

'Rainbow plague' or 'rainbow allies'? TĘCZA 'rainbow' as a floating signifier in the contestation of Poland's national identity

Dominika Baran

Abstract

The anti-genderism register, which demonises the LGBTQ+ community as promoters of so-called 'gender ideology', has spread in recent decades across right wing populist discourses around the world. In Poland, it is an important resource in right wing constructions of national identity, which appeal to a historicised account of Poland as the guardian of European Christianity. However, there is also a counternarrative that envisions Poland as a progressive member of the European Union with secular politics and respect for diversity in all its forms. In this context, the Polish lexeme TĘCZA 'rainbow' is a floating signifier whose meanings are struggled over by opposing discourses of LGBTQ+ rights and their place in Polish public life. Drawing on an analysis of 521 texts from five media outlet types on the right and left wing sides of the political spectrum, this article examines the contestation of TĘCZA as a site where the very meaning of present-day Polishness is discursively negotiated.

Rejestr antygenderyzmu, który demonizuje społeczność LGBTQ+ jako promotorów tak zwanej „ideologii gender”, w ostatnich dziesięcioleciach rozprzestrzenił się w prawicowych dyskursach populistycznych na całym świecie. W Polsce stanowi on istotny element prawicowych konstrukcji tożsamości

Affiliation

Dominika Baran
she/her/hers
Department of English, Duke University
Email: dominika.baran@duke.edu

Submitted: 2021-10-01 Accepted: 2022-05-10

G&L VOL 16.3 2022 286–307 <https://doi.org/10.1558/genl.21097>

© 2022, EQUINOX PUBLISHING

eequinox

narodowej, odwołujących się do uhistorycznionego ujęcia Polski, postrzeganej jako strażnika europejskiego chrześcijaństwa. Istnieje jednak kontrnarracja, prezentująca Polskę jako postępowego członka Unii Europejskiej, jako kraj zdolny do prowadzenia świeckiej polityki oraz poszanowania dla różnorodności we wszelkich jej przejawach. W takim kontekście polski leksem „tęcza” jest „płynną znaczącą”, o której rozumienie walczą przeciwstawne dyskursy praw LGBTQ+ i ich miejsca w polskim życiu publicznym. W oparciu o analizę 521 tekstów z pięciu rodzajów mediów, zarówno z prawicowej jak i lewicowej strony spektrum politycznego, niniejszy artykuł analizuje kontestację sensu „tęczy” jako miejsca, w którym dyskursywnie negocjowane jest samo znaczenie współczesnej polskości.

KEYWORDS: FLOATING SIGNIFIER, POLAND, ANTI-GENDERISM, DISCOURSE THEORY, CORPUS ANALYSIS, LGBTQ+

Introduction

In Poland, as elsewhere in Eastern and Central Europe, right wing politicians, media and the religious establishment have, in the past decade, targeted the LGBTQ+ community as a ‘neo-Marxist’ enemy whose alleged goal is the destruction of the ‘natural’ social order via the promotion of so-called ‘gender ideology’ or ‘genderism’ (Chojnicka 2015; Kuhar and Paternotte 2017; Darakchi 2019). In Poland, in what Graff and Korolczuk (2022:79) describe as ‘the third and most recent phase of anti-gender mobilization’, the term ‘gender ideology’ is often replaced with ‘LGBT ideology’ (Baran forthcoming). This shift was triggered when, in February 2019, Warsaw mayor Rafał Trzaskowski signed the LGBTQ+ Charter, which promised legal protections for LGBTQ+ individuals (Graff and Korolczuk 2022). Anti-LGBTQ+ attacks witnessed in Poland and elsewhere are central to what Borba (2022:60) identifies as the globally circulating anti-genderist register, ‘a conventionalized aggregate of co-occurring expressive forms, of which “gender ideology” is the most famous shibboleth’ (see also Gal 2018). In Poland, the register has become an important resource in the right wing construction of Polish national identity, which invokes a historicised account of Poland’s mission to safeguard Christian Europe through references to the centuries-old notion of Poland as the ‘bulwark of Christianity’ (Tzabir 2017; Baran forthcoming). Crucially, however, there is a counter-narrative in the Polish public space, emerging from grassroots initiatives and citizen activism, that envisions Poland as a liberal state whose politics can and should remain secular, and which welcomes diversity in all its forms. Left wing and left-leaning media express support for the LGBTQ+ community and activists, and Pride Parades, known in Poland as ‘Equality Marches’ (*Marsze Równości*),¹ are held annually in numerous Polish cities.

Open criticism of the Catholic Church's influence on Polish politics is increasingly common, as witnessed in mass protests such as the 2020–2021 All-Poland Women's Strike (*Ogólnopolski Strajk Kobiet*), organised in response to increased abortion restrictions or in various online discussions and comments (see Chałupnik and Brookes in this volume).

In this article, I focus on one specific element of public discourse where the negotiation of Poland's relationship with the LGBTQ+ community and of Polish national identity more broadly is enacted: the multiple uses and contested meanings of the lexeme TĘCZA 'rainbow'. My discussion is based on the analysis of how the lexeme is used in 521 texts from five media outlet types on the right and left wing² sides of the political spectrum, spanning the period from February 2019, when the LGBT+ Charter was signed in Warsaw, until August 2021.

The symbolic rainbow flag has, like the LGBTQ+ community itself, become a target of locally contextualised anti-genderist attacks, which frame it as anti-Polish, Marxist and anti-Christian. Right wing media typically describe displaying the flag in public spaces as inappropriate and offensive. Through its semiotic association with the flag, the lexeme TĘCZA itself has become an iconic representation of the LGBTQ+ community, as demonstrated in phrases such as *tęczowe rodziny* 'rainbow families', referring to families with LGBTQ+ parents or children, or *tęczowe wydarzenia* 'rainbow events', meaning LGBTQ+ events. Sometimes the noun *tęcza* 'rainbow' stands on its own as an LGBTQ+ icon, as in the name of the organisation *Fundacja Wiara i Tęcza* 'Faith and Rainbow Foundation', whose stated aim is 'advocating full acceptance of LGBT+ people in Christian Churches and in society' (*Fundacja Wiara i Tęcza: O Nas* 2021). The lexeme is also used to represent the values of acceptance and inclusion, sometimes through highlighting the link between the rainbow as the LGBTQ+ symbol and the literal rainbow in the sky. For example, in 2020, when Pride Parades were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an LGBTQ+ organization in the city of Białystok put up billboards with the slogan *Po burzy zawsze wychodzi tęcza* 'After the storm, there always appears the rainbow' (Nyczka and Przybylska 2021). Crucially, TĘCZA is used as an icon for the LGBTQ+ community by both its supporters and its right wing attackers.

In the anti-genderist register, TĘCZA is often collocated with negative (i.e. critical and disparaging) terms, or terms that would be read as negative by right wing audiences. The most infamous such use is the phrase *tęczowa zaraza* 'rainbow plague', coined by the archbishop of Kraków, Marek Jędraszewski, in his 1 August 2019 homily. Other examples include *tęczowa dyktatura* 'rainbow dictatorship', *tęczowa ideologia* 'rainbow ideology', *tęczowi bandyci* 'rainbow criminals' and *tęczowa cenzura* 'rainbow

censorship', referring to the alleged attack on free speech by LGBTQ+ friendly 'political correctness'. Through such repeated uses in right wing discourses, *TECZA* has become a disparaging descriptor of the LGBTQ+ community and anything related to it. On the other hand, in LGBTQ+ supportive discourses, the lexeme is collocated with positive terms or, more frequently, its positive meaning is implied from the surrounding context, as in the example of *teczowe rodziny* 'rainbow families', which appears in the left wing and LGBTQ+ friendly news outlet *Oko.press*. Similarly, the online publication *Queer.pl* posts regular articles under the heading *Tęczowe Rodziny*, whereas a December 2020 issue of the left-leaning mainstream newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* features an article titled '*Najlepsi tęczowi sprzymierzeńcy w Polsce*' 'The best rainbow allies in Poland' (Roman 2020). Perhaps the most linguistically interesting are neologisms and wordplay; in November 2020, activists organised an event protesting an anti-gender-themed conference, which they dubbed *teczowisko*, using the inflectional suffix *-isko* that typically indicates a large place, gathering or group. This can be translated as something like 'the big rainbow bash' (*Gazeta Wyborcza Toruń* 2020).

In this article, drawing on Laclau (1990, 2000, 2005), Laclau and Mouffe (1985) and Lévi-Strauss (1987[1950]), I argue that in Poland, *TECZA* is currently a floating signifier whose meaning is being contested by opposing discourses about the LGBTQ+ community. This contestation, in turn, is an expression of a broader argument over the meaning of Polishness and over Poland's role as a member of the global community. Adopting Laclau's terms, I argue that the opposing discourses of Polishness struggle to invest *TECZA* with antagonistically differing meanings (Laclau 1990; Jørgensen and Phillips 2002; Farkas and Schou 2018). The lexeme *TECZA* has become a site for the contestation of Poland's national identity as either ultraconservative, inward-looking and inherently Catholic or progressive, globally oriented and secular. This binary opposition is arguably a simplified interpretation of a much more nuanced sociopolitical reality; nonetheless, in terms of Laclau's framework, it represents the way that complex political projects and discourses organise themselves as identifying with the right versus left wing sides of the political spectrum. In my data, these discourses are in a struggle to define *TECZA* either negatively, as linked to a supposed 'neo-Marxist ideology' promoted by an international movement that wants to destroy the family and the 'natural' social order, or positively, as representing the values of acceptance, inclusiveness and respect. This contestation is sometimes enacted through a direct challenge of how the other side uses *TECZA*, but more often by a continuous reclaiming of the term by each side. This article explores the processes through which this contestation takes place, including how these two discourses draw on linguistic

resources such as the affordances of Polish morphosyntax to define *TECZA* in different ways. To use Laclau's (2005) terms, I argue that, at present, neither project has succeeded at fixing the meaning of *TECZA*, suggesting that neither has won the hegemonic struggle over the future of LGBTQ+ rights in Poland, nor over the definition of Poland's national identity and global role.

Anti-genderism versus the LGBTQ+ community and allies in Poland

The global anti-gender campaigns began with the Catholic response to the 1990s UN conferences in Cairo and Beijing (Paternotte and Kuhar 2018; Borba 2022), wherein the terms 'women and men' and 'family' were replaced with 'gender' and 'partnerships/families', respectively (Borba 2022:62). Conservative Catholic activists propagandised the idea of a threatening 'gender ideology' espoused by neo-Marxists whose goal is the confusion of the alleged 'natural' differences between the sexes in order to destroy the cisheterosexual family and reproduction (Borba 2022), and ultimately establish totalitarian control over the human population. By the early 2010s, the anti-gender cause was taken up by conservatives across Europe and elsewhere, 'in countries as different as Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia or Slovakia' (Paternotte and Kuhar 2018:8), as well as Bulgaria (Darakchi 2019), Latvia and Lithuania (Chojnicka 2015), France (Russell 2019), Brazil (Borba 2019), India (Graff, Kapur and Walters 2019) and others (Kuhar and Paternotte 2017).

In terms of activism, anti-genderists fight to undermine reproductive rights, gender equality, marriage equality, transgender rights and access to sexual education (Kuhar and Paternotte 2017; Borba 2022). The spectre of 'gender ideology' is invoked in right wing populist discourses as a looming threat to national identities that are envisioned in essentialist and hegemonic terms. Furthermore, as Paternotte and Kuhar (2018:12) explain:

Opposition to specific forms of parenting, kinship and reproduction partly ensues from worries about the (re)production of the nation... in some cases, these are not only debates about national identities, but also about the collective destiny of Europe, understood as the bearer of civilization.

The mission to protect Europe from encroaching non-Christian enemies, the latest of these being 'gender ideology', is central to the right wing construction of Polish national identity, an idea supported by the enmeshing of Polish and Catholic identities. This enmeshing, as Grzymała-Busse (2015) explains, was reinforced when the Church became the moral counterweight to the communist regime and an active supporter of anticommunist

opposition. Poland's subsequent democratisation and joining of the European Union forced a redefinition of the Church's role, which found itself pushing against secularism in politics and, consequently, against some of the key EU policies in human rights and gender equality. Both the Church and the ruling right wing populist Law and Justice party have given a supportive platform to queerphobic discourses in Poland with detrimental results. In the index developed by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe), which ranks 49 European countries' legal and policy practices on a scale of 0–100% in terms of support for LGBTQ+ rights, Poland received a score of 16% in 2020 and 11.29% in 2021, placing it in the bottom 10 in both years.³ Infamously, in July 2019, the right wing weekly *Gazeta Polska* published a sticker featuring the rainbow crossed out with thick black lines, accompanied by the words 'LGBT-free zone', which was followed by about 100 municipalities declaring themselves 'LGBT-free'. And most disturbingly, on 23 September 2021, a bill titled 'Stop LGBT', drawn up by the ultraconservative Catholic organization Life and Family Foundation (*Fundacja Życie i Rodzina*), made it to the national legislature for consideration. The bill aims to censor Pride Parades and any events that 'promote' marriage equality or the idea of gender as a social construct.

Simultaneously, this queerphobia encounters vocal and visible opposition, often centring around the symbol of the rainbow. In recent years, LGBTQ+ activists have repeatedly draped rainbow flags across prominent religious and national monuments on or near holidays or important historical anniversaries. In August 2020, members of the Polish legislature wore rainbow face masks to the swearing-in of the newly re-elected right wing President Andrzej Duda, one of them later explaining that 'Poland is for everyone' (Szczęśniak 2020). Well-attended Pride Parades (i.e. Equality Marches) continue to take place every year throughout the month of June, featuring the Polish white-and-red flag, in which the red is replaced with the rainbow. Since October 2016, various left-leaning media outlets have positively promoted *Tęczowy Piątek* 'Rainbow Friday', an annual event designated as the day of support for LGBTQ+ youth, sponsored by the organisation Campaign Against Homophobia (*Kampania Przeciw Homofobii*). And in 2019, in perhaps the most provocative act recently, activists in the city of Płock distributed stickers depicting the Virgin Mary with a rainbow halo, inciting outrage among conservatives. The activists were arrested and charged with offending religious sentiments, but were acquitted in March 2021, much to right wing dismay (Jędrzejczyk and Piasecki 2022). In fact, the stickers were a response to the local church's queerphobic Easter display in which 'gender' and 'LGBT' were named as sins alongside hate, greed, contempt and stealing. The polarised public reaction to this event

illustrates the current antagonism between the competing discourses about diversity, LGBTQ+ rights and national identity in Poland. In this conflict, the rainbow appears as a floating signifier, with its meaning contested as either that of a threat to Polishness, or an important aspect of it.

Theoretical framework: floating signifiers

While discussing the rise of the anti-genderist register, Borba (2022:58–60) observes:

What has gone relatively unproblematized by scholars and activists alike is how our detractors appropriate our own words and modes of action to forward spurious projects that run counter to feminist and queer values... As an emblem of anti-genderism, 'gender ideology' has been enregistered through parodying feminist and queer discourses while resignifying them along the way.

In Poland, this process of appropriation and resignification has been applied by right wing actors to the image of the rainbow and the lexeme *TĘCZA*. However, the negative meaning of *TĘCZA* has not been established as hegemonic, and instead *TĘCZA* continues to be a floating signifier.

In Saussurean semiotics, the sign consists of two interdependent parts: the signifier or the sound, and the signified or the concept. As Chandler (2017:13) explains, '[t]his is a relationship in which the two layers are as inseparable as the two sides of a piece of paper'. But in postmodern and poststructuralist thought, this separation is possible because meaning is understood not as stable and fixed, but as contextualised and changeable. Language as a network of interrelated signs is always changing, as signs change their meanings through contextualised, concrete use (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:10–11). In this process, a signifier may at various points be linked to multiple signifieds, or 'float' from one signified to another.

The notion of the floating signifier was introduced by Lévi-Strauss, who describes it as 'a symbol in its pure state' (Lévi-Strauss 1987[1950]:64) that is 'apt to be charged with any symbolic content' (Mehlman 1972:23). According to Gradinaru (2018:295), Lévi-Strauss builds on the ideas of Marcel Mauss, who 'emphasized that the relationship between the signifier and the signified may be evasive, transient or evanescent'. Crucially, Lévi-Strauss (1987[1950]:63) sees floating signifiers as 'enabl[ing] symbolic thinking to operate despite the contradiction inherent in it', or, as put by Gradinaru (2018:295), as allowing language to work with contradictions. Contradictions, meanwhile, are fundamentally implicated in discursive struggles.

Laclau develops the concept of floating signifiers within the framework of discourse theory outlined in Laclau and Mouffe (1985), according to

which not only are social phenomena always constituted through language, but this constitutive process is never complete. As Jørgensen and Phillips (2002:24) explain: '[m]eaning can never be ultimately fixed and this opens up the way for constant social struggles about definitions of society and identity'. The goal of these struggles is the fixation of meaning, or the securing of the relationship between a signifier and a particular signified. When one discourse wins the struggle, the meanings it assigns to signifiers may be fixed and these fixations 'become so conventionalized that we think of them as natural' (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:26). Crucially, however, they are always open to renegotiation, thus denying any permanent stability to social reality (Farkas and Schou 2018).

When opposing discourses are in an unresolved struggle over meaning, the signifier that is the object of the struggle becomes a floating signifier. In Laclau's (2005:305) words, floating signifiers result from 'the unfixity introduced by a plurality of discourses'. Whereas Lévi-Strauss (1987[1950]:64) describes floating signifiers as having 'zero symbolic value' and thus the potential to be invested with any content, Laclau (2005) distinguishes between *empty* and *floating* signifiers, with the latter's symbolic value being ambiguous and contested rather than null. The ongoing contestation is crucial: as Farkas and Schou (2018:302) point out, a floating signifier is not one that is simultaneously attached to many independent signifieds, but one whose attachments are being fought over by opposing political projects in a 'battle to impose the "right" viewpoint onto the world'. Laclau (2005:132) emphasises that 'the "floating" dimension becomes most visible in periods of organic crisis, when the symbolic system needs to be radically recast'.

The current battle over LGBTQ+ rights in Poland, which forms part of a broader contestation over the meaning of Polishness, appears to be an example of Laclau's 'organic crisis'. This crisis can be situated in the context of the global struggle between progressive and reactionary discourses, the latter manifested in the recent rise of far-right populisms, as well as in dynamics that escape this binary opposition, such as the often-disappointing reach of the rhetoric of equality since 1989. Overall, in Poland, when 'rainbow' came to denote the Pride flag carried at Equality Marches and in other displays of LGBTQ+ identities, both the visual symbol and the lexeme began to be used by right wing actors in ways aiming to resignify them as things to be feared: immorality, a threat to children and families and a reincarnation of 'communism and fascism' (in deliberate collocating comparison; see Graff and Korolczuk 2022). However, anti-genderist discourses have not yet succeeded in fixing the signifier *ŁĘCZA* to these negative meanings. *ŁĘCZA* is simultaneously used as a symbol of diversity and inclusiveness, values envisioned in progressive discourses as central to Poland's identity and future.

The lexeme/lemma TĘCZA in Polish morphosyntax

Like other Slavic languages, Polish has a rich and complex synthetic morphology. Lexical categories are marked with inflection. Whereas in English whether a word like ‘dance’ is a noun or a verb is inferred from context, in Polish the word’s form itself shows its lexical category; ‘a dance’ is *taniec*, but ‘to dance’ is *tańczyć*. Nouns cannot modify other nouns in Polish as in the English phrase ‘dance party’ but must be converted into adjectives with adjectival suffixes. Polish words are inflected for gender, number, tense and mood, as well as for conjugation and declension. The multiplicity and productivity of inflectional suffixes allows for particular types of creative wordplay by turning nouns into adjectives and adjectives into verbs, producing innovations whose intended meaning is inferable from their form. This affordance of Polish morphosyntax means that struggles over the meaning of signs can take place through their contextualisation and colloations as well as through wordplay and within word structure.

Table 1. Some forms of the lexeme TĘCZA found in the present data.

| Word form | Lexical category | Example of use |
|------------------|----------------------|--|
| <i>tęcza</i> | noun (fem, sg) | <i>tęcza nie obraża</i> ‘the rainbow does not offend’ |
| <i>tęczowy</i> | adjective (masc, sg) | <i>tęczowy rozdział</i> ‘the rainbow chapter [in history]’ |
| <i>tęczowa</i> | adjective (fem, sg) | <i>tęczowa ideologia</i> ‘rainbow ideology’ |
| <i>tęczowe</i> | adjective (neut, sg) | <i>tęczowe dziecko</i> ‘a rainbow child; a child from an LGBTQ+ family’ |
| <i>tęczowi</i> | adjective (masc, pl) | <i>tęczowi</i> ‘the rainbow ones’, referring to LGBTQ+ community and allies |
| <i>tęczowe</i> | adjective (fem, pl) | <i>tęczowe rodziny</i> ‘rainbow families’, LGBTQ+ families |
| <i>tęczowo</i> | adverb | 1) <i>podświetlić na tęczo</i> ‘to light up in rainbow [colours]’, referring to soccer stadiums during European Cup 2020 2) <i>tęczowo-genderowa rewolucja</i> ‘the rainbow-genderist revolution’ |
| <i>utęczowić</i> | verb | <i>utęczowić armię</i> ‘to rainbow up the army’, to make the army more LGBTQ+-friendly, used in this example in a derogatory sense |

In Polish, ‘rainbow’ can be expressed in many forms and lexical categories. In addition to common forms including the noun *tęcza*, the adjectives *tęczowy* (masculine), *tęczowa* (feminine) and *tęczowe* (neuter), the adverb *tęczowo*, etc., there are innovations such as the verb *utęczowić*, translatable as ‘to rainbow up’ or ‘to make all into rainbow colours’. A sample of

these forms is illustrated in Table 1. I refer to this set of words as a lexeme, although corpus linguistics also uses the term lemma. For my analysis, the concept is useful in distinguishing between the semantic category of ‘rainbow’ and its specific manifestations. In conceptualising TĘCZA as a lexeme/lemma, I borrow Knowles and Don’s (2004:71) notion of ‘the lemma as the name of a lexical set, e.g. DEAL = {deal, deals, dealing, dealt,...}’, including using small capitals to represent the set name. Thus, TĘCZA is the name of the lexical set referring to ‘rainbow’ as the LGBTQ+ symbol, separate from the lexeme, which might include the same morphological forms, whose members refer to the arc in the sky. This TĘCZA is the sign whose meanings are being struggled over, whereas the specific forms of the word are the manifestations of this struggle.

Data analysis: the floating signifier TĘCZA

The data in this article consists of 521 texts from five media outlet types on the right and left wing sides of the political spectrum. Sources include news outlets as well as activist organisation websites and social media pages spanning from February 2019 to August 2021, and were collected by searching for the keyword ‘rainbow’ in the outlets’ online publications. Using the analytical tool Dedoose, I searched the texts for excerpts containing the root *tęcz-* and coded them for the type of outlet (e.g. right wing, left wing, etc.) and a number of characteristics (e.g. positive, negative or neutral use of ‘rainbow’, the lexical category, etc.). Table 2 shows the distribution of the codes most relevant for my analysis across different types of outlets.

Table 2. Distribution of excerpts with different meanings of TĘCZA across outlet types.

| Outlet type | Number of excerpts | | | | TĘCZA used in reported speech or quote | Total tokens of TĘCZA | Total number of texts |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Negative meaning of TĘCZA | Positive meaning of TĘCZA | Neutral meaning of TĘCZA | | | | |
| Right wing | 135 | 20 | 318 | 83 | 742 | 207 | |
| Right wing Catholic | 95 | 17 | 157 | 116 | | 57 | |
| Liberal | 57 | 238 | 745 | 398 | 1405 | 181 | |
| Liberal Catholic | 24 | 13 | 43 | 40 | | 31 | |
| LGBTQ+ source | 0 | 159 | 126 | 106 | | 45 | |

Right wing sources include four widely read news outlets: *Do Rzeczy*, *wPolityce*, *Gazeta Polska* and *Salon24*, whose editors are also well-known media personalities, and the website of the anti-choice, anti-genderist Life and Family Foundation. Liberal sources include *Oko.press*, *Wprost* and *Gazeta Wyborcza*. The political leanings of Polish Catholic publications range from extreme right to liberal, reflecting the polarisation within the Church itself. These different views are represented here by the right wing outlet *Pch24* and the liberal magazine *Więź*. LGBTQ+ sources include the website of Campaign Against Homophobia, the online LGBTQ+ community forum *Queer.pl* and the Facebook page of the LGBTQ+ student group *TęczUIJ*. Together, these sources represent a wide spectrum of public conversations around salient topics in Poland.

Negative, positive and neutral meanings of TĘCZA listed in Table 2 include the following: 1) tokens where TĘCZA is paired with a negative or positive term, such as *tęczowa zaraza* ‘rainbow plague’ on the one hand and *siła tęczowej solidarności* ‘the power of rainbow solidarity’ on the other; and 2) tokens where TĘCZA occurs in a negative or positive context more broadly. For example, Excerpt 1 shows a right wing op-ed claiming that depression, self-harm and suicide rates among LGBTQ+ youth are caused by the ‘promotion’ of ‘gender ideology’.

Excerpt 1

I tęczowym w to graj – bo oczywiście ich propaganda przedstawią to jako dowód, że trzeba ‘więcej tolerancji.’ (Ziemkiewicz 2022)

And the *rainbow* [ones] love it – because of course their propaganda presents it as evidence that we need ‘more tolerance.’

On the other hand, the left-leaning daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* describes in celebratory terms the people and activities at an Equality March in Poznań as seen in Excerpt 2.

Excerpt 2

To właściwie nie marsz, ale roztańczony tęczowy tłum, który sunął przez centrum miasta. (Nyczka and Przybylska 2021)

It’s actually not a march, but a dancing *rainbow* crowd floating through city centre.

Table 2 shows that TĘCZA is typically used negatively by right wing and positively by left-leaning and liberal sources. Both also use TĘCZA neutrally, for example when reporting on displays of rainbow flags. In cases when right wing texts use TĘCZA positively and left wing texts negatively, it is always in reported speech or quotations, such as when left wing sources report on the infamous phrase ‘rainbow plague’ or when right wing sources

quote the words of LGBTQ+ activists. Such citations provide an opportunity to directly engage with and challenge the opposing discourse's attempts at defining and fixing the meaning of TĘCZA. For liberal sources, citing queerphobic language, often in quotation marks that identify it as the opposing discourse, becomes a way of exposing and discrediting it, as in Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 3

'Gazeta Polska' straszy 'tęczową zarazą', a kurator Nowak nie chce 'psucia dzieci'. A wszystko na podstawie półprawd, kłamstw i mitów. (Ambroziak 2019)

'Gazeta Polska' fearmongers about 'the rainbow plague', and superintendent Nowak does not want the 'corruption of children'. And all of this is based on half-truths, lies, and myths.

Here, *Oko.press* is delegitimising anti-genderist language espoused by *Gazeta Polska* and by Barbara Nowak, a school superintendent appointed by Law and Justice, by explicitly describing their quoted words, including the phrase 'the rainbow plague', as rooted in falsehoods. In this move, the outlet is directly challenging right wing media's attempts at associating TĘCZA with the concept of dangerous contagion. Most such challenges, however, take place through the repeated, proactive use of TĘCZA in positive collocations and contexts. Notably, the LGBTQ+ texts opt for this option; they do not include any uses of TĘCZA in the negative sense, not even in quotations, which can be read as refusal to amplify anti-genderist framings. On the other hand, in the liberal Catholic magazine *Więź*, TĘCZA appears more often in the negative than positive sense because 'rainbow plague' was coined by a Church figure and has thus become an important object of critique in liberal Catholic circles.

Another significant observation emerging from Table 2 is that although the number of texts from right and left wing sources is almost the same, the latter use TĘCZA twice as frequently as the former, with 742 right wing and 1405 left wing tokens. This discrepancy calls for further analysis, but at first reading it suggests the robustness of challenges to anti-genderist discourses about TĘCZA.

Tables 3–5 show collocations of TĘCZA in the five outlet types. Table 3 shows that, in addition to the unsurprising split in negative and positive use between the different discourses, right wing sources almost never cite left-leaning sources' pairings of TĘCZA with positive words, whereas the liberal and liberal Catholic sources frequently cite the right's negative pairings. Most of these instances quote and criticise the phrase 'rainbow plague'.

Table 3. Tokens of TĘCZA paired with negative and positive words across different outlets.

| Outlet type | Number of excerpts | |
|---------------------|--|---|
| | TĘCZA paired with negative word e.g. <i>tęczowa cenzura</i> 'rainbow censorship', <i>tęczowa ideologia</i> 'rainbow ideology' | TĘCZA paired with positive word e.g. <i>tęcza ozdobiła</i> 'the rainbow [flag] graced' (= decorated) |
| Right wing | 68 | 1 (quoting left wing speech) |
| Right wing Catholic | 69 | 0 |
| Liberal | 48 (all quoting right wing speech) | 44 |
| Liberal Catholic | 21 (all quoting right wing speech) | 11 |
| LGBTQ+ source | 0 | 9 |

Tables 4 and 5 show the results of AntConc analysis of TĘCZA in surrounding context, highlighting collocates that occur 10 or more times. For reasons of space, Table 5 includes the 12 most frequently occurring collocates out of the 17 that occur 10 or more times. These results are instructive because they show how different discourses attempt to fix the signifier TĘCZA to particular value-laden meanings through repeated use (see Borba 2022). Some collocates occur with a high frequency across the texts, establishing the collocations as fixed expressions or phrases, and in this way constructing recognisable links between the signifier TĘCZA and particular meanings. The anti-genderist register in Poland utilises such recurring pairings as *tęczowa rewolucja* 'rainbow revolution', *tęczowa zaraza* 'rainbow plague', *tęczowa ideologia* 'rainbow ideology' and *tęczowi aktywiści* 'rainbow activists.' In the case of collocates such as 'revolution' and 'activists', whose own meaning is context-dependent, the surrounding text makes their negative connotation clear: right wing texts construct 'revolution' as a threat to the 'natural' social order and to Poland's historicised Catholic identity, and 'activists' as dangerous propagators of this revolution.

Table 5 shows the same process in left-leaning and liberal outlets, where TĘCZA is repeatedly linked to positive meanings, establishing a register that challenges anti-genderism. For example, there are 32 tokens of the collocation *tęczowa rodzina* 'rainbow family', always in the context of centring and supporting LGBTQ+ families and their needs. The phrase *tęcza nie obraża* 'the rainbow does not offend', appearing 20 times, became the slogan of support for the activists who distributed the image of the Virgin Mary in a rainbow halo. Relatedly, the collocation of TĘCZA and 'Mother of God', especially in the phrase *Matka Boska Tęczowa* 'the Mother of God of the Rainbow', perhaps better expressed in English as 'Our Lady of the Rainbow', is significant because it enacts ownership over probably the most

important icon in Polish Catholicism, Mary, as the heavenly mother of all Catholics, including LGBTQ+ Catholics. The expression *Matka Boska Tęczowa* parallels designations of Mary as the patron of various sanctuaries, such as *Matka Boska Częstochowska* 'Mother of God of Częstochowa', similarly to how in English 'Our Lady of the Rainbow' might parallel 'Our Lady of Lourdes.'

Table 4. Collocations of TĘCZA in right wing outlet texts with 10 or more tokens.

| Collocations of tęczza in right wing texts (10 or more tokens) | | Number of tokens |
|--|---|------------------|
| Collocate | Example of use | |
| <i>flaga</i> 'flag' | <i>tęczowa flaga LGBT</i> 'rainbow flag of LGBT' | 74 |
| <i>rewolucja</i> 'revolution' | <i>tęczowa rewolucja chce znieść o wiele więcej niż ten rząd</i> 'the rainbow revolution wants to wipe out much more than this government' | 41 |
| <i>piątek</i> 'Friday' | <i>Tęczowy Piątek – powiedz nie</i> 'Rainbow Friday – say no' | 27 |
| <i>aureola</i> 'halo' | <i>wizerunek Matki Bożej w tęczowej aureoli</i> 'image of Mother of God in a rainbow halo' | 21 |
| <i>zaraza</i> 'plague' | <i>tęczowa zaraza naciera!</i> 'the rainbow plague is coming!' | 18 |
| <i>barwy</i> 'hues, colours' | <i>w tęczowych barwach LGBT</i> 'in the rainbow colours of LGBT' | 14 |
| <i>ideologia</i> 'ideology' | <i>tęczowa ideologia zalewa Europę!</i> 'the rainbow ideology is flooding Europe!' | 13 |
| <i>aktywiści</i> 'activists' | <i>ideologiczny cel tęczowych aktywistów</i> 'the rainbow activists' ideological goal' | 13 |
| <i>kolory</i> 'colours' | <i>kolory sześciokolorowej tęczy</i> 'the colours of the six-colour rainbow' | 12 |

Some collocates that seem to have a neutral meaning appear frequently across all source types. In these cases, the entire phrase containing TĘCZA becomes the object of struggle between the different discourses. One such example is *tęczowa flaga* 'rainbow flag,' which is often contextualised negatively in right wing outlets and positively in left wing ones. Another example is *Tęczowy Piątek* 'Rainbow Friday,' which in left wing sources is promoted as an event celebrating LGBTQ+ youth, and criticised for the same in right wing ones.

Table 5. Collocations of TĘCZA in left wing outlet texts with 10 or more tokens, showing top 12 of 17.

| Collocations of tęcza in left wing texts (10 or more tokens, top 12 of 17) | | Number of tokens |
|--|---|------------------|
| Collocate | Example of use | |
| <i>flaga</i> 'flag' | <i>tęczowa flaga to nasza tożsamość</i> 'the rainbow flag is our identity' | 389 |
| <i>piątek</i> 'Friday' | <i>Tęczowy Piątek już jutro</i> 'Rainbow Friday already tomorrow' | 91 |
| <i>aureola</i> 'halo' | <i>Maryja z tęczą aureolą była i jest potrzebna</i> 'Mary with a rainbow halo was and is needed' | 47 |
| <i>zaraza</i> 'plague' | <i>słowa o 'tęczowej zarazie' są sprzeczne z Ewangelią</i> 'words about "the rainbow plague" are inconsistent with the Gospel' | 42 |
| <i>ławka</i> 'bench'* | <i>ksiądz nie chce w Kielcach tęczy ławek</i> 'a priest does not want rainbow benches in Kielce' | 33 |
| <i>rodzina</i> 'family' | <i>rodziców z tęczy rodzin</i> 'parents from rainbow families' | 32 |
| <i>ławeczka</i> 'little bench'* | <i>Gdzie jeszcze staną tęcze ławeczki</i> 'Where else will little rainbow benches be placed' | 26 |
| <i>społecznicy</i> 'social activists' | <i>Tęczowi Społecznicy oficjalnie stowarzyszeniem</i> 'Rainbow Activists now an official organisation' | 24 |
| <i>kolory</i> 'colours' | <i>z Maryją w tęczy kolorach</i> 'with Mary in rainbow colours' | 21 |
| <i>nie obraża</i> 'does not offend' | <i>dla nas to oczywiste, że tęcza nie obraża</i> 'to us it is obvious that the rainbow does not offend' | 20 |
| <i>symbol</i> 'symbol' | <i>symbol tęczy powiewającej nad pomnikami</i> 'the symbol of the rainbow flying over monuments' | 19 |
| <i>Matka Boska</i> 'Mother of God' | <i>sprawa 'Matki Boskiej Tęczowej'</i> 'the case of the "Mother of God of the Rainbow"' | 19 |

*'Rainbow benches' refer to benches painted in rainbow colours in the city of Kielce, which became the object of major controversy after they were targeted by queerphobic vandalism, as the rainbow colours of the benches were read as the LGBTQ+ symbol.

The texts also feature many examples of TĘCZA in infrequent pairings, which nonetheless reinforce its links with either positive or negative meanings. For example, in right wing sources, there are such phrases as *tęczowy ucisk* 'rainbow oppression', *tęczowy najazd* 'rainbow invasion', *tęczowi cenzorzy* 'rainbow censors', *tęczowi bandyci* 'rainbow criminals', *tęczowi szaleńcy* 'rainbow lunatics' and, positioning LGBTQ+ identities as outside the national community of Poland, *tęczowy antypolonizm* 'rainbow anti-Polonism'. On the other hand, in liberal media, there exist

such pairings as *tęczowi sprzymierzeńcy* 'rainbow allies' and *tęcza ozdobiła pomnik* 'the rainbow graced the monument', as well as positive references to various LGBTQ+ organisations whose names include TĘCZA, such as *Tęczowe Pogotowie* 'the Rainbow Clinic', lit. 'emergency', a free counselling service for LGBTQ+ persons. Liberal sources also use TĘCZA to describe LGBTQ+ events and activities, for example, *tęczowy piknik* 'rainbow picnic', a community event for LGBTQ+ families, or *tęczowe zakupy* 'rainbow shopping', used in texts promoting companies that support LGBTQ+ causes.

Finally, TĘCZA is also used creatively in neologisms and wordplay. These are infrequent but can be powerful and influential, both in local and wider domains of use. Right wing texts in the data include four neologisms built around TĘCZA, all with clearly intended negative connotations, illustrated in Excerpts 4 and 5 from *Do Rzeczy*. Excerpt 4 is from a text criticising the United States (Lisicki 2021); the expression *radosna wieść* 'the happy news' is intended sarcastically to describe Joe Biden's purported efforts to make the US army more LGBTQ+ inclusive. The text explains this attempt to 'reform' the army with the neologism *utęczowić*, a verb that can be translated as 'to rainbow up' or 'to make more rainbow-coloured'. Excerpt 5 is from a text critical of the European Union's efforts to make the distribution of funds to member states dependent on these states' respect for the rule of law, including LGBTQ+ rights (Karwelis 2021). The neologism in Excerpt 5 is a verb, *tęczowieć*, which translates as 'to become more and more rainbow-coloured', and appears as a participle modifying the following noun. The result is the noun phrase *tęczowiejąca praworządność*, which literally means 'the rainbowing rule of law'. In my translation, I phrased this to convey the same meaning more clearly in English.

Excerpt 4

Joe Biden poszedł dalej niż wcześniej Barack Obama i postanowił zreformować (czyli *utęczowić*) armię. Radosna wieść jest taka, że w USA pojawił się pierwszy bojowy helikopter z załogą złożoną wyłącznie z homoseksualistów. (Lisicki 2021)

Joe Biden went further than Barack Obama did earlier and decided to reform (that is, *rainbow up*) the army. The happy news is that the first military helicopter with a crew made up entirely of homosexuals appeared in the US.

Excerpt 5

Kwestia ratyfikacji tych funduszy nieładnie zbiega się z rezolucjami, by konkretnie uzależnić wypłatę tych środków od *tęczowiejącej* praworządności. (Karwelis 2021)

The question of ratifying these funds converges unpleasantly with resolutions seeking to make the payment of these resources dependent in specific ways on whether the rule of law *becomes more and more rainbow-coloured*.

The data include three neologisms with positive connotations, which recur several times in the liberal and LGBTQ+ outlets. One is *tęczowisko* ‘rainbow bash’, discussed earlier. The second is the coinage *Matka Boska Tęczochowska*, which can be translated again as ‘Mother of God of the Rainbow’, but instead of the adjective *tęczowa*, the modifier is the innovative adjective *Tęczochowska*, making a much more explicit reference to *Matka Boska Częstochowska* ‘Mother of God of Częstochowa’, the most important Polish sanctuary of the Virgin Mary. The last example is the name of one of my sources, the Facebook group *TęczUJ*, organised by students at the renowned Jagiellonian University in Kraków. The group’s name combines the root *tęcz-* with the acronym of the school’s Polish name, UJ (from *Uniwersytet Jagielloński*). But based on the ending *-uj*, *tęczUJ* could also be read as the second-person singular imperative form of a verb. In this case, the reader is being called ‘to rainbow’ just as they may be called ‘to dance’. Elsewhere, the group creates an adjective derived from its name in advertising its *tęczujowy podcast* about experiencing one’s gender identity.

Conclusion

The growing circulation of the anti-genderism register in public discourses globally is serious cause for concern. It is especially alarming to see this register adopted by right wing governments to suppress the rights of LGBTQ+ people, as has been happening in Poland, elsewhere in Europe (Kuhar and Paternotte 2017) and more recently in the United States (Diaz 2022). Graff and Korolczuk (2022) argue that anti-gender campaigns have emerged as a useful rallying cause for right wing populists and ultraconservative groups of various stripes, allowing them to unite and collaborate in what the authors call ‘opportunistic synergy’. One successful anti-genderist strategy has been the hijacking and resignification of terms and concepts through the process Gal (2018) describes as grafting, as has happened with ‘gender ideology’ (Borba 2022). However, since meanings are never permanently fixed, it is possible to challenge and disrupt such attempts at resignification.

The findings presented in this article are significant because, on the one hand, they show the process through which attempts at resignification of terms and concepts in anti-genderist discourses take place as well as how they are resisted, and on the other, they provide evidence that such resistance can be a powerful resource in combatting queerphobic prejudice. Laclau’s concept of floating signifiers is useful for exploring these discursive struggles through the example of the Polish lexeme *TECZA*, which has become a prominent site for contesting attitudes towards LGBTQ+ issues and towards Polish national identity more broadly. This contestation is

facilitated by the inflectional productivity of Polish morphosyntax, where *TECZA* can easily modify noun phrases with various affective meanings, from *teczowa zaraza* 'rainbow plague' to *teczowi sprzymierzeńcy* 'rainbow allies.' In the process, the meaning of *TECZA* itself is being contested as the opposing discourses, those that envision Poland as a fundamentally Catholic and homogeneous country in contrast to those that envision it as secular and welcoming diversity, attempt to define *TECZA* according to their espoused beliefs by linking it with words that suggest danger and threat on the one hand or with those that suggest love and supportive community on the other.

In Laclau's (2005:132) conception, the floating dimension of floating signifiers becomes most apparent in periods of 'organic crisis', when the symbolic system undergoes a major upheaval. At such historical points, when opposing discourses are engaged in especially visible struggles for dominance, certain signifiers' attachments to particular meanings are loosened as the signifier starts to be used repeatedly in different ways. It seems that Poland is currently at this type of an organic crisis in terms of defining its national identity, similarly to other Eastern European countries which, having transitioned to democracy after the fall of the Soviet bloc, had to reconceptualise what it means to be Czech, Hungarian, Russian, etc. (Kuhar and Paternotte 2017). The resulting struggle can be situated within the broader context of the EU as a struggle between looking outwards to a multicultural European identity and intersectional solidarity on the one hand and looking inwards to exclusionary and hegemonic national identities on the other. Further, this exists as part of a global phenomenon of political polarisation in the wake of growing right wing populisms (Wodak 2021).

In Poland, the notion of *TECZA* as the LGBTQ+ symbol arrived together with calls for greater visibility and acceptance of LGBTQ+ persons and their rights, triggering a backlash from the Catholic Church, ultraconservative activists and right wing politicians and media, who adopted the emerging global anti-genderist register. Efforts to fix *TECZA* as a disparaging term linked to the alleged threat of 'gender ideology' have been a prominent part of this campaign. However, the existence of publicly visible counterdiscourses that challenge these attempts offers hope for the future of LGBTQ+ rights in Poland and provides an example of how anti-genderism can be discursively resisted. Again, this resistance can be located within a wider context: Graff and Korolczuk (2022) describe growing opposition to right wing populism in Poland as manifested in well-organised women's protests to extreme abortion bans, which drew support from the Polish LGBTQ+ community and which the authors link to similar efforts globally. At this juncture, two conclusions can be drawn:

first, whereas anti-genderism is a global and growing phenomenon, it is also being resisted within varied, shifting and localised frames, including in places such as Poland where open queerphobia is common; and second, these discursive processes call for further attention and examination by researchers, especially those studying language and discourse.

About the author

Dominika Baran is Associate Professor in the English Department and the Linguistics Program at Duke University. Her work has focused on the intersections of language, identity, and migration, and more recently also on language, gender, and sexuality. She is the author of the monograph *Language in Immigrant America* (Cambridge, 2017). She previously worked on Taiwan Mandarin and identity construction in a Taiwanese high school.

Notes

- 1 All translations are mine, unless a translation already exists in English-language sources (e.g. All-Poland Women's Strike).
- 2 In this article, I use the terms 'right wing' and 'left wing' to refer to politicians, media, and discourses that align with conservative/ultra-conservative and liberal perspectives, respectively, while recognizing that these terms are relative and not easily comparable across national contexts, and that the distinctions between them are inherently complex. Here, I apply the term 'right wing' in the manner similar to Wodak (2021) and Graff and Korolczuk (2022), to refer to entities and discourses identified with nationalist populism and extreme social conservatism, while 'left wing' refers to those espousing opposing views.
- 3 The rankings are regularly updated and posted at the organizations website at <https://www.ilga-europe.org/rainbow-europe/>, retrieved 5 August 2022.

References

- Ambroziak, Antoni (22 October 2019) Homofobiczny lament prawicy na temat 'Tęczowego Piątku'. Chcą ochronić dzieci przed potępieniem [The right's homophobic lament regarding 'Rainbow Friday'. They want to protect children from damnation]. *Oko.press*. Retrieved 27 April 2022 from <https://oko.press/homofobiczny-lament-prawicy-na-temat-teczowego-piatku-chca-chronic-dzieci-przed-potepieniem/>
- Baran, Dominika (forthcoming) Defending Christianity from the 'rainbow plague': Historicized narratives of nationhood in the anti-genderism register in Poland. *Gender and Language* 17(1).
- Borba, Rodrigo (2019) Gendered politics of enmity: language ideologies and social polarization in Brazil. *Gender and Language* 13(4): 423–448. <https://doi.org/10.1558/genl.38416>

- Borba, Rodrigo (2022) Enregistering 'gender ideology': the emergence and circulation of a transnational anti-gender language. *Journal of Language and Sexuality* 11(1): 57–79. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jls.21003.bor>
- Chandler, Daniel (2017) *Semiotics: The Basics*, 3rd edition. London: Routledge.
- Chojnicka, Joanna (2015) Homophobic speech in post-socialist media: a preliminary typology of homophobic manipulative discourse. *Journal of Language and Sexuality* 4(1): 138–173. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jls.4.1.05cho>
- Crystal, David (2008) *Language Library: A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 6th edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Darakchi, Shaban (2019) 'The Western feminists want to make us gay': Nationalism, heteronormativity, and violence against women in Bulgaria in times of 'anti-gender campaigns'. *Sexuality & Culture* 23: 1208–1229. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-019-09611-9>
- Diaz, Jaclyn (28 March 2022) Florida's governor signs controversial law opponents dubbed 'Don't Say Gay'. *NPR News*. Retrieved 28 April 2022 from <https://www.npr.org/2022/03/28/1089221657/dont-say-gay-florida-desantis>
- Farkas, Johan and Schou, Jannick (2018) Fake news as a floating signifier: hegemony, antagonism and the politics of falsehood. *Javnost—The Public* 25(3): 298–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2018.1463047>
- Fundacja Wiara i Tęcza: O Nas* (2021) Retrieved 17 September 2021 from <https://www.wiaraiteczka.pl/>
- Gal, Susan (2018) Registers in circulation: the social organization of interdiscursivity. *Signs and Society* 6(1): 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1086/694551>
- Gazeta Wyborcza Toruń* (16 November 2020). Jędraszewski i Czarnek przyjadą do o. Rydzyska. Aktywiści z lewicy planują 'tęczowisko' [Jędraszewski and Czarnek will visit Father Rydzyska. Leftwing activists are planning 'a big rainbow bash']. Retrieved 29 April 2022 from <https://torun.wyborcza.pl/torun/7,48723,26508702,jedraszewski-i-czarnek-przyjada-do-szkoly-ojca-rydzyska-torunianie.html>
- Gradinaru, Camelia (2018) GIFs as floating signifiers. *Sign System Studies* 46(2–3): 294–318. <https://doi.org/10.12697/SSS.2018.46.2-3.05>
- Graff, Agnieszka (2014) Report from the gender trenches: war against 'genderism' in Poland. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 21(4): 431–442. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506814546091>
- Graff, Agnieszka and Korolczuk, Elżbieta (2022) *Anti-gender Politics in the Populist Moment*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003133520>
- Graff, Agnieszka, Kapur, Renata and Walters, Suzanna Danuta (2019) Introduction: gender and the rise of the global right. *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture and Society* 44(3): 541–560. <https://doi.org/10.1086/701152>
- Grzymała-Busse, Anna (2015) *Nations under God: How Churches Use Moral Authority to Influence Policy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Jędrzejczyk, Agnieszka and Piasecki, Maciek (12 January 2022) Matka Boska w tęczowej aureolii nie obraża, aktywistki niewinne. Jest prawomocny wyrok sądu [Mother of God in a rainbow halo does not offend, the activists are innocent. The court issued the final verdict]. *Oko.press*. Retrieved 28 April 2022 from <https://oko.press/teczka-nie-obraza-prawomocny-wyrok-sadu-apelacyjnego-w-plocku/>
- Jørgensen, Marianne and Phillips, Louise (2002) *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. London: Sage.

- Karwelis, Jerzy (30 March 2021) Budżet UE. Wszyscy jedziemy na tym samym... żółwiu [The EU budget. We are all riding on the same... tortoise]. *Do Rzeczy*. Retrieved 27 April 2022 from <https://dorzeczy.pl/swiat/177699/budzet-ue-wszyscy-jedziemy-na-tym-samym-zolwiu.html>
- Knowles, Gerry and Don, Zuraidah Mohd (2004) The notion of a 'lemma': head-words, roots and lexical sets. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 9(1): 69–81. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.9.1.04kno>
- Kuhar, Roman and Paternotte, David (eds) (2017) *Anti-Gender Campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against Equality*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Laclau, Ernesto (1990) *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*. London: Verso.
- Laclau, Ernesto (2000) Constructing universality. In Ernesto Laclau, Judith Butler and Slavoj Žižek (eds) *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left* 281–307. London: Verso.
- Laclau, Ernesto (2005) *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso.
- Laclau, Ernesto and Mouffe, Chantal (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude (1987[1950]) *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Lisicki, Paweł (16 May 2021) Wojskowe siły oporu [Military force of resistance]. *Do Rzeczy*. Retrieved 27 April 2022 from <https://dorzeczy.pl/opinie/184805/wojskowe-sily-oporu.html>
- Mehlman, Jeffrey (1972) The 'floating signifier': from Lévi-Strauss to Lacan. *Yale French Studies* 48: 10–37. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2929621>
- Nyczka, Tomasz and Przybylska, Aleksandra (3 July 2021) Marsz Równości w Poznaniu. Tęczowe całe centrum! 'Mamy prawo do tej przestrzeni. Mamy prawo do tego miasta' [Equality March in Poznań. The whole center is rainbow-colored! 'We have a right to this space. We have a right to this city']. *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Retrieved 27 April 2022 from <https://poznan.wyborcza.pl/poznan/7,36001,27279305,marsz-rownosci-w-poznaniu-bo-pis-dal-przyzwolenie-na-homofobie.html>
- Paternotte, David and Kuhar, Roman (2017) 'Gender ideology' in movement: introduction. In Roman Kuhar and David Paternotte (eds) *Anti-Gender Campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against Equality* 1–22. New York: Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Paternotte, David and Kuhar, Roman (2018) Disentangling and locating the 'Global Right': anti-gender campaigns in Europe. *Politics and Governance* 6(3): 6–19. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v6i3.1557>
- Roman, Dorota (8 Dec 2020) Najlepsi tęczowi sprzymierzeńcy w Polsce – Diamenty LGBT+ [The best rainbow allies in Poland – Diamonds LGBT+]. *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Retrieved 28 April 2022 from <https://wyborcza.pl/7,82983,26585457,najlepsi-teczowi-sprzymierzenicy-w-polsce-diamenty-lgbt.html>
- Russell, Eric L. (2019) *The Discursive Ecology of Homophobia: Unraveling Anti-LGBTQ Speech on the European Far Right*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

- Szczeńniak, Agata (6 August 2020) Tęczowa Polska na inauguracji Dudy. Demonstracja solidarności z osobami LGBT+ [Rainbow Poland at Duda's inauguration. A show of solidarity with LGBT+ persons]. *Oko.press*. Retrieved 21 September 2021 from <https://oko.press/teczowa-polska-na-inauguracji-dudy-demonstracja-solidarnosci-z-osobami-lgbt/>
- Tzabir, Janusz (2017) From *antemurale* to *przedmurze*, the history of the term. *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 2: 67–87. <https://doi.org/10.12775/OiRwP.2017.SI.04>
- Wodak, Ruth (2021) *The Politics of Fear: The Shameless Normalization of Far-right Discourse*, 2nd edition. London: Sage.
- Ziemkiewicz, Rafał A. (27 June 2021) Dezorientacja seksualna [Sexual confusion]. *Do Rzeczy*. Retrieved 27 April 2022 from <https://dorzeczy.pl/opinie/189355/ziemkiewicz-dezorientacja-seksualna.html>