THE IMAGE OF THE COUNTRY IN JOURNALISTS' TWEETS – CASE STUDY

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Abstract

This article attempts to assess the role of Twitter in international communication on the ba- sis of intentionally selected part of reality. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the potential impact of messages, posted in the microblogging service by the internationally recognized journalist, on creating the image of Poland in the world. Case study was carried out on the example of Anne Applebaum's Twitter account.

Keywords: Twitter, image, journalism, communication

Introduction

This article attempts to assess the role of Twitter, as the medium, in international communication, although in a very limited extent. The purpose of the text is in fact the analysis of the potential impact of messages posted on Twitter by the recognized jour- nalist, and comments of the recipients of these messages, in creating the image of Po- land in the world. Case study was carried out on the example of Twitter account of Anne Applebaum, associated with Poland, American journalist and writer. At the beginning of the analysis, it was assumed, that basing on the individual case study, it is possible to state probable further hypotheses about the potential of creating an image of Poland on Twitter by well-known journalists.

According to O. Gorbaniuk and D. Radman (2011, pp.75-94), the image of the country is the total sum of person's beliefs on a given country. Positive image plays an important role as a tool of influence in international relations, therefore, every coun- try attempts to shape it, and thus strengthen its competitiveness on the international arena. The country's image in the world consists of many nuances, and each of them, depending on the context and time, may be significant. The basic element of the coun- try's image understood in this way is military, economic and scientific potential, but the

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prestige of the state depends not only on them. A significant role plays the group of evaluations and opinions relating to its functioning, and activities formulated outside of a given country.

A significant role in creating the image of the country plays media, including for- eign ones. Communication between the representatives of the authorities, institutions, organizations, and elites, who create the image of the country, and the society, is rarely direct, and nowadays the media does mediate more often. Of course, the media are not the only source of information about the countries, but they are usually the most intense source of opinions and evaluations, thus fulfilling its opinion-forming role (Gac- kowski, 2009). Moreover, an increasingly important role in all types and at all levels of communication plays social media, which content is basically formed by the ordinary Internet users.

In the hands of celebrities, politicians and journalists, they have become tools to promote the views and opinions, thus shaping the moods and social relations. One of these tools is Twitter, a free, public mikroblogging platform that allows publishing short messages, of 140 characters or less (Szews, 2013, pp. 271-289), as well as using many abbreviations and key words, which have become known as hashtags. According to an expert of the Polish Internet, Eryk Mistewicz, "Twitter is the most characteristic medium of the new media era, posttelevision, postradio and postjournal medium" (Mistewicz, 2015, p. 7).

Twitter is known as a one of the "fastest source of information". Very often, import- ant messages from politicians or editorial boards are transmitted through this service. Therefore, for the majority of active users it is the most important, and sometimes the only source of information (it is important here to emphasize that it concerns active us- ers, and not the ones just having an account). Twitter has its power in having accounts of people known to media. As a result, Twitter has the potential to become in some cir- cles, one of the most influential media. In the US, this microblog is an important element of election campaigns and the candidates compete with each other on a "number of followers" on their profiles[4]. For example, it was often repeated, that Barack Obama won the election thanks to Twitter. Also some people assume that Polish President Andrzej Duda owes his popularity to the activity at this service, although the presence in social media may be the reason of problems too (Noch, 2016). Twitter is also a great place for discussions and exchange of views between users. During the Olympic Games in Lon- don in 2012, on Twitter have emerged more than 150 million messages associated with this event. The same year were written "only" 31 million posts about the presidential elections in the US (Sowiar, 2012).

Anne Applebaum - American journalist of Polish origin

Anne Applebaum is an American journalist, a famous writer, columnist of *The Washington Post*, privately wife of Polish politician, former Minister of Foreign Affairs - Radoslaw Sikorski. She grew up in a family of American Jews, descended from the Pol- ish Eastern Borderlands (now Belarus). During studies she was a member of the group of best students called Phi Beta Kappa, which at its time included 17 US presidents and 136 Nobel laureates (Stankiewicz, Deptuła, 2010). She studied in the best universities of the United States and Great Britain. She is fluent in Russian, French and Polish. She cre- ated a network of contacts in the US, UK, and continental Europe. Her knowledge with a degree in history and Russian literature at Yale University, her personal experience of multiple travels to countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and 20 years of living and working in Poland, made her a specialist of international affairs in this region.

The importance of the Applebaum's opinion for American society and the possible effects on the shape of the mood in the Western world is evidenced by her professional achievements (and also, in the context of this text, activity of Twitter's users on her account; see below). Applebaum worked as editor of the foreign section and deputy editor for the weekly magazine *The Spectator* in London, and later as a journalist for the magazine Slate, also had her own column in *The Foreigners*. Since 2002 she is a member of the editorial board of one of America's most prestigious journals - *The Washington Post*, where she writes regularly foreign affairs column. She wrote also for *The Evening Standard* and *The Daily Telegraph*. Her books are popular and often quoted. So far she published five books, including *Between East and West: Across the Borderlands of Europe*, for which she received the Adolph Bentinck Prize, and *Gulag: a History*, awarded in 2004 with the most prestigious journalism award in the US - the Pulitzer Prize (Stankiewicz, 2010). All this may prove the professional position of Anne Applebaum and influence of her opinion on the image of Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland.

As a journalist Anne Applebaum is mainly engaged in international politics. She is not afraid of controversial issues and boldly expresses her opinion. According to specialists she is ranked among the first league of the world's political commentators. They think that she is a good source of information about Polish history, Polish-Rus- sian relations and about current situation in Europe. The columnist writes about Poland in English, therefore, her opinions have a wider range, for which she is appreciated also in Poland. In 2013, Anne Applebaum received Polish citizenship. In 2015 she represent- ed Poland at the Bilderberg Group, that is, the "unofficial world government", which for several days discuss the important problems and global issues (Kowalska, 2013).

Anne Applebaum appreciates Poland and considers it as a successful country; she highly estimates Poland's opportunities and position on the international arena (Pawlowski, 2015). In an interview for *Newsweek* she said that if returned to America she would miss Poland (Stankiewicz, 2010). She attends to entice the Western opin- ion-forming circles with Polish affairs, not only political and economical, but also with promoting Polish culture. In 2008, *New York Review of Books* published her review of the movie *Katyń* (Kowalska, 2013). In 2011, on the US markets appeared her book about Polish cuisine, the history of Polish culture, and changes in the traditions of Polish fam- ilies. The circulation was quickly sold out, and the issue gathered huge media attention in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. The promotion of Polish tradition is also visible in her articles (Applebaum, 2013).

Anne Applebaum took a role as a kind of ambassador of Polish interests in the discussions in the United States. She criticized, for example, the head of the FBI James Comey for his comments about Polish responsibility for the Holocaust, arguing that the extermination of the Jews was the official policy of the German state, and Poles and their families were threatened with death for rescuing Jews (Applebaum, 2015). Often in her articles she fights with the negative attitude of Jews towards Poland, promot- ing empathetic attitude and emphasizing the positive historical moments (Applebaum, 2016).

The above-mentioned information allows making certain assumptions about the role of Anne Applebaum in shaping the image of Poland abroad. It can be assumed that the journalist in the United States, is considered as an expert of Central and Eastern Europe's issues, thus her opinions may be treated as a source of knowledge about this part of the world. Twitter for Applebaum seems to be an effective medium of informa- tion, not a platform for discussions. Further analysis attempts to describe of how Po- land is represented in Anne Applebaum's posts on Twitter.

Methodological remarks and quantitative data

Applebaum created her Twitter account in May 2011. She introduces herself as the "author of the *Gulag* and *Iron Curtain*, among others, *the Washington Post* Columnists, CEPA fellow. Citizen of the World" (Applebaum, 2016). 68.9 thousand of followers (as of 16/07/2016), and frequent citations of messages from her account in the media, con- vince that Anne Applebaum undoubtedly has an impact on the creation of views in the world, including views about Poland.

Assuming for the purposes of the analysis that Twitter is a journal (it is updated more frequently than once a week), and the research sample for the journal is 14 is- sues/days (Lisowska-Magdziarz, 2004), the period from 16th to 30th November 2015 was selected (due to emotional political situation in Poland, intentionally taking into ac- count the past year) for the analysis verifying the idea that Twitter can be a place of the state's image creation. On November 16, 2015, Beata Szydło's government took over power, which was a major change after 8 years of the Civic Platform (Polish: Platfor- ma Obywatelska (PO)) rule, and attracted interest in Polish issues on the international arena. It was the impulse to conclusion that at this time Western journalists, including Anne Applebaum, would write about Polish affairs. Considering this analysis, it is worth remembering, that the time of tweet's publication is the local time, so it will be slightly different time for the researchers who use the data in Poland and for the American re- searchers, less different for the Western European researchers (only an hour of differ- ence). However, this paper is not to discuss the relation of the chronology of events and the publication of Applebaum's tweets, but to deal with recent ones; still it seems, that it must be emphasized for those who would be interested in analyzes of Twitter in the context of relation to the real events.

Within two weeks of the survey Anne Applebaum published on Twitter 74 tweets. All of them concerned both international and domestic policy of each country. The jour- nalist did not post (frequently seen in the Polish language part of Twitter, dominated by the journalists) personal, private, and not related to her field of professional special- ization messages. The vast majority of Applebaum's tweets thematically focus on the politics of Vladimir Putin (32%), many posts are devoted to attacks in Paris in November 2015 (9%), a little less to politics of Barack Obama (5%), events in Turkey (5%), in Ukraine (5%), in Syria (including the activities of ISIS - 5%) and migrations (5%). The rest of the messages (22%) concerned other topics (mainly current events or social problems).

97% of all 74 tweets from the period from 16th to 30th November 2015 are written in English, only 3% in other language: Russian, Polish and German. All tweets about Po- land were posted in English, which seems to confirm the hypothesis that Anne Apple- baum treats Twitter as a medium, which she uses to communicate internationally, and writes for the audience from around the world; she does not focus only on recipients in Poland.

Among all 74 tweets only those tweets directly related to Poland and thus have the potential to create its image, were selected for the analysis. Within two weeks Ap- plebaum published 13 of such messages, which represents almost 18% of all tweets published by her in the analyzed period. It is worth noting that this is the second topic (after the policy of Vladimir Putin) most often considered by her. The above data reflect the author's main professional interests, and support the hypothesis that Anne Apple- baum may be considered as an expert in the policy of Russia, or wider region of Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland.

Most frequently Anne Applebaum applied retweets - 42% of all tweets – or she retweeted adding a comment - 21% (of all tweets). She posted relatively many mes- sages with references to articles from various media - 35% of all tweets. Only 2% are messages written by her, with no retweets and links.

Comparing the Applebaum's overall style of tweeting and her tweets about Poland, there were no significant differences noticed. Messages about Poland are also mainly

retweeted (60%) or retweeted with added comment (20%), although there are also her own tweets with links to the articles (20%). The posts with information about Poland, without references to other accounts or sites, were not posted. This means that each of her own opinion about Poland, the journalist also complements with the materials, ar- ticles, or other's statements. It can be assumed that such action stems from diligence for the justification of the contents, or the desire to refer to the opinions of others, to not to be accused of bias. It is also possible that Applebaum is trying to quickly share the materials with which she agrees, what can be even confirmed by a fairly coherent narrative about Poland, which emerges from the analysis of tweets.

Anne Applebaum's posts cannot be classified as short messages, 12 of 13 posts concerning Poland include the links with references to the articles in the media. There- fore, they constitute an extended message, requiring the recipient to check the linked text. Not all readers will recall the source, for them a base for interpretation may be tweet alone. Nevertheless, considering the purpose of this analysis, a fairly broad discourse that forms around Applebaum's tweets has been taken into account. All the texts to which the author of microblogging refers are analyzed, also the comments to these texts (if they are present), and the comments below the tweets. However, the comments are not a part of the image of Poland created by Applebaum; nevertheless, they are an interesting context's complementation. In addition, they show how the commentators, not researchers, interpret Applebaum's messages about Poland.

In all messages from the analyzed period, the author refers to a wide variety of me- dia, which can create the impression of objectivity (consciously used the term "impres- sion" because among them there is the lack of the right-wing media, the lack of polish media, and Polish authors writing for foreign media). The author refers to some sources more often: two or three times, for example to *Legatum Institute* (li.com), *Foreign Policy* (foreignpolicy.com). All articles concerning Poland come from the webpages of the for- eign media, both those with a long history, as well as those relatively young.

- *The Washington Post* (washingtonpost.com) - the largest and oldest daily newspa- per in the US, is considered as one of the leading opinion-making organs of the press in the United States. Journalists and authors of the newspaper have won a total of 47 Pu- litzer Prizes, the most prestigious in the media market in the US. As already mentioned, Anne Applebaum has been cooperating with this newspaper since many years.
- *Deutsche Welle* (dw.com) - German station, which broadcasts television and radio programs, and runs a website in 30 different languages. Weekly this Internet medium reaches 118 million recipients around the world with the most important information.
- *The Financial Times* (ft.com) - an international journal, published in 24 countries, focused on economic and financial topics. The journal is considered to be elite and trustworthy, total circulation includes 450 thousand copies.
- *BBC* (British Broadcasting Corporation, bbc.com) - the world's largest television and radio broadcaster based in the UK. Editorial office has branches around the world, and broadcast information in 28 languages.
- *The Hill* (thehill.com) – an American newspaper published in Washington, D.C. since 1994. Its main topics are the politics, economy and international relations.
- *Politico* (politico.com), focused mainly on world politics. It was established in 2007, based in Washington, Brussels and New York. 7-8 million unique users per month read the online version.
- *EUobserver* (euobserver.com) an independent online journal, which is oriented main- ly on the events in the European Union; supports the integration of its members and is the guardian of democratic values, among others, freedom of speech. It is non-profit organization independent of the EU, operating since 2000 with its seat in Brussels.

These are mainly American media and media from the EU countries, which are

considered to be leading in the international arena, with the freedom of speech as- sessed at a relatively high level (World Press Freedom Index, 2015). It is worth noting that these are the leading magazines, opinion leaders, with high levels of readership, believed to be reliable. Referring to the articles on the same subject, but from different media and countries, strengthens the message and persuasive dimension of expres- sion. It should be noted, however, that some of the texts from the western media are written by Poles, what became the reason to criticize journalist as unfairly present- ing their views as "western point of view" [https://twitter.com/anneapplebaum/sta- tus/669662079167668226]

Running her account, Anne Applebaum quotes many different users, which com- bined with sharing articles from various media, creates the mentioned impression of objectivity. What is more, in her posts about Polish policy, among people mostly cited by her, are mainly famous and reliable names. Her posts have mentions to people like Nils Raimonds Muižnieks - Latvian political scientist and lawyer, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, and Andrew Stroehlein, Media Director of Human Rights Watch (HRW), an organization dedicated to the protection of human rights.

Anne Applebaum does not use hashtags. The so-called replies appear rarely, and mainly concern media's websites (e.g. @WSJ, @comentary), nongovernmental organi- zations (@HRW, @legatumlnst, @cepa, @pomed, @wikileaks) or journalists (@Chuck- Lane), whose articles were shared by Anne Applebaum.

In posts concerning Poland the author did not use either hashtag, or reply option. It also suggests that she treats Twitter as a source of information, not focusing on promoting her own posts or medium in which she works. Anne Applebaum does not publish photos in her tweets, if any, these are only images downloaded from the source links of articles to which Applebaum refers (images appear automatically when link is attached to tweet).

The number of general likes of journalist's tweets ranges from 5 to 67, and the number of general shares ranges from 2 to 72 (as of 03.20.2016). Interestingly, the big- ger number of likes and shares (> 20) appeared under the posts about Russia. Tweets about Poland were also often shared and read. The number of likes was different in every post, ranging from 23 to 58 users. The number of shares ranges from 15 to 78 users. It could be argued that this recognition confirms Anne Applebaum's position as an expert on Russia and the region of Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland. Interestingly, in most cases, the number of shares is greater than the number of likes. It may be due to the fact that the recipients read Anne Applebaum's posts and share them as a reliable source of information, but not necessarily agree with her.

Nearly one quarter of tweets has not been commented, under the rest of tweets the comments appeared (ranges from 1 to 10, although there were also other with the num- ber of comments above 15). Among 74 tweets, comments are mostly neutral. Interest- ingly, in the comments under the tweets, which included links to the articles about Rus- sia by Anne Applebaum, she was often praised (e.g. "@kalenskyj @anneapplebaum Yes well she (unlike most) knows of what she speaks. Thank Heavens for Anne A and Those like her! "[Kalensky, Twitter, 2015]," @anneapplebaum Anne, one small typo: "Russians from Russian". otherwise, thank you very much! "[Applebaum, Twitter, 2015b], and rec- ommended (" Today's must-read to @anneapplebaum. Those who forget the USSR and KGB are doomed to ... interesting times. https://www.commentarymagazine.com/arti- cles/russia-great-forgetting/ ... "[Collier, Twitter, 2015].

Commenting on articles concerning Poland looks quite different. Comments ap- peared more often, from 12 to 28 comments, depending on the post. Internet users deny Anne Applebaum's statements; they accuse her subjective interest in propaganda communication against Law and Justice (Polish: Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS)), ma- nipulation and lies. It is not proved (Twitter does not provide nationality of commen-

tators), but believing the descriptions of accounts that contain Polish names, it can be assumed, that mainly Poles commented posts about the new government.

From all 74 posts Anne Applebaum replied to only 6 posts, 4 of which concerned Poland. All comments appeared under her posts, and retweet or link. The journalist does not comment on others posts, only on her own, and it happens very rare. Two comments were neutral (e.g. she was explaining something), in three comments she defended her opinion, replied to the allegations, including the three replies to the allega- tions of the posts on Poland (Applebaum, Twitter, 2015). She did not participate in the discussion until the end (at some point she withdrew).

Possible reasons for this approach are at least a few. First of all, the lack of activity in the comments could be due to lack of time, dealing with a different theme, or focusing on discussions through other channels. Another reason could be treating Twitter only as a source of information and opinions, not the tool to build the image of journalist. It can be also assumed that Applebaum concluded, that discussions ended, and so, she did not continue the dialogue. In some cases, the lack of response may refer to both the person who asks the question, as well as the adoption of the principle that linking people's opinions is only their dissemination and it does not initiating a discussion on her own profile. On the other hand, sharing one's opinion and / or article without clear indication of support or criticism of shared content, increases their range, which can be understood by the recipients as supporting the views of cited people. It is difficult to clearly state whether Twitter, within the meaning of the journalist, is news channel, or rather a place to promote specific views, and to share opinions. However, it seems that, as in the case of many others, especially the Polish journalists (Leonowicz-Bukała, Martens, 2015), Anne Applebaum also does not use the potential of social media, which is interactivity, through which relationships with recipients is built and maintained.

The image of Poland in the narration created by Anne Applebaum via Twitter - a qualitative analysis

Particularly interesting in the context of this text, seems to be the fact, that on her twitter account, beside Polish affairs, the author raises a variety of topics, such as politics of Vladimir Putin, and tragic events, such as wars, conflicts and acts of terror- ism. This background is a place for publishing messages about Poland, mainly in the context of a change of government. This background, consisting of dozens of tweets, is quite an unambiguous suggestion that Applebaum seems to treat the change of power in Poland in terms of the phenomenon, which is sufficiently serious from the point of view of international affairs, and the unambiguously negative. Positive phenomena, as indicated by her account considering Tweets not involving Poland, are not interesting for her; she deals mainly with political problems of Central and Eastern Europe.

Further, it can be assumed that Anne Applebaum is interested in the specific phe- nomena associated with Poland. All posts about Poland concern the country's politics, both domestic and foreign, and their contents are associated with the change of gov- ernment. At this point are analyzed tweets, which in a given period concerned Poland. These are both tweets from Applebaum's account, as well as those, to which she direct- ly referred on her account.

The first analyzed message was posted on 20th November. Applebaum refers in this message to a critical comment by Nils Muižnieks, the Council of Europe's Com- missioner for Human Rights, about changes in the law regarding the Constitutional Court planned by Beata Szydło's government. Muižnieks believes that the proposals approved by the Polish Parliament undermine the rule of law and should therefore be withdrawn. Applebaum emphasizes that this is the first time that she remembers when that person responsible for the human rights criticized the Polish government. On 20th November she wrote: "first time I can remember since 1989: Human rights commis-

sioner of COE criticizes Polish govt" (Fig.1).

Fig. 1 Anne Applebaum's tweet on 20.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/anneapplebaum/status/667804155327750144

It is significant to underline that such incredible situation did not take place since the democratic breakthrough in Poland, and thus it place the current government in the role of the one, who breaks this established democratic order, for which Applebaum does not have doubts. The same conviction echoes from her next post associated with Poland, posted on 24th November. Sharing and commenting post by Marcin Goettig about abandoning by the new government's habit of placing Polish flag next to the flag of the European Union during public speaking, Applebaum wrote "an era ends" (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Anne Applebaum's tweet on November 24, 2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/anneapplebaum/status/669174834786607104

Although comments concerning these two posts are quite different, there is more criticism of the opinion presented by Applebaum, referring to short memory (commen- tator provides a link to the text from 11th September 2013, which was posted on the website of Polish Radio, its lead starts with the words "Human Rights Commissioner Nils Muižnieks has criticized Poland "[http://www.thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/146865,Po- land-slammed-for-%E2%80%9Cpolitical-interference-in-CIA-%E2%80 % 98black-site% E2% 80% 99 Investigations]). Commentators criticized the commissioner, also the facts about the actions taken in connection with the change of legislation on the Constitu- tional Court by the previous government of the Civic Platform are cited, there are also personal attacks on the journalist. In the case of message posted on 24th November, majority of commentators share the view that the lack of the European flag during Pol- ish government speech is the change approved and expected by them.

Another post associated with Poland refers to a post published on the website *Po- litico* (this portal was described earlier). On this portal's account on 25th November was published a link with the text about the threat, that in the author's opinion, is a right- wing Polish government for the European Environmental Policy (Fig. 3). The title of the article by Andrew Kureth is *The Poles may spoil Paris party* (it is invisible in the tweet), the text itself refers to a possible veto at the upcoming climate summit in Paris, which was announced by Szydło's government. According to Kureth, veto would be dictated by the desire to protect the Polish coal industry.

Fig. 3. Post on *Politico*'s account on 25.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/politicoeurope/status/669436683490893824

The title of the article, in which the author used the word "spoil", sounds rather negative, but being familiarize with the article it seems that it is quite objective and

represents different views of the analyzed issue. The author stresses, that the previous government of Civic Platform, also fought for the interests of the Polish mining industry, in the context of climate regulations. Also most of commentators of this post on Apple- baum's account think that the announcements of the government of Law and Justice in this matter are justified, similarly as the majority of commentators of article on *Politico* website, who recognize the economic arguments of the Polish government.

Another tweet is again a reference to an external text. This time it is material in the *BBC News* about the attacks of the new government on Donald Tusk in the context of the Smolensk air crash (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Anne Applebaum's post from 25.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/anneapplebaum/status/669529712566366208

As one can read in lead visible in the tweet, a Polish government spokeswoman calls to judge Donald Tusk for alleged "handling" of disaster of 2010. ("A Polish gov- ernment spokeswoman has called for ex-PM Donald Tusk to be tried for his handling of a 2010 disaster in the president died"). Unknown author of the article wrote about the supposed Tusk's negligence alleged by the new government in the oversight of the explanation of the Smolensk air crash, but it is a very modest narration. In the article appear quotes of the government ministers, who did not cite any specific failures, ex- cept for giving the investigation to Russians, and ineffectiveness in returning to Poland the wreckage of Tupolev that crashed on April 10, 2010 near the city of Smolensk. Inter- estingly, this post associated with the Smolensk catastrophe, no longer raises interest among commentators as it was before, what is more, this time posts have rather cool tone, critical of the government of Law and Justice, which "[...] have nothing better to do

. .:-(". It seems that as long as current issues of the government, related to econom-
ics or international politics has been often understood and approved by commentators on Applebaum's account, then the topics about Smolensk are not so exciting for them, thus they are not willing to openly express support for the government's actions (this could be due to the specific nature of the subject, and also the characteristics of follow-

ers of Applebaum's account, although it is difficult to be certain).

Another tweet dated on 25th November also refers to external sources, this time to the portal *thehill.com*, which published the text entitled *Congress: Keep an eye on Kaczynski's Poland*. Both the title, and the tweet's lead suggest that Jaroslaw Kaczyns- ki, although do not hold any government position, will affect political decisions from "behind the scenes" (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5. Post on Anne Applebaum's account from 25.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/anneapplebaum/status/669662079167668226

The author of the text in *thehill.com* is Dr Maciej Bartkowski, Director for Education & Research at International Center on Nonviolent Conflict. The author clearly presents the changes on the Polish political scene in the context of destabilization, ("Poland has recently experienced a political earthquake") and the same as previously pointed by Ap- plebaum, unprecedented event since the time of Round Table's transformations ("This completes the process of Establishing a single-party rule for the first time since the introduction of democracy in Poland in 1989"). Bartkowski suggests that Kaczynski's unofficial influence on political decisions is reliable, and at the same time is "mudding democratic transparency and accountability." The text is full of statements in relation to the environments and the government of Law and Justice such as: "take full control of the Polish Constitutional Tribunal", "the opposition was rooted out from the custom- ary rotating chairmanship of the powerful parliamentary intelligence committee," "es- tablish tight control over public media " or referring to well-known public figures:" the end of rule of law and "coming of" a velvet dictatorship. Later in the article, Bartkowski gives recommendations to the US Congress, which he makes responsible for the pro- tection of democracy in Poland, even because of the pro-American orientation of the Szydło's government.

Suggestions that in Poland democracy/rule of law would be threatened appear in the next tweets, as in a tweet published on 26th November. Applebaum shares tweet of *Deutsche Welle*, which directly mentions the "silent coup" ("silent coup in Poland", Fig. 6), though with a question mark.[5]

Fig. 6. Post from Deutshe Welle on 26.11.2015.

Source: https://twitter.com/dwnews/status/669904730609483776

Despite the latter, already in the lead, the author writes, "Critics are already wor- rying that their (PiS) mandate has been stretched too far". In the text she focuses on stressing signs of at least dishonesty of PiS against voters, she writes e.g., about trans- ferring the defense ministry to Antoni Macierewicz, who "eagerly spreads conspiracy theories" and who, according to the election promises, would had no sit in the govern- ment. Another member of government, for whom Romaniec has reservations, is Mariusz Kaminski "Convicted for abuse of office in March with a three-year prison sentence." Romaniec also writes about the issue of the Court and the changes in the public media. A short video, entitled *Poland's swing to the right* additionally accompanies the text.

Already on 27th November, Applebaum publishes another tweet related to Poland, this time it is a reference to *EUObserver*'s tweet saying "Poland's ruling party shows true colors", which refers also to the article on the page *euobserver.com*. From the lead's content, one can learn that the government of Law and Justice soon after the election shows "its true face", which feature is a confrontational style of internal and external policy (Fig. 7). As one can read in the further part of the text, the confrontation partic- ularly concern Russia (even at the level of resume of Smolensk's investigation), which Law and Justice deputy, Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło, called Polish enemy.

Fig. 7. Tweet from the EUobserver's account on 27.11.2015 r.
Source: https://twitter.com/euobs/status/670160137638821892

Kaczynski in the *EUobserver*'s text is compared to Viktor Orban, the Hungarian conservative prime minister, whose statements were repeatedly quoted by the Polish politician. In the article, Ewa Kopacz, a former prime minister in the government of the Civic Platform, calls his party "the shame of Europe".

Not only *EUobserver* refers to the similarities of Jaroslaw Kaczynski to Orban. The day before, Applebaum shared post by Henry Foy, *Financial Times* correspondent in Central Europe. On 26th November Foy promoted on Twitter text by him and Neil Buckley, entitled *Tensions over migration: Barbed rethoric*. He did it with words, which clearly put the countries of Central Europe in opposition to the Western countries of the European Union. "Brussels can tolerate on Mr Orban, but not half a dozen Central Europe's rising Europhobia," writes Foy (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8. Henry Foy's tweet on 26.11.2015.

Source: https://twitter.com/henryjfoy/status/669992300446093312

In the article of Foy and Buckley, the main theme is the negative attitude of the new authorities in Poland to the issue of European migration policy on the background of wider anti-European tendencies in this part of Europe. Poland is presented as the one, that instead of condolences to France after the terrorist attacks in 2015, makes a use of the situation to undermine the sense of the European policy in this field, which for the authors seems to be outrageous ("to use the Paris attacks as a means of the attacking the EU migration policy shocked many across the continent"). The text's quotes suggest that Europe/Brussels cannot "tolerate" more than one "Viktor Orban". Poland is in the text juxtaposed with other countries in the region, the countries of the Visegrad Group, which according to the authors, all have suffered, or are at risk of the so-called right- wing "populism". In addition, it is stressed that Jaroslaw Kaczynski "has warned that immigrants into Europe could spread parasites and disease", which puts the president of PiS in unfavorable light, as a person biased against immigrants or even backward, from the point of view of the politically correct discourse of Western Europe. Commen- tators were extremely active for this Foy's post, arguing about the legitimacy of phrases used in the text, accusing the authors of use of "socialist rhetoric" or "post-democratic" newspeak, and spreading views from the point of view of political correctness, rather than truth and common sense.

Somewhat in opposition to the tone of these comments, is another post recom- mended by Applebaum, published with replying Henry Foy and Neil Buckley on the ac- count of portal predictit.com. This post concerns "nationalistic rhetoric" migration of Central European countries' politicians: the Czech President Miloš Zeman, Jaroslaw Kaczynski and the Prime Minister of Slovakia - Robert Fico (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9. Post on the account of portal predictit.com on 27.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/PredictIt/status/670209056678805504

This post is accompanied by 4 images - portraits of politicians, and descriptions, which briefly define their attitudes towards migration policy in Europe. About Jaroslaw Kaczynski authors write that he declared that Poland would not support the EU plan for relocation of refugees (Fig. 10).

Fig. 10. Post on the account of portal predictit.com on 27.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/PredictIt/status/670209056678805504

Comments to portraits of other politicians of the Visegrad Group have similar tone. It is written that Fico threatened, that rather Slovakia would leave the EU, than agree to a quota system; Orban is said to have led to the enactment of laws that prevent refuges access to Hungary, while Zeman is said to support the Czech right-wing block against Islam. Through this combination, Polish politician can be perceived only as an oppo- nent against European mainstream policy, being on the opposite side than the West- ern countries, which theoretically support Brussels's plans. One of the commentators called the group of these politicians as "Visegrad separatists", another pointed out that the Czech president was photographed on the background of the Chinese flag, which in his opinion is very significant.

The next tweet, this time Applebaum's own comment, also published on 27th No- vember, is quite an interesting example among the other posts of the journalist, as it is a complement to post of her husband, a former Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs in the cabinet of Donald Tusk (PO), Radoslaw Sikorski (who was also in the past the minister in the government of Jaroslaw Kaczynski (PiS)). Sikorski wrote that "authoritarianism in Ukraine under Victor Yanukovych started with evisceration of Constitutional Court in 2010", which is a comment on the actions of the Law and Justice government related to the change of the law on the Constitutional Court. While quoting her husband, Apple- baum added, that it took place in Hungary too (Fig. 11), which is a continuation of the narration about placing Poland next to the other Visegrad countries, which at the same time were defined more in the extreme-right mainstream.

Fig. 11. Post from Anne Applebaum Twitter account on 27.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/anneapplebaum/status/670230510665375744

This post is followed with interesting discussion between Applebaum and other users. One of the Twitter's users asked a journalist and her husband to stop "slender Poland abroad" (in the last comment on this thread there is a statement "you do harm to Polish State"). Applebaum is trying to defend herself, she points to her book about the Iron Curtain, which is to deny that Poland is slandered by her. Two commentators clarify that her history books are essentially flawless, and only her latest comments raise their concerns. When Applebaum refers to her comments on *commentarymagazine.com* and *washingtonpost.com*, concerning Russia and international politics, one of the commentators slowly withdraws, claiming "Thank you for the links. I am more concerned about the comments about Poland, others are very accurate and balanced". Somewhat striking is the journalist's strong commitment in the "tweet's polemic "(her three comments), on the other hand, people with whom she argues is a Member of the Polish Parliament Arkadiusz Mularczyk and Karol Kwiatkowski, an assistant of deputy Paul Skutecký. These are known and recognizable people; perhaps Applebaum considered

that it is worth to argue with them.

The last three posts are basically comments about the same event. The first one is share of tweet by Jackson Diehl, who is Applebaum's colleague in journalism, pro- moting his press commentary on the page of *Washington Post*. Diehl suggests in his text that Poland suffered from revolution harmful both for the country and Europe. He called Antoni Macierewicz, Polish Minister of National Defense, as an anti-Semite. Diehl points to, apart from affairs about the Constitutional Court already known to Western public, pardon of Mariusz Kaminski, or the case of withdrawn from Wroclaw theater the art by Nobel Prize-winning author Elfriede Jelinek by the Culture Minister, Piotr Glinski. In the lead Diehl writes about the "ugly, pre-World War II populism", which in his opinion, seized Poland at a time when Europe needs it (Fig. 12). Jaroslaw Kaczynski is com- pared to Viktor Orban and Donald Trump, at that time still a candidate for President of the United States. Diehl suggests that Kaczynski surpasses him in "lies" which aim to fear Polish public opinion of Muslims. Perhaps the Polish liberals are wrong to speak about "creeping coup d'etat", as Diehl writes, however, he ends his text with advice for the rulers of Europe, Angela Merkel and Francois Hollande, to "keep an eye on Warsaw."

Fig. 12. Jackson Diehl's tweet on 29.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/jacksondiehl/status/671140789863489536

Commentators generally not favorably adopted the text of the Washington Post's journalist simply calling him "a liar", and accuse him of using simplicity, nonsenses, failing to investigate the facts, and relying on unreliable sources. The same arguments arise, when the text is also recommended by Edward Lucas, the editor of *The Economist* (Fig. 13).

Fig. 13. Post on Edward Lucas's account on 30.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/edwardlucas/status/671294220699836416

The very first commentator suggests Lucas to verify the facts. The article is de- fined as "unserious, childish and full of prejudices", written from the one, "anti-PiS" perspective, based on unilateral sources. There are also comments (more than one), suggesting that it was Anne Applebaum, who is behind the content and the message of this text.

On 30th November, Andrew Stroehlein also referred to the same material. He ques-

Fig. 14. Post on Andrew Stroehlein's account on 30.11.2015.
Source: https://twitter.com/astroehlein/status/671297840958865408?lang=pl

tioned the suggestion of “creeping coup d’etat” and proposed instead the term “dra- matic and disturbing shift” (Fig. 14).

Once again commentators claim that the article has many factual shortcomings (which is not necessarily true, even because of the important role of belief in the discus- sions raised in posts’ subject, but this is not the subject of this analysis).

Conclusion

With caution dictated on the one hand with the desire to avoid over-interpretation, on the other hand with shortness of thoughts communicated in tweets, it is possible after all, being familiarized with all the posts and getting acquainted with the articles recommended by Anne Applebaum, to conclude that in Poland takes place anti-demo- cratic process of change in power. As pointed by the author, whose article was shared by Applebaum (Bartkowski, 2015), this process began in May 2015, when Andrzej Duda, the candidate of Law and Justice party, became the President of Poland. In October 2015, the same party won the parliamentary election with the majority of votes. For the first time in Poland after 1989, the country is ruled by one political force. Analyzing fur- ther information, one can notice, that Anne Applebaum on her Twitter account, is trying to prove that it is a change, which undermines the democratic foundations of the state, and is seen as not promising for Europe. Interestingly, further posts are linked together with undertaken threads (like comparing Kaczynski to Orban, Poland to Hungary or to other Visegrad countries, or even assigning the unprecedented characteristics to the current changes after 1989), creating a fairly coherent narrative about Poland. Although the individual posts on Twitter are not very rich in content, the context created for them by recommended articles, the authors quoted by Applebaum, and comments for her posts, all of these build a specific vision of Poland.

In conclusion, it is worth to make a synthesis. In 9 out of 12 tweets (which share links to the articles) it was written, among others, that the new government nominates to the high state positions people previously convicted of abuse of power; without de- bates and hearings selects the judicial authority, changes judges, thus opening the way for amending the constitution; or threatens freedom of speech subordinating the media and threatening journalists with dismissals. It is worth to stress that, as indicated in the conducted analysis, this information is provided without Applebaum’s explanation about the reasons, history and contexts.

Therefore, without wider perspective, the overall reception of posts and recom- mended texts is clearly unfavorable for the ruling party in Poland. Applebaum suggests that the rule of Law and Justice is a threat to the stability of the relations between Po- land and the European Union. It may be proved by the lack of the European Union flag at the press conference of Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło (to remind, this fact was commented by Applebaum on 24 November 2015 with the words “ an era ends “). For the first time, the country that enjoyed the development and strengthening of its influ- ence in the European Union has become strongly right-wing, and at a time when Europe weakened, among others, due to migration crisis, this situation becomes very danger- ous, according to Applebaum’s narration. Moreover, in shared articles it was written for several times that the present government plans to strongly engage in research of the Smoleńsk air crash of 2010, which will result in a more open confrontation with Russia, thus will lead to rising tension in Europe. In one of the tweets, Anne Applebaum suggests that the new government can blackmail Donald Tusk, the President of the Eu- ropean Council. Such a presumption results from suspicions and allegations, for which Law and Justice accuses the former prime minister, in case of the air crash near the city of Smolensk. Representatives of the current government consider him to be involved in this drama, accusing him of transferring the investigation to the Russian authorities, and thus prevent reliable investigation about the circumstances of the tragedy (Smo- lensk air crash, BBC News, 2015). Anne Applebaum’s tweets create a clear image that

in Poland is relatively publicly conducted creepy coup d'état. In Poland, according to Applebaums' image, exist anti-immigrant sentiments, the rise of nationalism and eu-roscepticism, which are a threat to Europe. From the analysis of the research material, it can be concluded, that the aim of messages formulated by the journalist is to build a specific, emotionally subjective image of the situation in Poland. It is not necessarily a complaint, after all, Anne Applebaum does not positioning herself as reporter, first of all she is a columnist. Her opinions and views may significantly influence the way Poland is perceived by the media and journalists, even in the United States.

In an interview for *Newsweek* in 2010, Jackson Diehl, the Deputy Editorial Page Ed- itor of *The Washington Post*, stated: "I am sure that most of her readers do not know who is her husband" (Stankiewicz, Deptuła, 2010). This may mean that the American reader does not perceive Anne Applebaum's texts and comments in the context of her private life, which can play a significant role in formulating her views. In Poland, the name Ap- plebaum is uniquely associated with a specific policy option. The journalist presents a position consistent with the political line of her husband, whose political camp is in opposition. When Law and Justice, the right-wing party, from which a few years earlier Radoslaw Sikorski moved to Civic Platform, came to power, Anne Applebaum start- ed criticized the new government. She is a columnist, and thus, she has wider circles than reporters to express opinions, not only in articles, but also in social media. What is interesting and worth noting, the journalist actually avoids direct comments on the events in Poland. Her posts consist mainly of retweets of other people's comments, or sharing other authors' texts. Thus, it seems that she may distance herself and support with the diverse sources of information, to not to be accused of subjectivity.

In conclusion, despite many advantages and opportunities offered by this way of communication, Twitter, like any other media, can be effectively used as an opin- ion-forming tool, especially, if the author of the message is a well-known person having wide and faithful audience.

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