Ethos 32, no. 4 (128) (2019): 433–446

Andrzej JAROSZYŃSKI

THINKING ABOUT THE FATHERLAND...
Confession of a Diplomat

A diplomat is expected to be an obedient civil servant rather than a patriot. A government employs its representatives abroad principally not because they love (or declare to love) their mother country, but because they are committed to serve it regardless of their sentiments. The tension between the public and the private within diplomatic duties should be as invisible as a foreign servant's religion or political preferences. A diplomat's task is to understand, to assimilate, and to persuade the Other, whether an opponent, a partner or a rival.

What I am going to write about is personal by experience, subjective by opinion and independent of political bias. It is an essay pretending only to touch on the topic which it cannot exhaustingly examine.

My *patria*—motherland, fatherland, and homeland combined—had been somewhat schizophrenic prior to 1989, as most of my generation's experiences had been. I sincerely detested the Polish People's Republic as a political and ideological system governed by aliens and for alien purposes. In fact, I almost felt like a foreigner in my own country. Moreover, my university studies in English language and literature added to my sense of living in 'non-splendid' isolation. However, as an individual and a private person, I did cherish my own personal little Poland. First, it was rather an imagined Poland, saved mainly from bits of the family history. Second, it was the reality fed by Radio Free Europe, contemporary Western literature and arts, and, on top of these, a reality marked by attachment to the Catholic Church. This was the 'country' I argued with and often ridiculed, but still cherished much more than I accepted or recognized the surrounding, real and unreal, socialist state. Characteristically, I quarreled and argued with pre-war Poland and her heritage more than I seriously studied Marx or was curious about the tenets of communism, which I regarded as almost barbaric, but certainly as boring. Interestingly, one of the most powerful arguments in rejecting communism was its cheapness, shabbiness, or simply ugliness. I certainly shared many of the above opinions with my generation and was influenced by leaders of the democratic opposition. The values we shared were reclaiming national history and culture, drawing on the Christian tradition, and embracing Polish Romanticism. Moreover, we distrusted revolution and political parties, and opted for nonviolent conflict resolution and pluralism.

Out of the many gurus I had, one name must be mentioned as far as the shaping of my love and hate for the fatherland was concerned. I am thinking

about Witold Gombrowicz. He said that the more you are yourself, the more you will express your nationality, in contrast to the majority of Poles, who wanted to be Polish rather than human beings and, thus, lost their spiritual independence. As a 'citizen of the world,' Gombrowicz constantly wrote about his homeland as 'the living essence of man rather that a blot on the map.' My own Poland was a sort of inner, illegal country of the mind in an outer, legal People's Poland.

I earnestly never thought about leaving my country and becoming an émigré. Partly, because I had never suffered brutal oppression, partly because I never desired material success or comfort. Moreover, I was so deeply submerged in the Polish reality that I could not imagine reinventing myself as a self-made man in the West.

Last but not least, my fatherland did not appear just as a country. It was a duty that hurts but is for life. It also provided the basis for my self-judgment, the possibility of which I would have lost, had I decided to emigrate.

The Solidarity movement had been the first opportunity for me to 'open up' my private Poland so that I could merge with and serve in the official, public arena. Then, when offered a post of consul right after the breakdown of the regime in 1990, I accepted my new engagement both as a civic duty and as a personal opportunity, with no need for membership of any party. I did not learn much about my new profession from the old cadre, so I had to find out about things by doing them, and that process was an adventure in itself. From then on, my *patria* became my fatherland: the official, political state structure and neither a private nor an abstract nation. In other words, it was neither my love for my country, together with its place in world politics, nor the national identity, but predominantly matters of State, conceived as a unit of analysis and activities in world affairs, which became the daily reality for me in my new job of a diplomat.

However, a diplomat is expected to be an obedient civil servant rather than a patriot. A government employs its representatives abroad principally not because they love (or declare to love) their mother country, but because they are committed to serve it regardless of their sentiments, 'being careful in conduct and unimpeachable in character.' The tension between the public and the private within diplomatic duties should be as invisible as a foreign servant's religion or political preferences. A diplomat works for his country through a government. A diplomat's task is to understand, to assimilate, and to persuade the Other, whether an opponent, a partner or a rival.

Fortunately, in the early 1990s, new Polish diplomats in America received generous, much as calculated, assistance and were welcomed with a general expectation of the success of Poland. In America, one could feel the difference between success driven patriotism and the failure driven one, the latter being historically the Polish variety.

It has been said that power without diplomacy is blind, but it is equally true that diplomacy without power is impotent. That is why, Polish diplomacy did not join in the proverbial aversion to the use of power which is characteristic of Western European states. The priority of Polish foreign policy was membership of NATO. I felt that contributing to the first Polish international success, that is, our membership of NATO, was worth minimizing my previous private 'mental country' with its intellectual passions and fascinations. Likewise, the new agenda was also worth neglecting the old wounds and divisions from the socialist era. In all fairness, it must be said that most diplomats coming from the old regime clearly demonstrated the shallowness of their previous communist belief, as well as enormous ability to 'change colors,' in some cases with good will and for the good of the country. I sometimes had the feeling that had we known how superficial and opportunistic our former oppressors' loyalties were, perhaps less harm and fewer misfortunes would have occurred on our side. If patriotism is understood as an integrating element, the glue that binds different groups in achieving an extraordinary, historic target to provide lasting security to the whole country, then, all of us, new and old diplomats, joined in that endeavor.

In 1990, my first mission took me to Chicago, the greatest community of Poles and Polish Americans in the USA.

The cooperation and confrontation with Poles living in the US opened my eyes to two things. Firstly, it showed the workings of the traditional Polish motto, "God, Honour, Fatherland," when put into practice in a free society. Secondly, I was dealing with a community and its institutions not governed by influential elites.

The idea of mandatory use of the Polish language in the universal, common Catholic Church outside Poland seemed to be driven not by religion but by our national needs. One would have expected that, at least abroad, Polish Catholics would become more catholic than at home. The word 'honor' sounds noble, but in America it is somewhat old-fashioned and bizarre. Their idea of fatherland, in turn, or rather one of the mother country, seen in a frozen image—imagined rather than real and collectivist rather than individual—made me recall similar preferences of some of my countrymen at home.

However, the issue the new Polish foreign service in the USA found most urgent was the inability of the Polish ethnic groups to gain visibility or create an effective political lobby. To me, it was illuminating to find out that living in a free and democratic country does not automatically translate into success or influence. The anti-elitist and anti-intellectual attitudes of the Polish diaspora combined with our well known national fault of factiousness, and, above all, with the absence of leadership or funds, which also functioned as a warning against the problems Poland might encounter while adopting democracy as

a model for institutions and for the people. The narrative of 'the Poles staying apart' even without communism imposed on them by an external political power was clearly observable in the case of the Polish communities in America, as well as in other countries, where I served later. Part of my consular mission in Chicago was to persuade my Polish-American partners to take advantage of the American institutions and of the opportunities provided for the American ethnic groups.

Needless to add, in my missions in America, Norway, and Australia, I had to deal with two diverse and internally divided generations of the Polish diaspora, in other words, the older Polish community and the more recent arrivals. The above-mentioned image of Polish Americans, Norwegians, or Australians as being politically invisible, socially mute, and financially needy was true about the traditional, organized, and institutionalized diaspora. Some of its 'ethno-representative' and 'culture preserving' organizations acted with hopes of re-creating a pre-war Poland, while others tried to work out a substitute for the Polish life. Deeply religious and conservative as far the social issues were concerned, they distanced themselves from more secular, integrative and cosmopolitan new arrivals living in metropolitan areas. The traditional organizations, however, though withering away, are still more powerful and politically cohesive than loosely integrated groups of Polish pro-multicultural liberal democrats. However, while there are some individual exceptions, neither group participates actively or successfully in their new homeland's political, social, or economic mainstream.

Polish communities are rarely complained of, except for having unpronounceable names. At the same time, they are not regarded as supporting or threatening the stability or prosperity of the host countries.

The relations between the new Polish diplomatic service and Polish communities abroad can serve as a good illustration of the tribulations and challenges both sides faced. Very soon it became clear that the Polish diaspora was not able to supply significant financial or political aid to help Poland in its 'return' to the West. Neither were the traditional Polish institutions abroad recognized at home as instrumental in the process of modernization, which by nature meant rejecting or neglecting the traditional life style. Although the successive Polish governments recognized the autonomy of Polish organizations abroad and supplied thousands of medals and distinctions to veterans and political refugees, their hopes were focused upon the newly assimilated and successful professionals. However, those individuals, independent and free from collective national or family obligations, treated their engagement primarily as a business or transactional policy. One way or another, a majority of Polish diplomats, among them their bosses in Warsaw, looked reluctantly, if not grudgingly, on the possibilities of achieving a desired cooperation with

the Polish diaspora, and most of them did their best not to become involved in any such cooperation. No wonder then that the current establishment in Poland is regarded by a majority of expatriates as their own. No wonder, too, that the expectations towards the patriotic diaspora are very high nowadays, since, generally speaking, its members are considered as part of the Polish nation.

Another area which has been controversial and in fact unsuccessfully managed by the post-communist Polish diplomacy is promotion of culture as a tool in foreign relations. In the case of a middle-size country which is not a world power and whose recognition dependents on its alliances with the powerful, an international image, supported by distinct national branding in culture, is one of the few tools diplomacy can use. Paradoxically, it was the late Cold War period that happened to be that of the golden era of the visibility and recognition of Polish culture. Polish music, film, literature, and theatre of the period were innovative and experimental in form, as well as unique in tackling the relationship between man, history, and politics, using local references to express universal messages. Obviously, those accomplishments could not be promoted by the old regime, partly because they were politically inappropriate, and partly because they opposed the regime.

With the decline of arts and the rise of globalization with its mass culture, the post-1989 Poland tried to catch up with the Western trends by imitating and following them. Poland became less and less 'Polish' and no longer cultivated its living myths or symbols, neither did it foster the specific national brands. The culture of the new capitalist Poland was neither innovative nor experimental; rather, it became mediocre. Paradoxically, after 1989, it tended to blindly follow the 'fashionable' West, unlike it had done in the past, when it demonstrated artistic creativity far from the dictates of social realism or the propaganda of the state. Consequently, the promotion of the Polish post-1989 culture has been tantamount to the promotion of artists from Poland or those born in Poland. Incidentally, one cannot help the observation that the Poles who gained worldwide recognition in the past, or those who still enjoy it, were mostly émigrés or immigrants, such af Tadeusz Kościuszko, Frederic Chopin, Joseph Conrad, Czesław Miłosz, or Roman Polański, to enumerate just a few. At any rate, without significant accomplishments in the realm of popular culture, or particular novelties in an elite area, it is increasingly difficult to use culture as a tool of diplomacy with the purpose of establishing the image of a country as modern, dynamic and marketable. Needless to add, as it is the case with the problems concerning the Polish diaspora, few diplomats only strive to promote Polish culture seriously and ambitiously, considering such actions as a step in their own careers.

I must confess that my attitude to those problems was perhaps not very typical. I had previously met many Polish émigrés in the United Kingdom and

in the United States, as well as lectured for many students with a Polish background, so their gains and pains were familiar to me. Likewise, my English studies and the courses I taught in comparative literature shaped my interest in Polish as well as world culture.

I felt especially at home in the company of veterans and political refugees—members of Polish pre-war intelligentsia—from the generation of my parents. They were politically marginal but socially interesting as story-tellers, ironic observers, and above all people with class (at least most of them). They seemed to have put their war dramas and the loss of their country behind them and rarely cherished their Polishness in an openly patriotic way, let alone for the sake of keeping up the appearances. My peers, expatriates from Poland, were even more private in their display of patriotism. However, I must admit that—like many of my countrymen—I would react emotionally whenever I met a person from my hometown, and gave additional credit to anyone (foreign partners of mine) who happened to know anything about the city.

My diplomatic service was based on the traditional understanding of diplomacy, which I conceived as the tool of foreign policy performed by government institutions. However, I also witnessed two other types of diplomacy emerge: (1) public diplomacy and (2) supranational and transnational diplomacy. Both are connected to the changing role and image of the nation and the state.

Public diplomacy exercises influence through communication with the general public within another nation rather than by attempting to influence the other nation's government directly. Broadly speaking, it aims at communication with the foreign public in order to establish a dialogue designed to inform as well as to influence. At the center of our efforts were universities and think-tanks, as well as the mass media. Technological advancements and the advent of digital diplomacy now allow instant communication with foreign public. Facebook and Twitter diplomacy are increasingly used by world leaders and diplomats. In such cases, diplomacy usually resembles international communication and dialogues, a kind of hybrid activity expressing global changes. In the past, it was a sense of glory and glamour, as well as a long and turbulent history, that provided reasons for the national pride and served as a powerful, however soft, tools of power in diplomacy. Today, the prestige of a country is corollary of its public safety, welfare, and infrastructural wonders. Countries and nations assume the role of facilities providing material goods, security and pleasures. Moreover, diplomatic targets and their implementation are now more transparent and a country's diplomacy is made accountable to the domestic voters, in particular when foreign policy is treated as secondary to domestic objectives.

An activity related to public diplomacy is the practice of branding a nation, involving the promotion of its image abroad. Branding guru Wally Olins was

hired in 2003 to market Poland abroad effectively in a national branding programme. According to studies he carried out together with his team, perceptions of Poland in Western Europe were hazy, confused, and rather negative. Poland was seen as poor, grey, boring, and inhabited by peasants. In the background, there were images of Solidarity, Pope John Paul II, anti-semitism, Chopin, and war time heroism. Eventually one core idea, that of *creative tension*, emerged, based on the dualities and inner contradictions of the Polish character. Mr. Olins explained that *Poland is part of the West and also understands the East; Polish people are passionate and idealistic, and also practical and resourceful; the Polish character is ambitious and also down to earth.* Fortunately, the project was stopped, then abandoned, and now is hardly remembered.

As a matter of fact, Poland appeared to be a success story especially due to her smooth economic and financial transformation in the 1990s. My American partners even joked that Europe was turned upside down because the Frenchmen now spoke English, Germans became pacifists, and Poles turned to business. During my mission in Oslo, the mass media there pointed out to Poland's membership of the European Union as an example of enormous progress only to be envied by Norwegians. In Australia, in turn, the public was astonished to find out that Poland was among the few countries, including of course Australia, to avoid the global financial crisis. At the same time, the successive Polish governments were unable to build on those achievements, just as they failed to build a new positive and lasting branding around Poland's heroes John Paul II and Lech Wałęsa.

The inefficiency of Polish diplomacy in the field of international public relations can be best seen in the handling of the problem of the "Polish death/concentration camps" misnomer, which distorts history and offends Poles both at home and aboard. The Campaign Against "Polish Camps" conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which began in 2004, has reduced the use of this false phrase, occurring world-wide, but then opened up an international discussion on the Polish complicity in the German atrocities of the Second World War.

Curiously, one of the most successful nation branding efforts was that of the 'Polish plumber,' who 'came into life' in 2004 in France. Before the European Constitution referendum of May 2005, heated debates started in France about the newly joined countries. The 'Polish plumber,' a persona created by French anti-constitution campaigners, emerged as a low-wage worker from a new member state who threatened the jobs of French workers. Poland reacted with a most creative campaign to improve the image of Poles and Poland in France, though: instead of competing with the French working class for a job, a Polish plumber invited all French citizens to visit Poland. The campaign in question was an instance of the new diplomacy which used an attractive

and distinctive visual figure appealing both to the senses and to the emotions, while having the least to do with the Polish national image. What worked was a publicity trick radically different from the unsuccessful intellectual ideas, such as those proposed earlier by Olins. Popularizing Poland as a commercial commodity was hardly acceptable to diplomats, though, who regarded their job as a craft. It was all right to promote Polish affairs in different communities and to use culture as a diplomatic tool, but to pass the objective of national branding to market operators seemed to be short-lived, superficial, and of no political duration.

Another challenging phenomenon which has recently appeared in the world of diplomacy is its supranational conception, developed mainly within the European Union as The European External Action Service, formally launched on December 1, 2010. A European Union diplomat neither represents a state, nor is an international civil officer working for an international organization, such as, for instance, the United Nations. Rather, he or she represents the entire European Union abroad, protects and promotes its interests, as well as carries out negotiations on its behalf. A diplomat representing the European Union is not, or rather must not, be governed by national interests. The position of a European diplomat, however, is similar to that of a state one, that is, he or she has privileges and immunities. Some believe that there will be an ever-increasing role for the Corps of Brussels diplomats, as the staff of the European Union take over seats previously occupied by representatives of national foreign offices.

While serving as the Polish ambassador in Canberra, Australia, I had a chance to work with the EU Delegation (in other words, EU Embassy) headed by the ambassador. Specific challenges could already be seen in the formal way of avoiding the names "embassy" and "ambassador" so as not to equal the EU status with that of a Member State. Furthermore, the head of a European Union delegation bears the nationality of one of the European Union Member States, also represented in the same corps by a national diplomatic mission. Prudence and courtesy are therefore crucial. The head of the European Union delegation to Canberra was particularly sensitive during our meetings to represent the good of the entire European Union. He tried very hard to promote its visibility in Australia, which was taken there as another European experiment hardly interfering with the bilateral relations with specific European states

It is important to note that today also another category of diplomacy, the so-called transnational diplomacy, is on the rise. A transnational diplomat represents non-governmental organisations, international corporations or can be an "ambassador of good will" (this role is usually assumed by celebrities) acting on behalf of the UNICEF, UNESCO or other UN institutions. Such

diplomats do not have a diplomatic status, but perform important diplomatic tasks dealing with representation, negotiations, and public promotion.

While discussing the rise of supranational diplomacy one needs to have in mind that it was the Holy See that first introduced this kind of representation. In this respect, the Vatican—as much as royal courts and trading posts—was instrumental in creating modern diplomacy. It is worth remembering, though, that the criterion the Holy See has always used while sending its nuncios and missionaries to their posts, as well as while sponsoring scholars, was not that of their nationality, but of their competences and loyalty to the common good of the Church.

According to some observers, the existence of supranational and transnational diplomacy, accompanied by dynamic multinational relations, is obvious evidence of the decline of the importance of the state and the nation in international relations. Particularly the nation—just like the family or religion—ceases to be considered as a natural, God-given, and everlasting environment of a human being. The concept of nation is regarded now as a product of history, human imagination, and formal culture (sustained by means of schooling and state churches). As a result, patriotism has lost its position as part of high, or even mass culture, and is slowly declining in public education and discourse. The question of national identity, or patriotism, is perceived as a realm of individual choices and experience, and often manifested nowadays only in cuisine and language. On the other hand, though, patriotism conceived as devotion and commitment to one's mother country is welcome and used by governments, both at home and overseas, for their own purposes.

The idea of a nation seems to be outdated today and gives way to those of federation, alliance, or a super state, consequently leading to cosmopolitanism. Particularly within the European project, there have been attempts at reducing (and later abolishing) states as separate political units, as well as nationhood as an element of political considerations and practice. The postwar Europe has already turned from nationalism to pooled sovereignty. The ideal is promotion of cosmopolitanism together with multiculturalism, environmental protection, human rights, secular values, and transgender equality. The slogan calling for no borders, no religion, and no private property as the guarantee of global peace and happiness is well known from John Lennon's song *Imagine.* Diplomats, no doubt, enjoy the tune but they realize that once Lennon's dreams about a world without borders and with a brotherhood of men and women come true, none of them will be needed any longer. However, the social and political life seems to constantly confirm that the need for, or obsession with, identity and national interests will never die down.

One of the ways to oppose the tendency towards cosmopolitanism is adopting the so-called populist orientation, which is gaining importance in recent

times. One view of the mass support for populism is that it is driven by the economic insecurity perspective. The other, which, I believe, focuses on a more decisive factor, points to 'the cultural backlash.' It explains the support for populist politicians as a return of once-predominant sectors of the population to the tradition. The populist attitude questions such values as cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, secularization, and transgender culture. It opts for a national sovereignty and advocates self-interest of the nation, putting it above that of international organizations and cooperation. Populist discourse emphasizes the nation as the key integrating element in the society and, consequently, promotes the nation's historical heritage and distinctness. Populists claim to represent 'the real people,' or 'the silent majority.' Populism is essentially anti-pluralist, which contradicts the norm of coexistence—'live and let live'—on which both democracy and diplomacy rest. Populist leaders are mistrustful of the elites, as well as of the establishment and of the experts, diplomats being frequently included in the latter category.

After joining the European Union, Poland tried to combine the liberal democratic trend in politics with the protection of the nation's security, simultaneously making an effort to catch up, in the economic and social senses, with Western European countries. Modernization, almost synonymous with Europeanization, was considered as the most essential task. Connected with it was a general desire to return to normalcy, to become a well-governed, prosperous, and law-abiding country rather than a permanent trouble-maker, a romantic warrior, or an over-ambitious actor disliked by others, in particular by the neighbors.

As for the main strategic aims of Polish foreign policy, which dictates the objectives of diplomacy, Russia is traditionally viewed as a potential existential threat, and thus military security plays a key role. Challenges of a non-military nature (e.g., migration, the climate change, and terrorism) are not as important in the case of Poland as they are in many other European countries. Despite the transformations after 1989 (the collapse of the bipolar division and the growth of non-state entities), the dominant category in the realm of security is that of the neorealist paradigm, in which the main actors in international relations are states which seek classical security (i.e., survival, inviolability of borders, and territorial integrity).

Thus, and rightly so, Poland is seen as the most pro-Western, pro-American, and anti-Russian state among the former Warsaw Pact members. Joining NATO and the European Union was the crowning accomplishment of Polish foreign policy. The dual enlargement offered Poland a space in Europe (i.e., the European Union) where it could continue to engage with America (in NATO), while providing an institutional and normative framework for the process of modernization. Recently, however, Poland's pro-European, or more precisely, pro-European Union position has been questioned.

Russian aggression in Ukraine has posed and is still posing the most serious test for Polish and European security since the end of the Cold War. The current Polish government, seeking more American presence on the Polish soil and more American equipment in the Polish armed forces, counts on the US–Polish compatibility of threat assessment and hopes for a military action of the USA in Poland and Central Europe, should such a need occur.

The present Polish government—in office since 2015—has in fact continued the post-1989 strategic aims to avoid the 'grey zone' of uncertainty by anchoring the country permanently in the Western security system (i.e., in NATO and in the EU) and by a closer partnership with the USA. The attention to the relations with Russia and the support for Ukraine also remain unchanged. However, newcomers—as I call the current government—have introduced some reorientations. Their slogan, "we're rising from our knees," was not only symbolic but of a qualitative nature. Foreign policy started to be treated as secondary to the domestic objectives of a radical rebuilding of the state and society. Skepticism towards the future of European integration, as well as ignoring the previous 'Europeanization' paradigm, seems to be the most important change of attitude.

The European Union is seen as a causal factor of mass migration, or as fundamentally unaccountable in its policy regarding migration and terrorism. It is also treated as a 'Napoleon without teeth,' that is, as providing neither hard power capabilities nor a sound common foreign and defence policy. In addition, the European Union is accused of political correctness, not naming the real threats or enemies, and of being guided by deep-rooted pacifist attitudes resulting in a non-confrontational policy.

The skepticism towards the European Union not only comes from the Polish government's assessment of the actual situation, but is built on some ideological assumptions, such as the priority of a nation over a community and the disapproval of liberal democracy as the dominant socio-cultural model. According to this paradigm, nation is not seen primarily as a political entity (in the sense of a community of citizens), rather, it is considered in terms of its historical tradition and cultural unity. The role of the state is then to define and pursue the national interests.

In my diplomatic roles, I was spared balancing and choosing between the liberal (cosmopolitan) model and the populist (nationalist) orientation. However, as Adam Zamoyski maintains, "The principal difference between two competing parties lies in their outlook and sense of Polish nationhood. The Civic Platform party tends to be uncomfortable with Poland's past and aspire above all to be 'good Europeans' with a cosmopolitan mindset. The victorious Law and Justice party attracts people who cannot forget the wrongs of World War II, people who find the idea of the secular, liberal Western world

too challenging and seek comfort in a sort of provincialism that wraps itself in religious and patriotic slogans."[1]

However, while handling this issue diplomats must have in mind the essential fact that although they are primarily public servants of their own governments, they are also obliged to look beyond their direct service and try to contribute to building an international order based on cooperation, as well as on respect for the law and the human rights. They also need to contribute to the political culture promoting integration rather than confrontation in foreign relations. Moreover, diplomats cannot perform their function in contradiction to their own idea of the fatherland.

No doubt that for those like myself, who joined the diplomatic corps in their mid-life period and under specific historical circumstances, it was very difficult to accept many inconveniences on a scale unknown before, in my case in academic life, with which my career had been connected. The challenges in question consisted, above all, in using people, culture, and ideas as diplomatic tools; in the need to accept a superficial style of life, devoid of friendships and non-targeted contacts, and—last but not least—in conventionality in both the savoir vivre with its confines and the use of a 'diplomatic lie,' often called a professional lie. The latter resulted from a convention, an informal agreement necessary to be able to conduct the art of diplomacy.

However, while serving as a diplomat, I rarely felt that my 'private image of the fatherland' collided or rebelled against the public one I was to serve. I never regretted that, this way or another, I had to give priority to loyalty over admiration or nostalgia. For, to be a diplomat, one agrees to treat his or her political and personal preferences as private, unless they directly oppose the aims and ways of the government's program one serves. Understood personally rather than politically, Polishness is not about one's birthplace, but about one's self-awareness which never leaves the person, wherever they might travel. It is an attribute of our deep individual identity and helps us understand ourselves in dialogue, or in confrontation, with the Other without the fear of getting lost.

Maurycy Szczucki, the main protagonist of the 2018 novel *The Death of the Fronsac*[2] by Neal Ascherson, is a triple emigrant: a soldier fighting abroad, an exile who returns to Poland and is then expelled, and finally, someone who settles in Scotland and visits his homeland as a British subject. He recalls a certain incident which took place during the pilgrimage of John Paul II to Scotland.

---

[1] Adam Z a m o y s ki, "The Problem With Poland's New Nationalism," *Foreign Policy*, January 27, 2016, https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/27/the-problem-with-polands-new-nationalism/.

[2] See Neal A s c h e r s o n, *The Death of the Fronsac* (New York: Apollo, 2018).

> I was close when he [John Paul II] came through the crowd. A woman was holding up a tiny girl in red-white folk dress. He stopped, and asked the child in our (Polish) language: '*Gdzie Polska*? Where is Poland?' She looked back at him bewildered. The Pope took her small fist, pressed it against her heart and said: 'Poland is here.' I was furious to find my eyes filled with tears. Why? Such cheap sentimentality! Such shameless conflation of soul with a stretch of land, such an inoculation of that old God-Fatherland serum into the blood of a child. But then I remembered that I had done the same. ... Except that back then, I had thumped (my friend's) fist against my chest: 'Polska tu! Poland is here!'[3]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ascherson, Neal. *The Death of the Fronsac*. New York: Apollo, 2018.

Zamoyski, Adam. "The Problem With Poland's New Nationalism." *Foreign Policy*. January 27, 2016. https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/27/the-problem-with-polands-new-nationalism/.

ABSTRACT / ABSTRAKT

Andrzej JAROSZYŃSKI, Thinking about the Fatherland...: Confession of a Diplomat

The essay comprises a personal account of a former Polish diplomat of his experience and concept of the fatherland. The paper describes the development of the author's sense of his national identity, beginning with his experience of the communist Poland, and continuing up to the period of his diplomatic service after 1989. In the conclusion, the author discusses the question of nationality as a person's identity.

Keywords: Poland, fatherland and motherland, national and individual identity, opposition to communism, diplomacy

Contact: John Paul II Institute, Faculty of Philosophy, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Al. Racławickie 14, 20-950 Lublin, Poland
E-mail: ajaroszynski@o2.pl
Phone: +48 81 4453218

Andrzej JAROSZYŃSKI, Myśląc Ojczyzna... Słowo dyplomaty

Esej przedstawia osobiste poglądy byłego polskiego dyplomaty dotyczące pojęcia ojczyzny oraz jego doświadczenie patriotyzmu. Autor opisuje ewolucję

[3] Ibidem, 186.

swojego rozumienia tożsamości narodowej, poczynając od swojego doświadczenia ojczyzny w komunistycznej Polsce i analizując jego rozwój aż do czasu, kiedy po roku 1989 reprezentował Polskę jako dyplomata. W podsumowaniu rozważa kwestię narodowości jako osobistej tożsamości.

Słowa kluczowe: Polska, ojczyzna, tożsamość narodowa i indywidualna, opozycja wobec komunizmu, dyplomacja

Kontakt: Instytut Jana Pawła II, Wydział Filozofii, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II, Al. Racławickie 14, 20-950 Lublin
E-mail: ajaroszynski@o2.pl
Tel. 81 4453218