

INTRODUCTIONARY ARTICLE

THE SHAMELESS OFFICIAL IN AN AGGRESSIVE
STATE: EDUCATIONAL CONSEQUENCES

ALEKSANDER KOBYLAREK

Institute of Pedagogy, University of Wrocław
J. Wł. Dawida 1, 50-527 Wrocław, Poland
E-mail address: aleksander.kobylarek@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4562-9035>

MARTYNA MADEJ

Institute of Pedagogy, University of Wrocław
J. Wł. Dawida 1, 50-527 Wrocław, Poland
E-mail address: martyna.madej11@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6096-3621>

TIBOR MÁHRİK

Evangelical Theological Seminary of Prague
Stoliňská 41a, 193 00 Prague, Czech Republic
E-mail address: mahrikt@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7799-5841>

ABSTRACT

Modern democracy in the Polish State, as well as respect for minorities of all kinds and women themselves, is collapsing in favour of a particularly close affiliation between the State and the Church. The separation of these two institutions is becoming negligible, if it still exists, and the state and the church have become allies of each other with any educated and/or intelligent element that does not support such a practice. The medieval practices, the stigmatisation of individual groups, patriarchy and the lack of respect for the constitution oppress societies, oppress the rights of citizens and show their place in the ranks. More and more rights are granted only to privileged groups, while others, such as women, LGBTQA+, migrants, the disabled, political opponents, or anyone else who does not support the current actions of the most influential institutions, remain ignored or muddled, vis-à-vis potential voters of the ruling party. Meanwhile, influential citizens can afford to do almost anything. At present, the lord and master decides the fate of all his subjects irrespective of how many protests and on what issues take place in the state, the utter shamelessness



of the official can be observed here. Those who invoke God do not seem to believe in Him and, moreover, they act contrary to His principles. What stands out most in their actions is their total ignorance, their hatred of anyone who is against them and their lack of thought for the consequences that will come to them once they lose their power. The only hope seems to be for future voters with full civic awareness.

Keywords: informal education, democracy, autocracy, usurpation, politics, higher education, citizenship education, symbolic violence

INTRODUCTION

The development of democracy in the so-called First World has accustomed us to thinking of the government official as someone who has a particular responsibility. In this same context, Danish thinker Nikolai Grundtvig (1783-1872) indicated them as those on whom the construction of the state and a national community depends, through constant dialogue with other social classes, e.g., higher state school. This vision of the government official is an image of support and refuge for every citizen, regardless of their status. Representatives of the state take care of the common good with dedication and humility, for the benefit of both the broader national community and smaller local communities. (Kralik, 2016, 2017; Kondrla, & Kralik, 2016) A calm, methodical, organized and somewhat boring official, limited by procedures and regulations, and devoid of emotions but precise and attentive, has always been the epitome of predictability and a quiet peaceful life. Thanks to this, we don't need to worry about tomorrow, because we are sure that our state representatives will always act in accordance with the law, and within the limits set by that law. This general presupposition also includes the more precise assumption that interference by the coercive apparatus can only occur if there is a specific reason for it, e.g., a reasonable suspicion of a crime, and not as a result of the whim of a representative of the authorities.

Conducting education in such an organized and predictable environment is relatively simple, because it is easy to define education goals, establish the knowledge that a young citizen should receive and, finally, influence students (in the case of teachers) through authority and personal example. Educational systems struggle with many other problems, but the fundamentals of an educator's work are solid, based on a strong foundation. Unfortunately, political turbulence in countries moving away from deliberative democracy and towards authoritarianism or usurper democracy is destroying these foundations (Applebaum, 2020).

ETHICAL USURPATIONS

The basic problem of usurper democracies is usurpation by representatives of the authorities of the exclusive right to formulate moral judgments and ethical assessments. The way senior officials (president, prime minister, ministers) behave suggests that they are convinced they have a mission to

fulfil. The order of values to which the ideology they declare refers becomes 'the end that justifies the means' (Wojciszke & Rotkiewicz, 2018).

It seems to be the same type of belief in the existence of values beyond time and space, combined with a conviction of the mission and superiority of the chosen which characterizes conquistadors, inquisitors and war criminals.

Observing the political activity of ethical usurpers, one can come to the conclusion that the complexities and nuances of history and philosophy are unknown to them. One looks for references to Plato, Scheller, or dualistic ontological concepts in vain. They also do not oppose ethical concepts that are in clear contradiction, and visions of ethics presented by, for example, Alasdair MacIntyre (1966). The lack of such references, combined with the lack of deeper justification for the proposed ideology, allows us to assume that in fact there is no justified order of values, only a matrix and a political simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1988).

So what will remain when we reach beyond the matrix and rip off the false map that is Baudrillard's simulacrum? With no references to the systems developed by philosophy and other scientific fields, there will be a rather primitive understanding of what 'layman's term' is, and at the same time a selected understanding of tradition, supported by an equally crudely understood anthropology of everyday life, describing a vision of the world from the point of view of the uneducated. This, in turn, explains the anti-intellectual epithets aimed against elites by the populists.

Usurpers define themselves as "locals" who, like other simple people, do not want the world to be too complicated. On the one hand, they become allies and exponents of the will of the "simple man", on the other hand, they value a lack of education, rudeness, ignorance, and being adrift in the world (Kondrla, 2023). Thanks to this, people who previously did not have the courage to flaunt their anti-scientific views and contempt for others (groups, nationalities, orientations, lifestyles) can freely express opinions that were previously considered as a source of shame. They do this in accordance with the principle: if important people say and do so, then it is all right for me too.

Shame as a basic mechanism preventing us from acting with stupidity no longer works. Previously, when an elite of wise and educated people defined what was appropriate and what was not, a sense of shame caused anti-Semites, anti-vacciners, flat-earthers, fascists, and violent people to be aware of the lack of social acceptance for their beliefs and pseudoscience, and therefore careful about revealing themselves. The sight of a government flaunting its questioning of the scientific and ethical achievements of Western civilisation encourages the uneducated to fully express their ignorance and stupidity (Bolz, 1996).

By appealing to the common man and flaunting vulgarity and a lack of education, the new political elite has turned ignorance and contempt into the most important virtues. Revolt against everything that cannot be understood has been elevated to the rank of a supreme value.

In fact, however, this is not an appeal to 'the common man', but to idiots, because the usurper democracy elite considers the voters incapable of making the right political, moral or any other kind of choice. They also appeal to hate-filled cynics who, although they are not so stupid as not to notice the manipulation and hypocrisy of the authorities, are not bothered by this state of affairs because they are happy to see the fall and defeat of others. In this case, cynicism is in fact another type of stupidity, because increasing the good of the community enriches everyone (including the envious), and destroying the common good also destroys both cynics and those who passively observe.

If we ignore the essence of these ethical usurpations, we ourselves fall into symmetrical digressions that are intended to justify the actions of political degenerates and give us a false sense that we are only facing chance aberrations and not pure evil, an evil whose only aims are possession and power. And there is no deeper ethical justification for this, and all ideological narratives only serve to bring chaos into reasoning.

MORAL WARNING - CRACKS

Moral inconsistency is incontrovertible proof of falsehood, ethical usurpation, bad will and a desire to destroy Western civilisation based on democracy. We can see this very clearly by comparing the declarations and actions of representatives of the leaders of a usurper democracy. These new elites appeal to the axiom that they are the true representatives of the moral high ground. In Poland, they refer to the universe of values, where the leading place is taken by God, Honour and Homeland.

The axiom of moral purity and cultural superiority in relation to others (semantically, the phrase itself is nonsense, see: Olszewska-Dyoniziak, 2001) leads to the construction of further axioms: the infallibility of power, the proper representation of the spirit of the nation, possession of the status of the chosen/marked/predestined ones who have a historical mission to perform, that mission being to impose their value system on others (Rychnová et al. 2022).

God is a value that manifests itself in traditional (preferably pre-conciliar) Catholicism. Representatives of the new elite often refer to the role of the Catholic Church as the spiritual guide of the nation (Figiel, 2012). Thus, as a religion Catholicism became manifestly privileged, and the Catholic Church gained a large influence over secular power, despite the formal separation of religious institutions from the state. The Church hierarchy often calls for the electors to vote for a party that will give them further influence on the control of morality, and high state officials willingly accept invitations to religious events, presenting themselves as the only true defenders of the faith. In this way, there is a real "cementing" of church and state authorities, which has further significant consequences, such as leniency of

law enforcement agencies towards criminal clergy (paedophiles, thieves, drunk drivers) on the one hand, and on the other support in the form of parish meetings and speeches organized for government representatives.

Moral discord appears in two cases in particular. In the first one we are dealing with a situation where the authorities, represented by law enforcement agencies, should take action in the event of an obvious crime committed by a representative of the Church, and resolve the issue of repairing the harm done to an ordinary citizen (e.g. a child rape victim). Failure to do so (and sometimes even the protection of criminals in cassocks) causes an inevitable feeling of dissonance and helplessness in decent Catholics.

The second situation occurs when the declarations of government officials who claim to be followers of "God" and practicing Catholics, turn out to be something completely different. Such glaring examples include: repeated annulment of marriages by the Catholic Church (for an ordinary citizen, annulling a consummated marriage is practically impossible), embezzlement, greed, incitement to hatred and open contempt for the "Other" - immigrants, political opponents, women, LGBTQA+ members, and everyone who opposes their one true interpretation of the world.

Educated people, including Catholics, feel as if the nation had suddenly returned to the morality of the era of the Code of Hammurabi, or at least the Old Testament. It is as if the New Testament and the moral law of "love thy neighbour" no longer have any meaning. It is a kind of moral counter-revolution, turning back the clock of moral civilization thousands of years.

Honour and Homeland are the sanctity of tradition. They conjure up a romantic image of the country as the Jesus of nations, the bulwark of Christianity, full of citizens with noble intentions and heroic deeds. Such a narrative excludes all kinds of discussion and speculation (and even research) on a difficult past. The new version of history must strengthen the image of the "noble citizen" in the eyes of contemporary people. There is no place in the history books for blackmailers, collaborators, traitors and "queers". Everything that is bad for us comes from outside. Hence also the accusations made against other nations, creating an image of the homeland as a besieged fortress. The leaders of the usurper democracy will not negotiate a thing, because they are obsessed with the vision of a historical mission, and convinced of the moral superiority of the feudal lord, whose position allows them more "freedom" (Leszczyński, 2020).

Of course, it is obvious that society cannot construct its future with others when they are in conflict with others. A communal world cannot be built through aggression by rejecting all forms of agreement. There is also a whole range of dark sides to national identity. To build a positive future and healthy relationships with others, it is necessary to identify what has been scandalous, tackle the demons of the past, and learn lessons for the future. (Kralik & Torok, 2016, Pavlikova, 2017 2018). (Sweeping the past under the carpet, pretending to be someone else, and justifying and distorting history, only leads to further misunderstandings and mistakes, because

no conclusions have been drawn. „Real Poles“ do not want to feel ashamed, so they will deny facts describing the shameful history of their ancestors. However, this feeling of shame is only the beginning of purification. Logically-thinking people see contradictions between facts and interpretations of effects. It is those who shout loudly about the uniqueness of the nation while distorting history who remain without honour, not those who are blamed for a lack of honour and humanity due to their doubts, and their willingness to conduct research to resolve them.

All this means we live in two moral orders. Among Christians who are subject to ideology, the authorities appeal to primitive feelings, fears, emotions and a simple vision of the world before Christ. The elite lives a full life, without sin and infamy, and without being constrained by any restrictions, apart from the necessity of paying homage to a feudal lord further up the hierarchy. The Church will forgive, justify, explain and absolve almost any villainy. The rights of women, humans, animals, students and citizens are not applicable. There is only divine law, interpreted only by a church dignitary.

A CHAOTIC STATE

Referring to the idea of Grundtvig's higher state school, the place and value of an official in the modern state determines the scope of help that they can offer to a citizen. Such an official is a pillar, a keystone and a strong foundation of the national community and the citizen's relationship with state structures. The higher the official, the greater his power, understood not as the ability to force others to follow orders, but as the ability to help others to achieve ambitious goals and self-realization, without harming other people.

An official in a usurper democracy is closer to the feudal system than to democracy. The electoral system is supposed to justify gaining the right situation, which will then allow the system to be transformed in such a way that losing the election is no longer possible. This did not work in the United Kingdom or the United States. In Hungary and Turkey, elections have become a form of theatre, in which the roles are filled by the most important director until their death or overthrow. Systems have been reinforced - constitutions changed, unruly media bought up or closed down, and independent judges dismissed or imprisoned. The entire coercive apparatus is in the hands of great theatrical directors who decide on law, guilt, punishment and what is ideologically right. And what is ideologically right is what suits their interests, not what is good for the citizens. This is a completely different view of democracy than in the Nordic countries, including Grundtvig's homeland.

In such a state, the phenomenon of ideological and institutional incoherence corresponds to legal chaos (being its inherent element). Illegal or morally questionable actions directed against people considered as "aliens"

(and anyone who does not play his role according to the great director's wishes can become an "alien") are becoming more and more common, until finally an independently thinking citizen can become a public enemy number one at any time. In such conditions, an official can give vent to their insolence, cynicism, ostentatious ignorance, vehemently express contempt for weaker groups (migrants, election losers, sexual or national minorities), and continue to change the political environment with a shameless sense of impunity. In the absence of control institutions in the form of independent offices and officials who could halt usurper activities, independent commentators in the form of media which would be able to reveal the background of lawlessness and abuses of power, and an independent justice system, the state becomes chaotic, and its functioning depends on the good (or evil) will of the great usurper.

CROSSROADS. INSTEAD OF AN ENDING

Usurper democracy can be perceived as a certain stage of involution or degeneration of the state, although the usurpers will of course ideologically argue that it is a new, better form of government. The direction of change is determined by the takeover of power by the usurpers, and the subordination of individual independent institutions. Hitherto, behind each such action was one man who surrounded himself with faithful followers, like the guru of a sect. Very often, when describing the activities of such a community in everyday conversations, people mention symptoms similar to those in a sect - providing a ready-made, simplified vision of the world to followers, creating a doctrine of the leader's infallibility, and the effects of brainwashing in the form of speaking in stereotypes derived from dogma (Ryabchenko et al., 2018). It seems that as long as there are some islands of resistance and independence in the nation, a change in the direction of development is still possible. However, as each subsequent independent institution is taken over, it becomes more and more difficult. At the end of this stage, enslavement is so far advanced that no opposition party is able to win the next elections and the citizen is completely defenceless in the face of the authorities. The state is becoming totalitarian, a façade of democracy, and we need to prepare for the next stage.

The last stage is the robber state, whose leader, devoid of any inhibitions or shame, turns against their citizens (as in Belarus or North Korea), or tries to realize further dreams, such as an empire or a monopoly of natural resources, and decides to commit aggression against other countries (like Russia currently). A foretaste of what happens in a robber state is provided by the usurper democracy. The shamelessness, obsessions, aggression and feudalism of the representatives of power are just the beginning. This is a kind of informal education lesson for all those who are still aware of what the usurper democracy is heading towards. We should also realize that

soon there will be nothing left to save, and any manifestation of rebellion will be nothing but a heroic act.

The shamelessness of an official in the usurper democracy is the king's ostentatious contempt for his subjects and, in more recent times, a manifestation of the manorial mentality. A reflection of the times when the lord of the manor decided the fate of the peasant who was completely subordinated to his authority. This is a kind of civilizational battle. On the one hand, a struggle for total power and, on the other, for freedom and a citizen-friendly state, or a state of really empowered citizens.

It should also be realized that usurpers have never (and will never) treated the people subject to their power as fully empowered entities. For them, they are just fools who allowed themselves to be manipulated because they believed in empty dogmas, or fools who believe in democracy and allowed themselves to be convinced that they could win against a cocktail of empty promises. And for an aggressive usurper, a believer in the cult of strength, a fool is a weaker being, only worthy of contempt.

Ostentatious shamelessness on the part of the usurpers also means that they do not believe in the possibility of defeat and the need to negotiate with independent institutions. They are not afraid of God (in whom they do not believe), nor of human judgment, nor of how they will go down in history. Another display of their ignorance is a lack of awareness that empires rise and fall regularly, and that usurpers end up in prison or on the gallows (Nguyen, 2021). The sad thing is that they are left behind in ashes and ruins, and subsequent generations repeat their mistakes (Pavlikova, 2017).

Even educated people do not avoid these mistakes. The usurper authorities are often supported by scientific authorities. In the future, they will be interesting cases for research, just as communist or fascist ideologists. In the society of the stream space (Castells, 2009), one cannot hide behind ignorance. Independent media reports further crimes of the usurpers. It will not be possible to say that they were cut off from information. Perhaps the result of cold calculation tells them that it is better to have leftovers from the master's table in the form of good positions and allowances allocated by the usurper authorities, than to be underestimated and, in the future, be contemptuous of their environment. They are willing to risk their authority in the future for tangible benefits in the present (Martin et al. 2018).

In the end, the phenomenon of usurper democracy can be seen as an eternal clash between opposites: nature and culture, emotions and reason, chaos and order (Burszta, 2009). The shamelessness and ostentatious arrogance of public officials is possible because the citizens allow it. Their lack of education can be perceived as a deficiency of reason and culture, not possessing them in a sufficient degree to tame emotions and nature, and control chaos.

To teachers operating on the borders of educational institutions there remains only the hope that one of the next lectures will not be wasted and will find fertile ground, awakening civic awareness. Anyone who finds the

civil courage to proclaim their beliefs can be such a teacher. Except this courage will become less and less among citizens as usurpation progresses, shamelessness increases and the public sphere continues to deteriorate.

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