



The quality of power elite as a factor in achieving Poland's strategic goals

In the 21st century reality the role of power elite of a nation as a strategic security factor has been systematically increasing. It is mainly due to two components. Firstly, the cost of conducting a conventional war is one of the highest in history, which decreases the number of traditional wars in the world. Secondly, the development of international organizations (e.g. Poland's joining NATO and the EU) requires the country to act as part of a supranational team when defending its interests. Meanwhile, the establishment of a nation is required to participate in global structures (from traditional academic structures to such events as the Davos Economic Forum).

In the current issue of our policy papers Andrzej Kozicki tries to depict the quality of power elite in Poland in the future. "It can be seen that Poland is a weaker player, but with some potential for the future. The nation of Poland has experienced a loss in the substance of elites as a result of the Katyn Forest massacre (1940), the failure of the Warsaw Polish Uprising (1944), of thousands of army officers locked in exile in Western part of Europe when the iron curtain has descended upon the continent (after 1945) and of the Poland's Air Force One crash in Smolensk, Russia (2010). Despite all these calamities, the Polish nation has shown an immense ability to recuperate and recover."

I highly encourage you to read the new issue of the "Pulaski Policy Papers"!

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The Casimir Pulaski Foundation is an independent, non-partisan institution with a mission to promote freedom, equality and democracy, as well as to support actions of strengthening civil society. The foundation carries out such activities as conducting scientific research, preparing publications and analyses, organizing seminars and conferences, providing education and support for leaders in Poland and abroad. The Casimir Pulaski Foundation is one of only two Polish institutions that have a partnership status with the Council of Europe and is a member of the Group Abroad – a umbrella organization of top 40 Polish NGOs working outside of Poland.

Andrzej Kozicki

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Resources and the evolution of the tools to affect geopolitics

The twilight of conventional wars age and the transferral of the geopolitical game to other fields (energy contracts, technological dependency, possibility to influence the directions of international organizations' activities) increases the role of creative tools and forces of a country and decreases the significance of tools and forces of destruction (a conventional army or sabotage). It is best shown by the example of the planned actions of the United States, Germany and Turkey over the last few years. Poland should follow their example in establishing her own tools of soft power.

The Americans have been spending smaller funds on their armed forces while enlarging investments in the creation of networks of non-governmental organizations in key regions of the world. They are also attempting to transfer institutional knowledge to local partners, for example by means of their USAID employees. The creation of social capital and the dissemination of institutional knowledge were a missing link in the investments introduced by the German government in the new provinces acquired in the process of unification in 1990, where enormous investments in infrastructure did not bring the expected equalization of living standards and social mobility. More significant results were achieved by the German double-track strategy of building influences in the east across the border, i.e. focal activities of political foundations and taking over share-holding in popular and widely-read media. Turkey has made an educational leap forward, has laid cross-national oil and water pipelines, and has normalized her relations with all her neighbors. Turkey cares about presence in existing international structures as well as tries to develop new ones (e.g. South-East European Cooperation Process, the Summit of Turkish States).

Against this background it can be seen that Poland is a weaker player, but with some potential for the future. The nation of Poland has experienced a loss in the substance of elites as a result of the Katyn Forest massacre (1940), the failure of the Warsaw Polish Uprising (1944), of thousands of army officers locked in exile in Western part of Europe when the iron curtain has descended upon the continent (after 1945) and of the Poland's Air Force One crash in Smolensk, Russia (2010). Despite all these calamities, the Polish nation has shown an immense ability to recuperate and recover. This can be seen, firstly, with the self-limiting revolution of Solidarity in 1980, which involved a signed agreement between the non-democratic governing power and the people of Poland. Then it was proved by the numerous opportunities to work out an accord, for example, the Solidarity elites entering the power institutions of the nation in 1989. The social legitimization process of power-shift consists of such events: 17 million people took part in partially free elections of 1989, 12 million voted in the Constitution of 1997, 13.5 million voted for Poland's accession to the EU in 2003. This self-recuperation is also visible in bringing 'fresh blood' to the establishment by a wide range of government coalitions after 1989, thus there has been only one parliamentary party which had never participated in power-sharing and it

is notable that this political party no longer exists. This chain of social acceptance of system transition, along with the internal circulation of power elites, facilitated the achievement of the three basic policy goals for Poland after 1989: to establish efficient institutions of a nation, to anchor Poland in Euro-Atlantic structures, and to support the independence and development of Poland's eastern neighbors.

Poland has the financial, institutional and geographical resources to take advantage of the vitality of her elites.

The explanation for the financial capability is that Poland is on its way to the kind of economic growth which creates a middle class. At present almost 600 thousand citizens of Poland earn more than 30,000 USD per year (MillwardBrown SMG/KRC data). This is the middle class which is capable to form elites: it invests in learning foreign languages and seeks promotion. It counts on its hard work, mobility and social networking.

The main curbs on Poland's further development are the high costs of work and high taxes, where 26% of the Poles evade paying them. This is a dangerously high index in a time of global economy when Polish companies register in more tax-friendly countries such as Germany or the Czech Republic (where the grey area amounts to 18% of the economy).

The explanation for the institutional potential is that the scholarization of the society has been increasing. Although the quality of Poland's universities is appalling, this trend accentuates aspirations, and will force a reform of higher education system. The scholarization factor has increased from 13 percent in 1990 to 48 percent in 2008 in the 18-24 age group, while the rate of 500 students per 10,000 residents ranks the sixth highest result in the world. The presence of only two Poland's universities in the Shanghai ranking (ARWU) of 500 best schools worldwide shows the disastrous quality of higher education in Poland. It is worth noting here that the points for the University of Warsaw are scored by a Nobel Prize winner, Menachem Begin, who before the Second World War had studied law in Warsaw, and the Nobel Prize in Literature laureats, Czesław Miłosz and Wisława Szymborska scored for the Jagiellonian University of Krakow. The intellectual weakness of Polish universities is depicted in the structure of the majority of academic research which, according to the 18th century pattern by the Russian academician Mikhail Lomonosov, tends to describe an occurrence encyclopedically without proposing a thesis or conducting any discussion or choosing the best solution, as if Thomas Kuhn's "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" had have never been published.

The explanation for geographical potential is that the physical accessibility to the elites from European countries increases with the development of transport infrastructure and anchoring in EU structures. At the same time, there are other nations currently in the growth phase which have a long tradition of elites, and which are closer to Poland than to Brussels, Belgium, or Berlin, Germany. These are Ukraine, Romania, Turkey and Russia. The center of gravity on the continent has been Brussels and Berlin for the last two decades, although it is slowly moving eastwards. Physical accessibility, the development of transport networks and the consequent emergence of common international projects are all great qualities of Poland, and it is easy to realize this when looking at mainland China, isolated by deserts, mountains and seas, where only 34 million Chinese do cross the border a year.

Changing the model of elites and recommendations

The growth in the significance of soft power is closely linked to another process – the transformation of the model of elites. The hierarchical and centralist models, which used to be the basis for ruling a country since Max Weber, have been becoming outdated. Still, this model is persistently reinforced in Russia ruled as a "sovereign democracy" with Aleksandr Dugin (Александр Гельевич Дугин) being its prominent ideologue (Dugin,

who comes from a family of high rank officers of Russian military intelligence, lectures in geopolitics at the Lomonosov University in Moscow). This model assumes that a centralized state is such an elephantine structure that it is capable of reaching its goals by means of order and through the method of the politics of accomplished facts, at the same time retaining its “sovereignty”. The main threat in such a model might be the danger of infiltration of the country's management system. Hence, its obvious consequence: saturation of the Russian elites with special services at a level of 78 percent – if we are to believe in calculations made by Olga Krysztanovskaya (Ольга Крыштановская) as of 2006.

Reaching out for the hierarchical means to realize the nation's politics is counter-efficient. The setting up of the CBA (Central Counter-Corruption Bureau) in Poland under President Lech Kaczyński – a hierarchical institution – as a vertical competition against the existing special services' community was a spectacular fiasco. Also the work of Macierewicz's committee to expose the military intelligence network – set up by General Jaruzelski's junta in 1980s – as a hidden political actor and an anti-development interest group (ADIG) was doomed to fail. For, in accordance with the theory of the flow of power, captured by Jadwiga Staniszkis in her book “O władzy i bezsilności” (2006), network structures have always been stronger than hierarchical structures. (The theory can be derived from Alvin Toffler's outline in his “Power-shift.”)

The model of elites which increases in value is a network model, is described from its theoretical side by Staniszkis. This is the model which promotes devolution of projects and budgets, internal connections and synergy of the activities of institutions, and which also promotes mutual influence of interest groups and ideological streams. Some of these assumptions are already known to Polish civil servants, e.g. performance budgets. However, it is not the institutional structure that is the most significant in this model but an internal information flow and the creation of *pensée unique*, i.e. a community of opinions of the country's elite in key aspects.

This is clearly seen in the example of the institutional reaction of the U.S. government to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Despite the appearances and some of the media reports, the centralization of the system did not happen. On the contrary, the community of special services was enlarged and amounted to 1271 institutions. Additionally, the access to federal funds was widened to encompass state security and anti-terrorist activities, which resulted in the total of 1931 companies and private entities (Top Secret America report, Washington Post, July 2010). The American version of network bonds are: frequent conferences, seminars and study away scholarships (personal acquaintance with professionals), affiliation to groups (extending from those very popular Bible working groups, Trilateral Commission to the Knights of Columbus and Rotarians), access to knowledge, far-fetched financial transparency, public reports and records of public events on social media such as the YouTube. Finally there is the most important tool of mutual bonding of elites: the social networking site Facebook. Facebook is a depiction of personal connections, and it facilitates their strengthening, building one's own credibility and widening the network of contacts.

Poland's transformations of internal order should develop in two dimensions: technocratic and political.

The technocratic dimension consists in:

- 1) implementing network solutions (the internal mobility of elites and their networking using YouTube and Facebook);
- 2) project-based work (performance budgets, accurate goals of a project and reliable evaluation of results);

3) widening elites by means of public-private partnership, and by devoluting the official policy to non-governmental organizations and academic circles.

What this all requires is standardization, the opening of passages, and making career paths transparent in administration, power structures and at academic institutions, especially by means of making positions tenured.

The political dimension consists in:

- 1) decreasing the costs of labor which will reduce the “grey market” in the economy and will free the energy of entrepreneurs, which will transfer to an economic growth with strong fundamentals;
- 2) changing the higher education system and the radical transformation of post-Soviet (in its structure) Polish Academy of Sciences;
- 3) building a transport infrastructure which would have an integrated character (a dense system of highway junctions and a large number of railway stations after the example of the TGV high-speed trains of France).

The political feature of this dimension consists in the existence of strong anti-developmental interest groups (ADIGs) which live off the current system. The progressive solutions in this dimension must be a part of a complex package.

The Casimir Pulaski Foundation

is an independent think tank which specializes in foreign policy, with a mission to promote freedom, equality and democracy, as well as to support actions of strengthening civil society. The foundation carries out activities both in Poland and abroad, among others in Central and Eastern Europe and in North America.

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The Foundation is the main organizer of the Warsaw Regional NGOs Congress www.warsawcongress.pl, the Academy of Young Diplomats www.akademia.diplomacy.pl and publisher of the Communication Platform for Non-Governmental Organizations www.non-gov.org

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