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Political leaders of Poland's transformation – in generational terms

Introduction

From the viewpoint of methodology foreign literature puts particular attention towards describing the leader's generation of leaders¹ when dealing with Chinese political reality. From the methodological point of view, I accept the concept of dividing politicians in power into those in command, and those who are leaders. The one in command is a decision – maker with political background whose strategic decisions are most important, independent and permanent². In Poland's political reality, the criterion of belonging to a generation is associated with two positions: the prime minister and the president. In three cases, the centre of strategic power was and still remains outside the presidential and government centre. The first case concerns the withdrawal of Donald Tusk from the government in 2014 to the centre of power in the European Union. The second case is related to Marian Krzaklewski, who was the then founder of the winning group (Solidarity Electoral Action – AWS) and also managed the

¹ Among others L. Dittmer, *Chinese Informal Politics*, "The China Journal" 1995, no. 34; A. J. Nathan, *A Factionalism Model for CCP Politics*, "The China Quarterly" 1973, no. 53; C. Li, *China's Leaders: The New Generation*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Lanham 2001; L. W.W. Lam, *Chinese politics In the Hu Jintao era: New leaders, new challenge*, M.E. Sharpe New York 2006.

² Cf. J. Sielski, *Teoretyczne aspekty przywództwa politycznego. Casus Polski*, Adam Marszałek Toruń 2013, I also decided to omit the media decision-makers, e.g. Adam Michnik, due to editorial article volume limits.

AWS Parliamentary Club and the Solidarity Independent Self-Governing Trade Union (later also the chairman of the AWS Social Movement). The third case is Jarosław Kaczyński, who is outside the governmental and presidential centre, but is the president of the ruling party and Poland's defacto strategic decision-maker.

Before I get to the generation analysis, I need to present some issues first. Consent to presidential elections by universal suffrage (27 September 1990) entered the president elected by the nation into the parliamentary and cabinet system, and this created fields for conflicts between the president and prime minister. Jerzy Ciemniewski puts that straightforward "... it is such an element that, regardless of the person holding this position, causes a certain dysfunctionality of the parliamentary system"³. This legal structure has created a dual power.

The 1997 constitution strengthened the office of prime minister and weakened the position of the president, but nevertheless this constitutional structure still maintained dual power. During the generation of Aleksander Kwaśniewski-Leszek Miller dual power, the latter, at the urging of Grzegorz Rydlewski, created a new management structure in the Council of Ministers, which allowed him to construct a strong decision-making centre (strengthening the prime minister) and Miller himself was called the "iron chancellor".

I. Transformational (transitional) leadership 1989–1990.

The actual first period of systemic transformation begins with the Round Table, and the June 1989 elections that overturned the entire socio-political system. Because of this, the power system was evolving. At that time there were three significant centres of power: the opposition group headed by Lech Wałęsa, the government group headed by Wojciech Jaruzelski and a group of political parties (United People's Party, Democratic Party). The first two centres struggled to win the latter. An important turn on the formation of the government was the article by Adam Michnik, entitled "Wasz prezydent, nasz premier" [Your President, Our Prime Minister], which was published on 3 July 1989 in "Gazeta Wyborcza". On 19 July, the National Assembly elected Jaruzelski to the presidency of the Republic. The vote was passed by a difference of a single vote. At that moment it was already evident that the communists lost. And Wałęsa knew that he could seize the entire power pool.

³ Wywiad z Jerzym Ciemniewskim, [in:] Z. Bujak, *Konstytucja starsza niż myślisz, czyli o tym, co z historycznego dorobku państwa polskiego znajdziemy w naszej Konstytucji*, Wyd. ZB Milanówek 2017, p. 289.

ZSL and SD accepted Wałęsa's proposal presented by J. Kaczyński – for a joint coalition government. Walesa provided Roman Malinowski with three candidates for the post of prime minister: Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Bronisław Geremek and Jacek Kuroń. The president of ZSL chose Mazowiecki: he was a legend for the opposition, a compromise politician for the communists, a religious Catholic for the Church, and a weak player for Wałęsa⁴. Wałęsa accepted this choice, thinking the candidate will be submissive, but here he was wrong, Mazowiecki said he would not be a “painted” prime minister.

From this moment we can talk about the second period of the first generation. It begins with the creation of the Mazowiecki government, which was a triumvirate of power (opposition, People's Republic side parties, government group) based on representatives of four parties – OKP/ZSL/SD/PZPR. Slowly, Jaruzelski's group and himself lose influence. Yet, the prime minister ignores Wałęsa's proposals regarding the composition of the government. This caused Lech's “rage” and retaliation against him. The so-called “war on top” began.

A new stage of the struggle for power in Poland started up within the opposition group between those supporting Wałęsa and those who were for Mazowiecki. At the time, the solidarity elite was divided, according to Piotr Wierzbicki (the article published on 10 November 1989 in “Tygodnik Solidarność”), into three factions. “The Family” was the environment centred around the Presidium of the Civic Parliamentary Club headed by Geremek, Kuroń and Michnik. “The Entourage” is the group of Prime Minister Mazowiecki, while “The Court” is the group around Wałęsa. Following the conflict described above, an alliance was formed between “family” and “entourage”. The two aforementioned solidarity groups (headed by Michnik and by Mazowiecki) competed fiercely. Wałęsa, appalled at the whole conflict, chose to run for president. And he won. Mazowiecki did not even get to the second round of elections. He was defeated and so he resigned. Walesa still offered him the position of head of government, yet Mazowiecki refused.

Conclusions. The most important opposition politicians of the first period of transformation are leaders-decision-makers. We can list two people here. Lech Wałęsa and Tadeusz Mazowiecki. They are the main political players – decision-makers, who made strategic decisions of the highest political and state importance.

From our point of view, they shaped the Third Republic with their political decisions⁵. But each of them created the Third Polish Republic differently. Wałęsa

⁴ R. Krasowski, *Po południu*. Czerwone i Czarne Warszawa 2012, p. 66.

⁵ Cf. J. Sielski, *Lech Wałęsa i Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Twórcy III RP*, [in:] “181 Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis Studia Politologica XIV”, edited by R. Kozioł, A. Tasak Wyd. Naukowe UP Kraków 2015, pp. 48–64.

was above all the one who overthrew the system – the real socialism. He was an excellent destructor. Mazowiecki was above all a constructor, when he became prime minister he created the “new Poland” in front of our eyes, his decisions shaped the new political, economic and social system. They had different personalities too. Wałęsa was a hothead and this type of personality was perfect for the time of “revolution” – he tore down old structures, destroyed the old system. Mazowiecki had a different task, namely to create a new system, build new structures. And to this end the Nature gave him a different personality, a coherent one, with features of mediation-type personality. Stubborn, yet prudent, seeking mediation, compromise. This was his advantage, but also his weakness.

II. L. Wałęsa 1990–1995 leadership “authority of the leader”

The 1990–1995 period was marked by Wałęsa’s dominance in the political system, the authority of this leader. Nevertheless, the analyzed period has three distinct subperiods. The first (1990–1991) is connected with the full domination of president. This includes the time of forming the first Olszewski government and the existence of the Bielecki government. It was the President who imposed his preferences on the power elite. The second period after the 1991 elections is no longer marked by full domination. There is no longer a submissive contractual parliament, but a very fragmented (29 political groups) one and Wałęsa tried to take advantage of it, often imposing his will, playing the role of the superior referee. On the one hand, he compromises and accepts the “disliked” Jan Olszewski as prime minister. On the other hand, he then blocks his activities until his demise. Then followed the failed mission of the Pawlak government “anointed” by Wałęsa. Suchocka’s government accepts but blocks many personal decisions. In the end, he dissolves the parliament, hoping for a more favourable political arrangement for himself. During the third period, following the 1993 elections, his dominance is the weakest, he was a “malicious” arbitrator. The creation of a majority government by the Democratic Left Alliance – Polish People’s Party, took many advantages away from Wałęsa, but those that remained were often used in a “malicious” way to inhibit the consolidation of the political system on the right and strengthen the left – with a balance in mind. The left side appreciated it, as it only came out of political isolation. The president became the “healer” of left-wing politicians. He thought he would become a political arbiter and left and right politicians would seek his favour⁶. For the second time, Wałęsa began to support Waldemar Pawlak as head of government, A. Kwaśniewski, not wanting to bring about a dispute and

⁶ J. Sielski, *Teoretyczne...*, pp. 161–162.

at the same time being aware of the SLD's historical and cultural barrier, agreed for Pawlak to become the prime minister. Nevertheless, later disputes on the Pawlak-Wałęsa line led to the president's ultimatum regarding the change of government. SLD delegated Józef Oleksy as the new prime minister. The accusation of Prime Minister Oleksy of espionage and, consequently, the dismissal of the head of government was a revenge "from beyond the grave".

III. Post-communist (left-wing) leadership 1995–1997

Kwaśniewski wins the presidential election in the second round against Wałęsa and on 23 December 1995 is appointed the head of state. As much as this came as a surprise for the worldwide public, it was no surprise to the Polish one. The chairman of SLD turned out to be a professional, he hired the famous French spin doctor – Jacques Séguéla, who introduced Western standards to his campaign. He suggested to Kwaśniewski to introduce the idea of televised debates. Wałęsa agreed. Séguéla properly prepared Kwaśniewski for his television appearance. Against the background of Wałęsa's rough and rude behaviour, Kwaśniewski proved to be a professional and intelligent politician. According to Ludwik Dorn⁷, Kwaśniewski "discovered the Polish disco appearance". "When he danced disco polo, the crowd in the market in Września recognized him as one of their own ranks"⁸. It was a new type of plebeian-ness, "a new shape of the Polish people": "Our Lady of Częstochowa lost to >dotted panties<".⁹ In this way, Kwaśniewski "brought the potential for cultural legitimacy on the part of the social majority".¹⁰ In short, he seduced the Polish people and secured two terms by doing so.

As a result of coalition discussion, the President designated (on 7 February 1996) Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz as the prime minister. This choice was one of the better decisions of the entire SLD/PSL coalition. Cooperation with the president was harmonious, but on the SLD/PSL line there were program and staffing disputes all the time.

Cimoszewicz was a man of many advantages. "He has thorough knowledge, respect for competence and is very hard-working."¹¹ He made decisions quickly and efficiently. But he also has disadvantages: communication problems. Not

⁷ Ludwik Dorn. *Anatomia słabości. Rozmowa z Robertem Krasowskim*. Czerwone i Czarne, Warszawa 2013, p. 100.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 101.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ Leszek Miller. *Anatomia siły. Rozmowa z Robertem Krasowskim*, Czerwone i Czarne Warszawa 2013, p. 111.

everyone could “fraternize” with him. Characteristically, he was the opposite of Kwasniewski, whose behaviour was relaxed and carefree, and even the most risky mishaps did not negatively affect his good image (Clinton syndrome)¹². Nevertheless, Cimoszewicz introduced one very important reform that laid the foundations for the “Polish semi-chancellor system”¹³, and which granted him real power in the state. This was one of the most important reforms in Poland, and his colleague Leszek Miller was the first to benefit from it.

Conclusions. Winning the presidential elections and appointing “their” prime ministers – first Oleksy, and then Cimoszewicz was a total victory for the post-communist left. Kwasniewski, in legalizing the adoption of the constitution in 1997 together with the Freedom Union and the Church, gave the post-communist left the status of full-fledged political entities in Poland. Kwaśniewski’s legacy lies in that he did not seek revenge against the Solidarity elite, but was able to encourage it to cooperate – which, as Dorn claims – “was a sign of political wisdom. And that of a large calibre”.¹⁴ Robert Krasowski summarizes it by deeming him a “great strategist”¹⁵.

IV. Union-presidential leadership 1997–2001

The political situation after the 1997 elections began to change. The AWS/UW government was formed. In the new political and legal situation (new Constitution), there were three centres of political power: the president – Kwaśniewski, the prime minister – Jerzy Buzek and Marian Krzaklewski – the “founder” of AWS and at the same time the chairman of NSZZ “Solidarność” – and who was, in reality, content with the leadership of the AWS parliamentary club only. Despite this, he was considered the actual leader of the AWS – a politician who led the government “from the back seat¹⁶.” The government was formed as a result of coalition bargain. This bargaining was particularly difficult because AWS itself consisted of 44 different organizations, not counting the Democratic Freedom Union [Unia Wolności]. Buzek was a little known AWS politician, a professor of technical sciences and a trade union activist. He was a surprise, as Krzaklewski was expected to head the government.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 99.

¹³ Jan Rokita, *Anatomia przypadku. Rozmowa z Robertem Krasowskim*. Czerwone i Czarne Warszawa 2013, p. 143.

¹⁴ Ludwik Dorn..., p. 102.

¹⁵ R. Krasowski, *Po południu...*, p. 352.

¹⁶ A. Dudek, *Historia polityczna Polski 1989–2015*, Znak Kraków 2016, p. 378.

Why did Krzaklewski not want to become head of government? There are many answers, I will cite only the two most important ones. First, he wanted to repeat Kwaśniewski's path without holding any state office, but still influence power and become president. He wanted to become the right-wing Kwaśniewski¹⁷. Secondly, he did not want to leave the chair of the trade union head. "The unity of the AWS leadership and the trade union in his hands was to be the most important guarantee that once again the government elected by > Solidarity < would not fall into an open social conflict with the union."¹⁸

Krzaklewski was a model personality (of melancholic disposition). Many features speak for this type of personality: he plans on paper, is geared towards distant goals, likes charts, tables, is serious and analytical, attaches importance to details, is overly perfectionist, etc.¹⁹ He was a poor speaker, he hid in the shadows, avoided fighting and polemics, his soul was torn between supporting the government and fulfilling role of the head of the trade union. His great merit was the successful creation of a right-wing group based on Catholic and anti-communist populism. He knew that success lies in being commonplace. He also knew, how to create unity and give everyone a share in the victory. He calculated the quotas on his private computer, that is, the shares of each AWS group in power, and he kept the groups within the AWS-Solidarity center-right framework.

Krzaklewski's defeat in the presidential election resulted in a slow breakdown of the AWS and the coalition. The AWS/UW coalition survived until 4 June 2000 when low ratings in surveys led to the departure of the UW. From that moment onwards, Buzek's government was a minority AWS group.

The Kwaśniewski-Buzek cohabitation had its good and bad sides. As a rule, the president did not interfere in matters related to political programs. He did not question the pro-Western policy, and he supported it. On 26 February 1999 he signed the accession to NATO after the countersignature of the prime minister. Rafał Matyja²⁰ stated that the president was sometimes a malicious reviewer, e.g. regarding the new territorial division of the country. Ultimately, this resulted in vetoing the legal act and the subsequent rejection of the veto by the Sejm. The opposition, together with the president, forced the government coalition to compromise in order to pass a legal act that followed the intentions of the opposition and the president.

¹⁷ *Ludwik Dorn...*, p. 112.

¹⁸ *Jan Rokita...*, p.154.

¹⁹ J. Sielski, *Typologia decydentów politycznych z punktu widzenia przekonań i temperamentów*. Wyd. Kadruk Szczecin 2005, p.21.

²⁰ R. Matyja, *Przywództwo i instytucje*, [in:] *Budowanie instytucji państwa 1989–2001 w poszukiwaniu modelu*, edited by I. Jackiewicz, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe Warszawa 2004, p. 16.

Repeated cyclical crises within the AWS made the government look bad.

This was further enhanced by the terrible style of coalition governance and above all the AWS – and the famous call of J. Kaczyński – NFW (“Now the F* We”), which defined the negative behaviour of members of his party – ineptitude, nepotism, cronyism.

Conclusions. Each of the leaders was a different political personality. The president was a magnetic personality, a typical sanguine, a good speaker and strategist, a “colourful” politician. Buzek – a calm, phlegmatic personality, a good mediator, willing to cooperate. Krzaklewski – a melancholic personality. In comparison to the other two politicians analyzed, Kwaśniewski was the most visible and gained the most “applause” among the society despite some visual “slip-ups”. Buzek, with his calm personality survived as prime minister the entire term of office as the first head of government after 1989, and later found himself in the European Parliament as its president. Krzaklewski suffered the worst defeat, and after losing both the presidential and parliamentary elections he resigned in 2002 from the chair of the “Solidarity”.

V. Left-wing leadership 2001–2005.

The left came triumphant in the 2001 parliamentary elections, but its victory was not a complete one, it required a coalition partner in the parliament in order to rule. A coalition of three parties SLD/UP/PSL was formed. Leszek Miller became the prime minister, this time for the first time the leadership of the government was taken, from the very beginning, by the leader of the party winning the elections – SLD. On 10 October 2001, Miller presented the composition of his cabinet. It was fully of his choice, the prime minister successfully blocked the uncomfortable proposals of the coalition partners.

The cooperation between the president and the prime minister was, at first, good, though, with some glitches. Over time, fierce competition followed. It was a rivalry between two strong personalities, often referred to as “rough friendship”, there were even observations stating that Kaczyński was the third coalition partner, one which was the most difficult to deal with, and the most important at the same time²¹. The president was also able to question the bills adopted by coalition votes. Cooperation between the coalition partners was not going well either.

On 1 March 2003 Miller asked the president to dismiss all ministers in the government that were recommended by the PSL. In this way, Miller’s minority

²¹ J. Raciborski, *Konstruowanie rządów i elit rządowych*, [in:] *Elity rządowe III RP 1997–2004*, edited by J. Raciborski, Trio Warszawa 2006, p. 41.

government was formed. The greatest success of the government of Miller and Kwaśniewski as president was Poland's accession to the European Union (1 May 2004). The end of the minority government was spectacular, with numerous scandals and misunderstandings between the president and the government leading to its resignation in 2004.

With the fall of Miller's government, President A. Kwaśniewski accepted the resignation and entrusted the mission of creating the new government to Marek Belka. The president not only had a decisive influence on the selection of the prime minister, but also on the entire composition of the government and the program concept. Belka's government was to be transitory and was supposed to lead the parliamentary pact to the 2005 elections.

Conclusions. The president and prime ministers are from the same formation – the left. In the analyzed generation, two leaders met, striving for power: the president and the prime minister, called the "iron chancellor", albeit both with different personalities: the president – magnetic personality, the prime minister – strong personality. At first, Miller, who created the hierarchical SLD party from various leftist groups, held an advantage²². It was the first formation in the Third Polish Republic built on the model of a strong party. Miller therefore became the strongest party leader and the strongest prime minister in the Third Republic²³. Grzegorz Rydlewski²⁴, inspired by the PM, reformed the structure of the Council of Ministers (there were only 16 ministries), creating the Standing Committee, which was a mini government. All these improvements gave Miller control in the framework of the so-called "Polish chancellor system". The economic situation was bad when he took over. Large budget deficit, zero economic growth, investment collapse. As a result, 18 acts were quickly passed, and the situation was soon back under control, with new wave of economic growth. The prime minister selected good economic strategists (Grzegorz Kołodko, Jerzy Hausner) and, at least at the beginning, appropriate ministers M. Belka (Minister of finance) and Jacek Piechota (Minister of economy).

There were a lot of merits, but also various scandals. The Rywin gate (in particular) and the investigation commission drowned three prominent authorities (the so-called power triumvirate)²⁵ involved in this scandal – Michnik (media leadership, opinion-forming leadership), A. Kwaśniewski (real leadership – president), but most of all L. Miller (PM and party leadership). Kwaśniewski, in saving

²² *Ludwik Dorn...*, p. 138.

²³ *Leszek Miller...*, p. 182.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 183–4.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 236–7.

his image, demands the resignation of the prime minister, a group of about thirty parliamentarians leaves the SLD on 26 March 2004 proclaiming the founding declaration of Social Democracy of Poland. Miller resigns. All this casts a “black shadow of corrupt suspicion” on Miller, Kwaśniewski and Michnik (the triumvirate self-destructs), and at the same time undermines the strength and unity of the left, which in the 2005 parliamentary elections wins just some 12% of the votes.

VI. First socio-conservative leadership 2005–2007

In 2005, before the parliamentary and presidential elections, polls pointed to the victory of the Civic Platform over Law and Justice. For this reason, talks were held between PO and PiS on the future grand right-wing government coalition – the POPiS²⁶. However, the actual political reality surprised everyone. PiS wins parliamentary and presidential elections (Lech Kaczyński).

Donald Tusk, the leader of the PO party, is depressed. Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, who heads the minority government, becomes the first prime minister. This was a surprise because until now he was not widely known on the political stage, albeit previously playing significant roles in right-wing parties. His positioning was probably about attracting PO to the coalition. Marcinkiewicz was tolerable for PO in comparison to J. Kaczyński and other PiS politicians²⁷. On the other hand, putting forward Marcinkiewicz for the position of PM, shortly before the second round of presidential elections was intended to soften the image of the Kaczyński brothers, as for many people the full power of both brothers would be unacceptable (Prime Minister Jarosław, President Lech). Nevertheless, this government was created to weaken and break up the PO, and it was for this purpose that Zyta Gilowska, Andrzej Sośniarz (members of PO), and Zbigniew Religa (cooperating with PO)²⁸ were nominated for government positions.

“In April and May 2006, the PiS/Samoobrona/League of Polish Families coalition was formed, after which the government has the majority in Sejm, Andrzej Lepper (Samoobrona) and Roman Giertych (LPR) became deputy prime ministers, Marcinkiewicz remained the prime minister.

However, on 7 July 2006 Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz resigned. At the time of his resignation, he had 58% public support, was a very popular politician, of popular sympathy and trust, an efficient administrator of the government’s work. Nevertheless, this popularity and the growing independence of the prime

²⁶ *Jan Rokita...*, p.254.

²⁷ *O dwóch takich...Alfabet braci Kaczyńskich*, Wyd. M, Kraków 2006, p. 10.

²⁸ *Ludwik Dorn...*, p. 178.

minister accelerated the replacement. The Kaczyński brothers did not tolerate independence in their party, besides, both brothers were distrustful of him and “furious” of “jealousy and a sense of injustice and fear that Marcinkiewicz”²⁹ would turn his popularity against Jarosław’s position. This made them force the PM to resign³⁰.

On 14 July 2006, the President swore in the coalition government (PiS / Samoobrona / LPR) of Jarosław Kaczyński, who made almost no changes in the cabinet. However, the confusion with the tape and land scandal causes a coalition crisis. On 11 August 2007 The PiS Political Council adopted a resolution to terminate the coalition and hold early parliamentary elections. On 13 August Prime Minister Kaczyński dismissed all LPR and Samoobrona ministers. The government then resigned on 5 November 2007.

Conclusions. In the analyzed period, we have three leaders, all from PiS. Everyone is different in terms of their personality and objectives. Marcinkiewicz was a popular, magnetic personality, but he became PM by “mere luck” Nevertheless, he quickly stepped in the role of the head of the office. However, it was too much! “He did not understand the logic of the situation he found himself in. Staring at his popularity, he did not understand that he was the interim prime minister (...)”³¹. He did not have his political base, so he had to lose to the brothers.

J. Kaczyński is a strong personality, a typical choleric. As prime minister, he had strengths, first of all a good election program, and political intuition. But he also had disadvantages. According to Ludwik Dorn: “he set his objectives aptly, but the way he achieved them left huge space for improvement. He was more a publicist than a state format politician.”³² His biggest error was the international policy from the personal and diplomatic side, resulting from the resignation from “collective wisdom” and distrust of one’s own expert and political support³³.

L. Kaczyński had the personality of a melancholic (sensitive to others, thinking, intellectual, attaching importance to details, excessively sensitive, easily falling into depression, putting emphasis on negatives, suspicious, with mood swings, pessimistic). For example, he was extremely distrustful of many politicians from his own environment (e.g. Marcinkiewicz, Sikorski). Still, he also had advantages (being a minister in Buzek’s government, he demonstrated that he was a skillful and ruthless player). As president, he made both good decisions

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 184.

³⁰ Cf. J. Sielski, *Marcinkiewicz musi odejść*, [in:] *OPiSy politologów. Uwagi o polskiej scenie politycznej*, edited by M. Drzonek, J. Mieczkowski, “Biblioteka Acta Politica” Szczecin 2007, p. 49 et seq.

³¹ *Ludwik Dorn...*, p. 181.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 186.

³³ *Ibidem*, p.199.

(eastern policy), and bad ones (including withholding and delaying the appointment of professors, nomination and accreditation of ambassadors).

Both brothers had German and Russian phobias. These did not allow them to look soberly at foreign policy – something they wanted to implement as completely sovereign, independent, albeit, under the umbrella of the US. For this reason, they had almost no friendly political partners in Europe. According to Antoni Dudek, the defeat of the Kaczyński camp was often associated with its ill-considered moves and statements (both that of PiS politicians and the president), leading to the isolation of the PiS camp. “It’s amazing that when they designed deep changes they didn’t look for broad social support for them.”³⁴

VII. Right-wing leadership – malicious cohabitation³⁵ 2007–2010

The 2007 early elections were won by PO, which formed a coalition government with PSL. PO leader Tusk became the prime minister. PiS became the largest opposition party. Lech Kaczyński was still the president, and his term was to last till 2010. The analyzed generation of leaders was characterized by high assertiveness between the president and the prime minister. In particular, foreign and economic policy became the basic area of competition, but the direction of development of the armed forces was also disputed.

There were different terms coined for this assertive political phenomenon – “turbulent cohabitation”³⁶, journalists defined it as – “small malice from both sides, boys playing in the sandbox when important things happen – this is quite a common tone of comments.”³⁷

Both leaders had different political views even though they came from the same solidarity camp. Tusk had right-liberal views, while L. Kaczyński had right-social views. They also had different political personalities. L. Kaczyński was a melancholic with all the pros and cons of this³⁸. In the first period of his presidency he tried to control Marcinkiewicz as the head of government, in the second, he played the assistant brother of the prime minister. The third, ultimate one, was devoted to fighting with Tusk. He was frustrated by Donald’s premiership because he thought his brother Jarosław should be the boss, and

³⁴ A. Dudek, *Historia...*, p. 592.

³⁵ J. Sielski, *Bójka dziecka z bobasem, czyli osobowościowa analiza polskiej polityki zagranicznej*, [in:] *Polityka zagraniczna. Decyzje, procedury, instytucje*, edited by J. J. Piątek, R. Podgórzńska, Adam Marszałek Toruń 2009, pp. 67–80.

³⁶ *Ibidem*

³⁷ J. Paradowska, *Prezydent: reaktywacja*, “Polityka” 06/09/2008, p.21.

³⁸ J. Z. Pietraś, *Decydowanie polityczne*, PWN Warszawa-Kraków 1998, p. 349 et seq.

this would be best for contemporary Poland. That is why he often vetoed Tusk's legal initiatives³⁹.

Tusk did not want to give up priority on the political scene. Miller emphatically described Lech: "Privately, he was a nice man, but unsuitable for first league politics, and lacked political sovereignty."⁴⁰ He proved to be a fragile personality, where his complexes could easily be awakened to politically paralyze him (pamphlet published in "Tageszeitung"). Tusk was the exact opposite of Lech – assertive to the limit. At the end of 2008, Tusk developed the strike method to combat Lech. When trouble or uncomfortable topics arose, he hit out directly. This proved to be always effective⁴¹.

VIII. D. Tusk's leadership 2010–2015

President Lech Kaczyński was killed in the Smolensk air disaster (on 10 April 2010). Bronisław Komorowski won in the early elections and became the new president. From then on, there are no longer tensions on the president – government line, and cooperation went on without visible conflict. From the personality point of view, the president could be described as a phlegmatic, and therefore of calm nature. He also has extensive political experience, but he is also incapable of quick reactions and afraid of head-on confrontation. He preferred friendliness and acquaintanceship over competences. He was loyal, and worked with people he felt good with. Komorowski was just a man of principle. However, as president, he made many blunders. Janusz Palikot describing it stated: "In fact, Broniek took on the figure of a national grandfather, whose presidency was carried out by the force of inertia, rather than by his own effort."⁴²

The analyzed period undoubtedly had one leader – Donald Tusk. This time can be defined as the reign of "leadership authority." From the perspective of time, it should be defined as 7+1. Seven years of domination as the head of government, plus one year of Tusk's "spiritual authority." In 2014 he left for Brussels (2014) for the position of Permanent President of the European Council, but it was with his inspiration that Ewa Kopacz became the head of government. His authority in the Civic Platform was so big that it can be suggested that since then Tusk has become the spiritual leader of the Civic Platform, which was indirectly confirmed by its granting, on 8 November 2014, the title of Honorary President of Civic Platform

³⁹ Cf. J. Sielski, *Teoretyczne...*, p. 170 et seq.

⁴⁰ *Leszek Miller...*, p. 290.

⁴¹ *Kulisy Platformy. Tajemnice Platformy, rządu i parlamentu ujawnia Janusz Palikot w rozmowie z Anną Wojciechowską*, Czerwone i Czarne Warszawa 2011, p. 161.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 34.

to Tusk. This spiritual leadership is further confirmed by the election of E. Kopacz as prime minister, who was considered a politician who was most towards Tusk⁴³.

From the point of view of personality, Tusk is a conglomerate of the good traits of a choleric (goal-oriented, logical thinking, takes power, good organizer), the weak traits of a melancholic (falls into depression, puts emphasis on negatives, pessimistic, has mood-swings, is suspicious, excessively mysterious, locked in, rarely smiles) and strong sanguine features (sense of humor, a humanistic profile that seduces people). Tusk has two faces: internal: a mixture of nihilism and cynicism, and external: with certain grace and charm⁴⁴. It should be added here that Tusk's political personality has evolved. The starting point is the image of the future prime minister as a lazy, sluggish boy in shorts, who puts good company, playing football and wine, over politics⁴⁵. There were four moments climactic for this image. The first was the creation of the Civic Platform and the slow "pushing" of Tusk through triumvirates (I. Maciej Płażyński, Andrzej Olechowski, Tusk; II. Gilowska, Rokita, Tusk) to the top of the Platform. Second: the lost 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections – and resulting depression. Third: hiring a trainer who properly prepared him for the debate with J. Kaczyński. Fourth: victory in the debate gave Tusk confidence and strength, and these he was able not only to hold on to, but to take them further, and develop. According to many politicians and journalists, he has the image of a tyrant who performs political executions without sentiment. Tusk attached great importance to political marketing. He was very allergic to the media, he did not trust them. Whenever there was a problem, a scandal. Tusk presented his spin doctors with a task to accomplish. He used to say: >Do we have a problem? What can be used to cover it up?<⁴⁶

Tusk selected his politicians using many different criteria. The closest circle, from which he drew the most politicians to the government or other institutions, was the so-called Tusk's "team"⁴⁷. The core of this team was a group from the Coast associated with its former party, the Liberal Democratic Congress. The main marketing specialist was Igor Ostachowicz, K. Bielecki was the advisor on political and economic matters (Economic Council at the PM), while Grzegorz Schetyna advised on organizational issues. The second criterion was loyalty. Third: to place ministers of his government in such a way that none of them turn out to be better than him⁴⁸.

⁴³ *Kulisy Platformy...*, p. 99 et seq.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 9.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 212 et seq.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 7–122.

⁴⁸ R. Krasowski, *Czas Kaczyńskiego, Czerwone i Czarne* Warszawa 2016, pp. 273–275.

IX. Jarosław Kaczyński's leadership 2015

Andrzej Duda (PiS) won the 2015 presidential election, and it becomes fact that PiS alone (PiS lists also included representatives of Solidarity Poland and Poland Together, on 4/11/2017 Poland Together transforms into the Porozumienie party, and the three parties together form the United Right), won parliamentary elections obtaining 235 seats, i.e. for the first time in the history of the Third Polish Republic, the PiS government of Beata Szydło held an absolute majority in the Sejm and in the Senate: 61 senators. In 2019, the United Right won both the European and parliamentary elections. Mateusz Morawiecki became the new prime minister.

Since the victory of Andrzej Duda in the 2015 presidential election, there is dominance on the Polish political and social conservative formation associated with PiS. The leadership of this generation is based on the authority of its leader J. Kaczyński, who is the creator of PiS (party president) and the coalition (United Right). He is the one, who is in charge, setting objectives and designating people to accomplish them. As the “leader-politician” himself claims, he must have a proper orchestra and he must be a conductor, who chooses the performers so that they perform exactly as the conductor wants. In translating this into politics, there must be appropriate coalition partners and politicians from their own party, but the most important is the right conductor, because they should play according to his instructions⁴⁹. That is why during his rule the president and prime ministers are little-known politicians (Duda, Szydło, Morawiecki). They are to be soloists in the orchestra but under the baton of the conductor, i.e. Kaczyński.

Kaczyński is a charismatic leader, who today sets the tone in Polish politics. He holds the prestige, authority of the leader. Many have already felt the negative effects of his decisions in politics: (dismissals of, among others, Dorn, Marek Migalski, etc.), but also positive effects (promotions of: Szydło, Morawiecki, etc.). It is he, who decides, within the coalition, about positions in the state and strategic decisions. His great ambitions, are pushing him to megalomaniac behaviour, destroying everything along the way, if it was not implemented by him. He appears as the man of the moment, who would save Poland through reforms. Unfortunately, there is a dissonance between ambitions and possibilities.

⁴⁹ Cf. J. Sielski, *Tworzenie się osobowości politycznej przywódcy na przykładzie Jarosława Kaczyńskiego*. [in:] *Partie polityczne – przywództwo partyjne*, edited by J. Sielski i M. Czerwiński, Adam Marszałek Toruń 2008, pp. 91- 111.

Egocentrism caused him to think that his wrongs are the most important, therefore he has the right to any retaliation he finds suitable. The words of Kazik Staszewski's song: "Twój ból jest lepszy niż mój" [Your pain is better than mine] perfectly reflect the philosophy behind his political life.

Conclusions

The sorting of Poland's of leaders into generations presented above is my original idea, especially when it comes to the time frames withing the political system. I adopted the following types of generations: transitional, which was initially a three-power, but at the end of the analyzed period it formed as a dual power: Wałęsa (court) – Mazowiecki (entourage + family). A similar, yet slightly different, format was associated with Krzaklewski, Buzek and Kwaśniewski. It should be assumed that at first there was the Krzaklewski – Kwaśniewski dual power, and the paternalistic sub-dual power: Krzaklewski – Buzek. After the 2000 presidential election, Krzaklewski gave power to Buzek and the Buzek – Kwaśniewski dual power was formed. Other generations of dual power are: "rough" (both leaders were from one ideological trend, but had different opinions on many issues: Miller – Kwaśniewski, Wałęsa-Suchocka); "malicious": Wałęsa – Mazowiecki, Wałęsa – Olszewski, L. Kaczyński – Tusk; dual power of cooperation: Cimoszewicz – Kwaśniewski, L. Kaczyński – J. Kaczyński; paternalistic dual power: Wałęsa – Bielecki, L. Kaczyński – Marcinkiewicz, Tusk – Komorowski, spiritual paternalistic double power: Tusk – Kopacz. At the end we have a monopoly (alternative: paternalistic dual power) of J. Kaczyński – Duda – Szydło – Morawiecki.

When we assess the leaders of the three decades subjected to our analysis, six political personalities should be distinguished: Mazowiecki, Wałęsa, Kwaśniewski, Miller, J. Kaczyński and Tusk. Mazowiecki – for me was the creator of the Third Republic, unlike Wałęsa, who was the destructor of communism. Mazowiecki had authority, he was honest. He reassured everyone, led the country through its worst period, and gave rise to the new political and economic system. He was independent and at the same time flexible, he did not destroy but rationally carved a new shape for Poland. He was an unusual politician-leader, an icon.

Wałęsa could not build, he was capable only of destruction. However, at the right moment he jumped over the fence and gave us the opportunity to build a new Poland. It is hard to imagine today's Poland without him. The left had its original leaders too. Kwaśniewski was a great strategist (he painlessly introduced the post-communist left as an equal subject of generational transformation in the country's political landscape), while Miller was the first to build a strong

party structure, and hence he was called the “iron chancellor”. They both brought Poland in the European Union. Regarding Tusk and Kaczyński – one without the other was like a horse without a saddle. They formed a duo that was interdependent.

Tusk is intelligent, with political intuition, he is also able to revive in due time and at the same time leave when the “boat was already sinking” to become an international leader. He had many faces, one for the outside, another for his own. Kaczyński has all makings to be “great”, even a genius of politics⁵⁰, but the negative traits of the choleric are causing chaos and shoddy construction of the new reality (in particular, in his choice of political staff), which proved to be just like the previous one: marked with corruption scandals, nepotism, cronyism, megalomania of power. Prime Minister Szydło expressed it most clearly: “we deserve it” (very high cash bonuses).

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⁵⁰ Cf. J. Sielski, *Geniusze polityki i mężowie stanu*, [in:] *Przywódcy polityczni wobec współczesnych zagrożeń i kryzysów* edited by M. Hartliński, Instytut Nauk Politycznych Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie, Olsztyn 2017, pp. 35–52.

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Abstract: The author of the work tries to describe Poland’s leaders in terms of generation, during the thirty years of systemic transformation. In Poland’s political reality, the criterion of belonging to a generation of leaders is associated with politicians who make political strategic decisions. Based on this methodological assumption, nine generations can be distinguished. In the work, the road to power, the political personalities of leaders and their mutual relations within a given generation are analyzed. Keywords: generations of leaders, strategic decisions, path to power, political personalities, mutual relations between leaders.

Keywords: generations of leaders, strategic decisions, path to power, political personalities, mutual relations between leaders.

Generacje polskich przywódców politycznych transformacji systemowej

Streszczenie: Autor pracy stara się przedstawić pokolenia polskich liderów w okresie trzydziestu lat transformacji ustrojowej. W polskiej rzeczywistości politycznej kryterium przynależności do pokolenia liderów kojarzone jest z politykami podejmującymi strategiczne decyzje polityczne. Na podstawie tego założenia metodologicznego można wyróżnić dziewięć pokoleń. W pierwszej kolejności analizowana jest droga do władzy, osobowości polityczne przywódców i ich wzajemne relacje w ramach danego pokolenia.

Słowa kluczowe: pokolenia liderów, decyzje strategiczne, droga do władzy, osobowości polityczne, wzajemne relacje między liderami.

