



MALMÖ UNIVERSITY
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Polish sovereignty and the European Union

The analysis of sovereignty as a political tool in the words of
the Polish President Andrzej Duda

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Abstract

The juridical reforms proposed by the Polish government have brought the attention of European institutions. The conflict concerns the matter of sovereignty, as the reforms conducts changes on domestic level. The paper discusses how national identity of states can shape the understanding of sovereignty. The paper aims to understand how sovereignty can be used as a political tool in relation between Poland and the European Union. The research question asks, “How Polish national identity constitutes the EU as a threat to sovereignty?”. To answer this question, the thesis applies poststructuralist’s concepts to the narrative analysis on speeches of the Polish President Andrzej Duda. The results of the thesis indicate that sovereignty can be understood subjectively, thus can be used as a political tool that can legitimise and justify policies as well as construct relations with others.

Key words: sovereignty, identity, Poland, European Union, narrative, narrative analysis, poststructuralism

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The list of abbreviations

GUS – Central Statistics Office (*Główny Urząd Statystyczny*)

EU – European Union

IOs – International Organisations

KE – European Coalition (*Koalicja Europejska*)

KO – Civic Coalition (*Koalicja Obywatelska*)

PiS – Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*)

PRL – Polish People's Republic (*Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa*)

SLD – Left Alliance (*Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*)

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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1. Introduction

The relations between Poland and the European Union has been discussed in the media after President's remark that the EU is just an "imaginary community" (Shotton and Huber, 2018). The President's statement has been part of the larger conflict between Poland and the EU concerning juridical reforms that have been implemented by the current Polish government. The conflict between those two actors can be discussed through classical concept for IR scholarship – sovereignty.

Paper will be focused on two research problems – identity and sovereignty. Sovereignty was chosen to discuss its meaning in the contemporary world. Sovereignty is a crucial concept of International Relations studies; it has been an internal part of the scholarship since the Peace of Westphalia. The current world system, especially in regional context, depends on regional organisations. In European context, the European Union and the idea of mutual cooperation has led the member states to voluntarily gave up some aspects of their sovereignty. Hence, scholars began to question the meaning of sovereignty and its significance in the contemporary world.

The discussion of sovereignty varies between scholars. Some of them connect sovereignty with other variables, such as nationalism and argue for its relevance (Heiskanen, 2019), other scholars like Krasner (1999), criticise sovereignty for its hypocrisy. Some have gone further and have questioned the background of Westphalian Treaty and its impact on sovereignty (Osiander, 2001; De Carvahlo et al, 2011).

The paper will analyse sovereignty as a concept influenced by the national identity of the state. The paper will discuss sovereignty as a concept that is subjectively understood by different actors and applied accordingly to their political plans and needs. The paper argues that national identity influences how sovereignty is conceptualised and in turn – it influences relations with other states. The paper aims to discuss how subjective understanding of sovereignty became the political tool, which can be used to justify and legitimise policies as well as construct relations with other. Research question asks: "How Polish national identity constitutes the EU as a threat to sovereignty?"

To answer this question the paper will analyse speeches of Polish President Andrzej Duda. Poland serves an interesting case, because of its historical background. Poland lost independence and sovereignty twice in 1795 as a result of partitions, and in 1945 as a result of Second World War. Sovereignty analysed through perspective of the state that did not enjoy it

completely can show how it can be understood subjectively. The paper's hypothesis assumes that in such situation, states may be more reluctant to any changes that can violate their sovereignty and thus use it as a political tool when someone tries to interfere into their domestic matters. The paper will contribute to the discussion of sovereignty and identity in IR, because it proposes approach that argues that sovereignty is the concept shapes by national identity.

The paper will be structured as follow: next chapter will begin with literature review, where identity, sovereignty and historical narratives will be discussed. Then, paper will discuss poststructuralists concepts such as discourse and deconstruction. Before applying them in analysis, the paper will present chosen method – narrative analysis. In the methodology chapter, the chosen method will be discussed as well as data, its source and limitations. Analysis will be conducted on speeches by Polish President Andrzej Duda from 2019 to 2020.

2. Literature review

This chapter of the paper will review what has been said about sovereignty and identity in IR scholarship, which is necessary to my further analysis of how these two are connected. The research question asks, “How Polish national identity constitutes the EU as a threat to sovereignty?”. Before the thesis will answer this question in the analysis, the paper will begin with the review of scholarship that discuss the roles of leaders in Foreign Policy (Jervis, 2013; 2017; Toomey, 2018; Congdom, 2018), identity (Prizel, 1998; Neumann, 1993; O’Neal, 2017; Bunikowski, 2018) and symbolism (Lewis and Waligórska, 2019; Kotwas and Kubik, 2019; Myrntinen, 2013; Kończal, 2020; Waligórska, 2019), sovereignty (Lake, 2003; Heiskanen, 2019; Thomson, 1995; Osiander, 2001; Krasner, 1999), and lastly historical narratives (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019; Toomey, 2018; Gustafsson, 2019; 2020).

I will begin with the brief discussion of role of the leaders and the proceed to identity and sovereignty. Before moving to theory, I will discuss the use of historical narrative. The analytical part of the thesis will be based on speeches of Polish President. This decision was motivated by the assumption that state leaders represent national identity, hence they represent national interests as well.

The topic of leadership and its impact on foreign policy has been discussed by scholars (Jervis, 2013; 2017; Toomey, 2018). Scholars have analysed whether leaders play a role in

foreign policy decision-making and what factors can influence their decisions. Factors that are commonly emphasised include preferences, individual personalities, environment, style and skill. All of these can influence somehow decision-making of the leaders, because it can construct her or his own beliefs.

Topic of beliefs was further elaborated by Toomey (2018); according to him, leaders can become the equivalent of the states. He exemplifies this relation with the case study of Hungary and Orbán, whose beliefs and values became the superior ones. For Toomey, such relation when leader have ability to constitute common beliefs is more dangerous, because leaders operate through different resources. They are not limited to soft power that influence cultural and social level, but they can go further and engage in legislative changes on domestic level, which was done in this case by inclusion of Christianity to constitution (Congdam, 2018).

However, the leaders in democratic societies are chosen based on citizens' votes. They represent the voice of those people, who constitutes group with the same collective identity. The significance of identity should not be ignored, because even though the leader has a legal power to make changes, his actions are rooted in beliefs and values of this identity. In the next section I will continue discussion of identity in the context of Polish identity to set the ground for analysis.

2.1. Identity and symbolism

2.1.1. National identity

This section will continue with the matter of identity and symbolism. As was argued earlier, leaders represent a certain version of identity, with possibility of this identity being the major one in society based on their winning. To understand the key elements of national identity, there is a need of discussion of culture, tradition and history, all elements that could in some way shape identity's current state. Identity is rooted in one's society, but it is also constructed in relation to others. These two presents a crucial role of identity – ability to making a distinction between “we” and “them” as well as constituting interests. According to Prizel (1998), national identity should be studied, because it shapes foreign policy of the state.

In his study Prizel identifies several types of national identities; some of them are based on same language (Anglo-Saxon societies) or region (in the case of France). However, for the purpose of this study I will be focused on the second group he identified. This group includes nations that experienced imperial and colonial dominations in the past, which applies to

Central and South America as well as to states of Central and Eastern Europe (1998: 23). The element that characterises this group is the strong feeling of resentment, which he describes as “(...) an intense feeling of political and social injustice inflicted on the indigenous peoples, profound cultural defensiveness, and a fascination with the past” (1998: 24). In the case of Poland, the fascination with the past ties to the history and culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth which ended with the third partition in 1795.

During that period, national identity was constituted based on the collective memories cultivated in society. Prizel argues that the lack of a strong political and legal institutions led Poles to search for their identity into those collective memories of heroic actions and struggle (1998: 38). Polish national identity is strongly influenced by the Roman Catholic Church, even now those are stressed. Two dates are commonly stressed - baptism of Poland in 966 and defeating the Teutonic Knights in 1410. The first one marked the moment of transition to Christian culture and tradition, while the second one is crucial in establishing Polish self-picture of the hero.

Moreover, the partitions period is the moment when the second element that constitute national identity has appeared – victimisation. In this, it is not surprising that the nations that have suffered produce such self-perception. However, in this case this self-perception has another dimension – more religious and spiritual. Poles from that period had believed to be the “Christ of nation” and reproduced the messianic ideas of Poland suffering for the greater good. This suffering was supposed to end with the independence, not only of Poland, but also other enslaved nations. This approach was discussed by Prizel (1998) and by Waligórska (2019), but Waligórska discusses in more detail how Poles adopted such religious framework. During that period using regular national symbols, such as eagles, was banned. As a result, Polish people used the cross as a hidden national symbol of resistance, in this way wearing the symbol would not result in the punishment (2019: 502). In this discourse, Poland was portrayed as a “Christ of nation” and Russia as the “Antichrist”, following this assumption the thought of Polish messianic role was established.

The messianic ideas influenced the actions of Poles during partitions, because it shaped national identity of that period. According to Prizel, national identity influences the direction of foreign policy. However, based on his study of Poland, this identity can be changed. Depending on the period Polish national identity shaped foreign policy in various ways. During interwar period, national identity influenced strong attachment towards the Eastern borderlands (*Kresy*) and led to attempts to assimilate minorities living there (1998).

The end of the cold war was the end of certain national identity as well. After 1989 Polish national identity began to transition to more European identity with the goal of joining the EU and NATO. According to Prizel, this was a success based on reassigning from the messianic ideas (1998). Prizel's analysis was rich in the discussion of historical events that shaped national identity, as well as religious ones. It was not limited to historical events, but it included references to the literature from both partitions and interwar period.

While Prizel argues that the change of identity was caused by rejection of old ideas, Neumann (1993) proposes different argument. He questions the term of Central Europe and its new European identity. He claims that the states of Central Europe, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia wanted to distinguish themselves from Russia. After decades of Soviet control, liberated states attempted to become more "European"; it was not about being different from the East, culturally or socially, but about re-establishing new European identity. Those states have constituted Russia as the other, which in turn constituted their Europeanness (1993).

Both studies, Prizel and Neumann, captured the moment of transitioning from being the ex-Soviet Satellite to becoming liberated pro-European state. This change had an impact on the identity of those states. Process of searching for new identity relied on constituting Russia as the other and ascribing Russia with negative qualities, such as authoritarian, and in turn ascribing positive ones such as democratic and sovereign to the Western Europe (Neumann, 1993: 369). The belief that Europe would be more suitable influenced Central European states actions. Now, all those states are part of the EU. After sixteen years of membership some of those state have changed their mindset about their similarity to the Western states and the process of changing the identity began again.

Now I will proceed to the discussion of current national identity. The analysis of current national identity, its relation to the government and the EU was made by O'Neal (2017). She argues that the change in government in 2015 caused a rapid change in attitudes towards the European Union. She distinguishes two clashing identities in current discourse, "Cosmopolitan European identity" established after entering the EU, and "neo-traditional identity" popularised by the PiS (2017: 29).

She connects the second type of identity with the interwar and the cold war period, but she is not the only one to argue for such correlation. Prizel (1998), O'Neal (2017) and Bunikowski (2018) all find the period of the interwar crucial to understanding current national

identity. According to O'Neal a particular national identity depends on the ruling government. Behind national identity is history, which is unchanged, but what events are emphasised depends on the government. In this case, Polish government rejects the Cosmopolitan European identity established after 1989 and returns to old ideals.

To conclude this section, it can be argued that national identity is not fixed concept, because even though it is constructed based on historical events, the decision on which events are stressed depends on the current government. But other question arises here, how much of identity can really be changed. After all, the certain elements that have been previously rejected have returned. In the next section, I will discuss symbolism and how it relates to the national identity.

2.1.2. Symbolism

It was argued in previous section that national identity is not a fixed concept; some elements that constitute it can be rejected and other can be emphasised. This section will discuss how symbolism relates to national identity. According to Lewis and Waligórska (2019) symbols serve a link between past and present and between local and global levels (2019: 431). Symbols are imbedded/enriched with historical background. Kotwas and Kubik (2019) have observed other dimensions of symbols. They argue that in Polish populist narrative symbols have “thickened”, because of religious and nationalist discourse they are part of. This symbolism has strong ties to Polish major religion, Roman Catholicism, and it was characterised with “ritualism, visualism, magical thinking” exercised strongly in “folk dimension” (2019: 438).

The folk dimension refers to the form of symbolism, which is exercised by the events that have deeper “spiritual” meaning. In this case, the study refers to two events “Rosary for the borders” and mass parades on the Independence Day. The first one had a particular spiritual way; in 2017 people gathered around the borders of Poland and prayed together to preserve and save Christian Europe. The actions are not organised by the government, they are part of people’s initiative. The picture of Poland being the protector of Christianity is still part of the symbolism.

Other element of symbolism is the victim discourse in which they can operate. This relation is not only observed in Poland, but it is a part of national discourse in Timor-Leste. Myrntinen (2013) argues that symbols are not used to remind about lost glory, but rather to remind about struggle for independence. Symbols can be rooted in culture and religion or they

can be connected to the use of specific colours together. They may have different forms and background. In this case, meaning behind symbols is rooted in history of lost independence and colonisation.

She stresses that the process of valorisation of resistance is not limited to the practice of regular people. In the case of Timor-Leste, valorisation has also a legal aspect - it is written into constitution (2013: 214). By adding legal aspect, celebrating anniversaries and creating traditions based on the struggle and resistance, those symbols contributes to construction of a particular collective identity. Since it is done not only through non-state actors, but through officials as well, it makes this particular identity an official one. Symbols serve a role; they can be used to legitimise position, both socially and politically (2013: 217).

Now I will return to Polish case. Here, Kończal (2020) discusses how valorisation of post-war resistance can be exemplified with the Cursed Soldiers (*Żołnierze Wyklęci*). The Cursed Soldiers were the group of anti-communist resistance that operated in the first post-WWII years. During years of Polish People's Republic (PRL) their existence and alleged impact was erased by the government. Their existence was known until 90s. Since then they have been promoted by the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (*Instytut Pamięci Narodowej*) and eventually were politized by the government.

The Cursed Soldiers represent self-perception of being a victim and fighting the oppressor. They perpetuate the romantic ideals of resistance described by Prizel. They have been constituted to be the continuation of the nineteenth century fighters of freedom and eventually have been included into discourse of politics of memory (Kończal, 2020).

As it was argued in previous section, national identity shapes foreign policy. It influences the perception of state and thus its relations with others. Moreover, national identity is not a fixed concept. The basis of national identity exists independently of political actors, but which elements they choose to emphasise depends on them; in that way national identity can change. These emphasised elements can be strengthened by using symbols in political discourse. They serve as a link between past and present. Furthermore, they have a power to connect and influence masses, because of religious dimensions they embodied. Politicians can use them to spread the range of the identity, because of that they work as a tool to influencing masses. In the next section I will review scholarship concerning sovereignty. After that I will propose the argument of how sovereignty and identity are connected.

2.2. Sovereignty and IR

This section will discuss sovereignty as this is a classical concept for IR tradition. Since the Westphalian Treaty, it has been incorporated into IR understanding of state in the matter of authority, control and non-intervention rule. Sovereignty has been discussed by variety of scholars in IR, but they tend to focus on different aspects. For Lake (2003) the focus lies on hierarchy and anarchy in IR. He problematises sovereignty in terms of international hierarchy and anarchy.

His definition of sovereignty can be described as a narrowed one. According to his definition only great powers are capable of having the “Westphalian sovereignty” understood as complete and authoritative (2003: 311). Furthermore, it is state-centric; IOs are not described as a threat to sovereignty, they are presented as the platform for powerful state, where they can exercise international hierarchy. Great powers use them to advocates for issues that concern them. The study presents a realist approach by focusing on the great powers. The study did not give enough attention to other states. It was strongly focused on the USA; other states were only showed in the relation to the USA and its power, whether it was USSR, Saudi Arabia or Latin America.

Other argument is proposed by Heiskanen (2019). She dispatched from discussion of hierarchy and anarchy. She is focused on connection between nationalism, sovereignty and IR. According to her, IR scholarship has ignored correlation between these three issues. She connects them to show how there is a natural relation between domestic and foreign policies. Those two cannot be simply separated. Nationalism is a domestic product, but it strongly influenced by the national interests and the conceptualisation of sovereignty. In this way sovereignty is not a product of IR, sovereignty shapes IR (2019: 319-320).

Different approach is proposed by Thomson (1995). He reflects on interdependence, the phenomenon which made other scholars questions the importance of sovereignty. He rejects this view and argues that sovereignty does not concern state’s ability to control its borders. It is about state’s authority in international realm (1995: 216). Osiander (1995) goes further and proposes an unconventional position towards the Westphalian Treaty and its alleged heritage to IR. He rejects the idea of the Westphalian Treaty being the base of sovereignty in IR scholarship. IR ideas, such as sovereignty, non-intervention, territoriality, were ascribed to the Westphalia and created a myth (2001: 266). The study shows how everything can be constructed to resemble certain ideas.

For Krasner (1999) there are several different types of sovereignty; he identifies four of them. They can be distinguished from each other based on the aspect they are mostly focused on. Westphalian sovereignty and International Legal Sovereignty stress the matter of the authority; interdependence focus on control, and the last one, domestic sovereignty, combines both elements. His understanding of sovereignty has a similar aspect to Heiskanen, he also argues that there is a connection between domestic level and foreign policy. Domestic goals influence the actions and goals of state on the international area.

Krasner criticises the concept of identity; he calls it an “organised hypocrisy”. He argues that even though the logic of appropriateness should lead actions of the state, the logic of consequences dominates on international level (1999). In principle, the logic of appropriateness should be superior for states. However, state tends to break the rules they firstly voluntarily agreed on if it fits their interest more (1999). As so, they tend to act upon the logic of consequences, since they are more concerned about their possible gains and losses. He claims that they are motivated by their national interest, which can change from time to time.

However, national interest does not eliminate the logic of appropriateness. Rules and norms guide the actions of state’s rulers, but they are concerned primarily with the rules and norms of their own state. Norms and rules represented by the leaders are essentially the rules and norms of their society. As a result, domestic rules come first instead of international ones. As so, leaders are prone to violate international rules and norms to protect their national values.

He points out that even though sovereignty has been considered as the essential characteristic of states, in the history many states have existed without or with limited sovereignty. States do not have to possess a complete sovereignty to be perceived as a state in international area. He exemplifies this with the Central and Eastern Europe from the cold war period. As a result of being incorporated into the Soviet Block, those states did not have a chance to enjoy Westphalian sovereignty (Krasner, 1999: 29). Even though he acknowledges that fact he does not elaborate how this could possibly influence self-understanding of sovereignty of those states. The paper will argue that such experience influences self-perception, which constitutes national identity and as a result – understanding of sovereignty. Now, I will proceed to the discussion of the use of historical narrative in IR.

2.3. Historical narrative

This section will discuss how the role of history is seen in the IR scholarship, however, to stay relevant to the topic of the paper I will be focusing on the aspect of collective memory and its influence on foreign policy. This topic has been discussed in various studies of Gustafsson, in which he is primarily focused on China and Japan. The paper will use two of them, one from 2019 and 2020.

Gustafsson asks if the leaders popularise certain beliefs. He discusses the case of China and collective memory regarding Great Chinese Famine. He questions whether alternative source of knowledge, such as Wikipedia, can serve an information role and eventually challenge social debate about established collective memory (2019). Government provides citizens with the source of knowledge such as museums or encyclopaedias which deliver acceptable information. Wikipedia was typed as other, alternative source of knowledge, because of its function to edit information. However, as his study shows, social debate and Wikipedia failed to challenge established collective memory. Patriotic identity popularised through the party was able to maintain collective memory. National identity is not something that can be easily challenged, especially if the government is protecting it.

The study argues as well that the national identity influences both domestic and foreign policies. He continues with the topic of foreign policy in the other study. Here, in the case of relations between China and Japan, he discusses how historical past of those countries still influence their relations. The memory of past aggression is not easy to forget. Despite of that, in this article he discusses the matter of forgetting. He identifies two types of forgetting - forgetting as fading and forgetting as denial (2020). According to Gustafsson, collective memory persists to influence their relations, because it is written into their national identities. In both articles, he stresses that national identity constructs domestic and foreign policies.

He emphasises how some aspects of collective memory can be easily dismissed in both types of forgetting. Aspects that are not pleasing, can be erased or transformed, especially when they are part of the narrative. Following this thought, collective memory can be used to influence politics, by being tool of manipulation.

Narratives are commonly used in populist's rhetoric. They include such elements as distinction on "we" and "them", some aspects of evil elites, popular sovereignty (Stanley, 2008). In such narratives, history can be used to manipulate the audience by highlighting

certain aspects as it is done in victim discourse used by Orbán in Hungary. Such studies emphasise the significance of nostalgia and sentiments (Toomey, 2018).

Existing research about sovereignty is mostly conducted as a theoretical discussion, as was done in the case of Heiskanen (2019) and Thomson (1995). Lake's study, on the other hand, can be defined as a discourse about the USA power, his article ignored states that cannot be described as "great powers". Gustafson's choice of cases was more original in comparison to others, but he was focused on the aspects that this paper will not consider namely social media, internet encyclopaedias and museums. Two most common approach was either theoretical discussion or a case study with the use of narrative. The case studies were focused on either the USA or China. They can be helpful to discuss those theoretical concepts, but they do not refer to the topic of Europe nor the EU in which paper is mostly concerned.

In the European context Hungary is a common choice in discussion of populist and nationalist policy towards the EU (Enyedi, 2016; Lugosi, 2018; Toomey, 2018; Schlipphak & Treib, 2016). Orbán's speeches are translated and discussed by international media. There is a lack of literature conducting a research about Poland. Hence, this paper will use it as a case study.

O'Neal's study included material from 2015; constructivist lances were applied to several PiS politicians, which included Foreign Minister, party leader Kaczyński, National Defence Minister. The case did not engage in any statements from President. Speeches, statements and symbols chosen in O'Neal's case were expressing Anti-European attitude. The analysis will focus on the President instead. In his speeches he constructs a specific picture of Poland and the EU but based on his position he does it more subtly by incorporating symbols, memories and sovereignty. In order to analyse how identity, symbols and sovereignty is incorporated into Polish narrative, the chosen method will be narrative analysis. The paper will come back to the discussion of narrative analysis in methodology. Now, I will continue with theoretical framework to discuss chosen theory and how it will be applied.

3. Theoretical framework

In this section I will discuss theory, as well as the research question and my hypothesis. Constructivism and poststructuralism share many similarities, which can lead to confusion between these two approaches; they both can be described as critical approaches and were constructed in the 1980s in the context of Cold War and the fourth great IR debate. Aiolfi

discusses both approaches; he argued that it is not unusual for students to confuse both theories; poststructuralism is believed to be more “extreme” version of constructivism (2015). He argues that constructivists tend to balance between reflectivity and rationality; the balance cannot be archived, which he argues is why the theory fails. He advocates for the use of poststructuralism, as constructivism is “stuck” between mainstream and non-mainstream IR, whereas poststructuralism is portrayed as a more stable and a more decisive theory.

In previous studies, constructivism and realism have both been used to analyse the matter of identity and sovereignty. This paper will use concepts taken from poststructuralism, to analyse the case from different perspective. Poststructuralism is a critical theory, which problematises typical for IR assumptions such as state, sovereignty or identity. It is done by analysing discourse, language and deconstruction.

Discourse and language are one of the major concepts within poststructuralist theory. Language is not neutral; it is a tool we use to ascribe meaning to things, as so language can produce meaning (Hansen, 2017: 162). Hence, things have meanings because we ascribe this meaning to them, both social and brute facts are socially constructed (Hansen, 2017: 162). Meaning is not fixed, it can change, which depends on dominated discourse. Discourse proposes a particular way of understanding events or phenomena in the world. By identifying discourses in my analysis, I will discuss how Polish national identity is constructed.

Deconstruction of the text is the concept proposed by Derrida. The analysis is focused on dichotomies that construct identities as well as state or sovereignty. Dichotomies are created and performed by language. They are not equal; the first one (we/them; inside/outside) is constructed to be the superior to other. In this understanding, words function as set of codes that are relational to other (Hansen, 2017: 162). Using poststructuralist lenses, the paper can problematise them. Deconstruction allows to better understand foundations of the phenomenon.

“Origin” the concept within Derrida’s deconstruction, it is focused on how the foundation of a particular position relates to its further claims (Williams, 2014:31). Identifying an origin allows to understand what motivates current actions and purposes. Locating “origins” in the text allows to understand how the claims are constituted; what is the source of them. They connect present with the past. Origins are discussed in relation to contemporary case. Origins represent the values, in the opposite to descent which is perceived as the loss of those values

(2014: 32). In my analysis, I will focus on both dichotomies, as well as on identification of origin.

The last reason to use of poststructuralist theory is the focus on history used is narrative. Poststructuralist theory does not reject history in analysis, it rather questions origin, discourse of a particular phenomenon. De Carvalho et al (2011) argues that rejection of historical literature by IR scholars results in “presentism” (2011: 756). Social and political phenomena are grounded in the past. Without understanding what the role of history is, it cannot be fully understood. Genealogy of the Westphalian myth was conducted by Osiander (2001) and De Carvalho et al (2011). Osiander was focused on how misunderstanding of the causes resulted in historians ascribing false attributes to the Westphalia, which led to IR scholarship incorporating these ideas.

The paper will use poststructuralist theory to focus on language, discourse and deconstruction. As was stated in introduction, the research question will investigate how a particular national identity influences the understanding of sovereignty. To be more precise, the question will be interested how Polish national identity influences the understanding of sovereignty, especially in relation to the European Union. In this case, it will be analysed by asking:

RQ: “How Polish national identity constitutes the EU as a threat to sovereignty?”

The question asks about Polish-EU relation, assuming their more intense character in recent years. Intensification of the relations is caused by the actions of the current government, which represent more right-wing, traditional beliefs. Those beliefs are represented not only by the actions of government, but they can be observed in the speeches of President.

Poststructuralism is a constitutive theory, which tells us something about structure, what makes Polish-EU relations. President’s speeches address the topic of EU, relations between Poland and EU, but it is done by addressing it through Polish perspective, which represent a certain version of identity. As a constitutive theory, poststructuralism is concern with elements that constitute this identity and relation.

Based on the case study of Poland and its President Duda’s speeches, the paper will argue that historical narratives combined with concept of sovereignty is used to portray the European Union as a threat of both, Poland and its sovereignty. The paper will argue that

leaders use sovereignty to address how others have violated it. In this way it can be used to construct our identity as well as the enemy.

The paper's hypothesis assumes that national identity influences both, the understanding of sovereignty and relations with others. Following this through, anyone or anything that poses the threat to sovereignty can be classified as the threat as well. How identity is constructed depends on the historical background of the state; states that did not enjoy complete sovereignty in their past, may be more reluctant to any changes that could challenge the scope of their sovereignty.

Furthermore, sovereignty exists, because of mutual agreements between states. But the current global system led to the situation when states can voluntarily give up some aspects of the traditional sovereignty to be part of a bigger regional organisation. In the case of Europe, member states agreed to open the borders. As a result, some aspects of sovereignty have lost their original meaning. Based on Krasner's criticism of sovereignty, it can be argued that sovereignty is a flexible concept, it can be stretched or narrowed. This leads to another element of the hypothesis – sovereignty can be understood subjectively and hence can be used as a political tool to justify and legitimise policies.

In the Polish case, sovereignty is understood as something that was archived; thus, it is not taken for granted and needs to be protected. Polish government uses this concept to portray the EU negatively, as someone who attempts to limit Polish sovereignty. The Polish case serves an interesting example for analysis, because sovereignty is not limited to borders and authority; values and beliefs are part of the discourse as well. Now, the paper will proceed with the methodological discussion.

4. Methodology

As stated in the literature review, the chosen methods in earlier research were case studies, engaged in discourse and narrative. The paper will conduct an interpretivist research to analyse how Polish national identity constitutes the EU as a threat to sovereignty. The question is concerned with subjectivity, namely how sovereignty and identity are subjectively understood in Polish historical narrative. The paper will use qualitative data – collection of speeches of Polish President Andrzej Duda. Chosen speeches are taken from the period 2019-2020 in order to focus on the current situation. Narrative analysis was chosen as a method, because it allows to investigate how the particular story is used to influence the intended

audience. In the next section, I will discuss how and why I will use a narrative analysis. In the discussion of narrative analysis, I will present how concepts taken from literature review and theory work within narrative. Then I will proceed to discussion of case, data and limitations.

4.1. Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis is a form of content analysis. It consists of two elements – the story, which is being told and a narrative, which is the way it is being told. First step of conducting narrative analysis is to identify the story. Story in the narrative analysis is built in the same way as regular story are; they include beginning, middle and the end which are constructed into coherent piece (Elliot, 2005). The story can be taken from real life experience, as well as it can be rooted in culture. When the story is used in narrative it is because it includes a moral (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019).

Narrative analysis will be conducted by identification the story in the analysis, but because of the length of the paper I will briefly present the story first. The story used in the speeches discusses historical background of Polish state, but it repeats itself in the speeches. Hence, identification will be brief, the paper is more concerned with the interpretation of the events and their alleged influence on current politics. The moral will be identified as well to assess how Duda's interpretation of the events is used to construct Polish national identity and understanding sovereignty as a result of it.

The purpose of the moral is to influence the audience, it is done by connecting past events with the present based on alleged similarity. In this way past is used to shape current understandings of the events. As argued in the literature review, symbols can be used to connect past with the present. The paper will discuss how symbols are applied in the speeches to do that.

This is attached to other element of narrative – the audience. Smith (2016) proposes to analyse it by asking “to whom the story is told” and “when it is told” (2016: 208). This aspect will be discussed in the analysis as well, but the main focus concerns the question “what the story does”. The paper will be focused on how the story is used to constitute Polish national identity and as result, how does this national identity constitutes understanding of sovereignty. It is argued by scholars that narratives are successful tool of manipulation, because audience tend to be more engaged into story since it is not just a description of an event (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019; Elliot, 2005; Wiczorek, 2020).

Retelling the story in narrative can be used shape views of the audience as well as can be used to distinguish who are “we” in this story and who are “they” (Hagström & Gustafsson, 2019: 395). Narrative can be used to establish an identity, ours and the enemy’s. Other function of narrative is legitimisation of policies and actions; it is done by appealing to specific emotions of the audience to create a bond or association based on the spoken story (Wieczorek, 2020: 223). Wieczorek refers to specific emotions such as trust or shared experience that can create bond between the speaker and the audience.

The paper will discuss it in relation to the “origin” – a poststructuralist concept discussed in theoretical framework. Origin can be traced in the story; it has historical background. Literature review discussed Polish national identity; based on what has been already said by scholars it can be argued that origin in Polish narrative can be located in eighteenth-nineteenth century. Analysis of the speeches will present whether the same origin still persist in Polish narrative.

Narrative is not a new phenomenon in politics, it is commonly used by populist actors. Historical narratives have been used by Orbán in Hungary. Some scholars have discussed it already (Toomey, 2018). They emphasised the significance of nostalgia and sentiments, which are used by Orbán as well as a “victim discourse” (2018). Stories that are told do not have to be based on their own experience; they can be taken from history, as was done in Orbán’s case. He does not reform to his own memories of Hungary, but to history of the country that is known to his listeners. Narrative does not have to come from our personal experience, stories are taken from resources that are socially and culturally available for us (Smith, 2016: 205).

This characteristic of narrative connects with other element discussed in literature review – collective memory. Collective memory can be used to influence public. Here, collective memory is embedded into particular discourses – victimisation and valorisation of resistance. I will discuss how narrative is situated in these discourses and how they are used to conceptualise sovereignty.

It was already stated that the main role of narrative is construction of identity. This brings attention to the language of the narrative – how events are described to come as results of another. For Bamberg this is essential for narratives, they consist of at least two narratives or events; the second one would not happen if not for the first one (2012: 81). But the language is not used to describe flow of the events, but characters as well. In this scenario, Poland and

the Western Europe/the EU function as characters of the story. Now, the paper will present the case and data.

4.2. Case and data

As stated above, the paper will conduct narrative analysis. It will be conducted on Polish President's speeches from 2019-2020. The case was chosen to analyse sovereignty from the perspective of state that did not enjoy complete sovereignty in the past. Furthermore, paper is interested in how sovereignty, national identity and relations can be connected together. As a relatively young democratic country, Poland serves as an interesting case in opposition to other member states of the EU. Polish historical background can influence understanding of sovereignty. This historical experience of not being able to decide about itself can be a factor that influenced current policy to be more anti-European.

The choice of speeches was narrowed to the period 2019-2020. Firstly, to stay relevant to current trends in narrative. By focusing on 2019 and 2020 the topic of refugees is eliminated. Secondly, the year of 2019 and 2020 are the years of three major elections: election to European Parliament and to Polish Parliament were both in 2019 and elections for Polish Presidency are scheduled in 2020. Pre-election time is the moment when politicians are most active. They tend to discuss the most pressing issues. The period of 2019-2020 was especially rich in that, hence these speeches present sufficient material to analyse.

Speeches from 2019 were collected throughout the whole year. However, the main focus in collecting material was on May, based on the assumption that in closer to the EU elections then the topic of the EU will occur more in the speeches. Hence, it can be analysed how the president referred to the EU and how he tried to influence the audience. The rest of the 2019 speeches comes from the rest of the year, approximately around the parliamentary elections.

Speeches from 2020 were collected until March. Speeches come from his visit around the Poland. Overall, the material includes 20 speeches, 10 for each year. Speeches were taken from different cities where size of populations varied between 871 citizens in the smallest and above 1,7 million in Warsaw (GUS, 2020). Speeches were obtained through official website of the president (prezydent.pl), where video from the meeting and transcript from it is available. They are only available in Polish language. Quotes used in the analysis were translated by the author of the thesis. Speeches will be analysed with the use of concepts discussed in literature review with the focus on identity and sovereignty.

The paper will use statistics from elections to the European Parliament accessed through official website of the EU parliament. This source will provide knowledge about turnout and the percent of voting for specific party. By confronting with the information statistics from Polish Parliamentary elections, it can analyse which group of citizens (age group/size of the city) voted for PiS. This will be used to analyse the audience. The next section will discuss limitations connected to both data and method.

4.3. Limitations and justifications

The disadvantage of narrative analysis concerns the belief that chosen story in narrative is exceptional. It can occur when the research is based on narrative build on speaker's personal experience. In this case, the story is not built on the personal experience. It is based on collective memories from Polish history.

Duda is consisted in his speeches; the story he tells is based on historical events, but the way he interprets them and the apply to present may be exceptional. The paper does not intent to discuss historical events to decide whether they were exceptional in any way. The paper will discuss how the Duda's interpretation of the story is used to construct identity, interests and relations with others. To sum this briefly, the paper is concerned in how past is used to interpret present.

Chosen speeches were not collected from major holidays/national celebrations. Such speeches would be massively based on historical narratives. To focus on how historical narrative is used in regular meetings, the paper will discuss speeches from regular presidential visits in Poland. The only exception was made with the speech from Constitution Day in 2019, because the celebration happened closely to the EU elections.

In case of statistics the paper will not use any statistic from this year, which predicts the voting in presidential elections. Those statistics present predictions; instead to minimise limitations the paper will use results from elections that already happened. After discussion of method and case, now the paper will proceed to the next chapter – analysis.

5. Analysis

This chapter continues with the analysis. In order to answer the research question: "How Polish national identity constitutes the EU as a threat to sovereignty", the paper will discuss selected speeches of the Polish President. As stated in previous sections, narrative analysis will be applied to do it. This chapter is divided into section that will discuss identity, which is

built on story told by Duda. Then, the paper proceeds to a discussion of sovereignty and the EU. Starting with identity is crucial to understanding how sovereignty is constructed and how this understanding shapes the perception of the European Union and Polish relations with it. Concepts discussed in previous sections will be utilised through the analysis.

5.1. The story and identity

5.1.1. The Polish national identity

This section will discuss what is told in the story and how it is told. After reviewing several speeches of the President Duda, it can be noticed that they are all built in the same way. He begins with a description of Polish historical background. He refers to the Middle Ages, when the towns he visited were often founded. He describes this period with the same qualities, no matter where he speaks. It is described as a period of productivity, independence, sovereignty and the period of transition from paganism to Christianity. The moment of baptism of Poland in 966 is crucial in his narrative, he refers to it as:

“Here grow our roots – roots of our state, nation, society and everything which constitute us. (...) We became the part of Europe by taking its roots and made these roots ours.”¹

“The baptism of Mieszko I introduced us to Christian Europe, his decision made us a truly European nation. No matter what was happening in our country, we were Europeans”²

In his narrative, this period is crucial in the construction of Polish national identity. Baptism is discussed as the moment of becoming a European state. Christianity is showed as a factor that constitutes both Polish national identity as well as a common European identity. Emphasis is put on the matter of Christianity – by becoming Christian state, Poland “joined” Europe.

Christianity is discussed as a foundation of current Europe and Poland. Values and beliefs cultivated in Poland are rooted in religion. Duda argues that Poland survived, because people cultivated those values. In this narrative, they are the foundation of identity, they can preserve and protect this identity even when the state cannot do it. Such narrative undermines role of the state, its authority, by strongly focusing on people and their role in constituting the state instead.

Identity is a crucial aspect in Duda’s narrative. The aspects of identity are discussed in all speeches; when he refers to it, he uses such phrases as “Polishness”, “the roots of Polishness”

¹ “Visit in Międzychód”, 2019

² “Constitution of 3 May Day”, 2019

and “the essence of Polishness”. He has a specific understanding of what it means to be Polish and how is characterised. Throughout his speeches three elements of Polishness can be distinguished. All three are connected to each other. The first one – land – to which he refers as “fatherland”. Fatherland (*ojcowizna*) implies a land that has been inherited for generations, where families have lived throughout a long time. By using this phrase, he is referring to his listeners’ patriotism. This patriotism has a local level. Fatherland is a place of tradition, strong bonds between families, where traditional values and beliefs are cherished. Polishness is not located in Poland, as a whole state; it is rooted in villages, small towns.

After discussing what Polishness means, he proceeds to period of partitions, when Polish national identity was threatened. Here, he refers to both, partitions and communism. Both are used to describe heroic and brave nature of Poles – in relation to partitions he stresses uprisings, in relation to communism – the role of Solidarity movement. He highlights patriotism, heroic actions – this is another element of what he defines as Polishness. However, this is not defined without an emphasis on repression that touched people for the fights. Historical references are made to stress the struggle of Poles in the fight for independence. Both aspects are emphasised by Duda in relation to identity.

In his narratives he discusses more historical aspects; First World War, interwar period, Second World War, the Cold War. Two dates are highlighted – 1918 and 1989 when Poland restored its independence and sovereignty. Depending on the region he visited, he referred to some of the events in more depth to refer to the local patriotism. He uses particular events and periods of time to interpret current events.

After discussing history, he comes back to the present, where he introduces the moral of the story. How he uses past will be discussed more in next sections; firstly, in discussion of origin and secondly in discussion of sovereignty.

5.1.2. Origin

To continue with origin, it was argued in theoretical section that origin is the source of nostalgia and sentiments. As a result, it serves as the source of further claims. It describes the “origins”, the past as something that should still be the base of present. It was already argued by scholars in literature review, where origin can be located in Polish history. They stressed partition period, 1795-1918 as crucial in construction of the identity. Based on Duda’s speeches, I argue that origin can be located in earlier period – in the history of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. I do not deny or reject that partitions shaped the mindset of Poles

as well as have produced the ideas that still influence Polish national identity. However, people who fought for free Poland fought in the name of pre-partition free Poland.

The origin here can be identified as free, independent and sovereign Poland; Poland from a particular period of time, before partitions, uprisings and wars. When people lived happily, according to their values, together with other minorities in Poland. It was a period of diversity and religious tolerance (“the place where three cultures lived together happily³” - Catholics, Jews and Orthodox” - Catholics, Jews and Orthodox). Duda highlights this period with reference to specific kings that were written into history as the great ones, Jagiełło for winning with Germans in 1410 and Jan III Sobieski for winning in the battle of Vienna⁴

It is the period of legal accomplishments, which based on Duda’s narrative are the source of belief that Poland was and still could be a role model to other European states. This argumentation is exemplified with Constitution of 3 May, which was adopted in 1791 as the first such constitution in Europe. Following this thought he argues that Polish ideas influenced Europe. The second example concerns the Union of Lublin (union that founded the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), which in his narrative was used as a role model of the European Union⁵.

In this narrative Poland is portrayed only in superlatives, however, the emphasis is put on these two aspects (protecting Europe and legal accomplishments). They are made on purpose – to constitute Poland as a role model to other nations. Duda even suggest that Poland is protected by the higher power⁶. By portraying Poland through struggle, resistance and values, he argues that Poland is somehow superior to other states. He implies that Polish messianic role is not over: “I believe deeply that we still have a role to play, not only for Europe, but for the whole world.⁷” But now, instead of fighting for freedom, Polish role concerns protection of values and sovereignty.

³ “Visit in Włodawa”, 2019

⁴ “Constitution of 3 May Day”, 2019

⁵ Ibid, 2019; “Visit in Myślenice”, 2019

⁶ “Constitution of 3 May Day”, 2019

⁷ “Visit in Włoszczowa”, 2020

5.2. Sovereignty and the European Union

5.2.1. Sovereignty

The ideals behind origin stressed Poland as a free, sovereign and Christian state. This picture of Poland is rooted in identity and origin described previously. Both have influenced understanding of sovereignty, which now will be discussed.

Duda's speeches indicates that sovereignty is an essential foundation of a free, independent state. In Krasner's study, he discussed states from the Eastern Block could still function on international area with limited sovereignty. President's narrative rejects such idea; there is no freedom without full and complete sovereignty. Any decisions that violate sovereignty have to be made by state themselves and such decision must be state's decision. He stresses that joining the EU was Polish decision⁸. Sovereignty is fully a domestic matter, no one have the right to interfere in it.

Except of clear definition of what sovereignty is, his speeches can be used to define how states can gain sovereignty. Sovereignty is earned by states, it has to be gained and deserved. The same applies to be part of Europe; in his narratives Duda treats Western Europe and the European Union as the same actors. Here, he returns to the past and refers again to historical battles. In the case of Poland, Sovereignty is understood as a "reward", states have to deserve to be sovereign. He said:

"We have been part of the EU for fifteen years and NATO for twenty years. This is a reward for the fight of Solidarity, fight for Poland to again be sovereign and free"⁹

By retelling the story, he stressed the constant fight for independence, where brave and heroic nature of Poles won their independence and sovereignty. Sovereignty is not something that was given to Poland, it was earned, thus needs to be protected. Portraying sovereignty from this angle, stresses significance of sovereignty. Polish sovereignty is discussed in the messianic context:

"Our resistance – Solidarity – caused the fell of Berlin Wall. Solidarity was first, our Polish victory was first. Fall of Berlin Wall is the consequences of our actions. This is the truth, and this is history."¹⁰

⁸"Visit in Międzychód", 2019

⁹"Visit in Mysłowice", 2019

¹⁰"Visit in Dubiecko", 2019

Polish resistance brought sovereignty to Poland and to other nations of the Soviet Block. Polish sovereignty has a higher, spiritual character. By discussing sovereignty in this context, as something spiritual, essential to sovereignty of other states, sovereignty can be used as a political tool. Following such understanding threat to Polish sovereignty becomes the threat to the whole Central and Eastern Europe. This conceptualisation stresses the importance of Polish sovereignty and enables Polish authorities with the tool of legitimisation of any threat.

5.2.2. Sovereignty and the EU

Research question is concerned with the relations between national identity, sovereignty and how this shapes relations with others. It assumed at the beginning that the Polish-EU relations are tense. Throughout speeches, Duda has a clear picture of what Poland is, what factors constitute “Polishness” and how Poland is different from the Western part of the EU. In relation to religion and tradition, Poland is portrayed as a European state, because the Polish state protects those values – the same that constitute Europe.

Even though the same values constitute both Poland and the EU in the narrative, the EU is portrayed though the context of losing these values. Hence, they are often constructed as dichotomies in the speeches and to do that Duda refers to history to build a parallel between present and the past. He comes back to the past to emphasise what are the foundations of Europe and by analysing it in the context of lost values and Poland as the protector of those values, he argues how Poland can help in repairing the EU.

Poland is generally portrayed as moral authority in the speeches. Duda refers to words of the Pope John Paul II to support this thesis. These words are “Europe needs Poland, Poland needs Europe”¹¹, which were said by the Pope before the EU referendum in Poland was conducted. Pope suggested how the EU would benefit from having Poland in its structure, because of Polish protection and preservation of values. On the other hand, Poland would benefit from being part of larger European community.

However, now after years of being in the EU, the perception of organisation has changed. Accusations towards the EU concern it not being tolerant nor diverse enough. This is argued with the parallels to the past. Firstly, Duda describes pre-WWII Poland as a tolerant and diverse region, then he proceeds to conclusion from this experience – the EU should be such community as Poland was. Furthermore, he not only argues that EU is lacking diversity, but the EU is indeed trying to influence the member states’ identities and change them:

¹¹ “Visit in Lubaczów”, 2019

“We want such EU, where we can keep our cultural values, where we can be proud of them, because we are proud of them, and no one will try to take them away from us and change us against our will, change our identity in some cultural or social way.”¹²

He implies that the EU is trying to erase those cherished values, the same that he argued earlier had established Polish and European identity. In this way the EU can be portrayed as a threat to common European identity. By approaching the topic this way, he can suggest that the EU is a threat not only to Poland, but to other member states as well.

Other accusation towards the UE concern problems within the organisation that are caused by the lack of democracy within the structures¹³. The problem needs to be fixed so another Brexit will not happen¹⁴. The lack of democracy is the problem for other member states, because it causes disproportions in financial help (Polish farms get less many than Frenchs and Germans¹⁵) and creating a situation when only few can decide about European matters¹⁶. What is interesting here, he does not propose any solution to make the EU more equal. Instead, he wanted people to choose such deputies in elections that would protect Polish interest in the EU by putting Polish interest first¹⁷.

As a result of emphasising these differences between Poland and the EU, it can be argued that in narrative they are portrayed through the East/West Europe dichotomy. The paper puts East firstly, because even though West is described in the speeches as more developed, the states of the Eastern Block are discussed as more superior. Poland is used to represent the ex-Eastern Block. The West is put as a second, because the Western development was built on the sacrifice of the Central Eastern Europe. Even though Poland was behind the Iron Curtain and could develop after war as the West did, Poland has stayed loyal to its beliefs. This dichotomy is used throughout Duda’s narrative to present Poland as a moral authority. Poland knows what reforms good, Polish authorities are do not need European inferences.

The sovereignty narrative became more intense as a result of juridical reforms in Poland. Interference into Polish changes is considered as a direct attack on sovereignty. Sovereignty implies that state’s authorities have the rights to make legal changes in their state. After the

¹²“Visit in Włodawa”, 2019

¹³ “Visit in Międzychód”, 2019

¹⁴ “Constitution of 3 May Day”, 2019

¹⁵ “Visit in Opole Lubelskie”, 2020

¹⁶ “Constitution of 3 May Day”, 2019

¹⁷ “Visit in Świętochłowice”, 2019

Venice Commission visit in January the discussion of foreign inferences was intensified. In his speeches from that period, Duda used a strong language:

“They will not tell us what to do in foreign languages nor tell us how Polish matters should be treated.”¹⁸

This quote of Duda refers to old, symbolic quote from Polish classical poet Mikołaj Rej (“Let it by all and sundry foreign nations be known that Poles speak not Anserine but a tongue of their own.”¹⁹). Rej is mostly remembered by his strong resolution to break with currents trends – he wrote his poetry only in Polish, instead of Latin. Rej functions here as a symbol of someone is not afraid of being different, not following others, staying true with his own identity.

He used a classical quote and the poet to give it the new meaning in current situation. The judges as well as opposition are portrayed in negative light in narrative – judges as associated with communists, ex members of Polish United Workers' Party and the opposition is criticised for not approving actions of government and for reporting them to the EU²⁰. The motives of reporting to international institutions is used in narratives to support the argument that other try to violate Polish sovereignty. Polish response to it is clear, the president said:

“We will fight to preserve our traditional values in Poland. Because this is important to us. We will not allow others to impose foreign values on us and we will allow others to take away our values.”²¹

Polish authorities will protect its values, because they construct Polish national identity. Any attack on them is an attack on Polish sovereignty as well. This brings back the research question; “how Polish national identity constitutes the European Union as the threat to sovereignty”. It was argued that national identity shapes relations with others. In this case, paper is concerned with the relations between Poland, its sovereignty and the EU. The EU is perceived through the national identity that is built on history in struggle and resistance. It is imbedded into victim discourse, especially when the EU tries to interfere into domestic matters of Poland. Hence, the EU is often discussed in the matter of alleged obligations and responsibilities towards Poland.

¹⁸ “Visit in Zwolen”, 2020

¹⁹ Rej, 1562

²⁰ “Visit in Zwolen”, 2020

²¹ “Visit in Kolno”, 2020

When Duda discusses the EU, he tends to do it by saying that Poland “deserves” to be in the EU²². He refers to protecting Europe in the battle of Vienna, Polish-Russian war and the battle of Monte Casino – they are discussed to prove Polish heroic actions. He argues that Poland was left behind in Yalta and sacrificed to Soviet Union²³. Based on history of suffering and protecting Europe, Duda drives the conclusions that Europe has to help Poland. Because of the past events, Poland could not develop. He argued that Poland deserves to be in the EU, the debt can only be paid by allowing Poland to develop on its own, but with financial help. Now it is time to repair the damages done to Poland through years of wars and communism²⁴.

In the narrative, Western Europe is portrayed negatively, as someone who could develop because others were suffering for them²⁵. According to the Polish government and the President, juridical reforms are needed to repair the system that still is shaped by communism. This refers to accusations towards judges allegedly still benefiting from the old system. By emphasising judges’ ties to communism and Western Europe actions in Yalta he is able to connect both matters. Western Europe, which is now referred by him as the EU, is threatening Polish sovereignty. Juridical reforms are needed to repair the Polish state and the rest of the Europe tries to interfere into this process. He comments this situation by saying:

“As You can see, not everyone is happy with us. That is why they attack us in different ways.”²⁶

The attacks are understood as attempts to investigate Polish reforms. He suggests that the EU does not want Poland to be fully developed. He says further that:

“I always say: you do not attack the weak, what would you gain from attacking the weak? You attack the strong one, because of their position, they are the threat to us”²⁷

This implies that the EU is motivated to stop Polish state, because the EU sees the developed and repaired Poland as a threat. This narrative implies that the EU’s actions are motivated by a fear of Poland and not by their interest in any violations of law there.

²² “Visit in Lubaczów”, 2019

²³ Ibid, 2019

²⁴ “Visit in Brojce”, 2019

²⁵ “Visit in Myślenice”, 2019

²⁶ “Visit in Namysłów”, 2020

²⁷ ibid, 2020

In Polish narratives, sovereignty became a political tool used by the current government and the president. When the EU tries to engage in Polish matters, sovereignty is used to portray the EU negatively. As someone who does not respect Polish values, and thus tries to change Poland. In this way the EU threatens Polish national identity. Moreover, the use of sovereignty in the argument concerning reforms is used to delegitimise the EU as a reasonable actor. The EU acts upon fear of Poland. Such narrative again shows Poland as a superior to the EU, because Polish authorities are willing to change, while the EU is afraid of those changes.

5.2.3. Audience and purpose

In the speeches Duda discusses the history of Poland to reclaim and maintain sovereignty and independence. The story is told to highlight the Polish struggle and heroic fights, which is done to justify current policies and motivations behind them. His story shapes Polish identity and identifies Polish national interests and as a result – relations with the EU. He uses history, how it fits him. Opposition and the EU is portrayed negatively, because they do not agree with current politics.

By retelling Polish history, he is able to make audience identify with the story. By choosing specific aspects that relate to the local historical events he can create connection between him and the audience. This connection is based on common history and identity. It is done by using common collective memories that influenced Polish history. These memories recall patriotic feelings, sense of pride and belonging. While the memories of partitions are taken from the textbooks, the cold war period is still remembered by the part of society, who actually lived during that time.

When he refers to the cold war and martial law, he can assume that the part of his audience remembers it. He visits places where people were moved from eastern borderlands (*Kresy*) after the WWII. He refers to their sentiments, nostalgic feeling for the lost fatherland²⁸²⁹. He refers to the Solidarity movement. If he visits a city when the resistance was pacified by the government, he refers to their loss, which he did in Silesia in relations to pacification of miners during martial law³⁰.

²⁸ “Visit in Świdwin”, 2019

²⁹ “Visit in Brojce”, 2019

³⁰ “Visit in Mysłowice”, 2019

Collective memories can be crucial in his narrative; based on statistics, PiS has the biggest electorate when it comes to older groups of citizens³¹ as well as in people who live in villages³². Based on that it can be argued that the local patriotism of Duda and his visits in small towns can have been motivated by the established patterns of voting.

Their strategy seems to be working, they earned the most votes in both elections in 2019, moreover, those two elections had the highest frequency in Polish history. The EU elections have proven to have the lowest frequency in Polish society, the frequency percent in past elections was around 20/23%. In 2019 there was a jump from 23,83% to a double percent – 45,68% in last elections³³. PiS earned 45,38%, which was the highest number, while KE earned 38,47%. Their score was considered a failure, as it was a collation of the biggest opposition parties: Civic Platform, Polish People's Party, Modern, Democratic Left Alliance and still was not able to defeat PiS.

These statistics show that PiS' strategy is successful. Appealing to Polish sentiments, nostalgies shows that Polish people are still influenced by the past.

5.3. Findings

Discussed speeches of the President fit into the PiS strategy, which was based on historical narrative. This narrative defined subjective understanding of sovereignty, which has religious, cultural and legal dimensions. National identity strongly influenced by victim discourse implied what sovereignty is and defined who the threat to it is. The EU was identified as a threat. Even though that the Venice Commission is not an institution of the EU, in the narratives it goes under the discourse about the EU. The EU as a threat was identified through its own institutions such as European Parliament and as Court of Justice of the European Union, as well as through the Venice Commission. All were used in narratives as actors that interfere into Polish sovereignty.

The research question asked, how Polish national identity constitutes the EU as a threat to sovereignty. Firstly, national identity is used to construct both Poland and the EU. Identification of who "we" are and how we differ from the EU is crucial. It shapes interests and differences. They all based in history. Throughout Duda's speeches there is a story he tells. The story of brave fights, heroic actions, oppression and struggle. His narrative connects

³¹ Tvn24.pl, 2019

³² Ibid, 2019

³³ EU Parliament, 2019

past with present by interpreting how past events legitimise current actions. The idea of Poland having a bigger role in the world – perpetuate the belief of Polish superiority, which is based on Christianity and won battles.

Secondly, national identity, based on retelling of the past, allows Polish authorities to create their own subjective understanding of sovereignty. This is presented as the moral of the story; sovereignty is something that was earned with blood by Polish people. No one helped Poland, this was Poland's doing, now it is up to Poland to protect it. Especially when someone poses as a threat to it.

Thirdly, such understanding of sovereignty can be used as a political tool that can justify and legitimise political actions – which is done in the area of juridical reforms and the EU interferences. When other actors try to criticise juridical changes, historical narrative is brought to show both Poland as victim and Poland as a moral authority. The first one implies that Poland should be left alone to the changes, while the second one portrays Poland as superior actor, which implies that Polish actions are infallible.

Duda's narrative presents the picture of nation that is still stuck in the past. History still persist to influence how other nations are perceived. Relations with the EU will not change until Poland stop using past as justification of current policies.

6. Conclusions

This bachelor thesis discussed the traditional for IR scholarship concept – sovereignty. To propose new angle to the discussion of sovereignty, the paper analysed how national identity shapes understanding of sovereignty and in turn – relations with other states and IOs. By focusing on state that has not enjoyed sovereignty in its history, the paper analysed subjective perception of sovereignty.

Research question of this thesis asked how Polish national identity constitutes the European Union as the threat to sovereignty. The aim of this bachelor thesis was to investigate how subjective understanding of sovereignty became a political tool in the hands of Polish authorities. The paper analysed sovereignty from the perspective of Poland, a state that has lost it twice in its history. Paper's hypothesis assumed at the beginning that sovereignty is subjective, thus it is produced by the national identity of the state.

Before the thesis analysed and answered research question, discussion of scholarship concerning identity, symbolism, sovereignty and historical narrative was conducted.

Literature review was interested in how Polish national identity was build, the works of scholars particularly interested in Polish national identity was reviewed (Prizel, 1998; Neumann, 1993; O'Neal, 2017; Bunikowski, 2018). To understand how Polish national identity is connected to symbolism, works of scholars interested in the matter of symbolism was discussed (Lewis and Waligórska, 2019; Kotwas and Kubik, 2019; Myrntinen, 2013; Kończal, 2020; Waligórska, 2019). These works have established that Polish national identity has a historical character, strongly influenced by the history of resistance and struggle. The paper reviewed how sovereignty has been discussed in contemporary scholarship to understand what another conceptualisation of the concept exists and how does it function nowadays. To do that the thesis analysed works of Krasner (1999), Lake (2003), Osiander (2001), Thomson (1995), Heiskanen (2017) and de Carvahlo (2011).

The chosen method was narrative analysis which was conducted with the use of discussed concepts as well as with poststructuralist concepts: origin, dichotomies and discourse. Narrative analysis was chosen to discuss a historical narrative imbedded in the speeches of Polish President. Poststructuralism was an appropriate theory, because concepts such as origin were crucial in locating the source of today's narrative. Together, both theory and methods, were useful to analyse how the story inside the narrative shapes national identity, sovereignty and relations with the EU.

After analysing several speeches of Andrzej Duda, the paper came to the conclusion that sovereignty, at least in Polish context, is a subjective concept. Sovereignty is understood through perspective of its loss and fight that eventually led to regaining it. Based on historical references, sovereignty is used in the context of any inferences by foreign actors, whether cultural, religious or legal. Polish history is used by politicians to justify and legitimise current policies, juridical changes and relations with the EU. Anyone who does not support actions of government can be portrayed as a threat to sovereignty. In this way, sovereignty became a political tool in the hands of Polish authorities. As long as this identity is promoted by government, tense relations with the EU will continue.

The study contributes to the discussion of sovereignty and national identity. The study discussed the relation with the EU, thus in contribution to the discussion of integrity within the organisation. The study discussed Polish perspective, a state that perceive sovereignty through its lost in the past. The study was conducted as an interpretivist research; hence its findings may not be generalisable to other member states of the EU. However, the thesis could be used in future studies that would compare how Polish understanding of sovereignty

differ from other member states of the EU that had been part of the Soviet Block as well. By comparing those countries, future research may produce knowledge about sovereignty and integration of post-Soviet states in the European Union.

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