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*“Opoka w Kraju” (The Bedrock in a Country).
The magazine’s monograph*

ABSTRACT

The periodical “Opoka w Kraju” may be classified into the mainstream of national magazines. Such a view can be corroborated by the magazine’s references to the Catholic ethics, perception of the nation as the highest value, historicism, the role of a family in maintaining one’s identity and a life in accordance with the Latin civilization. In its columns, the magazine presented the role of the nation, the national vision of the state, foreign policy, and the importance of religion. The essence of the national identity and culture was being emphasized, part and parcel of which was the stereotype of a Pole as a Catholic. The magazine was also moralistic in its character. It presented the effects of actions incompatible with the Catholic ethics and described some political formations which were not concerned about the Polish national interests. An important aspect within the scope of ideas presented in “Opoka w Kraju” was a dichotomous view of the world, consisting of potential allies and disclosed enemies.

“Opoka w Kraju” was a family magazine. Its predecessor “Opoka w Kraju” was published in exile, in London between 1963 and 1988 by Jędrzej Giertych. A year after his death in 1993, the magazine started to be published in Poland by Jędrzej’s son – Maciej Giertych. “Opoka w Kraju” was based mainly on the political thought of Roman Dmowski, Felix Koneczny and Jędrzej Giertych. For this reason, its programme policy has not changed since 1969.

Key words: nationalism, periodical, national thought, Latin civilization, Catholicism

INTRODUCTION

The publisher of the periodical “Opoka w Kraju” (The Bedrock in a Country) is Maciej Giertych. The first issue of the magazine was published in 1993, however, it is worth emphasizing that “Opoka w Kraju” (“OwK”) constituted the reactivation of the immigration magazine “Opoka” – published in London between 1963 and 1988 by Jędrzej Giertych. A year after his death, Jędrzej’s son, Maciej Giertych, started publishing the magazine in Poland, stressing the place of release. The family character of the magazine was also stressed by the fact that it presented political manifesto of Liga Polskich Rodzin (the League of Polish Families), a party whose president was the publisher’s son – Roman Giertych.

“Opoka w Kraju” may be classified into national magazine. Such a view can be corroborated by the magazine’s references to the Catholic ethics, perception of the nation as the highest value, historicism, the role of a family in maintaining one’s identity and a life in accordance with the Latin civilization. In its columns, the magazine presented the role of the nation, the national vision of the state, foreign policy, and the importance of religion. The essence of the national identity and culture was being emphasized, part and parcel of which was the stereotype of a Pole as a Catholic. The magazine was also moralistic in its character. It presented the effects of actions incompatible with the Catholic ethics and described some political formations which were not concerned about the Polish national interests. An important aspect within the scope of ideas presented in “Opoka w Kraju” was a dichotomous view of the world, consisting of potential allies and disclosed enemies. The articles refer to the publications of Roman Dmowski and Jan Ludwik Popławski – the seniors of the national movement in Poland. In addition, the content presented is compatible with the ideology of the national camp in pre-war Poland. It is worth noting that the author in the articles published identifies himself with the national movement. “Opoka w Kraju” was based mainly on the political thought of Roman Dmowski, Felix Koneczny and Jędrzej Giertych. For this reason, its programme policy did not change since 1969.

This article consists of four parts. The first part concerns the publisher’s biography, his political commitment and a source of political ideas. The second part deals with the journal’s origin which starts in exile, moves on to its distribution in Poland and ends with the reactivation in Kórnik. The third part describes its political thought. The last one concerns the periodical’s function.

THE PUBLISHER’S POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY

Maciej Giertych is the son of Jędrzej Giertych who was the pre-war National Democratic Party activist. He was born on March 24th, 1936 in Warsaw, where he, his mother and siblings spent the entire war. From 1946, he lived in exile in London. In secondary school he began reading his father’s publications, and he openly proclaimed

his views. As he claimed, most of his friends opted for a Poland’s concept presented by J. Piłsudski, which was the reason for Giertych’s conflicts with his peers. “Slowly I became my father’s student. I was shaped with his writing. I read everything he published and he would read and suggest corrections to my texts” [Wojciechowski 2005: 7]. He went to university in Oxford and studied at the Faculty of Forestry. Then he moved to Toronto where he defended his doctoral thesis and received a PhD in Physiology of Trees.

In college, he got involved in social activities. He ran a scout team for junior high school students. He founded the Polish Students Club and Saturday school of Polish for young members of the Polish society. He also organized meetings and debates which were attended by Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski, Edward Raczyński and Stanisław Mikołajczyk [Wojciechowski 2005: 7].

In 1962, M. Giertych returned to Poland. Following in his father’s footsteps, who served in the Navy, he wanted to do his military service, but was not admitted. Not doing the military service was inconsistent with its ideology – “I thought it was inevitable for an adult man to go to army. It is natural in my thinking and in patriotic thinking, too” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009].

M. Giertych linked his life in Poland with Kórnik, where he worked at the Institute of Dendrology, Polish Academy of Sciences. In 1970 he won a postdoctoral degree in Genetics of Trees, and soon became the head of the Laboratory of Genetics in Population Sciences. A few years later he received the honorary title of a full professor and was promoted to head of the Department of Genetics. He held this function until 1996, he was also vice-president of the Forestry Counsel with the Ministry for Environmental Protection for seven years.

After returning to Poland M. Giertych began searching for connections with nationalists. The ND (National Democracy) environment in PRL was rather broken, some activists feared arrests and harassment and so worked in secret. The first contact was Leon Mirecki, who introduced Giertych to a conspiratorial post-ND environment [Wojciechowski 2005: 10].

In 1986, he got involved in oppositional activities and became a deputy chairman of Social Council under Primate Glemp. Alexander Hall recalls that when a draft of a document designed to “respect the world-views in the state and society” was being created, the most zealous of its opponents was M. Giertych. He vetoed a number of statements contained in this document, including the right to remain silent about one’s faith or lack of faith, opposition to the identification of a Pole with a Catholic. In the Council, only Cardinal Glemp had a similar position [Wojciechowski 2005: 15]. In 1987, Giertych was the only layman to receive an invitation from Pope John Paul II to participate in the Synod of Bishops in Rome, whose theme was the role of the laity in the Church and the world.

M. Giertych was also a member of the Consultative Council under the head of the Council of State, General Wojciech Jaruzelski. The “OwK” founder stated at the Council general meeting that he had agreed to participate in it because he supported

martial law. He believed that if it hadn't been for the State Council decree on the introduction of communist martial law, surely the invasion of forces of the Warsaw Pact in Poland would follow. Giertych nevertheless, presented a positive attitude towards the Soviet Union, which he regarded to have been the guarantor of Polish borders. At the general meeting of the Consultative Council of July 17th, 1989, he said: "Politically, we must not give up the Russian support. The West will not fight for the Polish Gdańsk. the Soviet Union, however, protects us militarily; it is also a proven economic partner" [Zuchnowski: www.wiadomosci.gazeta.pl]. Such attitude to the Soviet Union stemmed mainly from fears of a continuous sense of threat from Germany.

Maciej Giertych recalled: "in the Consultative Council I fought for justice, mainly for families with many children and the legal protection for the unborn children. So far nothing has changed in this matter, but something has started. The existence of the Council provided an opportunity to give publicity to these problems" [Wojciechowski 2005: 18]. Giertych was repeatedly criticized for participation in the Council. He was accused of supporting the communist regime. He was the only opponent of the government who did not support the opposition.

In addition, M. Giertych was accused of collaboration with the Security Services (Służby Bezpieczeństwa, SB) during operation "Drone", which aimed at discrediting one of the oppositionist, Adam Michnik. M. Giertych was thought to have mediated in the transmission of documents by SB to his father, concerning the oppositionist's brother – Stefan Michnik. SB employees wanted Jędrzej Giertych to publish in his periodical an article about the activities of Stefan Michnik, who was a Stalinist military judge. Jędrzej Giertych did not accept the offer. Nevertheless, he wrote an article about Michnik, drawing information from other sources. Lustration court ruled, however, that M. Giertych was not a secret collaborator of SB [www.parlamentarzysta.info].

It is worth mentioning that before Maciej Giertych began to publish the "Opoka w Kraju", he was one of the founders of the national magazine "Słowo Narodowe". The magazine was based on ideological assumptions of the pre-war National Democracy. The magazine discussed historical matters, European integration and problems of rural areas and agriculture. Due to the lack of funds, the magazine was closed after operating for two years on the Polish press market. In 1988, under the editorship of Maciej Giertych, an issue of "Gazeta Warszawska" [The Warsaw Newspaper], closed down in 1935, was released. The address of the editorial office given was supposed to facilitate the integration of the national environment which was quite dispersed at that time. The apartment belonged to Leon Mrzygłocki – "the former deputy delegate of the government on behalf of Stronnictwo Narodowe [National Party] in Lviv ["Myśl.pl" 2007: 51]. The opponents of Maciej Giertych pointed out that the the publishing activity often comes to an end quickly. As examples, they indicated closed newspapers edited by Maciej and Roman Giertych. The examples of such newspapers include: "Słowo Narodowe", "Gazeta Warszawska", "Prawica Polska", "Od Nowa", "Bastion", "Wszechpolak", "Gimnazjalista", and "Biuletyn wewnętrzny" ["Ojczyzna" 1994: 2].

During the political transformation the Giertych family aimed to reactivate national structures from before World War II. Maciej Giertych was involved in the reconstruction of Stronnictwo Narodowe, SN (the National Party), and his son Roman in the rebirth of Młodzież Wszechpolska (All-Polish Youth). In the eighties, the national environment was kept together by Leon Mirecki, the former head of the organizational department of the Main Board of SN [“Myśl.pl” 2007: 52]. Since 1990, for twelve years Maciej served as the head of SN Supreme Council, and his son became a member of SN Central Administration [Giertych 2005: 5]. The National Party manifesto was approved by the Board in 1991 in chapter on Nation. Its main objectives were the introduction of population policy. It consisted of the statutory prohibition of abortion, ensuring an adequate number of flats (adequate to the number of marriages), offering additional money for each child and promoting a model a large family, through the media [Program of the National Party: 1990]. In 1999, there was a unifying convention of SN and the National Democratic Party [Piskorski 2006: 234]. At the beginning of 2001, Maciej and Roman Giertych became involved in the process of consolidation of national groups. The initiative to establish a new party appeared before the parliamentary election in 2001. Witold Hatka who presented his plans on Radio Maryja was the initiator of consolidation activities. He proposed the establishment of a political party called Liga Rodzin [the League of Families]. Roman Giertych (on behalf of Stowarzyszenie Rodziny Warszawskiej [Association of Families in Warsaw]), Henryk Goryszewski (MP), Marian Jurczyk (Niezależny Ruch Społeczny [Independent Social Movement]), Bogusław Kowalski (Stronnictwo Narodowe [National Party]), Mariusz Olszewski (Stowarzyszenie Porozumienie Polskie) and Adam Wędrychowicz (Koalicja dla Polski [Coalition for Poland]) also became involved in the initiative [Maj, Maj 2007: 241].

In May 2001, during the unification congress, Stronnictwo Narodowo-Demokratyczne [the National-Democratic Party, SND] merged with the League of Families. Marek Kotlinowski became the chairman of SND and issued a resolution to rename Liga Polskich Rodzin – LPR [League of Polish Families]. The new name was approved by the Political Council of SND (attended by Maciej and Roman Giertych among others) [Maj, Maj 2007: 242]. The Electoral Committee was also established. Maciej Giertych, Roman Giertych, Gabriel Janowski, Jan Łopuszański, Antoni Macierewicz, Jan Olszewski, Witold Tomczak and Zygmunt Wrzodak became leaders of that political group [Maj, Maj 2007: 246]. Despite the size of the organizations which entered LPR, the party was dominated by “the Giertych environment”. Therefore, the environment of the League of Polish Families was very diversified and described itself as of a Catholic-national nature.

The basic manifesto of the party was based on the ideological achievements of R. Dmowski and J. Giertych. On Jędrzej Giertych’s hundredth birthday, the party appointed Jędrzej Giertych Memorial Institute, which was to disseminate the magazine’s forefather’s thought. LPR took part in the parliamentary elections [Maj, Maj 2007: 252]. In 2001, both Maciej Giertych and his son Roman won seats in the Parliament

with LPR. A year later, the party created the Polish Committee for Independence led by Roman Giertych. The Committee coordinated the political campaigns of parties which opposed the Polish admission to the European Union. In the European Parliament elections in 2004, LPR won 15.92% of support. Ten candidates from this party, including Maciej Giertych, won seats in the EP [Maj, Maj 2007: 238]. M. Giertych, launched in the European elections with a mission to promote Christian values in Europe and to build the atmosphere of Euro-skepticism. Time spent in Brussels, M. Giertych considered as wasted, he said “one can do a lot less there, than in the Polish Parliament”. He said about his work in the EP: “I messed up a little bit. I have a feeling that the people there treated me like a weirdo but in a serious way, they treated me as a man who had no support, who was not in the mainstream, did not belong to any major party, nor to the establishment, but certainly as someone interesting. I did not feel they treated me as a fool. It is important that people are forced to think, and that is a lot. I played such role to some extent, although I do not overestimate it” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009].

In 2005, Maciej Giertych launched in the presidential election for the second time, but he withdrew his candidacy which encouraged his supporters to vote for Lech Kaczyński. That year, Maciej’s son, Roman Giertych became the head of LPR. As a result of coalition between Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice), and Samoobrona (Self-Defense Party), Roman Giertych became Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education. He was the founding father of *becikowe* and the *zero tolerancji* programme, as well as a supporter of the introduction of school uniforms. Conflicts within the coalition, dissolution of the Parliament which resulted in early elections, eliminated LPR out of the Polish political scene. The support for LPR declined from 7.97% to 1.30% in two years [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009]. Roman Giertych resigned the presidency in the party and went on to work as a lawyer. Maciej Giertych became a vice-chairman of LPR Political Council.

The popularity of the League of Polish Families dropped significantly due to the lack of support from Radio Maryja. LPR did not repeat the electoral success in the election to the European Parliament. In 2009, Libertas Polska “supported by LPR received 1.14% of the votes cast. This was only the eighth score in Poland and it did not guarantee the MEP’s mandate. It only confirmed the poor condition of LPR, lack of strategy of action and errors of managing bodies who decided to take part in the election under the name of Libertas” [Maj 2010: 84].

Maciej Giertych said that Roman “had been brought up to be a politician from a very beginning. For this reason, he majored in both Law and History – subjects necessary for political activity” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009]. Roman’s name should not be considered insignificant. He was named after Roman Dmowski – the main ideologist of ND.

EMIGRATION ORIGIN OF THE MAGAZINE

“Opoka w Kraju” was the continuation of “Opoka” published in London by Jędrzej Giertych. Jędrzej was both its publisher and editor. The first issue of the journal was published in October 1969 in London. Two main reasons for the emergence of the periodical may be taken into consideration. One of them was a discussion on the doctrinal changes in the Catholic Church, the liberalization of the rules and criticism of Pope Paul VI’s encyclical – *Humanae Vitae*. J. Giertych identified himself with it. The second reason was the shutdown of Witold Olszewski’s “Horyzonty”¹, where the founder of “Opoka” published his articles. Therefore, in order to disseminate their views and participate in the discussion, Giertych decided to found his own magazine.

It is an important fact that the emergence of “Opoka” was associated with the defense of Catholic orthodoxy, and with contestation of the Second Vatican Council’s provisions. Genealogy of the journal’s title can be traced in the article by J. Treszkowa, where she compares the Catholic Church to the Evangelical rocks, “which will not be crumbled by any storms” [“Opoka” 1969: 17]. Using the journal, J. Giertych wanted to defend the principles and traditions of the Catholic Church in Poland. According to him, only a good Catholic could be a good Pole. Any liberal approach to faith was criticized in “Opoka”.

The first issue contained articles written not only by the publisher but also by his wife, daughter and friends (Poles living abroad). “Opoka” also published letters from readers. The editor added comments to each one. What is more, Giertych presented the authors’ profiles – where they lived before emigration, what sort of education they received or information on their family background. Furthermore, “Opoka” published obituaries of people of merit who in Giertych’s opinion were important in Poland’s matters.

In the first years of its existence, the magazine touched upon religious themes mainly. Apart from articles, each issue consisted of columns – “from the last minute” and “notes” – reflections written on a daily basis (that is why J. Giertych called “Opoka” “a single day newspaper”). A few issues published a series of articles on the role of Poles in exile. Later, “Opoka w Kraju” adopted a similar layout.

London’s “Opoka” cost five shillings. Profit from sale was intended for founding publishing of further books [O’Driscoll 2007: 414]. Lack of funds caused Mr Giertych sent letters of its announcement and financial support requests to his friends. “Opoka” was being subscribed. The whole Giertych family was involved in the process of publication. The magazine was assembled by Giertych’s wife and his children. The children were also involved in distributing the journal. “Opoka” had a large number

¹ Periodical published in France by Witold Olszewski, until his return to Poland, to 1972 funded by the Ministry of the Interior of PRL, V. T. Stańczyk, *Usidlanie emigrantów*, <http://www.rp.pl/artykul/87282.html>, 1.12.2009r.

of readers abroad. Maciej Giertych circulated the periodical in Poland. The priority was to provide the Primate with the magazine [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009].

The journal's programme line was consistent with ND political thought. In his articles J. Giertych often referred to the founder and main ideologist of the national movement – Roman Dmowski. He wrote about him: “the greatest man who grew from the ND, arguably one of the greatest men in Poland's thousand-year history and a major constructor of the new Poland” [“Opoka” 1972: 16]. J. Giertych's ideas were also influenced by other national ideologists such as Jan Ludwik Popławski, and Zygmunt Balicki. Jędrzej Giertych's writings had moralistic overtones. Main issues raised in “Opoka” were the themes associated with the importance of Polish national culture. They included articles which listed examples of behavior unworthy of a Pole or those which gave an insight in a Pole's national responsibilities.

Giertych devoted a lot of articles to how to raise children. When he wrote about the origin of the Polish people, he often stressed the advantages of their national character through the prism of them belonging to the Latin civilization. A collection of Felix Koneczny's writings (with whom Giertych corresponded) had a large impact on Giertych's perception of the importance of civilization. It was Koneczny's idea of a rule, implemented by Giertych that one should conduct in accordance with the law derived from civilization to which he or she belongs. He pointed out that there is no universal ethics, but every civilization has its own moral code. Latin civilization's ethics is the Catholic ethics [Koneczny 2001: 19–20]. The set of views represented by J. Giertych in “Opoka” can be referred to as a “catalogue of nationalist's values”.

One could say that through “Opoka” J. Giertych took part in the Polish society. He received many letters from readers, and he answered them all. He wrote repeatedly that in his case, emigration is temporary.² Jędrzej Giertych published “Opoka” until 1988. His illness put an end to the existence of the periodical. Jędrzej Giertych died in 1992. He was buried in Poland, just as he wished.

“OPOKA” OF KÓRNIK

One year after Jędrzej Giertych's death, his son, Maciej began to publish the journal. In the cumulative book “Nie przemoga”, which comprised the first 10 issues of the journal, Maciej Giertych writes: “Today I begin publishing ‘Opoka w Kraju’. I join the journal issued by my father, but I am fully aware that neither its level nor the subject matter will come close to my father's publishing work. Certainly, this

² Maria and Jędrzej Giertych had passports that allowed them to live in the UK and travel the world, except for Poland. These documents failed to protect its holder from unjustified arrest, such as the country of origin. Passports received refugees living in Britain who have not decided to adopt the English nationality. When planning a trip to their homeland, after 43 years of living in exile they took the passport and the nationality of the PRL. In Poland, he wanted to “give lectures” and “encourage the activities of his son”. See: V. J. Giertych, *List do moich czytelników*, “Opoka” 1988, no 21, 1988, pp. 1–2.

journal will be different. But there are things that ‘Opoka’ and ‘Opoka’ alone, may touch upon (...)”.

From its beginnings “Opoka” appeared at irregular intervals. Giertych stressed that the magazine is issued when he gathers enough material. Since the establishment of the national journal there had been 80 issues by the end of 2012, There were two special issues before the referendum for the European Union (No. 44 from April 2003) and before the election to the European Parliament (No. 49 from May 2004). It is worth noting that emphasizing the continuity of thought of “Opoka” with “Opoka w Kraju”, M. Giertych maintains the continuity of the numbering with the emigration edition of the magazine in the numbering of the magazine issues in parentheses.

It is worth stressing that the origins of Maciej’s involvement in his father’s publishing work trace back to his stay in London. At that point, his task was to send the brochures out to readers. At the age of 13, Maciej Giertych was sent by his parents to a Polish boarding school in Cambridge, where he directly distributed the journal and disseminated his father’s views. When he returned to Poland, he dealt with distribution all over the country. He did not charge anything for the journal. His activity was not recorded by the SB, although his return to Poland met with some interest of SB. Maciej Giertych was suspected of espionage. Since his arrival to Poland he was under surveillance. He was given the nickname “Long”. He was followed by twenty-seven SB employees. The officers came to Giertych’s house and interrogated him about his father’s views. In the end, officers reported: “He does not pose any threat, but he is being controlled” [www.wiadomosci.gazeta.pl].

Mariusz Urbanek wrote in “Polityka” that SB did not prevent M. Giertych’s father from the distribution of writings, because Jędrzej Giertych and the government of The People’s Republic of Poland had a common enemy – Komitet Obrony Robotników (the Workers’ Defense Committee) [Urbanek 2001: 24–26].

Maciej Giertych says that the reason why he decided to continue the thought presented in “Opoka” was among others “to get people accustomed to the journal published by his father”. As he pointed out: “My father died but political thought should continue”. However, its origins were similar to London’s “Opoka”. Both journals were created as a protest against progressive current in the Catholic Church. The main cause of appearance of “Opoka” was the introduction of a new Religious Education handbook. Maciej Giertych said: “The first issue of “Opoka” I published, was connected with the publication of an awful, new educational aid for catechesis. There were so many things that I did not like, looking from the Catholic point of view, in which I was raised. It was a translation of something western, but with the recommendation of a Polish bishop for introduction into Polish schools, where catechesis is taught. I wrote and sent the journal to the bishops. There was much racket, and even an ecclesiastical debate over whether I’m right. I was informed that I was admitted that I was right, but without any official confirmation. The handbook was withdrawn” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009].

It can be concluded that just as Jędrzej, Maciej Giertych used the journal to defend the traditional religious values. The reaction to his writings proved that the role of a journalist – moralizer, which he performed, was needed. It is worth to point out one more reason for reactivation of “Opoka”. Undoubtedly, it stemmed from the desire to continue the work of his father, who definitely was a role model for his son. On the basis of numerous texts written by Maciej, it can be inferred that his father was an unquestionable authority in every aspect of his life and Maciej sought to imitate him. Maciej Giertych in the article *My dad* writes that he was always influenced by his father’s opinion about political events, and he eagerly waited for letters from him. They gave him confidence in his ideas or corrected his point of view. [Giertych: www.endecja.pl]. Like his father, Maciej Giertych very early began to get involved in the scouts movement or set up Polish organizations. As early as secondary school, he began writing articles or deliver presentations on history. A very important matter was also his world-view issue, which was fully transferred from father to son.

“OwK” took after London’s “Opoka” notes compiled on a day-to-day basis. Most issues discussed in the journal, especially those related to foreign policy, morality and the Catholic Church, are also similar in tone with its predecessor, “Opoka”. Basic topics addressed there, are the issues “ignored” by the media in Poland. What is different however, is the range of topics related to the publisher’s interest and education, namely, the issue of evolution, genetically modified food and environmental protection. “OwK” expanded its topic related to the internal political situation, as well as international organizations. During elections, the journal promoted the LPR’s manifesto, and during the fifth cadence of the Sejm, it supported Roman’s activities and concepts on educational reform.

As noted by Jarosław Tomaszewicz, a regular column devoted to Feliks Koneczny’s theory of civilization can be found in “Opoka”. In his opinion, it was due to the editor’s conviction that “it is a great export commodity, which could conquer the western right-wing” [Tomaszewicz 2003: 219–220]. However, another aspect of presenting Koneczny’s reflections should be pointed out. Feliks was Jędrzej’s friend. It was Jędrzej who asked Maciej to find his manuscripts and he did so. He speaks as follows about his role in the dissemination of Koneczny’s achievements: “Basically, his legacy was rescued, and I contributed to it. I read it, checked, and I corrected it on my own. It was an extremely tedious process, but I just fell in love with this author. I tried to promote it internationally, as part of my work in the European Parliament” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009]. Promotion of Koneczny’s concepts could therefore be related to Jędrzej’s positive assessment of his achievements. Jędrzej was an unquestionable authority to his son.

Using the journal, the editor perpetuates a pattern of thought “about the nation, Poland, the Church, the family and society”, which he took over from his father [Szwed 2011: 232]. M. Giertych said that he was a spokesman for those who look at politics and society in a: “traditional, Catholic, national, Polish, patriotic way (...), against socialism, against corruption, against attempts to violate our direction, at-

tempts to violate the teachings and practices of the Church” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009].

Undoubtedly “OwK” is where M. Giertych can proclaim his views. He can also promote his books there. He says that there are in Poland, “forces that are able to create silence” and by his own writings, Giertych overcomes these forces. He gives an example of a conference which accompanied issuing of the bulletin entitled “Quo Vadis, Europe?”. He speaks on the promotion: “I wrote the book, I organized a conference and the promotion of the book, the journalists arrived, the room was full. There were seven television cameras, and about forty reporters. I handed in a copy of the book to each. The next day nothing happened, there was silence, there was nothing. Ranging from ‘Radio Maryja’ to Urban’s ‘Nie’ there was only silence, and all of them attended the conference. I can understand that you may not like it, but there was no criticism. It was an organized boycott by some unknown forces, but surely they were backstage, secret forces” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009].

Maciej Giertych also adopted his father’s conviction that the world is governed by systems which have power over the media. The main organization of this system is the Bilderberg Club. Using his journal, Giertych attempted to hinder the plans of the secret organization and to inform its readers about the activities of the Masonic organization.

It pointed out that political thought contained in “Opoka w Kraju” is compatible with ideology in “Opoka”. In the course of forty years of its functioning no changes were made in its layout. It is still published at A5 size. It should be noted that “OwK” has up to 16 pages and is released more frequently than its predecessor. What is more, it is also available on the website (since March, 1995). Each issue of the magazine consists of the main article presented on the first page, side articles, notes, and a list of books recommended by the publisher of “OwK”. As Giertych emphasized, he takes notes on a regular basis. Their goal is to familiarize readers with important issues not covered in the Polish media. He claimed that the “The number of notes is growing on its own, depending on what I am dealing with at the moment”. He considered the matter of evolution as their important element – “this is an ideological issue, struggle with some atheistic way of thinking that is imposed against the scientific results. This is political correctness in science. Science basically protects itself on its own. There is discussion, something is happening. These are topics that are not subject to debate, the evolution being one of them” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009]. Giertych, as a supporter of creationism, rejected the theory of evolution.

It is important that the journal in its printed form, is sent to two groups only: Polish bishops and representatives of the National Democratic Party niche environment. Maciej Giertych decides who receives it. The recipients may, however, be divided into four groups. The first group consists of the bishops. Maciej Giertych sends them copies of absolutely each issue. He confirms the validity of his target group choice illustrating it with an example, namely the comments to the articles the clergy provided. He said with conviction that they “do not throw away the journal, unless

they read it. Little by little I try to influence the episcopate”. The second category comprised of people who shared Giertych’s world-view.

M. Giertych sent them the magazine and asked them to copy and transmit it to the wider community so as to widen the circle of nationalists. Giertych said that he accepted “every kindred spirit” as readers of his magazine. The third group consisted of the Internet users who read the on-line version of the magazine and send e-mails asking for the internet subscriptions, and the so-called curious readers, who wanted to receive it. The last category were the recipients from abroad (former “Opoka” readers, postwar emigration representatives and M. Giertych’s associates from the “post-Solidarność” political emigration).

M. Giertych answers all letters from the readers. The reactions listed in the periodical are usually critical. Giertych says, “They are a polemic which emerges out of the concern for Poland’s welfare”. M. Giertych gets some abusive e-mails, too, but he treats them as a reaction to his political activity. The Editor considered the lack of letters of support, as a sign of acceptance, in accordance with the principle: “if you like it, there is nothing to comment on” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009]. Every year, in order to update the list of readers, the “OwK” publisher sends them a query whether they still want to receive the journal. Lack of response is treated as resignation. It is difficult to determine the circulation of the magazine. As Giertych stated, some journals are returned to him because of the change of address or death of the recipient. Many readers of the magazine came from the circle of readers of the emigrant “Opoka” and from “the solidarity emigration”. In an interview, Giertych said “I also send it to people who at one point told me that they would distribute it – they make copies and give them to others. At this time, it has become so popular that I don’t even check if it indeed can be distributed in this way. I want to impact the environment of the like-minded people” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009].

The editor encouraged readers to make copies and distribute the magazine. Maciej Giertych is the sole author of all texts included in the magazine. Articles are simply his own thoughts. It is difficult to determine the impact of the magazine. However, as Giertych says, it arouses the biggest interest among the Catholic priests. M. Giertych, in the pages of issue 25 of “OwK”, highlighting the anniversary of the magazine, pointed out that he sends out 700 issues of journal, but “many recipients distribute it further. Some distribute it to a great number of other people”. Hence, it is difficult to determine the number of recipients whom the magazine reaches. As the publisher of the magazine declares, the circle of recipients keeps growing. The above-mentioned issue of the journal was published in February 1998. It can be concluded that together with the integration of political groups of the national movement (National-Democratic Party with National Party) in 1999, and, in 2001, the establishment of the League of Polish Families, its participation in the government coalition in the years 2006 to 2007 may have contributed to the popularization of the magazine. However, the “OwK” wasn’t a press organ of the League of Polish

Families. In July 2012, in issue 79 of “OwK” M. Giertych said that on his own he distributes about 1,000 copies of the magazine and has about 100 “e-mail recipients”. He also stressed that the website on which “OwK” is available is visited by around 1,000 people [“Opoka w Kraju” 2012: 16].

THE POLITICAL THOUGHT, “OPOKA W KRAJU”

The main topics discussed in the journal concern political and social sphere, expanded with moral issues associated with the social teachings of the Catholic Church. The issue of evolution, which M. Giertych treated as an ideological matter, plays an important part, too. He says that his articles “fight with an atheistic way of thinking imposed on us in defiance of the scientific research outcomes” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2012: 16]. Thanks to the magazine, Giertych was able to shape opinions, especially those concerning the theory of evolution. He emphasized that “empirical research results are closer to the biblical descriptions than the claims of evolutionists”. He emphasized that he seeks to “demonstrate that evolutionists have their religion and in its name they bend facts, and ignore the ones which are not compliant with their own claims” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2007: 10].

It can be undoubtedly concluded that the journal is opinion-forming. The analysis of current political and social events made by Maciej Giertych is focused on their consequences for the Polish nation, its faith and values. The thought contained in the journal is timeless, both “Opoka” and “Opoka w Kraju” are strictly national. Still, the main idea is the concept of order, which is grounded in national parties and in the Roman Catholic religion.

Several themes presented in each issue, specific to the national trend, can be identified in “Opoka w Kraju”. These are issues related to the functioning of the nation, the family and its role in the culture, religion and the Catholic Church, as well as a threat to the vitality of the Polish nation. Thus, let us elaborate on M. Giertych’s views concerning these topics.

Maciej Giertych thought of nation as a “family of families”. According to him, nation was “all people who share a common history, common language, common place on earth, namely, homeland, common culture, in particular, common literature” [Giertych 2005: 13]. Thus, he narrowed the range of the notion of nationality. He argued that understanding of this nation in the Polish language is special, because it “includes both the rational and emotional content” [Giertych 2005: 13]. Nationality was therefore not only citizenship, or a command of a common language. Nationality could not be imposed as opposed to citizenship, exemplified by the citizenship of the Polish nation under foreign rule. Nation was consolidated in: legal awareness, social structure, common ethics and culture of Latin civilization. An important element of national identity was also a historical consciousness interpreted as respect for the activities of one’s ancestors, traditions, and the sense of responsibility for future

generations [“Opoka w Kraju”: 1996]. The nation was treated as a voluntary union, created by the state at its own free will, in order to meet common needs.

Nation was a value higher than the state in Giertych’s opinion. He stressed that “the state is an expression of people’s will to exist and function in a common organizational structure. Moreover, it exists by the will of the people and is subjected to them” [Giertych 2005: 13]. He considered the state to be merely a tool to defend the nation and to maintain its structure. State rank was reduced to the nation’s benefit. The importance of the existence of the state was its characteristics, e.g. “hierarchy”, “power” and “collective strength”. These factors allowed the state to fulfill its functions relative to the nation. The role of the state was limited to “defining the limits of what is acceptable” [Giertych 2005: 93].

An important element of “OwK” was also an indication of the threat to the Polish nation, its independence and culture. According to M. Giertych, Poland was vulnerable to attacks due to its Catholic character.

THE JOURNAL’S FUNCTIONS

“OwK” in addition to its basic informative, opinion-forming and controlling function, performed integrative and attitude-forming functions, too. Informative function is performed by highlighting environmental, social and political problems, which could not be learnt from the general media. M. Giertych wrote: “Time goes fast, an event is chasing as event, some important matters are jammed by other which are even more important, and so many current affairs escape our attention. I would like, however, certain things to be saved for the history. If the daily newspapers and mainstream magazines do not consider them important enough, let them be recorded in “Opoka w Kraju” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2006: 3]. The periodical was supposed to be a complement to the national media.

M. Giertych, after receiving the mandate of MEP, on the pages of “OwK” published a summary of his activities and events taking place in the European Parliament and important for Poland. In the journal he published the fragments of correspondence with EU officials.³

Due to the creationist approach to the theory of evolution, M. Giertych presented in the “OwK” its main assumptions. However, he also showed the lack of tolerance for the concept which he himself supported. “On November 8th [2009] I attended a meeting on the scientific criticism of the theory of evolution at the University of St. Pius V in Rome. There were a lot of journalists, but so far there has not been any response. On November 26th a session on evolution was supposed to be organized in Warsaw. I got an invitation to debate with advocates of the theory of evolution. As it

³ See: M. Giertych, *Antyniemiecka agitacja*, “OwK”, no 60, pp. 2–3; Idem, *Sprawozdanie z pracy w Parlamencie Europejskim*, “OwK” 2009, no 71, pp. 1–4.

turned out that I was to be one of the speakers, none of the proponents of this theory agreed to participate” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2010: 11]. Thanks to “OwK” Giertych had the opportunity to participate in the debate on evolution.

An important theme in the journal was the presenting the effects of the functioning of the European Union. “Today the EU is evolving towards a single state. Just as Bismarck had united the German kingdoms and created a unified country, today the Union’s administration wants to make us a single European state, with a common constitution, currency, economy, politics, government, etc. This administration is dominated by German influences” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2010: 8]. What is more, Giertych proved the European Union connections with the Freemasons. He pointed out that the Masonic meetings were attended by notables of the EU. He claimed that at a meeting of the Bilderberg Club, Commissioner Neelie Kroes was present and she “forbade us to support our yards” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2009: 13]. “Opoka” was therefore a place where harmful relationships between organizations were discovered.

In “OwK” Maciej Giertych described the ND positivist approach to history. Political thought of ND “combined the romantic mysticism with positivist national political realism and realism in assessing one’s strengths” [Maj 2001: 134]. For this reason, the journal criticized the glorification of defeated national uprisings. Opinion-forming function was implemented by presenting views on the current governmental policy and highlighting the role of the nation.

M. Giertych assessed politicians’ conduct through the prism of dominant behavior in a given civilization. He wrote: “Jarosław Kaczyński behaves like the Turanian ruler. He gives orders and demands absolute obedience. None independently thinking individual will stay with him for a longer period of time” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2011: 10]. He compared J. Kaczyński to Józef Piłsudski and Sanation ideology.

When he wrote about the nation, Maciej Giertych pointed to its mission. It was basically the defense of orthodoxy in the Catholic Church and the defense of the Christian world against the influence of alien civilizations that sought to destroy the Catholic faith. Giertych has repeatedly stressed in “Opoka” that “we are a nation of great measure, one of the great Christian nations of Europe and we defend the great and lofty ideals” [“Opoka” 1974: 20]. The goals of the nation were clear. “Their source is, first of all, the respect for our ancestors and the legacy they left (...). What is more, it is the concern for the welfare of future generations. Furthermore, it is a sense of rightness, which on the one hand forbids us to give up on behalf of the nation its major assets, on the other hand, prohibits endeavor of what the nation is not entitled to” [“Opoka” 1975: 20].

“Opoka” repeatedly portrayed the Polish nation as distinctive in comparison to other European nations. Its positive indication according to the Giertych was determination in Catholic faith, which was understood as the backbone of the Latin civilization; and the power of struggle which allowed the reconstruction of the state.

The opinion-forming function was intended to demonstrate the need for the national parties to take over the power in Poland. It also comprised the sense of pride in the nation, by referring to its mission.

The controlling function was to indicate Poland's government incorrect decisions and to identify conspiracy groups. M. Giertych has repeatedly pointed out that the Polish government's decisions were mistaken due to the non-Polish interests they were to serve. In their political thought the Giertychs listed active anti-Polish groups.

Jędrzej Giertych's daughter wrote in her book: "Dad was the main Polish promoter of conspiracy theory of history. He believed that what was generally known in politics, did not present a true picture. He was convinced that many of the events which took place, were planned in secret. He was sure that secret organizations and agencies of political forces tried to manipulate the nations for their own purposes" [O'Driscoll 2007: 414]. J. Giertych said that it was R. Dmowski who showed him the validity of conspiracy theories. He wrote about the ND leader: "He opened my eyes to the new and unknown phenomenon" ["Opoka" 1972: 38].

Maciej Giertych shared his father's opinions concerning the existence of anti-Polish circles. He repeatedly mentioned Mason, Jewish and German conspiracies, who control the anti-Polish policy through the EU and aspire to destroy Poland. In all of those three communities the Giertychs saw one enemy who took several forms: it was the Germans. J. Giertych believed that the German people and German states like Prussia, Austria and German Reich sought to destroy Poland. He believed that the Germans were the most dangerous opponent and most difficult to defeat [Giertych 1996: 5].

M. Giertych, presents people in charge of ministries ["Opoka w Kraju" 2006: 6–12], adding the comment "It is impossible to pretend that we do not see who PiS (Law and Justice) implements into its government. From the very beginning we had the worst opinion about the choice of many ministers. (...) Gilowska, Meller, Religa, Sikorski do not represent anyone except themselves, no political circles back them (unless backstage, secret ones)" ["Opoka w Kraju" 2006: 6–12]. "OwK" discovered systems and networks, too. However, only after unmasking the external enemy, was the integration of the national environment possible. The most harmful opponents according to the Giertychs were: Germany, the European Union, Jews and Freemasons.

An important process which took place in the journal was the integration of its readers. Repeated reference to the pre-war ND activists thinking and presentation of the national parties' manifestos, helped readers to classify themselves as neo-ND environment members.

The importance of integrative function was great. On the pages of the journal, the names of candidates for deputies from specific districts were presented as well as profiles, encouraging contact and support. In addition, the representatives of the national movement were also informed about new publishing initiatives. The "national perspective" on the functioning of Polish authorities and the assessment of the government were presented. After losing the 2007 election, M. Giertych wrote in "Opoka": "It has never been easy for us, but we never despaired. Under all circumstances, we fought for Poland, and so we shall do now. Let's consider what there is we have to do. First of all, we must be able to see the positive aspects of our current situation" ["Opoka w Kraju" 2007: 1]. "OwK" is then a tool used for gaining the electorate, too.

Attitude-forming function of “Opoka w Kraju” was expressed in shaping patriotic attitudes. It was formulated mainly in the willingness to sacrifice for the nation, or in relevant education and behavior. Giertych also created the patriotic education model that was supposed to be in line with the Decalogue and work for the sake of the nation. He also consolidated the views of readers. He pointed out that the national environment must have “their own media”. He did not overestimate “OwK”, though. He stressed that national magazine is needed “on a daily basis” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2007: 5].

M. Giertych understood patriotism in terms of work for one’s own nation, which had to lead to its power. The patriotic attitude was characterized by: the intellectual effort, willingness to make sacrifices and willing to defend the national heritage [“Opoka w Kraju” 2010]. The family was the foundation of the patriotic education. M. Giertych stressed that in Poland, patriotic education equals religious education. He wrote: “We discuss duty towards God and Poland, the words “God” and “Home-land” are written in our banners, and we made Holy Mary, the Queen of Poland. This bond between Poland and Catholicism is most strongly felt in exile. As soon as Poles emigrate, they immediately gather around a Polish priest, attend a Polish Mass. When they stray from being Polish, they also leave the Church, when the walk away from the Church, and also leave behind their Polish identity” [“Opoka w Kraju” 1998: 5].

Jędrzej Giertych wrote: “One of the most important things that the young generation of Poles have to work on, is the forgotten and neglected virtue: the virtue of love of one’s country” [“Opoka” 1978: 5]. Parents should teach their children affection and respect towards Poland. Another important task that parents had to fulfill was religious education. Parents had to set good examples if they wanted to raise their children well. Giertych enumerated several tasks which had to be performed by parents–patriots. A priority was attending the Mass and confession. He advised “to avoid sin, not to lead a dissolute life, not to divorce one’s wife, not to commit the crime of abortion, not to cheat or exploit, nor lie (...) to educate children to be Poles, to donate money to national purposes, to defend Poland’s stance and Poland’s rights in foreign relations” [“Opoka” 1974: 36]. He considered necessary to manifest one’s faith and devotion to the motherland in pilgrimages, processions, religious and national marches. The base of proper upbringing was also expressed in convincing the young to keep premarital chastity.

Giertych thought, therefore, that divorce was the cause of demoralization of the young generation and resignation from educating them in accordance with the Catholic ethics, which also was the national ethics. In his opinion it was necessary to introduce procedures which hindered or even prohibited divorce. Giertych believed that in civil law there should be a record of permanence of marriage. The prospective spouses would make a statement of will in the registry office. Solvable marriage would be possible for infidels and atheists. He believed that “the permanence of marriage, even in the biggest difficulties is the first precondition for the proper upbringing of children. Children from broken marriages today form a generation of spiritual cripples. This generation is afraid of marriage and lacks patterns of unconditional devotion” [“Opoka” 1974: 36].

“Opoka w Kraju” was supposed to moralize the society and sensitize the members to the nation’s problems. Moreover, Giertych indicated that we should oppose corruption and drunkenness. Only the lack of tolerance at the level of civil society will ensure the effectiveness of struggle against Poles’ bad habits”. We must teach our children and grandchildren the rule of law and order. We need to teach the next generation, that someone else’s property is sacrosanct. We will not be able to heal Poland’s government if we do not heal its regular citizens, including ourselves” [“Opoka w Kraju” 2008: 8]. The editor therefore pointed to the positivist work with the basics. It is worth noting that also the Catholic Church was responsible for the government’s ethics: “The Church has the right and duty to check whether government acts ethically, and correct it, and the government has no right to interfere with the affairs of the Church” [Giertych 1995: 20].

“OwK” promoted the principles of Catholic life. Due to the Polish membership in the Latin civilization, the development of Poland was determined by the Catholic ethics. “The Decalogue is valid always and everywhere, in all areas of private, collective and international matters. Thus, even politics and war are not free from ethical constraints! This makes us different from the Byzantine and the Turanian civilization, from Germany and Russia” [Giertych 2007:10]. The rights in Latin civilization were taken from the principles of the Catholic religion. According to M. Giertych, this ethics was not static, but it was forever evolving, showing what the sin is and what it is not. This was due to each generation’s contribution to the development of rights, and transferring rules from the religious to the legal grounds.

CONCLUSIONS

“Opoka w kraju” is a mainstream national magazine. The biography of the publisher and family connotations had a strong influence on its content. References to the prewar National Democratic Party activists’ thinking are visible there, too. The periodical has fixed groups of readers and a programme line. It also has clearly defined functions such as: informing the public about the “collective anti-Polish” formations, shaping the patriotic attitude, ensuring the conservatism of the Catholic church, the integration of the neo-ND society and establishing who Poland’s enemies are. Giertych stressed that he had a “sense of mission” in his publishing work. When asked about the purpose of the magazine Giertych answered: “to have the opportunity to act (...) I worked out such a method for myself: at least once a quarter I gather my thoughts together, I print them, copy, distribute, and do not care whether or not there is a response. I hope that the silent waters run deep” [Interview with Maciej Giertych: 2009].

“Opoka w Kraju” is a specific product on the Polish press market. It is reflected in the journal’s familiarity, unchangeable concept, a characteristic target group of readers, and the constancy of purpose and thought included in it.

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