

DOI: 10.51480/1899-5101.17.4(38).896

**RAFAŁ LEŚNICZAK, WIZERUNEK PREZYDENTA ANDRZEJA DUDY
NA ŁAMACH „TYGODNIKA POWSZECHNEGO” (2015-2020)
[THE IMAGE OF THE PRESIDENT ANDRZEJ DUDA IN THE „TYGODNIK
POWSZECHNY” (2015-2020)]. THE CARDINAL STEFAN WYSZYŃSKI
UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING HOUSE, WARSAW 2023, PP. 304.
ISBN 978-83-8281-133-9**

The new publication by Rafał Leśniczak, titled *Wizerunek prezydenta Andrzeja Dudy na łamach „Tygodnika Powszechnego” (2015-2020)* [The Image of President Andrzej Duda in the “Tygodnik Powszechny” Weekly (2015-2020)], is a part of the body of research on political communication and the image of Polish political leaders. I experienced from the first pages of the book a truly remarkable encounter with an inspiring text that addresses important and topical issues. After reading the entire monograph, I can confidently state that this is a unique, outstanding, one-of-a-kind book for several reasons. Firstly, the author undertook a challenging task of analyzing the image of the head of state as portrayed in a weekly journal associated with the Catholic Church. In this initial context, Leśniczak does not fail to ask questions about the state of democracy in Poland and the role of the Polish opinion-forming media in shaping civic attitudes. Moreover, the author highlights and recalls the role of the President of the Republic of Poland as the guardian of the tripartite separation of powers. Secondly, Leśniczak’s book has been introduced to readers at a time of increasing political polarization in Poland, and notably, during the parliamentary election campaign. Thirdly, the author maintains the researcher’s perspective and objectivity towards the presented determinants of Andrzej Duda’s image. Professor Leśniczak is remarkable for his erudition, insight, and commitment to language correctness. This is all out of respect for the reader and the discipline of this monograph. Notably, the book, published by the UKSW Publishing House, has been reviewed by prominent experts in Polish media sciences: Prof. Barbara Bogołębska and Prof. Janusz W. Adamowski. Their positive reviews of the text are most certainly another reason to read the book.

Rafał Leśniczak offers readers a reconstruction of President Andrzej Duda’s image in the “Tygodnik Powszechny” weekly during the President’s first term of office. In the author’s own words:

There is a paucity of media studies in the academic literature concerning the analysis of the content of the “Tygodnik Powszechny” weekly regarding its political involvement during the so-called PiS-PO political duopoly. Therefore, this monograph attempts to systematically reconstruct the image of the representative of the Polish right-wing Andrzej Duda during his first term as the President of the Republic of Poland (2015-2020), i.e. from the day he was sworn in (August 6, 2015) until the end of his first term (August 5, 2020). (pp. 19-20).

The analysis examined the weekly journal’s perception of the declared achievements of the head of state in five key areas: foreign policy, military security, social policy, participation in the legislative process, and adherence to historical policy. The author undertakes the challenge to answer the question of the extent to which Andrzej Duda’s presidency was perceived by “Tygodnik...” as autonomous from the Zjednoczona Prawica (United Right) party, which was in power. After reading the book, I can say that Professor Leśniczak succeeds in the task.

Leśniczak conducts a highly comprehensive source search, as evidenced by the bibliography. The research covered 255 issues of the journal, making the research sample representative. A total of over 350 press releases met the research criteria. Estimably, the author refers to the works of the following experts in media sciences: Andrzej Antoszewski, Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska, Robert Entman, Norberto González Gaitano, Damian Guzek, Andreas Hepp, Stig Hjarvard, Iwona Hofman, Małgorzata Lisowska-Magdziarz, Sonia Livingstone, Mia Lövhelm, Paolo Mancini, Winfried Schulz, Holli A. Semetko, Patti M. Valkenburg, Agnieszka Stępińska. Readers should appreciate the efforts of Rafał Leśniczak in selecting Polish and foreign scientific literature.

I highly rate the structure of the monograph. The book comprises 304 pages, consisting of an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, an appendix, a bibliography, a list of tables, and a summary. The concept of the book is well thought out. Leśniczak guides his readers adeptly through the complex twists and turns of our times.

I believe it is worth mentioning, when presenting the structure of the monograph, that in the first chapter, Leśniczak successfully presents and synthesizes the most significant achievements of Andrzej Duda’s presidency, as declared by the politician on his official website, and confronts them with the viewpoint of political scientists. The second chapter, a conceptual one, details the factors conditioning the image of President Duda in the press, as well as the public relations activities he undertook. The presence and design of the methodological chapter deserve particular praise. Leśniczak meticulously presents and explains the research hypothesis, the independent and dependent variables, and the directional hypotheses. He further elaborates on the conceptual grid applied, the temporal scope of his analysis, and the criteria for including a press text in the

research sample. In my opinion, it is Rafał Leśniczak's expertise in the methodology of social sciences that especially reveals his scholarly maturity as a media science researcher. The fourth chapter presents the results of quantitative and qualitative content analysis of "Tygodnik Powszechny". In the fifth chapter, Leśniczak discusses the key determinants of President Duda's image. The author does not neglect essential issues on the public and political agenda, such as the President's attitudes towards the conflict surrounding the Constitutional Court in 2015 and the Supreme Court in 2017. The sixth and final chapter comprises the conclusions of the press analysis conducted and their interpretation. The author highlights the following issues of his research: The political involvement of "Tygodnik Powszechny"; the press image of the president vs. the communicative dimension of political leadership; President Duda's image vs. selected middle-range theories; the socio-political context vs. the image of the political leader; theories of mediatization metaphors; and President Duda's image vs. deontological journalism. The appendix to the monograph includes a classification key with its corresponding characteristics and categories. Notably, the author embeds his empirical findings in media science theories, including the theory of mediatization of politics, selection of information, middle-range theories, and the concept of framing.

However, Leśniczak's decision to omit the illustrative layer of press articles and to focus solely on the text is slightly questionable. Also, Leśniczak does not address the impact of the "Tygodnik Powszechny" weekly on its audience. However, this would require another kind of analysis, for instance, surveys or interviews. The author is aware of the above and therefore recommends further analyses of the topic and the inclusion of sociology experts in such studies. Moreover, Prof. Leśniczak argues for extending the research material to other nationwide opinion weeklies and social media to obtain a more precise reconstruction of the media image of Andrzej Duda. I agree with the author that:

"The content analysis method, although laborious, time-consuming, and demanding in terms of precision, both at the stage of source queries and at the stages of research material categorization and interpretation, yields reliable conclusions." (p. 240).

Also noteworthy is the high consistency ratio (CR) between the two coders in the pilot sample (at 0.95), which confirms the reliability of the analysis results obtained (p. 137).

Having read the text, I can confidently state that it is a valuable and engaging work that combines theoretical and empirical approaches. Therefore, I highly value the content of the book. This applies to both the conceptualization, the theoretical part, and the methodological accuracy, as well as the meaningful

content of the monograph. The formal and linguistic aspects of the publication also deserve praise, with its carefully designed, coherent, and logical layout. The author maintains a proper perspective and objectivity towards the analyzed content. Those genuine research traits allow Rafał Leśniczak to identify the weaknesses and strengths of Andrzej Duda's presidency in "Tygodnik Powszechny", particularly in relation to fundamental values such as democracy, the rule of law, and a free media. In the summary section, the author states the following:

"The media image of President Duda during his first term of office, as presented in "Tygodnik Powszechny," was therefore not idealized (it was not one-dimensional – neither exclusively negative nor exclusively positive). The journal did not refrain from judgments and interpretations, but those were always factually substantiated." (p. 240)

Leśniczak proves that the image of President Duda in the journal depicted a non-autonomous politician, dependent on the Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice) party and its leader, Jarosław Kaczyński.

I firmly believe that *Wizerunek prezydenta Andrzeja Dudy na łamach „Tygodnika Powszechnego” (2015–2020)* will become a crucial point of reference in discussions among media scholars and political scientists who closely monitor the progressive polarization of the Polish political scene and the media representations of Polish political leaders. The monograph by Prof. Leśniczak also outlines directions for further research, i.e. the assessment of the extent to which the Polish President's political programs and activities during his second presidential term have been legitimized by the Polish opinion press and the Catholic media. It is noteworthy that the author carefully follows the political communication processes of the Catholic Church. This allows Leśniczak to argue that in the second and third decades of the 21st century, the Church has been a significant political actor, and the Catholic media should be treated as an alternative voice of the bishops. I hope that Professor Leśniczak will continue his media analyses, share his research results on the media image of Polish political leaders with the media science community, and inspire social science scholars to engage in an academic debate on the relations between politics and the media. I am convinced that his monograph *Wizerunek prezydenta Andrzeja Dudy na łamach „Tygodnika Powszechnego” (2015–2020)* will be well received by the Polish media studies community, political scientists, and other representatives of social sciences.

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