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How Polish media coverage shows the American media's incredible bias against conservatives

By [Ewa Thompson](#)

On Sunday, June 28, 2020, Poles voted for president. Thirty years ago, Poland was so lightweight politically that such an event would have passed unnoticed. Today, as Alasdair Lane rightly notes, who becomes president in Poland will have consequences for the entire E.U. (Forbes, 28 June 2020). The two leading candidates were the incumbent Andrzej Duda and Warsaw mayor Rafał Trzaskowski. They got, respectively, 43.67 percent and 30.34 percent of the vote. There will be a second round.

Under Duda's leadership, Poland launched major investment programs such as building a canal across the Vistulan Peninsula, with the view to making the Polish port of Elbląg easily reachable by large ships; and the mega-airport in Baranów that will compete with the Frankfurt hub in Germany. Duda's government has improved the standard of living of the poorest citizens by giving families a \$125 bonus for each child and, recently, a one-time \$125 voucher for the child's summer vacation. The money became available because Duda substantially curbed corruption. Under the previous (Civic Platform) administration, billions of dollars left Poland annually as companies falsely claimed exemption from the value-added tax.

Duda's good-looking opponent, Rafał Trzaskowski, proved himself to be a singularly inept manager. In 2019, Warsaw's sewer system failed, and untreated sewage poured directly into the Vistula. Cities and towns along the Vistula River, all the way to Gdańsk, were affected, and so was the Baltic Sea. Trzaskowski was unable to cope with the problem and had to ask the conservative government (which he otherwise badmouthed) for help — which he received. Neither Greenpeace nor any other ecological organizations gave publicity to the event or blamed Trzaskowski for a lack of management skills. Did I make myself clear? Major media in Europe and America have favored Trzaskowski over Duda.

Here is how the media reported Duda's substantial lead over Trzaskowski. The article in Politico announced, "Polish presidential election heads to second round" (Politico, 28 June 2020). Trzaskowski is called "centrist," whereas the ruling party (of which Duda is not a member but with which he sympathizes) is called "nationalist." In the above-mentioned Forbes article, the incumbent president is called "a man who plays fast and loose with press freedom and the rule of law." There is no documentation for such statements, and indeed, it seems incomprehensible how a free election could be held under a president who allegedly is lawless. Duda is compared to the "notorious" Viktor Orbán of Hungary, a "right-wing reactionary." He is said to be "less extreme," however. The attempt by the Polish government to get rid of judges appointed still under communism is called "a legislative clamp down on judges and journalists critical of the government." Incidentally, eighty percent of the Polish media are foreign-owned.

U.S. News and World Report calls Duda "populist" and "right wing." EuroNews calls Trzaskowski "pro-EU," as if Duda were against Poland's membership in the E.U. The Guardian calls him "homophobic" ahead of the election (19 June 2020). The [BBC](#) chooses "nationalistic," a universal term

of condemnation in today's public debate. The BBC adds that COVID-19 caused the Polish economy to go into a recession. Aren't other economies also suffering? Yes, but recession is a handy stone with which to hit a politician one dislikes. Incidentally, isn't every government supposed to care for its own nation primarily? Why call conservative governments nationalistic and avoid this label when describing radically leftist governments, such as Maduro's in Venezuela?

Journalists apparently feel that it is not necessary to provide documentation concerning labels slapped on conservative governments. Incidentally, the Polish state has never passed laws discriminatory of homosexuals — neither after nor before World War 2. In the Second Polish Republic, several homosexual artists reached much recognition, such as composer Karol Szymanowski or writer Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz. The general consensus in Poland has been that homosexuality is a private matter and it should not become a topic of public discussion. There is a long way from this to being "homophobic" or imposing penalties for homosexuality. So why does calling Duda "homophobic" come so easily to "objective" journalists?

Who voted for Trzaskowski? Here is a partial explanation. Under Soviet occupation, over two million Poles joined the Communist Party. Add to that their families and friends, and those who collaborated with the secret police or were members of it — and their families. They are now retired, are Polish citizens, and have the right to vote. Whom do you think they vote for? Duda, who keeps repeating that he is working for the Polish people, or Trzaskowski, who mouths slogans about the E.U., progress, and sexual liberation?

The BBC has titled its article "Poland's clash of values in presidential election." Indeed, this is a struggle not between two parties, but between two civilizations: the civilization of demanding more and more ideological supervision from the state, and imposing more and more restrictions that are euphemistically called "political correctness." The other civilization is that of holding on to the tradition of natural law (so widely accepted in Poland) and safeguarding liberty, while also caring for material welfare of the citizenry and for technological development.

Poland is an easy target — too big not to be noticed yet not a great power, with neighbors that are not entirely reconciled to seeing her free of their commandeering. This is why it is so easy to slap labels on Polish events. These labels show glaring political bias in the media. Should we not try to point out how easily bigoted stereotypes are worked into world news?

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