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Power and Ethics in Public Opinion
Siła i etyka w opinii publicznej

Politics is a field of life the basic task of which is streamlining of exercising power by a selected group of representatives of a community inhabiting the territory of a given country. At least such its role seems to be the basic one in public opinion.

What is the power, then? The answer to the question put forward in this way seems to be complex and dependent on the political-legal system functioning in a given country. Though, not only on this, because its meaning is for most politicians functioning in different systems is identical, because the power creates appearances of unlimited potential and freedom of action to those, who have it at a given moment[1].

According to G. Tinder, it is a wrong attitude on the account that having power cannot guarantee accomplishing everything that comes to a politician's mind at a given moment[2].

Its it completely understandable, however? It seems that for a man, power is the source of both emotions as well as a source of income. Whereas its loss often becomes the basis for growing frustration. This is why, in the process of in his aspirations for maximisation of power in his hand, each man, not only a politician, seems to be able to take any steps in order consequently to his or her goals, not to lose the achieved position in life[3].

Ensuing of such circumstances contributes to the situation in which politicians consider it legitimate to maintain that the world of politics and the sphere of ethics

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[1] According to T. de Monolatria, in practice each power is to a certain extent limited in its activities due to its co-relations with the outside world, as well as to the necessity to submit to the regulations of the international law. Nonetheless it has a great freedom of acting on both internal and external planes. T. de Montbrial writes more about freedom of actions of politicians assuminf the reins of government in his analysis *Activities and System of the World*, Dialog, Warszawa 2011, p. 41.

[2] G. Tinder, *Myślenie polityczne*, Warszawa 2003, pp. 171–172.

[3] Illustrated by more, concrete historical examples published by R.S. Robins, J.M. Post, *Paranoja polityczna. Psychopatologia nienawiści*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 9–146 et seq.

constitute two separate and independent domains. Such perspective makes it easier for politicians to explain occurrence of a situation in which the mechanisms of action are far from the general sense of impartiality. Moreover, consistent infringement of the rules makes citizens become less committed to watching and analysing everything that is the results of actions undertaken by politicians. As though politicians were not part of the society and were not designated by the citizens in the election process to hold offices determining social life[4].

On the day he/she is born, a human being starts functioning in the world of rules and regulations of the law. The moment of appointment to a public office cannot automatically raise a given politician above those rules. Even in the case when he/she has influence on establishing the law and its improvement. Particularly when he/she functions within a democratic system, and not in its authoritarian opposition. But, as it seems, even in an authoritarian system there is a set of rules applying to both the rulers and the ruled. However, when the question of maintaining the power the tendency to avoid the law, or infringe it, seems to occur at numerous levels of political life and is not limited by any political or legal system[5].

It is for this reason, it appears, considering the fact that a human being is an unpredictable creature, prone to risky behaviours, which at times can even infringe the rules of social coexistence – there was a set of ethical and moral rules created, used to estimate not only politicians. It is a completely separate question whether the rules and principles are applied in practice or they are a dead letter, or, which is not so rare, they are selectively applied, depending on political circumstances or the need of the person who needs to refer to them at a given moment[6].

Reasons for selective treatment of principles in politics cannot always be explained without reference to the intentions of those who try to apply these socially recognised principles in practice[7].

In this perspective, the starting point was assumed to be that each political action can be assigned to the desire to seize or to retain power. A thus put forward thesis will be verified on the basis of case studies of political activities, whose objective in reference to the generally accepted values was to seize power. However, such a thesis poses a risk that it may suggest that ethical values are just a screen hiding the real intentions of politicians. This is why the relations between politics and ethics will be explained, which will make the image of power and politics more comprehensible.

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[4] The topic was more extensively described by M. Bankowicz, [in:] *Demokracja. Zasady, procedury, instytucje*, Kraków 2006, pp. 37–61 and pp. 193–198.

[5] G. Tinder, op.cit., passim.

[6] M. Bankowicz, op.cit., pp. 193–198.

[7] G. Tinder, op.cit., passim.

Particularly in the context of the relation between power and ethics understood in terms of social interpretation and in its classical – theoretical version[8].

Analysing the works of the people who since the beginning of human activity in the sphere of politics have been trying to define what power should be, it can be observed that hardly any of the thinkers pondered upon the question whether power is necessary for the society. It was mostly assumed to be something unchangeable that there must be a clear division to rulers and subjects. However, the subject that remained to be solved was the question of the scope of the exercised power. For the thinkers of the kind of Sun Zi, the ruler was the one whose word was the law. He was not to be queried, and tardiness in fulfilling the ruler's law required punishing the subject with the most severe of permissible punishments. The essential thing was not allowed to delay the punishment, or show excessive tardiness. These types of assumptions formed the political system of China at the time of combating kingdoms and became the foundation of the law of the united state. The system of power created in this way seems to be a mark of all what is generally accepted as an authoritarian system[9].

Sometimes described as the strong-arm regime, it is fundamentally different in its assumptions from the democratic system. It is characteristic of numerous Asian regimes, but can also be found with different intensity on other continents. Intensity of occurrence of the authoritarian model is to a large extent dependent on the degree of acceptance of a given regime by the society of the country in which it functions. The longer a given state participates in international relations, the greater the degree of consent to the method of exercising power. If a number of statements on the differences between authoritarianism and democracy is analysed, the perception of the earlier as being in contradiction with ethical principles and the other one as their standard is clearly visible[10].

Aristotle, a Greek philosopher, coming from a different civilizational circle than the said Sun Zi, pointed out that it is not an immoral system, or unethical one, because people have to function within a state and be subjected to its laws. After all infringement, disregard or eluding of the provisions of the law is regarded as violation of the ethical principles. Because from the moment of their arrival on the Earth human beings have a natural ability of distinguishing between good and evil. This trait cannot be learnt, but it is possible to increase or decrease is influence. Those who oppor-

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[8] It is all the more advisable, because according to G. Sartori, politicians keep trying to find more and more effective weapons attacking human minds, such as demagogy, in which social ignorance of a given issue makes it easier to win acolytes. Comp. G. Sartori, *Teoria demokracji*, Warszawa 1998, p. 158.

[9] Sun Zi wrote more on the subject in his *Sztuka wojenna*, *Chiński traktat o skutecznej taktyce i strategii w walce zbrojnej oraz w życiu i w interesach*, vis-a-vis Etiuda, Kraków 2003, p. passim.

[10] G. Sartori, op.cit., pp. 228–306.

tunistically, for immediate profit break the rules while maintaining that their interpretation is the free choice of an individual, usually do not abide by the canon of ethical principles. Aristotle gave us a hint to assess a man's actions before evaluating harmfulness of a system. Systems are created by people, and if people themselves trespass the competence assigned to them by the law, they should bear the consequences of their decisions, not the state in which they live. In other words, it is not the power itself that happens to be unethical, but the way it is exercised. It is indisputable for Aristotle that the system of power should be adjusted to both the citizens and the state in which they function. The external and internal circumstances that determine exercising of power protecting people and states against anarchy and disorder[11].

The Arab thinker Ibn Chaldun was driven by another train of thought. For him, the ideal was creation of a perfect world state subjected to one state and religious authority. It was obvious for that thinker, however, that not every man is predestined to governing. On the example of the decline of Arab domination in the world subjected to religious laws, he showed that when the authority rests on the laurels of their earlier success, it must become subject to the processes, which lead to its degeneration[12].

The common feature of the abovementioned thinkers was that they saw a threat in the system of exercising power at the moment when the ruling politicians, instead of obeying the existing law, bend it for their own needs, which are contrary to the interest of the state. When the authorities want to implement their objectives disregarding provisions of the law they have established, it is not only unethical, but it threatens to infringe the socio-political structure of the state. The scale of repressive functioning of the law is of no importance here, but its effectiveness is. In this case, each abuse of the scope of the exercised power infringes ethical and moral standards recognised as essential for both the authorities and for the subjects, irrespective of the kind and form of the exercised power.

When evaluating the actions of the ruling politicians as a whole, or of an individual politician, it is important to be guided by common sense, particularly when the evaluation comes out of the well-respected sources. Because, as St. Augustine points out, they are preordained an extensive knowledge based on facts, which results in recognising as a fact even something that needs not necessarily be based on facts. It is obvious for St. Augustine that when investigating a given issue, one should delve into the subject until all the possible doubts have been clarified[13].

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[11] Aristotle, *Polityka*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 25–30 et seq.

[12] Interpretation of the political doctrine and views of the thinker, who was born in Tunis, is contained in the work of J. Bielawski, *Ibn Chaldun*, Warszawa 2000, pp. 19–158.

[13] St. Augustine, *Solilokwia i inne dialogi o duszy*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 87–88.

The case of authoritarian system is similar. Certain cultural traits often become part of characteristic of a political system. The problem appears when people start to believe that a radical change of a political system will force liquidation of the elements, which were related to the existing system, as was the case with the civil war in Libya. In the countries of western democracy, it was assumed to be obvious that as a result of liquidation of the authoritarian and repressive regime of M. Gaddafi it will be possible to establish democracy in that country. In fact, it turned out that the scope of problems was much wider than anyone expected and not necessarily of the pre-assumed nature. The opinions based on reliable premises were taken for granted, but without intending to make detailed analyses, which are an essential element of taking such a far-reaching decision, which changes a given balance of power, involving the use of the armed forces. At the moment when it is recognised that the politician breaking ethical rules should be removed, it is necessary to know whether he or she is really the individual acted against the rules; or is he or she, on the basis of subjective premises, judged in one way or another. There must be only one truth, as St. Augustine emphasizes, and this means that there must not be different interpretations of the truth[14].

In case of Libya, the truth was not only the fact that the opposition wanted change of the system, but also the fact that different ethnic and religious groups, taking advantage of the war chaos, wanted to build their own political strength. Aspiring to take power, they took advantage of the European need for peace and democratisation to seize the power after removing of the dictator, replacing the old repressive regime with a system similar to democracy, but not quite being one[15].

This conduct, to a large extent resembles the rules that can be found in the ideas of the Italian philosopher and politician N. Machiavelli, who recognised as a rule the fact that in politics one has to be a lion and a fox at the same time. Force and cunning are the necessary attributes serving attainment of the assumed objectives. Nothing that might disturb once accepted schedule of action should matter when one wants to reach his or her objective. The principles are different, however, as different as the state of peace and the reality of waging war[16].

The views of N. Machiavelli, though criticised by his contemporaries, found their reflection in the political strategy of the first minister at the court of the King of France – cardinal A. de Richelieu[17].

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[14] Ibidem, p. 110.

[15] *Rocznik Strategiczny 2011/12*, Warszawa 2012, pp. 247–321.

[16] N. Machiavelli, *O sztuce wojny*, Warszawa 2008, pp. 13–146 et seq.

[17] The strategy of this politician is more extensively described by e.g. R. Price, *Historia Francji*, Poznań 2001, pp. 66–71, as well as H. Kissinger, *Dyplomacja*, Warszawa 1996, pp. 59–72.

In this way, the not fully recognised division into the ethics of wartime and the ethics of peacetime was created. One should bear it in one's mind that at the time of development of Machiavelli's ideas it was rather difficult to distinguish wartime from peacetime, as the states either waged war or were preparing for waging it. Contrary to commonly held opinions the Italian scholar did not create the rules. He only described the actual attitudes towards the issue of aspiring to taking power and then exercising it[18].

In the 21st century any deviations from ethical principles in politics are called political Machiavellianism, which does not have too many tangent points with the classical version of the doctrine of the Italian philosopher, as Machiavelli set politicians certain tasks and required keeping specific obligations towards the society. Whereas, nowadays it is assumed that political Machiavellianism justifies deviation from moral and ethical principles, and although it draws its sources from the experience of democracy in western countries, it is equally often applied by leaders of authoritarian countries. They are not alone in this attitude. Political Machiavellianism is evident in the attitudes of numerous extreme religious fundamentalist organisations. The most important of them seem to be the al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. They are used here as an example showing how ethical principles fail to meet political practice, especially when the issue of seizing power takes the floor. Particularly the power of non-measurable time of its exercising, because those aspiring to seize the power would like to extend its scope to the entire world. Which, in turn coincides with the views of ibn Chaldun on the need to create one human civilization[19].

However, the context and the sphere of responsibility is different. In our times, the point is not in seizing power to effectively manage human community, but to seize power for creating an alienated community feeling, thinking and behaving in compliance with the expectations of the leaders of a given group. These types of communities prefer functioning on the territory of a state the structures of which fail to function properly or are defective or flawed enough for a given organisation freely develop its activities and plans concerning liquidation the current state regimes and establish their own control[20].

The first organisation to use it on a large scale was the al.-Qaeda of the Saudi millionaire Osama bin Laden. In the past, he was engaged in the struggle of the Afghans against the Russian intervention. When that war ended, he became the enemy of both, the Saudi authorities and of the Americans, who supported them. After overcoming a lot of problems, he finally managed, with the consent of the pupils of Koranic

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[18] Which H. Kissinger points out in his work, op.cit., passim.

[19] J. Bielawski, op.cit., passim.

[20] When the fight for power shows the hallmarks of obsession, then every circumstance is used not to lose it. Of which R.S. Robins and J.M. Post try to convince their readers, op.cit., passim.

schools – the Taliban, to establish permanent bases on the territory of Afghanistan. Yes, launching an attack on the territory of the USA in 2001, Al-Qaeda led to the situation in which their actions were met with a fierce reaction of the American government. As a result of actions undertaken by the US-Army, the opposition forces brought down the Taliban government and the Al-Qaeda warriors retreated to hard to reach places in the mountains and hid in local caves. Osama bin Laden, whose objective was starting worldwide Islamic revolution and, consequently, creating a caliphate – state, whose was not so much the Islamic countries as the entire world. The terrorist attacks that he was the originator of were aimed at facilitation of the plan[21].

According to the Assumption of Sun Zi, to defeat the enemy, and this was what Al-Qaeda considered the United States to be, it was necessary to terrorize it by hitting something that Americans considered to be their personal property and that was at the same time a weak element of their defence[22].

This condition was satisfied by the attack on the WTC and the Pentagon. The only difference was that the attacker must have a reserve forces strong enough to take advantage of the surprise and panic in the ranks of the enemy to achieve the final success. In the discussed case the forces were incomparable, because the attack against the world superpower was wage by an organisation not a state. It did not make any difference that the influence of the organisation reached many countries, because its actions, as I mentioned before, resulted in complete defeat, not only of their own, but also of their Afghan allies. However, Osama bin Laden did not intend to renounce his global objectives, because wherever there is a chance to win any form of power there is also a growing belief that a defeat is only a stage of a certain kind of game, the results of which, regardless of the cost, will be the final victory. Particularly when there is a possibility of covering the political motivation with ideological premises or, as the case was with Al-Qaeda, with reasons of religious nature[23].

Religious faith has a force of bringing people together. This is why politicians may often be tempted to use it for their own particular interest. Particularly when religion is combined with politics to such a wide extent as can be seen in the states in which Islam is not so much the leading, but definitely the sole religious creed tolerated by the state authorities[24].

It is hardly possible to miss the fact that the states cooperating among through a network of political and economic ties keep trying to limit the religious aspects to

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[21] J. Kaczmarek, *Terroryzm i konflikty zbrojne a fundamentalizm islamski*, Wrocław 2001, passim.

[22] Sun Zi, op.cit., passim.

[23] J. Kaczmarek, op.cit., passim.

[24] Which J, Zdanowski is trying to convince us about in his analysis of the Middle East realities: J. Zdanowski, *Historia Bliskiego Wschodu w XX wieku*, Wrocław 2001, pp. 344–566.

the internal management of the state structures. Whereas, Al-Qaeda did not have such limitations. Not being subjected to any state, they did not expose a country allied with the USA to any retaliatory sanctions. Afghanistan was a special case here, because from the beginning of establishing the Taliban regime it aroused American intense dislike. That is why the Al-Qaeda as well as the Taliban could have expected sanctions for the attacks in the USA, but they did not expect the scope and the form that the retaliatory action took. For them, killing civilians became a kind of propaganda for their view of Islam and an effective method of fighting with the USA, which was a threat to their plans. And in spite of their apparently caricatural attitude to implementation of Machiavelli's slogan, maintaining that the end justifies the means, they initiated the process that could not be stopped. It consisted in revival of movements gathering the extreme and orthodox forms of Islam, for whom Osama bin Laden became a symbol of fighting with the West. Whereas WTC and the Pentagon became an example of the fact that a threat to security may appear in any place where it is assumed that there is no possibility of a terrorist attack[25].

As well as of the fact that wrong interpretation of the threat may escalate it instead of reducing it. An evidence of this was the military action waged against Saddam Hussein, the ruler of Iraq. In this case, the consequences of allowing incompatibility between ethics and political objectives can be clearly seen. In accordance with the idea of combating terrorism the target was to overthrow the person who, like Al-Qaeda aspired to seize a larger range of power. This is why he was equally dangerous for the terrorist as the USA, as it is the principle of the authoritarian leaders that they do not tolerate any opposition, or much less competition. And Al-Qaeda appeared to be such a competition due to the rapidly growing number of supporters. Yet, probably there were no plans of liquidation of the Iraqi regime by the Al-Qaeda. Iraq was feared to rebuild its forces, after the earlier wars quickly enough to make another effort to liquidate certain Middle East states opposing Saddam Hussein's policy. This is why the term rivals used in relation to the state of Iraq and bin Laden's organisation seems justified. Thus, it seems logical that they could never be allies, because politics and alliances in the West are understood in a completely different way than in the East. What is possible in the West, e.g. the alliance between Hitler and Stalin, is not in the long perspective possible in the East, because even in an alliance the question of leadership is the most essential element of successful cooperation[26].

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[25] M. Bearden, *Cmentarz imperiów. Zdradliwe szczyty Afganistanu*, [in:] (ed. by) J.F. Hoge Jr., G. Rose, September 11, 2001. *Jak to się stało i co dalej?*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 70–78.

[26] Compare: J. Zdanowski, op.cit., passim, as well as: M.M. Dziekan, *Historia Iraku*, Warszawa 2002, pp. 157–199.

In the East, an ally is often attacked before he becomes a rival, i.e. before implementation of this that was the basis of an alliance. This does not usually happen in the West, where an ally may be weakened, but not destroyed, before the main objectives of the concluded alliance or agreement have been concluded[27].

The trait distinguishing democratic countries from the authoritarian regimes is that the governments of individual countries pay much attention to their medial image. Such behaviour automatically translates into the belief that decisions taken in the military sphere should be, according to political elites, based on lofty ideals. Only such behaviour allows to present a given decision as morally acceptable, that is not standing in contradiction to ethics. A historical section reveals an image of a number of states, not only democratic, which took military interventions justifying their actions with high objectives, protection of values, goodness and justice. From such a point of view, the opponent is always perceived as the one who is against all similar values. Reasons for his disparate conduct, as in the case of Iraq, were of no importance, when the war was treated as the only chance for triumph of justice over tyranny[28].

Starting the war with Iraq, its justification was based on intelligence data, which after completion of the military operation proved to be impossible to confirm. Overthrowing of the regime opened a new front of combat with the terrorists, because taking advantage of the ensuing anarchy, Al-Qaeda transferred its bases to this country. Against the background of this operation it becomes more and more evident that in our times ethics becomes a screen for behind-the-scenes activities aimed at implementation of particular as well as vital interests of various states[29].

A question arises here whether manipulating with ethical values does not cause ethics in politics to become a handy tool used only in order to obtain short-term results. In order to answer such formulated a problem, it is worthwhile to refer to the doctrine by Machiavelli. Reading carefully its contents it is easy to notice that the outline: politics – "functional" ethics is not a new idea. Problems appear only at the time when one cannot distinguish the values attributed to clarity and transparency in politics from principles used solely for manipulating public opinion[30].

In the discussed case, the superior target were the activities taken in order to secure the widely understood security in the region. Whereas the real result turned out

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[27] M.M. Dziekan, op.cit., passim.

[28] At the moment of preparing and conducting actions of military nature, the essential element is manipulation of information to such an extent, the achievement of which allows military, as well as political success. When one knows the opponent's weak points, manipulation is more justified than in the case when such information must be created. More on the topic: see: N. Machiavelli, op.cit., passim.

[29] S. Tanner, *Wojny Bushów. Ojciec i syn jako zwierzchnicy sił zbrojnych*, Wrocław 2007, pp. 177–271.

[30] N. Machiavelli, op.cit., passim.

to be the proceeding destabilisation, the consequence of which was the appearance, on the political firmament, of radical organisations calling to overthrow the existing legal – political system. The result of that was, to some extent, an outburst of the so called Arab Spring, which lead tooverthrow of governments in Egypt, Tunisia and, with support of some European states – Libya. It also resulted in the long lasting civil war in Syria[31].

From the European point of view, government authoritarianism is a phenomenon which should be liquidated and replaced with liberal democracy. Operations that were taken up in the Middle East seem to have their logical justification. At the same time, however, they stand in contradiction to everything that builds and makes up the view of the political culture of the countries of the region. And this for the reason that in many of those countries the strong-arm regimes are deeply set in tradition and seem to be a strong foundation of the stability of the state. This is why strengthening movements aspiring to overthrow and authoritarian government does not guarantee, in any circumstances, that the new state authorities will recognise the values of a democratic state. Especially in its lay form of separation of the state and religion. The above was clearly illustrated by the case of Egypt. After the overthrow of the dictator, the elections in the country were won by the Muslim Brotherhood, which attempted to set up a fully religious Islamic community. In consequence, there were riots, and the citizens consented to mediations by the military. As a result, the rule of Muslim Brotherhood (elected in free, democratic elections) were overthrown and the military, as it had happened in the earlier history of that country, took over the power. In this way, with the approval of the majority of the general public, the authoritarian system was restored, indirectly recognised as providing a more extensive guarantee of stable development of the state[32].

The only state in which the experiment with the democratic system brought the results expected by the Europeans was Tunisia. Yet, even that state did not fully adapt to the new rules, an evident element of which is the number of Tunisian citizens becoming members of the so called Islamic State, which wages a number of military operations in Syria and Iraq and having its military bases in Libya and conducting large-scale operations directed against citizens of the Aran countries as well as against Europeans[33].

The Islamic State is a new organisation using slogans similar to those proclaimed by the Al-Qaeda. Yet, although the two organisations aspire to similar objectives and

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[31] *Rocznik Strategiczny*, [*Strategic Anual*], op.cit., passim.
[32] *Kryzys polityczny w Egipcie (2012–2014)*, Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopaedia, pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kryzys_polity...
[33] *Tunisia, the cradle of the Arab Spring, struggles with Jihadists*, wiadomości.onet.pl>Wiadomości>Świat

are open to identical groups of followers of the Sunni version of Islam, they try to compete, not to cooperate. Moreover, the organisation is ruthless in its actions. Building the Caliphate, they do not hesitate to exterminate people thinking in a different way. Trying to seize power, they attempt to depopulate the areas inhabited by adherents of Shia Islam as well as Christians who have been living in the Middle East for the last two thousand years. Using religious values they adapt them in such a way that every deviation is punished. And the opponents are both states and individual ethnic and religious groups[34].

This example illustrates the force of combining political objectives with religious values. The force of influence of the radical organisations in the situation of the growth of anarchy of political relations in the Middle East reality. An increasing number of unstable states, such as Syria and Iraq, as well as fallen states like Libya, Somalia and, to a certain extent, Sudan, contribute to the fact that the Islamic State has become a permanent element of political life in the region. A growing number of recruits allows them to make up the losses in the number of followers resulting from military campaigns conducted by different countries. For members of this group religious values stand in contradiction to ethical values understood in the western way. However, the objectives that inspire them seem to be typically political. Creating a state of people thinking in the same way and believing in the same values was the essence of actions of many dictators in the past. In the authoritarian system, tt is easier to manage the society in which there is no opposition. This type of alienation affected the Red Khmers ruling Cambodia. In such cases, there are mostly new ethical and moral values created, which in their assumptions are to justify the repressive nature of the new political system. The Islamic State is different only because they exterminate the opposition before the structures of power have been formed. Yet, it does not translate into effective stopping of the organisation from taking up successive, more and more spectacular operations[35].

Manipulating values is, in their case, an effective method of marking their presence and showing their strength. Human life, which is valued by every one of the existing religions has in this case been brought down to a functional object. Suicide attacks on both military and civil targets are an evident example of the fact. This seems to push even the repressive nature of the Middle East authoritarian regimes into the background, and contributes to the fact that it is not politics that departs in its actions from ethics, but ethics becomes subordinated to political objectives. In this way the

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[34] Państwo Islamskie – Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopaedia, pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pa%C5% 2584s...

[35] According to Sun Zi, determination is fundamental to effective action, and the Islamic State is very effective.

theory by the said N. Machiavelli, who stated that there is an ethics of the state of war (particularly liberation war or unification war as it took place in Italy), and the ethics of peacetime, where the values should have a higher value than their short-term interests. There is a trap in such reasoning, however, involving deviation from recognised values and principles for a time being, as any deviation, irrespective of its impulse may contribute to deconstruction of the system and, consequently, its degeneration. Because, as the example of the said Arab Spring shows, it is impossible to be partly a democrat and partly an autocrat. It is possible to change the system gradually, but any revolutionary movement may lead to anarchy. It is possible for democracy and authoritarianism to function side by side, but politics devoid of ethical values is an existence based on failure to understand that power, which is a result of exercising it is not only a profit, but first of all a duty, which sometimes in the heat of the fight is forgotten. Activities of radical organisations in the Middle East and threats that they carry with them for stability of not so much a region, but perceiving the problem from a wider perspective, for the world as well. It should be remembered[36].

It is worth noticing that against the background of aspiring to seize power, be it on a local or a global scale, the need for deviation from the values that were earlier considered to be inalienable rights and duties, seems to be more necessary than in any other fields of social life. According to J.M. Post and R.S/ Robins, an inherent trait of the process of acquiring power is ignoring everything that might foil plans of a given formation, or of an individual of an authoritarian nature. The analysis made by the abovementioned authors shows that ethics is an essential component of wielding power because it prevents the groupings whose sole current objective is winning power just for the sake of having power long-term functioning in the public sphere[37].

One should bear in mind that is pertains only to the states where the civic society has a chance of undisturbed functioning. Whereas in societies where there is social alienation, far reaching manipulation with public opinion is an element of political game. A civic society and their representation in the form of the media, are able to reject any attempts made at manipulation, which a god point of democratic systems.

In out times, each politician is subject to assessment not only of its own political formation, or the voters, but of anyone who has access to the, so called, community media. Their development, owing to the Internet, makes it possible for citizens to verify both the promises made and obligations assumed by politicians and their implementation in specific decisions. For this reason, like the press and television media that posed a threat to politicians breaking ethical and moral principles in the 20th cen-

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[36] Which the Italian philosopher tried to convey. See: N. Machiavelli, op.cit., passim.
[37] R.S. Robins, J.M. Post, op.cit., passim.

tury, in our times, in the 21st century, such a role seems to be performed by the Internet. Which does not mean that there are no attempts to use the impact of its influence for manipulation. However, the ability to verify the veracity of the sources can, to a certain extent limit the attempts at manipulating the reality and an appropriate amount of knowledge possessed by the citizens creates favourable conditions for ethical conduct of politicians, who have to bear in mind that it is the citizens who decide how long a politician remains in public sphere and hold the reins of government. Otherwise they may lose their credibility, and their power, which worth emphasizing no matter whether one deals with democracy or authoritarianism. A very good example of the above in the 21st century is Egypt and other, not only Middle East states. Because manipulating ethical principles favours neither democracy nor any other form of wielding power, which is illustrated not only by the contemporary history of political relations.