric indicators confirmed the high validity and reliability of the tool (Zarzycka, 2007).

Methods

The study was conducted on October 1-31, 2022 using the survey method, specifically, the Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI) technique. The survey questionnaire consisted of 30 single-choice questions and was distributed on social media groups (specifically Facebook). The Likert Scale was used in most of the research tool's answers, which allows the evaluation of the degree of acceptance of phenomena and the measurement of attitudes.

There were 238 respondents in the sample, 133 men, 102 women, and 3 people who did not specify their gender. The largest number of respondents were aged 18-24, with 111 (46.6%) in that age group. In addition, the sample included 63 people (26.5%) aged 25-34, 20 people (8.4%) aged 35-44, 17 respondents (7.1%) aged 45-54, 9 people (3.8%) aged 55-65, 10 people (4.2%) over 65, and 8 people (3.4%) under 18. There were 90 respondents (37.8%) living in cities with over 200,000 inhabitants. 62 respondents (26.1%) lived in towns with 20,000 to 100,000 inhabitants, 47 respondents (19.7%) lived in cities with 100,000 to 200,000 inhabitants, 27

respondents (11.4%) declared their place of residence as a village, and there were 11 people (4.6%) from among the respondents living in towns with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants.

Regarding declared electoral preferences, the sample was dominated by supporters of the Civic Coalition (PO, N, IPL, the Greens) with 63 respondents (26.8%) expressing their support. Other respondents said they would vote for the Left (New Left, Left Together) - 38 people (16%), Szymon Hołownia's Poland 2050 - 34 people (14.4%), Confederation - 28 people (12%), Law and Justice - 8 (3.4%), and Polish People's Party - 3 votes (1.3%). Three respondents would vote for another party, 27 of them (11.5%) marked the "hard to tell" option, 19 (8%) would not vote, and 12 (5.1%) would deliberately cast an invalid vote.

When asked if they considered themselves believers, 104 respondents answered affirmatively, 89 said no, 39 respondents could not answer the question, and 3 refused to answer. Among all the survey respondents 124 identified as Catholics.

The research part includes questions about the religiosity of the respondents and the importance of religion in socio-political reality. As a result of previous research, I aim to compare how religiosity (as a five-dimensional variable) influences the perception of the importance of religious and political principles in life. Through this, I hope to determine the relationship between the dimensions of religiosity and the perception of political life, as well as which aspects of the Catholic faith are most important from a societal point of view. Two hypotheses were established for this research study:

H1: All dimensions of religiosity are positively related to the perception of religious principles in everyday life and religion in political life.
H2: The dimension of the religious cult will produce the strongest connection with the variables.

To verify these hypotheses, there are two separate variables – religious principles in everyday life and religion in political life. The first variable consists of four questions developed in research tools, and the second variable consists of five questions. The design for these variables is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Questions forming the scale of religious principles in everyday life and religion in political life used for the study

Variable	Questionnaire questions	scale reliability (Cronbach's alpha)
Religious principles in everyday life	Do you raise (or will you raise) your children by the principles of the Catholic faith? Are you guided by the Christian principle of love for your neighbor in your life? Do you consider the Decalogue to be the basic set of moral principles that should be followed in life? Do you think that the biblical principle of "turning the other cheek" (i.e. not using force and violence to oppose evil) should be the basis for the functioning of society?	$\alpha = .731$
Religion in political life	Do you think that politicians in the legislative process (law-making) should take into consideration Catholic values? Do you think that the President of Poland should take into consideration Catholic values in the performance of his duties? Do you think that the judicial authorities should be guided by Catholic values in their decisions? Do you think that respecting Catholic principles (e.g. decalogue, commandments) is as important as obeying the law enacted by the parliament? Do you think that foreign policy should be guided by Catholic values?	$\alpha = .940$

Source: own research.

The variables were correlated with the dimensions of religiosity, including reading the Catholic press, religious beliefs, prayer, religious experiences, and cult. These dimensions were based on the Polish version of the Religious Centrality Scale (Zarzycka, 2007). The ideas behind each dimension are explained in Table 2, along with the presentation of the questions from the original Religiosity Centrality Scale and their modifications for this paper. The scales showing the dimensions of religiosity showed a satisfactory level of reliability (religious beliefs: $\alpha = .903$, prayer: $\alpha = .734$, religious experiences: $\alpha = .917$, cult: $\alpha = .649$).

Table 2. Construction of questions used to measure religiosity based on the Religiosity Centrality Scale

Dimension of religiosity	The importance of the religiousness dimension	Original questions from the Polish version of the Religious Centrality Scale (Zarzycka, 2007)	Questions used in the presented study
Interest in religious problems	Cognitive, intellectual confrontations with religious content, but it does not take into consideration the aspect of personal acceptance, i.e. religious certainty or doubts.	How much do you care about researching religious issues? How often do you think about religious problems? How often do you look for information on religious issues on the radio, television, the press, or in books?	How often do you read the Catholic press (e.g. "Mały Gość Niedzielny", "Gość Niedzielny")?
Religious beliefs	It measures the degree of the subjectively assessed probability of the existence of transcendental reality and the intensity of the attitude of openness to various forms of transcendence.	How confident are you that God really exists and is not just a human invention? How strong is your belief in life after death? How strong is your belief in the existence of a Higher Being?	How strong is your belief in the existence of God in your life? How strong is your belief in the existence of life after death?
Prayer	The frequency of establishing contact with the transcendent reality and its subjective meaning for man.	How often do you usually pray? How important is a personal prayer to you? How often during the week do you offer a short prayer to God?	How often do you pray? How often do you read the Holy Bible?
Religious experiences	How often transcendence, as a dynamically understood reality, becomes an element of human experience. This dimension provides information about the individual confirmation of the transcendent world of meanings.	How often do you experience situations in which you feel that God wants to tell you something? How often do you experience situations in which you feel that God is intervening in your life? How often do you experience situations where you feel God's presence?	Do you experience situations in which you feel divine intervention? How strong is your belief that God is constantly looking after your life?
Cult	Frequency and subjective importance of human participation in religious rituals.	How often do you attend church practices, also via radio or television? How important is it for you to attend church practices? How important is your relationship with the religious community to you?	Do you celebrate holidays (such as Christmas, and Easter) according to the Catholic religion? How often do you attend masses/rituals? How often do you go on pilgrimages?

Source: own research.

Results

To examine the relationships between the dimensions of religiosity and the created scales, two-sided Spearman correlation coefficients were calculated. The results indicate a significant relationship between religiosity, conceptualized as a five-dimensional scale, and the variables that determine the importance of religious principles in everyday life and religion in political life. Therefore, the first hypothesis, stating that all dimensions of religiosity are positively related to the perception of religious principles in everyday life and religion in political life, is confirmed. Statistically significant relationships were noted in all cases, which can be considered quite strong.

Table 3. Correlations between religiosity and the studied variables

Dimensions of religiosity and the studied variables	Interest in religious problems	Religious beliefs	Prayer	Religious experiences	Cult
Religious principles in everyday life	.326***	.640***	.650***	.665***	.688***
Religion in political life	.350***	.562***	.576***	.622***	.648***

*** correlation coefficient significant at the level p>.001
Source: own research.

Referring to the variable concerning religion in political life, the strongest correlation, according to the second hypothesis, is shown by the dimension of a religious cult (.648). However, it is only slightly stronger than the association of this variable with religious experiences, prayer, and religious beliefs. A weaker (although statistically significant) relationship was observed between religion in political life and interest in religious issues (operationalized in this study as reading the Catholic press).

Regarding the variable of religious principles in everyday life, the strongest correlation is also presented by the dimension of a religious cult (.668). This time, the differences between the other dimensions are even smaller. Three other dimensions of religiosity (religious beliefs,

prayer, and religious experiences) are almost equally strongly related to the examined variable, with correlation coefficients of .640, .650, and .665, respectively.

Importantly, religiosity is slightly more related to the variable of perceiving religious principles in everyday life than to the importance of religion in political life. Only reading the Catholic press correlates more strongly with religion in political life than with religious principles in everyday life. The remaining dimensions (religious beliefs, prayer, and religious experiences) concerning the variable of religion in political life show a weaker relationship than in the case of the variable of religious principles in everyday life.

Discussion

The presented research confirms that there is a relationship between religiosity and attitudes toward politics. All dimensions of religiosity were found to be significantly related to the perception of the importance of religious principles in everyday life and religion in political life. The dimension of the religious cult had the strongest correlation with these variables, while the dimension of interest in religious issues had the weakest correlation. In addition, the variable relating to religious principles in everyday life had a stronger correlation with the dimensions of religious beliefs, prayer, religious experiences, and worship than the second variable. The reason for this is unclear, but it may be caused by the fact that the Catholic values are deeply ingrained in Polish culture and are an integral part of everyday life for many Catholics. However, the relationship between religion and politics is often more controversial. While the Constitution of Poland formally separates the Church and the state, it does not mean that religious practices do not influence political life. The research confirms this, with the dimension of religious cult showing the strongest correlation with the variables. It is worth considering the role of clergy and membership in a religious community in this context.

The presented research has several limitations, including the construction of the dimension of interest in religious issues, which only refers to reading the Catholic press, and the method of selecting the sample, which limits the generalizability of the results to the population. However, the research does confirm that a religious cult, understood as practicing religious services, celebrating Catholic holidays, and going on pilgrimages, is the strongest determinant of the transfer of Catholic values to social reality. It would be useful to conduct a qualitative study

to investigate why the cult dimension is most strongly associated with the perception of the importance of religion in everyday life and politics. Additionally, it would be valuable to repeat similar studies with more diverse samples and improve the measurement of various dimensions of religiosity to ensure that the questions used are well-suited to Polish conditions.

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The Process of Acquiring Political Relevance
of Law and Justice

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Abstract:

Political relevance is one of the most essential elements of political subjectivity. The process of its acquisition by political parties is not only a factor of their success, but also the foundation of their ability to influence the sphere of current politics. The political relevance of political parties combines both the institutional dimension of political processes and the practice of competition in three dimensions: electoral, parliamentary and cabinet. Only when parties are able to participate in all the three dimensions will they be able to perform the most important functions. The following article presents a specific dimension of acquiring political relevance, which is the management of political change.

Keywords: political relevance, political change, political competition, political subjectivity, political institutionalization

Introduction

The presented studies are an attempt to explore the sources of the political subjectivity of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS; The Law and Justice party) and the leader of this party, Jarosław Kaczyński. It assumes the significance of the formation of the group, the first governance between 2005-2007, the loss of power and its regaining for building political relevance. The main thesis of the article assumes a fundamental role in the power structure of Jarosław Kaczyński and the impact of his experiences on the functioning of the party and, consequently, the entire state. In order to analyze the political relevance of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS), it is necessary to consider the history of the creation of the currently ruling party (Glajcar et al., 2017). In many areas, this had a diametrical impact on the currently shaped government policy.

PiS was officially established as a political party on May 29, 2001, as a direct continuation of the Porozumienie Centrum (PC; The Centre Agreement) established in the first half of the 1990s. PC was a party that was a part of a broad agreement of post-Solidarity circles, which was the Akcja

Wyborcza Solidarność (AWS; Solidarity Electoral Action). After the rule of the SLD (The Democratic Leftist Alliance), in 1997, power in Poland was taken over by the Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność coalition. After the turbulent rule of the coalition, carrying out four very difficult reforms (education, pension, local government, health), finally from the beginning of June 2000 until the end of the term, AWS was in minority government. A direct consequence of these events was the reconstruction of the government, where Lech Kaczyński was appointed for the post of the Minister of Justice as a member of the Council of Ministers. The appointment of the former president of the Supreme Audit Office (NIK) to the ministerial position turned out to be a decision with far-reaching consequences. Kaczyński strongly criticized the Penal Code, The Code of Criminal Procedure as well as the Executive Code introduced in 1997, which amounted to a general criticism of the entire state of the judiciary, especially the legal elite and the privileges they enjoyed. Kaczyński's ruthlessness met with increasing public approval. At that time, Lech Kaczyński, namely a 'sheriff', was the most highly rated minister of the AWS government, which took place at the same time as the ratings of the entire government of Jerzy Buzek were getting weaker and weaker. Ludwik Dorn, a close associate of the Kaczyński brothers, talked about the behind-the-scenes of Kaczyński's entry into the government in an interview with Robert Krasowski in the book 'Anatomia Słabości': *'After the presidential election (Aleksander Kwasniewski's second victory), when AWS began to crumble, we still had no idea for a party. All we knew was that Lech Kaczyński's tenure in the Ministry of Justice created some opportunities for us. (...) Kaczyński entered Buzek's government because it was a solidarity project. In addition, it was an opportunity to appear, to show the public a package of their own proposals. Lech Kaczyński's consent to take over the Ministry of Justice in Jerzy Buzek's government was based on the Napoleonic principle: we win the battle, and then we'll see. We were thinking quite vaguely about the future. We knew that being inside would make it easier for us to get along with the >>awuesian<< mainstream. (...) We felt that in the event of Lech Kaczyński's success, we would be able to negotiate from the position of an independent entity with strong assets. For Kaczyński knew that he was going to the government with a distinctive banner that the public might like.'* (Dorn, 2013, pp. 158–159).

Lech Kaczyński became the most popular minister in the then government. It was a time of growing weakness of the government, numerous accusations were leveled against it. In the final phase of the term of office 1998-2001, the breakdown of AWS became more and more visible. Taking advantage of his brother's popular status, the former leader of the Porozumienie Centrum

(The Centre Agreement), Jarosław Kaczyński, decided to form the Prawo i Sprawiedliwość Party. As Zaremba points out, *'In the spring of 2001, Jarosław Kaczyński begins to understand that Lech's popularity may be an opportunity to return to great politics. The last catalyst is the surprise creation of the Civic Platform. For Jarosław, it is proof that the philosophy: now or never fits this declining time.'* (Zaremba, 2015, pp. 210–211). The time when finally independent from Krzaklewski, Kaczyński has a unique chance to return to the first league of Polish politics.

A personal model of the political relevance of Law and Justice

The increase in popularity of one of the Kaczyński brothers turned out to be beneficial for the entire environment. J. Buzek got stuck in the internal contradictions of the group and was unable to identify new goals. Around the Kaczyński brothers, a growing circle of politicians associated with the post-Solidarity right wing began to gather, forming the core of the new grouping. They were former politicians of the Porozumienie Centrum, led by chairman Adam Lipiński, Lech Kaczyński's associates from NIK (The Supreme Audit Office), and people who had not been involved in politics before. The development of the structures of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość met with increasing nervousness among the AWS leaders' circle. The apogee of the growing conflict turned out to be a dispute between the minister-coordinator of the Polish secret services, Janusz Pałubicki, and the Minister of Justice, Lech Kaczyński. The background to the dispute was the rivalry between the prosecutor's office (managed by Kaczyński) and the secret service, against which the Kaczyński brothers had a particular grudge, e.g. since the publication of the instruction of the State Protection Office No. 0015/92 - regarding the so-called Lesiak's file cabinet. The instruction issued in 1992 concerned the surveillance of particular circles on the right and left political sides, considered by the then authorities to be 'extreme'. The party of Jarosław Kaczyński was supposed to be among the circles under surveillance.

In 2001, Kaczyński accused the Prime Minister, J. Buzek, of interfering and undermining the correctness of the prosecutor's decision to detain the head of the UOP (Office for State Protection) delegation in Katowice. The head of the UOP, Colonel Zbigniew Nowak, spoke out against the decision to detain his subordinate, which met with Buzek's approval. After a public letter from the Minister of Justice criticizing the Prime Minister's decision, Jerzy Buzek decided to dismiss Lech Kaczyński from the ministerial chair. In protest against the removal of Kaczyński, the Minister of Culture, Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski, also resigned. The dynamics of these

events ultimately constituted Prawo i Sprawiedliwość as an independent entity on the Polish political scene. Former Justice Minister Lech Kaczyński became the face of the new group, but Jarosław Kaczyński was the most important figure in the newly formed party. The core of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość was composed of former politicians of Porozumienie Centrum, including: Ludwik Dorn, Adam Lipiński, Przemysław Gosiewski, but also new figures on the political scene of the time, such as: Zbigniew Ziobro and Zbigniew Wassermann. Wojciech Jasiński became an equally important politician in the newly formed party. He was a friend from Kaczyński's studies and also the president of the Srebrna Ltd for several years. *'Kaczyński does not care about the fact that he had been in the PZPR (The Polish United Workers' Party) for years or that he lacks state experience. He is appointed an economic expert of the party, such experts are usually at a shortage. Other people recommended by Lech Kaczyński also appear - for example, his associates from the Supreme Audit Office.'* (Zaremba, 2015, p. 211).

Prawo i Sprawiedliwość in the fourth term of the Sejm with the support of 9.5% (44 seats) became the fourth political force on the Polish political scene, right behind the victorious SLD, Samoobrona (The Self-Defence of the Republic od Poland party) and Platforma Obywatelska (PO; The Civic Platform). In turn, in the elections to the upper house of the parliament (the senate), Prawo i Sprawiedliwość fielded their candidates in a joint bloc - Blok Senat 2001, which included representatives of: AWSP, PiS, PO and UW (The Freedom Union). The list ultimately won 15 out of 100 possible seats, with a firm 40 victory of the SLD (Dudek, 2002, p. 504). It was the first of two situations in which the candidates of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość and Platforma Obywatelska were included on one nationwide electoral list. The second time such a situation took place during the local government elections in 2002.

The first action of PiS in the new parliamentary term of 2001-2005 was the consolidation of the parliamentary club. In the composition of the 44-person club, 18 members came from the Przymierze Prawicy (The Right Alliance). From the beginning, Jarosław Kaczyński wanted to bring about the leadership style of the leader of the party. This task to be performed in the initial phase of PiS's functioning in the new parliament was not easy. For the first year of the new term, the chairman of the united club was Jarosław Kaczyński. *'Mr. Kaczyński does not like the Sejm as a building, working with the club was tedious for him and took away the time he needed to build the party, which in turn he loves to do. Mr. Jarosław Kaczyński reshuffled the presidium of the club from time to time, but nothing came of it: he was still burdened with work with the club, and the*

club worked badly.' (Dorn, 2013, p. 162). Eventually, the author of the above words, Ludwik Dorn, became the new chairman of the club. He was supported by all members of the club, except for 18 deputies from the Przymierze Prawicy. The skillful policy of the smaller partner successfully led to its members being introduced to the PiS political committee and finally to being absorbed into the structures of the larger partner. Not as a hostile takeover, but as an equal partner. Relations between Kaczyński's closest associates and the newly arrived supporters from the Przymierze had a very large impact on PiS's policy in later years, especially during the 2005-2007 coalition government. *'From the beginning, Jarosław looked at these allies in two ways. He always treated the party as his greatest work, an instrument for changing Poland. At the same time, he had traumatic memories of 1991-1992, when, following the chaos in the PC leadership, he was tried with all seriousness before a party court. In addition, there was regular club work, along the way, the union with the Przymierze Prawicy was important for us (...) it was a very well-functioning club.'* (Zaremba, 2015, p. 218). The experience of difficult leadership in the times of the Porozumienie Centrum as well as the specificity of the constant striving for compromise with the members of the Przymierze, undoubtedly influenced the current model of running the party by Kaczyński. This style was often based on the use of the position of power, the aura of internal conflict and rivalry, which could be observed much later, while compiling lists of candidates in the European elections in 2019.

The first electoral test for Prawo i Sprawiedliwość after the successful parliamentary elections in 2001 were the local government elections in 2002. A novelty introduced during these elections was the direct election of commune heads, mayors and city presidents. The ratings of the Kaczynski parties were at least good at that time. It was e.g. thanks to the great support for PiS among the so-called liberal circles. Effective media communication (conducted mainly thanks to Adam Bielan – already at that time growing into the main spin doctor of the party), an efficiently operating parliamentary club, or labeling Samoobrona and LPR (The League of Polish Families) as populist parties, made Prawo i Sprawiedliwość almost an establishment party at that time. The decision to take part in the elections to provincial assemblies turned out to be crucial for the group's fate. Despite many program differences and past events, a decision was made to create a coalition of Platforma Obywatelska – Prawo i Sprawiedliwość. The coalition of the former post-Solidarity camp seemed to be the most obvious alternative to the ruling post-communist Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (the Democratic Left Alliance). '*Kaczyński broke down on this matter, gave*

advice dozens of times, listened to the opinions of others, had thousands of doubts. It was the position of his brother, who exclusively came to a meeting of the political committee, which he usually did not attend, to force the party into this coalition - almost threatening to leave politics, if it doesn't happen.' (Zaremba, 2015, p. 225).

The election result turned out to be harsh for the authorities of both parties. The combined POPiS lists achieved a nationwide result of 12%, well below expectations, at a comparable level of support for the self-starting Civic Platform from the 2001 parliamentary elections (Wojtasik, 2012). This situation was very clearly described by the already quoted chairman of the PiS parliamentary club, Ludwik Dorn: *'Together, we gained as much as the PO itself collected a year earlier. It was an experience that prevented us from forming an electoral coalition in the future. The local government elections also revealed another phenomenon, even more dangerous for us - the unprecedented success of the protest party. Samoobrona collected 16%, LPR 14%. The two main parties of the protest had 30%, and together with ROP, UPR and KPN 36%. We, as well as PO, lost our dominance in the opposition camp. It turned out that the growing power of SLD and the merging of PiS with PO resulted in an increase in the importance of the protest party. Imperceptibly, we have lost our social basis. We were hit so hard that we felt we were standing on the edge of the abyss. So we decided not to do it again. This experience complicated our further relationship with the Platforma. We already knew that we could not go to the parliamentary elections together with the PO. We understood that, under the threat of annihilation, we had to find points of clash with the PO, so that our voters could clearly see that we were not them. At the same time, we were clear that we had to present a vision of our participation in an acceptable coalition that could replace the SLD.'* (Dorn, 2013, p. 171).

In reality, it was the local government elections in 2002 that buried the chances of creating a reformist, post-Solidarity PO-PiS coalition. In addition to the defeat in the parliamentary elections, the unexpected victory in the vote for the president of Warsaw, Lech Kaczyński, contributed to this paradoxically. In the first round of elections, Kaczyński defeated e.g. Andrzej Olechowski, the candidate put forward by the Platforma Obywatelska, to face Marek Balicki, supported by the Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, in the second round. This victory was interesting because the former Minister of Justice, associated with a ruthless policy towards criminals, was able to win in the capital of Poland with such a large margin, which seems impossible in the contemporary realities of the Polish political scene. As in the case of the PO-PiS parliamentary list,

also this time the Kaczyński brothers were not sure about the start of one of them in the elections for the mayor of Warsaw (Turska-Kawa, 2015).

'We were afraid of the victory and domination of Olechowski, who in the next opening would be imposed on the right as a candidate for the president of the country. We were afraid of repeating the maneuver of creating part of the right-wing elite from among people from the special services. There was also great hope that it would be possible to show in Warsaw that Poland could be governed in a different way. Smarter and fairer.' (Karnowski & Zaremba, 2006, p. 267). This influenced the further political strategy of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość before the electoral triathlon in 2004-2005 (European parliamentary elections, presidential elections, parliamentary elections). The gradual change of the fundamental political division into post-Solidarity and post-communist forces, and the emerging new line of dispute between the post-Solidarity forces, impregnated the Polish political scene for the next dozen or so, and perhaps even several decades. Paradoxically, until the 2005 elections, the scenario of a joint coalition of Platforma Obywatelska and Prawo i Sprawiedliwość was quite realistic. Especially that in the media layer, drawing this scenario was very beneficial for the main opposition forces to the ruling Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej.

The time of turbulent coalitions and the difficult beginnings of parliamentary work meant that PiS eventually became the leading party. Looking at the very structure of the functioning of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, the operation of the organizational structure meets the characteristics of a mass, professional and electoral party. From the very beginning, PiS was a party focused on participation in the exercise of power, as evidenced by the significant role of experts in the daily functioning of the party. Undoubtedly, from the start of the functioning of PiS, the president of the party as the highest executive authority of the party played a superior role in its functioning. *'(...) he has a decisive influence on the composition of the Political Council and the Political Committee. He grants authorization to represent parties in political agreements, including election agreements.'* (Glajcar et al., 2017, p. 434). In the classical division into left and right, PiS is easiest to classify as a center-right party that also implements social, free-market and conservative postulates (respect for the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church, tradition) (Turska-Kawa & Wojtasik, 2014). The strong position of the president in the very functioning of the party is reflected in the policy of shaping the state, where one of the decision-making centers after 2015 is a body not constitutionally empowered - the leader of the parliamentary majority, President of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość Jarosław Kaczyński.

Political practice of the rule of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość in 2005-2007

The time of SLD rule in 2001-2005 was remembered by many Poles as: the period of Poland's entry into the structures of the European Union, the so-called rough friendship between Prime Minister Leszek Miller and President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, and the period of numerous scandals, led by the Rywin Affair. It seems that it was the outbreak of this scandal that marked the beginning of the end of the power of the SLD, the power of the party which won a record support in the history of the Third Polish Republic in the elections to the Sejm of the 4th term. A quote by Prime Minister Leszek Miller to one of the three most inquisitive members of the commission, Zbigniew Ziobro, the later Minister of Justice, has entered the annals of Polish politics. '*You are zero, Mr. Ziobro'*, Miller replied, referring to the MP's question about the Prime Minister's connection with the murder of former police chief Marek Papala. Ziobro (PiS), next to Jan Rokita (PO) and, paradoxically, Tomasz Nałęcz (Unia Pracy - The Union of Labor), were politically the biggest winners of the first investigative commission after 1989. Shortly afterwards, Zbigniew Ziobro became the Minister of Justice, while Jan Rokita was given the never-fulfilled role of 'the Prime Minister from Krakow'. The political career of the third of the mentioned MPs, Tomasz Nałęcz, was equally interesting. This politician may not have had such great political ambitions as those mentioned above, but short time later he was one of the closest associates of Bronisław Komorowski, the President of Poland in the years 2010-2015. It could be maliciously said that Nałęcz openly contributed to the victories of the right wing on the Polish political scene, through the Rywin Affair in 2005, or participation in the lost campaign of President Komorowski in 2015. As the following months showed, the political careers of Zbigniew Ziobro and Jan Rokita, thanks to Rywin's participation in the commission, gained a lot of momentum.

The European elections in 2004 were already a harbinger of the coming change on the Polish political scene. Almost with 10% p.p. Platforma Obywatelska won the majority, interestingly not over the SLD or PiS, but the LPR which gathered around itself the most anti-European electorate. The result of the European elections did not inspire optimism among politicians from Kaczyński's party, especially ahead of the 2005 election biathlon. Initially, Platforma Obywatelska gained the advantage in the polls, but once again the attitude of Lech Kaczyński turned out to be crucial for the fate of PiS. The previous Mayor of Warsaw began his campaign with the postulate of building the Fourth Republic, which became the main motto of the first PiS government. The final clash for the presidency after Aleksander Kwasniewski was to be

between Lech Kaczyński and Donald Tusk. Raised in the circles of the Warsaw intelligentsia, Kaczyński and the liberal Tusk, contrary to appearances, had a lot in common. *'Relations with the historic milieu of Gdańsk liberals were characterized by a certain ambivalence. Donald Tusk and Lech Kaczyński really knew and liked each other well in the 80s. The outsider position that Tusk had in the years 1995-2000, when he seemed destined to drop out of politics after losing the position of deputy head of the Unia Wolności, also allowed him to get along well with the Kaczyńskis, who also for years teetered on the brink of defeat.'* (Zaremba, 2015, p. 241). Due to the short election calendar, the parliamentary campaign and the presidential campaign ran in parallel. The main faces of the first PO-PiS election campaign were the Kaczyński brothers and Donald Tusk. After the withdrawal of Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz's candidacy, Tusk became the main contender for the post of President of Poland. This also translated into an increase in support for Platforma Obywatelska. The PiS staff, seeing the party's dwindling support, decided to directly attack the PO's program proposals. The proposal to introduce a flat tax was sharply criticized. In the spot showing the refrigerator, it was suggested that the new tax, together with the increase in VAT on food, would lead to a drastic price increase. The division into liberal and social Poland outlined the axis of the 2005 campaign and allowed PiS to take the initiative. Brutal rhetoric on both sides gradually led to the final abandonment of the concept of joint PO-PiS rule. The result of the parliamentary elections also contributed to this, where with a record-low turnout of 40%, the Kaczyński brothers' party turned out to be an unexpected winner, winning 27% of support against 24% of Platforma Obywatelska. The Sejm of the 5th term also entered: SLD 11%, PSL 7%, Samoobrona 11% and LPR 8%. As it turned out later, the result of the last two parties turned out to be crucial for the shape of the 2005-2007 term.

The minimal victory of PiS over PO was a particular surprise for the politicians of the losing party. For the management of the PO, headed by Donald Tusk, approaching possible coalition games from the perspective of a loser was unacceptable. The events that followed in the coming weeks also contributed to this. The most brutal blow in the 2005 campaign turned out to be the case of the so-called grandfather from the Wehrmacht. This matter came to light after Tusk's victory in the first round of elections, where he received 36% of support against Lech Kaczyński's 33%. Pomeranian PiS politician, co-author of the book entitled 'Lewy Czerwcowy', the current chairman of Telewizja Polska - Jacek Kurski, revealed in an interview for the "Agora' weekly Agora' that Donald Tusk's grandfather had allegedly been a Wehrmacht soldier in the past (Wojtasik, 2019).

This fake piece of information was quickly denied, but it resonated until the end of the election campaign. The election results were mainly determined by the electorates of Andrzej Lepper, third in the first round (he supported Kaczyński) and Marek Borowski (he supported Tusk). Finally, after Aleksander Kwaśniewski's two-term presidency, Lech Kaczyński became the new President of Poland, gaining 54% of support. After the winning election battle for PiS, mock coalition talks began, after Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz was appointed Prime Minister. Interestingly, Jarosław Kaczyński himself considered this move to be right in the face of coalition talks. '*Marcinkiewicz was calm and easy to swallow for the PO, and we, contrary to what is said, really wanted this coalition. Before making a decision, I talked to Rokita. He reacted positively. Anyway, Marcinkiewicz was also digestible for our whole party (...)'* (Karnowski & Zaremba, 2006, p. 10). The main negotiator of the coalition talks on the part of Platforma Obywatelska was Jan Rokita. It would seem that the negotiations in the program layer went smoothly, while the selection of potential personal details for both sides was unacceptable. Clearly, Jarosław Kaczyński treated the interlocutors from the PO from a position of strength, but the impression that the PO was undoubtedly a party striving for a coalition would be wrong. Rokita himself was not the most important figure in the platformer puzzle. Despite this, Kaczyński has repeatedly appreciated his competence and talent. From the very beginning of the negotiations, Kaczyński believed that the PO was unable to accept PiS's victory and Kaczyński's will to take over the power ministries, in particular the Ministry of Interior and Administration. The entry of a person not associated with the hard core of the party into Marcinkiewicz's government was, from a political point of view, directed against the PO. This was to lead to the implementation of the plan of the Fourth Republic of Poland, with supra-party consent, without obtaining a parliamentary majority. The mere lack of support for the vote of confidence by the PO (the SLD was also against it) further complicated the idea of an almost buried coalition. Even last-ditch talks between Tusk and Kaczyński did not help in the last straight of the negotiations. They were held under the auspices of Archbishop Tadeusz Gocłowski. In the end, they did not lead to the expected breakthrough. The failure of the PO-PiS coalition was the moment when the chance to build a strong Republic was lost. This moment was aptly described in the book 'Wyjście awaryjne' by Rafał Matyja, the author of the slogan of the Fourth Republic of Poland: *'The era of transformation could be crowned by an important act of systemic correction made by the parties triumphant in the 2005 elections, which grew out of criticism of the weaknesses of the Third Republic. In the years of the political crisis of 2003-2005,*

many programs for repairing the state were formulated, which could constitute the agenda of the joint government of the Platforma Obywatelska (The Civic Platform) and Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (The Law and Justice). However, very little of what PO and PiS announced when removing the post-communists from power in 2005 has come true during their rule. The declared will to repair the state was quickly abandoned.' (Matyja, 2018, p. 10). Simply put, pride won out. The pride of winners unwilling to compromise and losers unable to accept defeat.

The government of Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz in the initial phase of its formation had the potential for reforms. The appointment of several non-partisan ministers to the government and the appointment of Prime Minister Marcinkiewicz himself, a man open to compromise and dialogue, did not herald the coming atmosphere of conflict, which ultimately accompanied the period of government in 2005-2007. Looking for a parallel, Marcinkiewicz enjoyed greater autonomy in choosing the composition of the cabinet than the first prime minister of the second PiS government in the 2015-2019 term, Beata Szydło. The premiership and the very election of Marcinkiewicz was quite an unprecedented practice in Polish politics. While the election of Beata Szydło as Prime Minister was justified, as she was the face of Andrzej Duda's victorious campaign, Marcinkiewicz, becoming the head of the government, took this position with a kind of carte blanche. The main goals set for the new cabinet were as follows: reform of the judiciary, liquidation of the WSI (Military Information Services), establishment of the CBA (Central Anticorruption Bureau), reform of public finances, diversification of gas supplies and construction of a gas terminal in Świnoujście. To carry out any of these reforms, PiS needed an appropriate majority of votes, which involved finding a coalition partner. Then the game of Jarosław Kaczyński began, striving to introduce his vision of the Fourth Republic and at the same time absorb his future coalition partners - LPR and Samoobrona. Kaczyński himself wanted to build a Christian Democratic party modeled on the CDU-CSU in four years.

PiS decided to carry out the most difficult reforms from its point of view. Studies of the structure of the electorate (Waldemar Paruch referred to them in numerous interviews) indicated that a large part of the new PiS voters, guaranteeing this party support of over 40%, were the voters won in the first half of the government (Ochermiak & Osiecki, 2019). Deputy Prime Minister Jarosław Gowin colorfully described this period as the period of the 'romantic revolution'. It was in the first half of the passing term that the Sejm stormed through the project introducing 500+, lowering the retirement age and numerous amendments related to the functioning of the judiciary.

Kaczyński approached the issue of legislation in the aforementioned first term of office of his party in a very similar way. In the current term of office, a certain change took place with the appointment of Mateusz Morawiecki as the Prime Minister. The second half of PiS's rule, with the face of the technocratic Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, was supposed to be a time of extinguishing numerous conflicts and disputes and laying the foundations for the construction of a kind of Polish CDU. Looking at the slogans from the election campaign, it can be concluded that few of the announced promises have been fulfilled. It is worth noting that what Kaczyński had failed to implement during his first government, he tried to implement with great consistency during the second PiS government, with more or less successful results.

Returning to the puzzle of the Polish political scene between 2005-2007, Jarosław Kaczyński realized more and more that he needed additional deputies to implement even a substitute of the Fourth Republic. The game began, which ultimately led to early elections, the loss of power for many years and the burying of Jarosław Kaczyński's vision of building a state. The consequence of numerous events, including: the failed vote on early elections, the fiasco of the 'stabilization pact', led PiS to conclude a coalition agreement with Samoobrona. This alliance did not give the PiS government a parliamentary majority, which led to the creation of a coalition of PiS, Samoobrona and Liga Polskich Rodzin. After a six-month parliamentary crisis, the ruling camp launched a legislative offensive. As a result, i.a. the CBA was created and the WSI was terminated. The machinery of the PiS revolution undoubtedly collided with the influences of numerous circles that functioned in the government's backroom and within it. This phenomenon was referred to by the Kaczyński brothers and other right-wing politicians as imposibilism. Having experienced difficulties in introducing numerous legislative proposals, Kaczyński decided that in order to gain full control over the actions of the Council of Ministers, he would have to take the helm of the head of government himself. From the image point of view, it was a very controversial decision. A politician who enjoys great social trust had been removed from the shadows, replaced by a man who is at the other end of the scale in the same studies (Wojtasik, 2022). From then on, Poland was ruled by two twins, Lech as the president and Jarosław as the prime minister. It was an unprecedented situation in the world politics.

Initially, one of the key decisions of Prime Minister Kaczyński's cabinet was a strong turn in foreign policy. Poland began to present a much tougher attitude towards the European Union, especially during treaty negotiations. The very decision to pursue a more subjective foreign policy

should be assessed positively in retrospect. However, the manner in which certain demands were implemented was limited to rhetoric only. In domestic politics, the biggest obstacle to implementing ambitious reforms was the difficult cooperation with the coalition partners. In order to tame difficult partners, Kaczyński used the power apparatus he controlled. Numerous skirmishes and games aimed directly at their coalition partners were commonplace. Even then it was noticeable that Kaczyński placed political will as the foundation of any legislative changes. The technology of power understood in this way was the basis for how much time the right-wing camp devoted to changes and personnel games, including the consistent marginalization of the aforementioned coalition partners. Internal instability, the lack of attempts to win over the circles to which the reforms were to apply, ultimately led to the end of the Fourth Republic project. Ambitious modernization plans in the structure of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration (Dorn), a tough attitude towards lustration, interesting ideas in the Ministry of Justice overshadowed by the fight over, among others, with Samoobrona (Ziobro), the right but unfinished tax reform (Gilowska), got bogged down in a maze of disputes and a sense of universal chaos. One can speculate how the 5th term of the Sejm would have turned out had Marcinkiewicz's government, which enjoyed great social trust and sought a consensus above party lines, been retained. Kaczyński's reformist drive could not be denied, while ruling against 'everyone' turned out to be a very risky and unsuccessful strategy. In the minds of many Poles, the Fourth Republic remained a time of unfulfilled hope for building a strong state and a time of political turmoil. Finally, in autumn 2007, after two years of the first rule of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, the Sejm decided to shorten the term of office. The immediate reason for this decision was the breakup of the coalition between PiS, Samoobrona and LPR, and the rejection of PiS's financial statements for 2006 by the PKW (National Electoral Commission).

Conclusions

Looking at the history of politics, the behavior of the rulers against the logic of management often led to the ineffectiveness of building their own subjectivity. Putting one's own interests ahead of the state's interest, often manifested by appointing people according to the party key, often ended in failure of the introduced policies or reforms. Since ancient times, humanity has been looking for an ideal structure that would ensure the inseparable existence of a specific community. Initially, people formed into tribes, settlement groups or all sorts of groups. As a result of the tests carried

out, the so-called polis, i.e. city-states. This involved the establishment of a specific structure, with an established system and legislation. This led to the creation of the perspective of Greek democracy, whose perception of the state was supplemented by the understanding of the state by Roman civilization. According to the Romans, the state was associated with the concept of 'res publica' - literally translated as a public thing, or 'civitas' - the state of Roman citizens. Both concepts were built on the foundation of political subjectivity as a necessary element of effective and relevant power.

The revolution of political subjectivity was the main reason for PiS's initial success in building political relevance. On the foundation of the governments of 2005-2007, a force capable of introducing systemic changes has grown. This process was very aptly described by Paweł Musiałek (2018), in the text 'Koniec polskiej transformacji', published immediately after PiS won the elections to the European Parliament: *'Are Prawo i Sprawiedliwość voters blind or stupid? This is the main question that has been echoing in the liberal salons for two days. The answer is trivially simple. They are not. They support PiS not because all the reforms are great, public television is good, and ethical standards are high. They voted for PiS not for these reasons, but in spite of them. It is therefore reasonable to ask what motivation causes that the balance of profits and losses is still positive. What power allows you to play the biggest fouls of the United Right camp? It is a farewell to Poles with the awareness of being a developing country which, in its pursuit of the West, has to put in more effort than others. Unfortunately, it happened way too early.'* One of the significant factors of the change described by Musiałek was the acquisition of political relevance by PiS.

It is worth dwelling here on the sad statement ending the above quote. Unfortunately, these areas were relegated to second and even tertiary tracks. The sources of such a political strategy, numerous social transfers, at the expense of real successes in the implementation of public policies, should be sought in social realities. Profit is still put on the pedestal in the first place, not the good of some imaginary community - a society of which we ourselves are an immanent part. Kaczyński perfectly understood these moods, he perfectly diagnosed the state of the human soul. Often complexed, longing for a sense of pride and subjectivity. Jarosław Kaczyński won power, but he did not win it for the sake of reigning. One can have many accusations against PiS, Kaczyński, but we cannot deny that this party and its leader are effective.

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