



RAINBOWS AND THUNDERBOLTS: A NON-OBVIOUS ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE LGBTQIAP MOVEMENT AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN POLAND IN 2016–2020

TEŻCZE I PIORUNY. NIEOCZYWISTY SOJUSZ RUCHU LGBT Z RUCHEM KOBIECYM W POLSCE W LATACH 2016–2020

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— ABSTRACT —

The article analyses contemporary social and political movements operating in Poland under the rule of the conservative and semi-authoritarian Law and Justice. It traces and reconstructs interactions between organized and trans-nationalized LGBTQIAP movement present in Poland since 1989 and the new women's movement constituted on the wave of contention against the conservative turn and attempts to further restrict abortion law in Poland that was backed by the government. The strategies employed by both movements differ but for each one of them the interaction has proven a considerable success. In a not-so-obvious manner, the solidarity with LGBTQIAP movement, built gradually by the women's movement, has helped to strengthen its base and its presence in the public debate. The article rests on textual analysis of social media sources to trace the timing of the most significant gestures of inter-movement solidarity.

— ABSTRAKT —

Abstrakt: W artykule poddano analizie współczesne ruchy społeczne działające w Polsce pod rządami konserwatywnego Prawa i Sprawiedliwości. Prześladowano i zrekonstruowano interakcje pomiędzy zorganizowanym i transnarodowym ruchem LGBTQIAP obecnym w Polsce od 1989 roku a nowym ruchem kobiecym, powstałym na fali sprzeciwu wobec konserwatywnego zwrotu w krajowej polityce oraz wobec prób dalszego ograniczania prawa aborcyjnego w Polsce. Strategie stosowane przez oba ruchy różnią się między sobą, ale dla każdego z nich interakcja okazała się znaczącym sukcesem. W nieoczywisty sposób solidarność z ruchem LGBTQIAP, budowana stopniowo przez ruch kobiecy, przyczyniła się do wzmocnienia jego zaplecza i obecności w debacie publicznej. Artykuł opiera się na analizie tekstowej źródeł w mediach społecznościowych, pozwalającej prześledzić momenty, w których dochodziło do najważniejszych gestów solidarności między ruchami.

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Słowa kluczowe: sprzeciw; ruchy społeczne; publiczność intymna; prawa LGBTQIAP; Strajk Kobiet

This article attempts to trace the “non-obvious alliance” between the women’s movement and the LGBTQIAP+ movement in Poland in 2016–2020. These movements have joined forces in the face of unprecedented attacks launched against them by Poland’s ruling conservative politicians. However, their alliance in Poland is not easy: in a predominantly conservative country, where family values have been at the forefront for years, they are in a sense competing for the attention of the liberal public, although cooperation and identification of interlocking goals are bringing about a broadening recognition of the goals of the LGBTQIAP movement and the women’s movement. To show the development of this alliance, I analyse online sources: statuses and descriptions of events in social media (Facebook platform). In the concluding section, I show the transformation of social attitudes towards the demands of the LGBTQIAP movement and the women’s movement.

The notion of social movement is not clearly defined in social or political theory despite the extensive literature on the subject. Perhaps the reason for that is the ever-changing and innovative character of the social movements themselves. For the purposes of this article, I find illuminating the basic claims made by Claus Offe (1985, p. 826), according to whom, “the space of the new movements is a space of *noninstitutional politics* which is not provided for in the doctrines and practices of liberal democracy and the welfare state”. This inconsistency with systemic politics is “due to the movements’ lack of some of the properties of formal organization” (1985, p. 830). This description coincides with the definition of the social movement provided by Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani (2009, pp. 152–153) as “loosely structured collective conflict”, generally associated with “taking to the streets”.

However, the practices of contemporary democracy show strong tendencies towards movements’ structure, formal organisation and institutional establishment, generally connected to transnational collaboration. Associating country-level struggle with human rights recognition processes on the international platforms, the movements gain a transnational characteristics, as indicated by Sidney Tarrow (2005, p. 4): “what is most striking about the new transnational activism is both its connection to the current wave of globalization and its relation to

the changing structure of international politics. The former, I argue, provides incentives and causes of resistance for many (although not all) transnational activists; but the latter offers activists focal points for collective action, provides them with expanded resources and opportunities, and brings them together in transnational coalitions and campaigns”.

In my research, I will use the notion of social movement to depict mostly the loosely structured “taking to the streets” of the women’s movement in 2016–2020, whereas I will identify the LGBTQIAP movement, as well as the feminist movement in Poland as belonging to a sub-category of the “transnational social movements”.

POLITICAL CONTEXT: GENDER IDEOLOGY, LGBTQIAP IDEOLOGY, ABORTION, LGBTQIAP-FREE ZONES

In 2016–2020, the conservative government of Poland launched a series of attacks on the rights of women and LGBTQIAP+ people. The common denominator of the acts of hostility on the part of those in power became the defense of the so-called “traditional form of the family” (i.e., heteronormative and nuclear), which was allegedly hit by the realization of women’s and LGBTQIAP+ rights. The leitmotif of the attacks was the dangerous “gender ideology”, which Marchlewska et al. (2019) identify as conspiracy theory. The researchers understand “the gender conspiracy beliefs” as a set of opinions amounting to a vision that: “Gender studies and gender-equality activists represent socially progressive forces that secretly promote an ideology designed to harm traditional values and social arrangements. In line with this reasoning, scientists and activists who emphasize that gender is not only a biological but also a psychological phenomenon are seen as enemies of human nature. Together with feminists and the LGBTQIAP movement, they are perceived as a group that strategically and purposefully seeks to deny the importance of the traditional differentiation of men and women” (Marchlewska et al., 2019, pp. 1–2).

In later years, “gender ideology” was joined by “LGBTQIAP ideology” with a similar message. Elżbieta Korolczuk (2020, pp. 165–166) situates the shift in emphasis from gender ideology to LGBTQIAP ideology in 2019: “Initially, the Polish anti-gender campaign focused mainly on fighting sex education and resisting the ratification of the Istanbul Convention. Between 2016 and 2018, it also included efforts to further tighten access to abortion. Since spring 2019,

LGBTQIAP people have become the main enemy of ultraconservatives, and the term 'LGBTQIAP ideology' has to some extent replaced the phrase 'gender ideology'. Both 'ideologies' have been used to suggest that proponents of gender and sexual equality are wolves in sheep's clothing: dangerous ideologues whose goal is to dismantle the 'traditional' family, the nation, and ultimately 'Christian civilization'.

Korolczuk's identification of the shift in 2019 would suggest that "raising the stakes" was part of the election campaign, with European and parliamentary elections taking place in Poland in this very year. By denouncing the "LGBTQIAP ideology", the circles positioned to the right of the ruling Law and Justice party marked their own identity. It seems, however, that placing this difference solely in the context of electoral struggle and the construction of political difference is inaccurate. If we assume, as do Douglas et al. (2019, p. 20), that "conspiracy theories may be associated with intentions to engage in political action against elites", then the mobilization of this type requires constant raising of political and emotional stakes. The replacement of "gender ideology" with "LGBTQIAP ideology" as the "symbolic glue" (term coined by Kováts & Pöim, 2015) may just as well result from a need for ever new stimuli in the form of sensational reports about alleged conduct of those "exotic" social groups.

It was the Catholic hierarchy that introduced the phrase "gender ideology" into circulation. Pokorna-Ignatowicz (2014) traces the first criticisms of gender studies in 2010 and 2011. The Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, the so-called Istanbul Convention, was frequently slurred as "gender ideology".

All three positions (anti-abortion, opposition to "gender ideology", and opposition to "LGBTQIAP ideology") seem to meet in similar areas: defense of patriarchal religion, fear of freedom of sexual expression, and glorification of children's innocence (including the most innocent of all, i.e., the "unborn children"), as well as strengthening the family with a push to ban divorce. The aversion to "gender ideology" or "LGBTQIAP ideology" and the ongoing fight against abortion in Poland are linked by a deep abhorrence of sexual freedom, as well as free-thinking (see: Pollitt, 2014). However, their occurrence in Polish public discourse should not be confused with social tendency towards ritualized scapegoating (see: Girard, 1986), as it is too structured and resembles institutional propaganda (see: Bernays, 1928).

Both the women's and the LGBTQIAP rights movements can well argue their reasons to protest. As I will try to show, the tactical alliance between the women's

movement and the LGBTQIAP movement promises long-term benefits for both sides, but in practice it does not always run smoothly. One of the fundamental reasons is the structural difference between the two movements: the LGBTQIAP movement is set in the tradition of the Civil Rights Movement, focused on lobbying and advocacy to improve the lives of LGBTQIAP+ people, and structured around institutions and organizations. The women's movement, on the other hand, is a classic mass protest movement, a counter-movement reacting to the actions of those in power. Although existing feminist organizations strive to be part of it, they are not crucial for its mobilization nor do they structure it.

THE LGBTQIAP MOVEMENT IN POLAND: CHARACTERISTICS AND GOALS

For Beata Bielska (2018, p. 59), “the contemporary LGBT* movement in Poland emerged mainly as a result of external factors and did not have a spontaneous genesis”. Bielska considers that “the LGBT* movement in Poland is a ‘child’ of political transformation and cultural diffusion” (p. 68). A different view of the movement's origins is held by activists from Liga dla Tolerancji¹ [The League for Tolerance], according to whom the movement's beginnings should be dated to the late 1980s: “The first Polish lesbian and gay organization, Warsaw Homosexual Movement (WRH), was founded in 1987. [...] It must be emphasized, however, that WRH operated illegally. At the time, the authorities refused to register the association because of the alleged possibility of violating the principles of public morality. Local associations were also formed in Wrocław and Gdańsk” (Liga dla Tolerancji, n.d., para. 3–4).

Restrictions of the registration and operation of NGOs prior to 1989 support the claim that the LGBTQIAP movement could only emerge in a liberal democracy. However, the social dynamics that made it possible to create multiple organizations as early as in 1989 shows that a significant mobilization had already

¹ Liga dDla Tolerancji's project “„Polska-Ukraina: strategie, dobre praktyki i doświadczenia na polu aktywizmu LGBTQIAP”” has been published without names of the authors nor any relevant date of the publication. With the last quoted events of 2014, I assume the publication date to be no later than 2015 – coinciding with the beginning of the smear campaign against LBGTQ people, which explains no personal names given. While poorly attributed from a scholarly point of view, multiple talks and the author's own memories confirm accuracy of the Liga dDla Tolerancji's accounts, hence the decision to consider it among sources.

taken place before the political change, and that the overthrowing of the secular socialist regime raised great hopes.

Both Bielska and Liga dla Tolerancji unanimously point to 2001 as a breakthrough year for the establishment of the movement. A coalition of social democrats and members of the People's Party came to power at that time. People from social organizations involved in, among other things, the Beijing, Beijing +5, and Durban trials, in which LGBTQIAP issues were vigorously debated, were invited to cooperate with the government. It is also worth noting that the Third World Gay and Lesbian Conference took place in Warsaw in 2000, which further strengthened the visibility of Polish LGBTQIAP organizations and embedded the national movement in an international framework.

Strengthened by its contact with the international circuit, the movement initiated new types of activities, fighting for ever greater social visibility. According to Bielska, "Such an event was undoubtedly the first Equality Parade of 2001, still held in Warsaw today. In 2003, the Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH) organized the social campaign 'Let Them See Us', depicting same-sex couples on billboards across the country" (2018, p. 66). Liga dla Tolerancji, on the other hand, notes: "The year 2001 saw the establishment of the Kampania Przeciw Homofobii [Campaign Against Homophobia, KPH] association, headed for many years by Robert Biedroń. The profile of KPH's activities, in comparison to the Lambda Warszawa's, was much more political from the beginning. In May of the same year, the first Equality Parade in Poland took place, organized by the Polish branch of the ILGCN (International Lesbian and Gay Cultural Network) under the leadership of Szymon Niemiec. The counterpart of the Equality Parade in Kraków became the March for Tolerance (since 2010, the Equality March in Kraków), first organized in 2004 by Fundacja Kultura dla Tolerancji" (Liga dla Tolerancji, n.d., para. 9).

Agnès Chetaille (2011, p. 119) observed: "collective action undertaken by Polish lesbians and gays was slow to emerge and to reach the public sphere after 1989. When it finally did, at the beginning of the years 2000, it faced a strong resistance and sparked off a nation-wide public debate with contradictory effects". Chetaille calls the post-1989 Polish system a "heterosexual democracy" (p. 120), although perhaps the terms "heteronormative democracy" or "patriarchal democracy" would be better suited. Hence, the self-imposing alliance between the LGBTQIAP movement and the feminist movement.

Sociologist Jacek Kochanowski (2007, p. 153) spoke of a "coalition for liberties" that formed in Poland "between the LGBTQIAP movement and feminist

and environmental organizations, with support from some trade unions and political parties”. Central European LGBTQIAP movement scholars Jon Binnie and Christian Klesse (2012, p. 445) linked it to the movement’s internationalized nature and specifically pointed it out: “Many feminist groups have supported LGBTQ struggles, even if their constituencies are predominantly or exclusively heterosexual. The transnationalization of Polish LGBTQ politics advances the manifestation of complex and multilayered solidarities”. Bielska (2018, p. 240) even recommends a strategy of such alliance: “It [the intensive mobilization phase] should take the form of mass, widespread civil disobedience, and thus would have to address the interests of broader categories of citizens. In this context, it is necessary to have a charismatic leader/leader (preferably a non-homonormative person, i.e., not a cis-male and not gay) and an alliance with a movement whose followers/supporters are potentially numerous and ideologically close. Such as the feminist movement”.

The Polish LGBTQIAP movement has never claimed to be a mass movement. Mass demonstrations like the Warsaw Equality Parade are not “prides”, but rather manifestations of solidarity and support – the Parade includes platforms of political parties, social organizations and even corporations declaring themselves LGBTQIAP-friendly, such as Google. As Bielska (2018, p. 206) puts it, “political lobbying is considered the most effective mode of action – all others, like changing public opinion, are complementary to it”. This goes hand in hand with Binnie and Klesse’s (2012) straightforward claim about the “transnationalization” of the Polish LGBTQIAP activism.

However, when the right-wing Law and Justice party came to power in 2015, efforts towards legislative change became futile. Since then, the movement has intensified its efforts to influence public opinion. Interventionist social actions, such as Bart Staszewski who attached signs identifying “zones free of LGBTQIAP ideology”, draw attention to the growing political expression of homophobia but also to growing numbers of people who are against homophobia and transphobia (Ash, 2020). In 2020, LGBTQIAP activists joined the women’s movement and became part of its decision-making structures, such as the Consultative Council of the National Women’s Strike, in the form of the LGBT+ Rights Team.

FEMINIST MOVEMENT AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN POLAND

For the purposes of this article, I differentiate the women's movement from the feminist movement. While the feminist movement in Poland after 1989 followed a similar trajectory as the LGBTQIAP movement, the wave of mobilization that emerged in 2016 in response to the threat of stricter abortion laws in Poland emerged independently of it. Organizations with a feminist profile began to emerge in Poland immediately after the political breakthrough. Ewa Malinowska (1999, p. 73) counted that "7 women's organizations started their activities in 1989 and in the first half of the 1990s there were more than a dozen of them per year". Dorota Szelewa (2017, p. 12) observes: "The feminist movement in Poland after 1989 had to deal with the defense of women's rights and gender equality on many fronts. Conservative post-Solidarity governments, in addition to proclaiming the official ideology of a 'return' to traditional roles culturally assigned to men and women, led to a fundamental erosion of women's rights, including a ban on legal abortion, with few exceptions. The mobilization around reproductive rights, which almost immediately after 1989 became the target of attack by post-Solidarity governments, cemented the feminist movement in Poland. This is why, although remasculinization of the public sphere and weakness of the feminist movement could be observed throughout Eastern Europe, Polish feminism was relatively the most developed compared to other countries in the region".

The mass mobilization of women in 2016, which occurred in response to the bill brought to the Parliament to completely eliminate access to abortion and to introduce the principle of imprisonment of women who terminate pregnancy, came as a complete surprise and arose separately from existing structures of the feminist movement. The differences were both in scale and in character of the two movements. The annual "Manifas" identified as the strongest "street occurrences" of the feminist movement in Poland, gathering several thousand activists throughout the country, while the call of the Women's Strike to protest on October 3 was met with a response of over 100,000 people across the country: "No one was expecting what happened next. In a society mired in political apathy, around 100,000 people took part in 143 protests in cities, towns and villages across Poland. Many thousands more wore black to work or school. The protests were remarkable for both their spontaneity – they had come together in less than two weeks – and their local character. There was no central organiser, no unified

plan of action; across the country, women took the initiative and came up with their own ideas about how to protest” (Cocotas, 2017, para. 9).

The women’s movement, All-Poland Women’s Strike, met the commonly accepted definition of a “contentious episode”, fulfilling the criteria of “continuous streams of contention including collective claims making that bears on other parties’ interests” (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001, p. 24). Because of its express aim to mobilize as broadly as possible, the movement focused on building a consensus, attempting to operate on the “lowest common denominator”. The activists sought this “lowest denominator” in opposition to the tightening of the abortion ban and the desire to defend the “compromise” of 1993². The conflict between the organized transnational feminist movement, based on the recognition of the interest of their target group, and the spontaneous, unorganized and strictly local women’s “episode of contention” was thus structurally determined.

However, as Tarrow (2005, p. 11) warns: “By mobilizing consensus, movement leaders play an important role in promoting the movement. But leaders can forge a social movement only if they succeed in reaching and extending a deeply rooted sense of solidarity and identity”.

The women’s movement informal character caused a certain aversion towards more established Polish feminist movement, the revindications of which were rarely taken to the fore by the women’s movement. The feminist authors, such as Agnieszka Graff, or the feminist politicians, such as Barbara Nowacka, leader of the pro-abortion legislative committee Save the Women, were *personae non gratae* in the protests – probably for fear of elitization of the message. Hence the need to “borrow” identity through gestures of solidarity. The most important and pervasive gesture linked the women’s movement with the LGBTQIAP movement whose transnational character did not present a threat similar to the feminist movement’s, as its organizations and postulates did not overlap with the women’s movement slogans. The work of solidarity (or even love) became foundational for the movement, just as its impetus provided momentum for the LGBTQIAP postulates and social recognition.

² Interestingly enough, the position of the All-Poland Women’s Strike on abortion remained ambivalent for a long time. In 2017, the movement’s headquarters joined the network Great Coalition for Equality and Choice, whose program centers around efforts to liberalize access to abortion in Poland. However, the movement only took a clear pro-abortion stance in the second half of 2020, when its leader, Marta Lempart, was named plenipotentiary of the civic legislative committee Legal Abortion -- No Compromise.

In the next subsection, I will examine the process of building a movement by targeting and strengthening a “sense of solidarity and identity”, as well as the evolution of the relationship between the women’s movement and the LGBTQIAP movement. I have examined messages posted on social media by the All-Poland Women’s Strike from 2016 to 2020, as well as the complementary communications of the two largest organizations of the LGBTQIAP movement in Poland: Campaign Against Homophobia and Love Does Not Exclude.

TURNING POINTS: ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

The analysis has been focused on Facebook posts from 2016–2020: statuses, descriptions of events, descriptions of videos, or “shares” of other people’s material, collected from pages of the All-Poland Women’s Strike and leading organizations of the Polish LGBTQIAP movement. The relevant messages were located by searching the phrase “LGBT” in the case of the page of the All-Poland Women’s Strike, and “Women’s Strike” for the pages of the LGBTQIAP organizations Love Does Not Exclude and the Campaign Against Homophobia. The results provided a collection of several dozens, in the case of the All-Poland Women’s Strike, and a dozen, in the case of the leading organizations of the LGBTQIAP movement, entries of increasing frequency in the indicated timespan of 2016–2020. I chose Facebook as the main and most consistent platform of social communication for both movements. The aim of the analysis was to explore the historical dynamics of solidarity between the LGBTQIAP movement and the newly minted women’s movement in Poland and the process of negotiating common goals in the context of the characteristics of both movements outlined above.

The Love Does Not Exclude Association was the first to declare support for the women’s cause. On October 4, 2016, the day after Black Monday – a surprising mass protest throughout Poland – the Love Does Not Exclude Association published a post supporting the Women’s Strike mobilization against the tightening of abortion law. The Association skillfully used the momentum of the mass uprising to increase the visibility of its own constituencies: “[...] We are finally here to show that we cannot be decided without us. [...] We are tired of hearing that demanding equality is radicalism. We are tired of hearing that women in Poland are not discriminated against. We work in the field of LGBT+ rights, so we know by heart the excuses about what society supposedly wants. [...] We are here to remind you that we exist, and we are not going anywhere. All women,

those hetero- and non-heterosexual. Trans men, cis women, non-binary people. We can all be affected by this” (Miłość nie wyklucza, 2016, October 4).

The association made similar calls for solidarity with the Women’s Strike demonstrations planned for International Women’s Day in March 2017: “It is about all women – non-heterosexual, heterosexual, transgender, non-heteronormative” (Miłość nie wyklucza, 2017, March 8).

The first expression of solidarity was not immediately reciprocated by the Women’s Strike. The first mentions of LGBTQIAP rights do not appear until February 2017, when, at a meeting of local groups, the demands of the National Women’s Strike are drafted, including a mention of the rights of the LGBTQIA+ people:

WE DEMAND: [...]

5. A Poland for all:

- Poland being a state under the rule of law with free courts, free elections, and free media;
- A Poland where human rights are for everyone, including women, LGBTQIA+ people, people with disabilities, national, ethnic and religious minorities, seniors, and the economically disadvantaged [...] (Strajk Kobiet, n.d.).

At the end of March 2017, Women’s Strike page shared for the first time material from the Love Does Not Exclude profile (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2017, March 21). In July 2017, the Women’s Strike for the first time indicated an LGBTQIAP organization as a co-organizer of the strike protests – Tolerado organization from Gdańsk. The protesters marched under the slogan “Free Courts” (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2017, March 21). In the same month, the “Pro-democracy Coalition” was formed: “The democratic opposition unites under the auspices of the Women’s Strike. Plans: to defend courts, media and women’s rights” (Wilgocki, 2017). LGBTQIAP rights were not mentioned in any prominent place.

In September 2017, the Women’s Strike stood in solidarity with protesters following the death of a teenager who committed suicide due to harassment for his orientation. It released a solidarity letter from a previously unheard of ‘Queer in Solidarity collective’ (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2017, September 20). Kacper’s suicide was a break-through moment: the LGBTQIAP community started to be seen as fragile and vulnerable, and the demands as interlocking (sex education in schools is a reproductive right, but it also helps fight homophobia

at an early stage, etc.). At the end of October 2017, Strike shared information about the Women's March protest in Katowice, which developed the theme of LGBTQIAP rights (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2017, October 27).

In March (Miłość nie wyklucza, 2018, March 22) and July 2018 (Miłość nie wyklucza, 2018, July 1), Love Does Not Exclude called to join the anti-abortion protests of the Women's Strike under the slogan "Zabierz tęczaową flagę z kirem" [Take the Rainbow Flag with a Pall].

In June 2018, the National Women's Strike used a profile picture with a rainbow rather than red lightning bolt for the first time. The logo was on display on "rainbow Fridays", joining an educational campaign launched by the Campaign Against Homophobia in 2016 (see: Kampania Przeciw Homofobii, 2020, October 30).

In the 2018 local elections, the National Women's Strike was endorsing at least seven candidates in various locales who identified with the Strike and had been protecting LGBTQIAP rights on their agenda.

At the end of February 2019, the National Women's Strike published the manifesto "Hate Kills" as a program for the International Women's Strike: "[...] in Poland we call our day a day against hatred and contempt for women. Against hatred and cruelty to children. Against hatred and inhumane treatment of animals. Against hatred and thoughtlessness towards nature. Against hatred of human beings – different, younger, older, with disabilities, LGBT+, migrants, refugees" (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2019, February 26)

In 2019, OSK provided a platform for a number of actions initiated by the LGBTQIAP movement, encouraging the reporting of anti-LGBTQIAP hate speech on Facebook (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2019, July 17) and the creation of safe spaces for coming out (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2019, May 16). It also organized local protests against "homophobes" (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2019, September 10; Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2019, November 24).

At least four activists supported by the Women's Strike who have devoted an important place in their program to LGBTQIAP rights participated in the parliamentary elections in the fall of 2019. One of them, Katarzyna Kotula from Gryfino, got into the parliament.

In the face of homophobic violence, the alliance of the women's movement and the LGBTQIAP movement was cemented. The two movements conducted many actions together, although pandemic considerations made it difficult to organize demonstrations. Following the tightening of abortion laws by the Constitutional Court on October 22, 2020, the All-Poland Women's Strike sought

to use the mobilization to reinforce the movement politically. It announced the formation of an Advisory Council to the All-Poland Women's Strike; one of its thirteen teams was to develop a program for LGBTQIAP people (Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet, 2020, November 1). Mirosława Makuchowska from the Campaign Against Homophobia became a member of the Council.

SUMMARY: THE EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC SUPPORT

The alliance of the LGBTQIAP movement with the women's movement between 2016 and 2020 has brought clearly positive results for the former. Public awareness of the existence and problems of the LGBTQIAP community has significantly increased. Support for the movement's main demands, such as civil unions, has also increased by leaps and bounds. In 2013, only 27% of Poles were in favor of the right to marriage for same-sex couples (SuperExpress, 2013), in June 2017, that is, a few months after the "recognition" of the demands of the LGBTQIAP movement by the All-Poland Women's Strike, this percentage was already 38% (Pacewicz, 2017), and at the end of September 2019 (after the riots in Białystok) support for marriage equality was already 45% (Ambroziak, 2019).

A deeper question, in a sense, is what the women's movement has gained from its alliance with the LGBTQIAP movement. Sidney Tarrow argues that a social movement shaped by discontent must, in order to persist, develop an identity and establish its bonds of solidarity. The political identity of the All-Poland Women's Strike is unclear. The movement's leader, Marta Lempart, describes it as a "movement without leaders" (Gessen, 2020). For a mass all-Poland movement, it has also proven to be politically ineffective – it has promoted only one personality worthy of the Polish Parliament, Katarzyna Kotula from Gryfino.

Here, the concept of "intimate public" developed by Lauren Berlant (2008, p. viii) may prove to be an interesting analytical tool: "A certain circularity structures an intimate public, therefore: its consumer participants are perceived to be marked by a commonly lived history; its narratives and things are deemed expressive of that history while also shaping its conventions of belonging; and, expressing the sensational, embodied experience of living as a certain kind of being in the world, it promises also to provide a better experience of social belonging [...]. So if, from a theoretical standpoint, an intimate public is a space of mediation in which the personal is refracted through the general, what's salient for its consumers is that it is a place of recognition and reflection".

Significantly, Berlant's "intimate public" is "juxtapolitical", that is, it does not enter political discourse as an opposition to the majority, but operates in the dimension of sentiment, convention and morality (2008, p. 3). Moreover, Berlant sees that: "Intimate publics can provide alibis for politicians who claim to be members of every community except political one" (2008, pp. 10–11). By virtue of the fact that the female intimate audience registers the crisis as a task for femininity, it will present it in the "idiom of love" (2008, p. 19). In sentimental optics, love is anti-political but heals wounds inflicted by politics.

This kind of feminine management of sentiment and morality sheds light on the reasons why the Polish women's movement is unable to formulate a political interest, but builds its strength and tries to shape social change through what one may call the labor of love: recognizing injustice, building solidarity, adopting the demands of other movements – besides the LGBTQIAP movement, the All-Poland Women's Strike has also "taken in" other politically disadvantaged groups: caregivers of people with disabilities, opponents of judicial reform, antifascists, etc. As far as the women's movement is concerned, Tarrow's "episode of contention" can only be lived through in Berlant's "idiom of love".

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