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Conservative Counter-Movements? Overcoming Culturalising Interpretations of Right-Wing Mobilizations Against 'Gender Ideology'

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Introduction

Since 2012, several European countries have seen the rise of conservative and, in part, fundamentalist social movements against the perceived threat of what they call 'gender ideology', 'gender theory' or 'genderism'. Being opposed (depending on the context) to reproductive rights, LGBTQ-issues, Gender Mainstreaming, conventions or recommendations of supranational bodies (e.g. the Istanbul Convention for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women; or World Health Organization recommendations of sexual education) as well as the public financing of Gender Studies, the advocates of these platforms tend to regard all political and non-governmental actors, administrative staff and scientific researchers who focus on these issues as a single homogeneous group and an organised lobby. This opposition is partly manifested in grassroots or religiously-affiliated movements and partly in the agenda of right-wing and populist parties. The simultaneity of the movements, the different triggers in countries that differ with respect to political landscape as well as gender and LGBTQ-policies indicates that, rather than dealing with isolated cases, we are witnessing a transnational phenomenon (Hark/Villa 2015; Kuhar/Paternotte 2017).

The transnational character is a defining feature of these movements. Therefore, it is necessary to look beyond local or national cases, even if it bears the danger of glossing over contextual differences. Another difficulty emerges in the analysis, as grassroots (e.g. parents), religious movements and political parties invested in these issues should be looked at simultaneously.

It is possible that there is no applicable macro-narrative that would explain everything with a one-size-fits-all model, and the danger of over-generalisation is high. How-

ever, in light of the global reach of the phenomenon, more macro ambition is needed in constructing interpretations, especially since Latin-America and Africa are also affected (Kuhar/Paternotte 2017, 3). So far, very little research is available on the subject, nevertheless, it seems that the vehement debates on the European continent about 'gender ideology' are indirectly connected to the current contestations in the Anglo-Saxon world about political correctness, identity politics as well as a simpli-fied notion of intersectionality and 'gender' understood as a felt sense of identity. To make the link between the different contexts, it seems helpful to discuss these movements in the context of the rise of right-wing populism and on the basis of considerations seeking to explain their demand side. I propose that 'gender' is not the final target for these movements, and they should not be understood primarily as mobilisations against equality. Rather, the emergence of these movements is a symp-tom of a larger crisis, and their ideologies are only the surface, where 'gender' is the symbolic glue (Grzebalska/Kováts/Pető 2017). Based on Chantal Mouffe's (2005) critique of the established hegemony of consensus in liberal democracy, I discuss two consensuses that are characteristic of the so-called progressive actors, includ-ing feminist and LGBTQ-actors, namely the neoliberal consensus and the human rights consensus, and their contribution to the rise of the movements against 'gender ideology'. Based on this I will argue that these movements provide responses to current structural crises in cultural terms. Interpretations limiting this phenomenon to a "fight between values" (e.g. framing them as counter-movements/backlashes against equality) function rather as an obstacle to understanding what is at stake by repudiating or obscuring this important structural realignment and reproducing false dichotomies.

The paper draws on debates in the Anglo-Saxon countries about identity politics and their reception in Western and East-Central Europe as well as speeches of the Budapest Family Summit in May 2017, which included the 11th World Congress of Families (WCF) and the 2nd One of Us Congress.[1]

Illiberal and Populist Tendencies: Attacks on Democracy Through a Gender Lens

Populist movements and parties are gaining in popularity all over Europe. In spite of the contextual and discursive differences, the East-West divide seems to lose rele-vance in this regard. This paper cannot undertake a critical analysis of the abundant scholarly literature on populism. Two aspects, however, need to be highlighted at the beginning, which define the paper's take on this complicated issue.

The paper follows the approach of those treating populism as a symptom and looking at systemic causes behind the populist tendencies, even leading in some countries to illiberal political shifts. For instance, in their paper about gendered aspects of the illiberal transformations in Hungary and Poland, Weronika Grzebalska and Andrea Pető put forward the following argument: "(W)e argue that *illiberalism* can best be

understood as a majoritarian nationalist response to the failures of the global, neo-liberal model which has shaped the relationships between individuals and the state during the last four decades" (Grzebalska/Pető 2018, 1). This approach contends that looking at the root causes and demanding self-reflection by progressive actors does not negate or relativize the seriousness of the populist/illiberal surge.

Second, while there is a mushrooming literature about the xenophobic and exclusionary discourse of populist movements/leaders/parties and their worrying moves when in power – e.g. "blurring of the separation between the party and the state, (...) the subordination of the judiciary to the ruling party, taking control over the media, creation of a parallel civil society sector and attempts to support and enrich ruling party's allies and voter base" (Grzebalska/Pető 2018, 2) –, very little has been said about the gender perspective of these movements. Generally, papers on the topic are either restricted to analysing the programs/implemented policies, or handle these without placing them into the broader frame of political phenomena. Instead, political processes need to be analysed together with their gendered aspects, beyond gender policies, to understand the role of opposition to the liberal equality paradigm which was in the creation of these systems (Grzebalska/Kováts/Pető 2017). Furthermore, the cases where a narrow understanding would obscure underlying processes need closer examination. For instance, it might be the case that the social policy of 500+[2] implemented by the right-wing populist party Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS) ruling Poland, could contribute to cementing traditional gender roles, but meets the practical interests of women in the same time, e.g. demonstrably alleviated the poverty of families (Cocotas 2018). As a consequence, labelling electorates as populist/misogynistic/self-hating women/having a false consciousness does not bring us closer to understanding the rise of these movements and parties.

Rethinking the Idea of Consensus – Conceptualizing Movements Against 'Gender Ideology' in an Era of "Anti-Populist Hysteria"[3]

In recent years, the term populism has gained enormously in popularity beyond the academic literature, and this has intensified even more since the Brexit vote and Donald Trump's election. Cas Mudde (2015) and Jan-Werner Müller (2016, 16) both note that populism has become a buzzword, and that there is virtually not a single politician who has not been labelled populist at one or another time, because most people use the term as a *Kampfbegriff* to defame a political opponent (Mudde/Kaltwasser 2017, 1 et seq.). Mouffe calls this phenomenon of overuse "anti-populist hysteria" (Mouffe 2016b).

This paper starts from the critique of overusing the term and concentrates on a specific aspect of the populist surge: the way the rise of the populist right is connected to the tendency of dismissing views deviating from the supposed/desired liberal consensus as populist. Far from stating that this single aspect would explain the phenomenon for good, the scholars invite to a better understanding not only of the rise

of right-wing populism, but also of the proliferation of anti-populism. Connecting these two and the Anglo-Saxon tendencies with the anti-gender ideology stances on the continent, Mouffe's theory may contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Drawing on Mouffe's critique of the concept of consensus, in this paper I will situate the movements against 'gender ideology' in the context of the *demand* for right-wing populism.[4]

The challenge posed by this enemy image of 'gender ideology' can be conceptualised through Mouffe's well-known theory of antagonism and agonism. To grasp the political, she agrees with Carl Schmitt that the political is inherently conflicted, but distances herself from his idea of the impossibility of pluralism. Also, she criticises the technocratic-liberal belief in consensuses based on rational debates. She argues that "(p)roperly political questions always involve decisions which require us to make a choice between conflicting alternatives", and that liberalism has a central deficiency, namely that it negates "the ineradicable character of antagonism (...), the conflicts that pluralism entails; conflicts for which no rational solution could ever exist" (Mouffe 2005, 10). In her understanding of liberal democracy, the most important challenge is finding a way to reconcile the political (which inherently contains antagonism) with democratic pluralism (which cannot be based on rational and anti-political deliberation). "The crucial point here is to show how antagonism can be transformed so as to make available a form of we/they opposition compatible with pluralist democracy" (ibid., 19). For this purpose, she introduces the concept of agonism, in which the conflicting parties acknowledge the political and the 'them/ us' divides, but see themselves as belonging to the same political association and recognize the legitimacy of their opponents (ibid., 20).

This is exactly what the opponents to 'gender ideology' contest, accepting the political, but negating pluralism. In their understanding, 'gender ideology' and those perceived as its lobbyists are not acknowledged as legitimate opponents, and are regarded as not sharing any common ground, not belonging to the same political association. Therefore, these anti-gender ideology movements pose a challenge to democracy: how to acknowledge rationally insoluble antagonisms while transforming them into agonisms.

One of Mouffe's key arguments may shed light on the responsibility of the progressive actors in exacerbating the situation in many countries and on the European level, providing a critique of the idea of consensus in the political realm. As mentioned, the existence of agonistic spaces, where the adversary and his/her right to pursue a hegemonic project contrary to mine is conceived as part of the same political space while recognising the inherently conflictual nature of politics, is a precondition of a functioning democracy. While there might be a consensus of elites or there might be a perceived consensus, neither one of those can eradicate the political and with it the conflict. She holds the politics of consensus accountable for the fact that societal conflicts surfaced in an antagonistic manner in Western Europe.

> (W)e should be very wary of the current tendency to celebrate a politics of consensus (...). A well-functioning democracy calls for a clash of legitimate democratic political positions. (...) Such a confrontation should provide collective forms of identification strong enough to mobilize political passions. If this adversarial configuration is missing, passions cannot be given a democratic outlet and the agonistic dynamics of pluralism are hindered. The danger arises that the democratic confrontation will therefore be replaced by a confrontation between essentialist forms of identification or non-negotiable moral values. When political frontiers become blurred, disaffection with political parties sets in and one witnesses the growth of other types of collective identities, around nationalist, religious or ethnic forms of identification. (Mouffe 2005, 30)

In what follows I will briefly analyse two consensuses prevailing among so-called progressive actors including feminist and LGBTQ-activists. I will argue that these provide certain clues for the understanding of mobilisations against 'gender ideology'.

The Neoliberal Consensus

For Mouffe, who concentrates on Western Europe, the neoliberal consensus (i.e. the pact of the centre-right and centre-left parties behind the neoliberal form of globalisation, where no real alternatives are available for voters) is the main reason for the strengthening of right-wing populism. This consensus bans every alternative and concurring vision to the current economic order as illegitimate (Mouffe 2005) and, in the EU context, euro-sceptical[5]. Natacha Chetcuti explicitly argues that nationalist neo-conservatism is a sort of answer to the neoliberal consensus (Chetcuti 2014, 253).

It can be argued that, similarly to the way certain feminist claims became politically institutionalised in the form of Gender Mainstreaming in the European context, gender equality shifted away from the horizon of everyday experience and the language of large parts of the electorates and largely became a policy issue rather than a political one, which constitutes a problem from a Mouffe-ian view as it is rather technocratic, mistrusts passion and identification. However, it must be noted that in countries such as Austria and Germany, where Gender Mainstreaming was one of the main battlefields of the struggle against 'gender ideology', right-wing actors do not treat it predominantly as a technocratic policy tool for which it is repeatedly criticised by feminist theoreticians. Instead, they understand 'gender' as 'gender identity' of the trans/queer identity politics, and see Gender Mainstreaming as a conscious and conspiratory strategy for spreading this approach (Rosenkranz 2017).[6]

The relevance of the neoliberal consensus for the opposition against 'gender ideology' can be found in the discourse of these movements, in two ways. On the one hand, as explicit and direct connection from their side, and on the other hand, as implicit and indirect connection: they speak culture, they mean neoliberalism.

The Neoliberal Consensus – Explicit and Direct Resistance to It

In fact, the movements mobilising against the threat of 'gender ideology' in several countries make explicit allusions to market fundamentalism and the influence of transnational companies over politics when arguing for the need to oppose 'gender ideology'. This can be illustrated with French examples:

The "Printemps français", the radical wing of the French movement Manif pour Tous,[7] mentions in its manifesto the "dictate of market ideology," and that they reject a society where banks serve as cathedrals. According to the manifesto, 'gender theory' is "ultra-individualistic, hedonistic and radically relativist," and therefore has the same roots as market fundamentalism.[8] Tony Anatrella, one of the main ideologues against 'gender theory' in France (and beyond) urges African bishops to "resist vigorously the imposition by Western NGOs, the U.N., and the E.U. of 'gender theory', which, in promoting moral and anthropological deregulation, presented risks analogous to unfettered market capitalism" (Case 2011, 805). Likewise, Romain Carnac quotes Jutta Burggraf, another important ideologue, that the claims of 'gender theory' found "a fertile ground in the individualist anthropology of neoliberalism" (Carnac 2014, 137). That the actors mobilizing against 'gender ideology' often identify a connection between the term 'gender' and individualism/neoliberalism is based on their idea that gender is something freely chosen, not constrained by norms, nature and biological sex. What makes this right-wing critique more complicated is the fact that the same connection is made from feminist and leftist perspectives, especially in the Anglo-Saxon countries where trans/queer identity politics are important strands of feminist and LGBTQ-activism. These critics argue that the identity politics approach turns emancipatory movements into terrains of individual claims for recognition and that by adopting the logic of neoliberalism instead of collectively addressing systemic problems, this strand fosters individual adaptations. To provide an example, it is argued that queer politics encourages individuals to reject the categories themselves (man or woman) instead of fighting the narrowly-defined gender roles of men and women and the system which sustains them, and that if one does not comply with the expected gender roles then one does not belong to that gender (Reilly-Cooper 2016).[9] Christine Wimbauer, Mona Motakef and Julia Teschlade argue, based on an impressive literature of feminist economics and feminist critics of the neoliberal order, that discourses against gender equality and gender studies are an attempt to get experiences of precarity and precarisation under control (Wimbauer et al. 2015, 43) and that the feminist and LGBTQ-struggles have found a comfortable place in the neoliberal order and are therefore made co-responsible for the damage it causes by the actors mobilising against them (ibid., 50 et seq.).

In the Hungarian LGBTQ-context, one example could be the Humen Magazin, which targets (and claims to represent) gays, extensively using market language and tools for fostering its agenda, and appraising the way market actors help shape attitudes "towards the Western values." (Humen Magazin)

The Neoliberal Consensus – Implicit and Indirect Resistance

The implicit resistance against the neoliberal consensus can be subsumed with the following sentence: they speak culture/morals/values, they mean structure. According to Mouffe, the populist right translates social problems into an ethnic code (Mouffe 2016b). A similar thesis is formulated by Ingar Solty in his comparison of the movement against an LGBTQ-friendly curriculum in Baden-Württemberg and protests against a school reform in the US. He speaks about "culturalisation of the social question" by the right-wing, and argues that the rage over socio-economic deep structures is shifted to the cultural surface structure (Solty 2015, 36 et seq.). Grzebalska brings a telling example from Poland, where

> (i)n eastern parts of the country, there are towns that now count 25% of their total population as citizens who have emigrated from other areas of Europe, and most of those were women who have been especially vulnerable to the rolling back of the state, the privatization of health care and the growing precarity of work in general. And while these brave women made the hard decision to leave their children in order to be able to provide for them, back at home their departure resulted in a massive moral panic (...). It was not long until right wing politicians started calling for the return of the nuclear family and traditional family values as a solution to these emergent problems (...) (Grzebalska 2016).

Increasingly often on the surface, in their discourse (and perhaps even in their conviction) they oppose growing individualism or cultural imperialism. However, these are phenomena that can be translated in structural terms as well, and are criticised by the Left too (Kováts 2017), for instance for the way neoliberalism shapes values (Gregor/Grzebalska 2016) or how global power elites use value discourses to export the economic order that fits their interests (Gagyi 2016).

In the ideological books of the forces opposing what they perceive as the threat of 'gender ideology', connection is regularly made between supranational actors like the United Nations (UN) or the European Union (EU), global corporations and the spread of 'gender ideology'. While this seems to be a naïve conspiracy theory in the best case or a conscious fear-mongering misrepresentation in the worst case, this line of thinking also points to a reflexion on global hierarchies, on questions of core and periphery, on entanglements of economy and politics, on the shrinking space of manoeuvring of national states as well as on the requirement of control (Kováts 2017). Which, again, is a point reflected by feminist and/or Marxist scholars too, for instance in case of LGBTQ-rights (see Mészáros 2017) and more broadly, in case of scholars researching global hierarchies, state-corporations relations, economic interests and ideologies relations. If we take these aspects seriously, the movements against 'gender ideology' can be understood differently than just as parts of a conspiracy theory or a reactionary political strategy.

Anti-'gender ideology' discourse appears differently in the countries of the core and (semi-)periphery: In France, for instance, the accused main agent of 'gender theory' is the US (Perreau 2016); in the US it is 'supranational bodies' or the 'global consen-

sus' and on the (semi-)periphery it is often connected to the critique of the narrative of 'catching up with the developed West'.

From the perspective of the post-socialist countries, the narrative of the liberal progress towards the values of 'the developed West' is criticised from the Left too. Ágnes Gagyi relates this discourse to two distinct strategies of political elites to connect to the world economy after the regime changes that built their respective ideologies serving as legitimacy strategies. She calls those two groups "anti-populist democrats" and "anti-democratic populists."

> Conservatives claimed to defend "national" interest against the coalition of old socialist power and foreign capital, invoking sentiments of national identity to bridge the gap between the interests of national capital and proletarianized groups. The coalition of Socialists and Liberals relied heavily on Conservatives' definition of "national interest," and built its legitimacy on defending democracy from "national interest" as an anti-Semitic, nationalist, populist claim. It identified "democracy" with the introduction of Western-type institutions of market and democracy – if necessary, then in spite of local resistance, and with the help of Western hegemonic actors (Gagyi 2016, 356).

As a consequence, expressions of economic discontent came to be "stigmatized in its discourse not only as irrational (...), but also (...) as yet another proof of popular nationalism, itself a threat to democratic progress" (Gagyi 2016, 356).

In East-Central Europe, feminist and LGBTQ-activism developed in the context of the alignment of the region into global structures as well. Instead of departing from the assessment of local circumstances, they often adopted the language and issues of their Western counterparts. This happened partly through the integration into European and global networks and partly through the growing dependency on foreign funds (Gregor/Grzebalska 2016; Mészáros 2017). The self-colonising language of liberal elites (Kiossev 1999), without taking the semi-peripherically embedded context into account, is exemplified by the increasing adaptation of the language of feminist and LGBTQ activism from the US and the UK (Bajusz/Feró 2017).

The Human Rights Consensus

The human rights consensus, which formed the basis of the post-WWII-order in the West, is another notion questioned by the forces mobilising against "gender ideology" (Pető 2016). When their ideologues attack the "global consensus" (e.g. Peeters 2012), they primarily mean the power dynamics implemented through the discourse of the human rights.[10]

This issue can be construed on the basis of Mouffe's theorisation of the relationship between liberalism and democracy. It is not only self-defined illiberal leaders such as Viktor Orbán, the Prime Minister of Hungary, who are known to argue that the two do not go necessarily together; Mouffe does so herself (Grzebalska/Pető 2018; Müller 2016, 14). Far from legitimising the current populist rules, Mouffe sets out in "The Democratic Paradox" the inherent tension that lies between liberal values in-

cluding human rights and the rule of the *demos* and re-inserts it in her analysis about recent global political developments (Mouffe 2000, 2016b; Wilde 2014). She says that there must be an ongoing negotiation between these two principles and that the liberal consensus prevailed over democratic rule in the recent decades.

Human rights are connected to the above-detailed neoliberal consensus from another aspect as well. There is a growing scholarly literature discussing whether human rights share the responsibility for neoliberalism becoming a hegemonic power or has simply been a "powerless companion" to the process (e.g. Moyn 2014). However, it is articulated more and more often that the human rights framework does not allow for the addressing of systemic questions, including global power inequalities.

Firstly, the universalistic framework of human rights covers up the embeddedness of the agenda in the global context. In East-Central Europe, for instance, the arrival of the human rights approach coincided (in time and partly in actors) with the need to catch up with the requirements of adhesion to neoliberal capitalism during the democratic transformations (Kováts 2016). Currently, the focus of human rights Non-governmental organizations (NGO) is strongly influenced by the agenda of Western donors.

Secondly, the paradigm of human rights focuses on individual rights and views the economic order as an independent social sub-system. It also disconnects the persisting privileges of men over women from its political-economical embeddedness, meaning the way that hierarchical relations between men and women are reproduced in today's societies, for example by construing reproductive work as an invisible (and invisibilised) precondition of so-called productive work (work done on the labour market).

Thirdly, this framework (see the popular call among activists for the 'rainbow coalition') hides the fact that there is a possible conflict of interests between different human rights claims and groups: for instance between gay rights representatives and feminists on the question of surrogacy, between disabled advocates and feminists when it comes to the 'sex as human right'-debate or between feminists and trans activists around certain claims of trans identity politics.

Fourthly: more and more claims are accepted under the umbrella of human rights – and once there, they become morally non-negotiable (Mouffe 2005, 30). For instance, the sex worker approach, anything but uncontested among feminists, attempts to delegitimise the abolitionist position on the basis of human rights. In many countries, activists that interpret 'gender' as an inner essence see the recognition of their gender identity (independently of embodiment, identifying as a man, or a woman or non-binary) as a human right, hence indisputable. This trend is exemplified by the stigmatising designations used by human rights activists, e.g. the terms 'whorephobic' or 'SWERF' (sex-worker exclusionary radical feminist, or one who does not agree with the sexwork standpoint), 'queerphobic', 'transphobic' or 'TERF' (trans-exclusionary radical feminist) for ones who do not agree with certain political aims and gender definition of trans or queer activism. Conceptual and strategical debates

are, of course, nothing new in activism striving for more social justice. However, in case of the (desired) 'human rights consensus', certain political positions are labelled as illegitimate (exclusionary or phobic). The same is true for the inflation of the terms 'racist', 'sexist', 'misogynist' and 'homophobic' in recent years. This labelling makes the understanding more difficult, and obfuscates the debates within progressive movements, e.g. on the issue of same-sex marriage among gays and lesbians.

Reference to a human rights consensus does not deny the existence of serious debates on UN and national level, also that there *isn't* a real consensus about them. I merely wish to point out that mainstream parties and progressive actors had (implicitly) agreed on this basis, making any criticism of the human rights paradigm equal to disputing some people's human rights. For instance, any criticism of same-sex marriage or surrogacy is, without further consideration, labelled as homophobic as contesting gays and lesbians human rights.

The strengthening of the demand for populism (and anti-PC language, for that matter) occurs in connection with the fact that people with opposing political claims are labelled and stigmatised; an agonistic conflict prohibited on a moral basis. Those who rally against political correctness in the US, Germany or Hungary do not all stand for the right to dehumanise other people or for upholding hierarchies (e.g. among men-women, heterosexuals-homosexuals, white-black), but they voice their rage that their political concerns are presented as illegitimate under the pretended/desired 'human rights consensus'.

Obviously, the human rights paradigm is not apolitical in the sense that it is a substantive political claim, that there are undeniable rights that cannot be put to the plenum of majority rule. However, it requires a more accurate analysis to decide which rights and how they can become a part of this paradigm, and what should be put up for an agonistic debate instead.

Therefore, if we treat the movements against 'gender ideology' in terms of culturally defined binaries like conservatives versus progressives, open-mindedness versus narrow-mindedness, past versus future, regress versus progress, intolerance versus tolerance, then it overshadows the debates *within* human rights activism, and contributes to the rising demand for populist alternatives by obfuscating the material and power aspects of progressive claims and by dismissing political claims on the grounds of presupposed consensuses.

Conclusion – Overcoming Culturalising Interpretations

Having participated in the World Congress of Families and the One of US Congress in 2017 in Budapest, what I could observe, was that the speeches of the Family Summit and the Hungarian and international liberal media reports mirrored each other. Both conservatives and liberals seemed to be trapped in a besieged fortress syndrome, both taking for granted that there are two camps, defined by a cultural fight of values: 'us' the progressives, defending the human rights and equality of all people, genders and

sexual orientation and 'them' against our values and spreading hatred on the one side; 'us' the holders of true values of family and love and 'them' destroying everything with their deliberatively malicious agenda. Both posited that 'our' camp is weaker, the 'other ones' have the power; 'we' are attacked, 'they' attack our values; 'we' are honest, 'the others' are just following an orchestrated political strategy.

My paper tried to challenge this besieged fortress syndrome on the progressive side, and also the predominant narrative that it is a counter-movement against achieved levels of equality and further progress.

The widespread culturalist framing hides the fact that various issues attacked by the Right are not uncontested on the progressive side either, or even more, that the idea of 'progressives' uniting liberals and left is itself the product of a certain socio-economic power order. Instead of labelling the feminist or leftist critiques of these worrying trends of social justice activism as 'useful idiots' or even accomplices of the Right, as it happens for instance in the US and in Hungary, it would be useful to critically reflect on their own claims and their embeddedness within a broader order. This approach provides an alternative reading to the widespread practice of citing conspiracy or misrepresentation as the account of what is happening.

I argue that the movements against 'gender ideology' should be seen as a plea. They challenge liberal democracy as we know it, and they question the consensuses of the so-called progressive actors. But instead of being trapped in a besieged fortress syndrome and bemoaning the lost consensuses, academics and politicians alike should work towards creating agonistic spaces for re-politicizing conflicts in a manner compatible with pluralist democracies, towards trying to grasp the root causes, and noticing that the cleavages are not there (any more) where it is presumed. As long as we are trapped in the culturalist framework, we will not be able to provide better alternatives to the right-wing hegemony.

Notes

1 The World Congress of Families is "the largest and most influential organization involved in anti-LGBT policies worldwide" (Moss 2017, 203 et seq). The One of Us Congress is a European umbrella organization for "pro-life" and "pro-family" organizations. The Budapest Family Summit was a huge event, sponsored and co-organized by the Hungarian government in 2017, comprising a demography congress (25 May), the World Congress of Families (26-27 May) and the One of Us Congress (27 May). I participated as observer at Day 1 of the WCF and at the One of Us Congress.

2 This family policy measure offers families a monthly cash transfer of 500 PLN (120 EUR) for every second and subsequent child until 18 years of age, and for the first child in case of families below a certain income level.

3 This chapter of the paper is based and elaborates further on Kováts (2018).

4 Numerous social and political scientists have attempted to identify the demand-side reasons of populism and call for taking these seriously in order not to mitigate the symptoms (e.g. attitudes of the electorate) but few address the root causes. These identified factors include the perception of large part of electorates that their concerns are kept off the political agenda by political elites (e.g. growing precarisation), that their political elites are powerless in the face of transnational companies and supranational bodies; the "there is no alternative" pact of

center right and center left parties (Mudde 2004, 2015; Mouffe 2005, 2016a, 2016b; Grzebalska 2016; Mudde/Kaltwasser 2017).

5   "(A)ll attempts to challenge the prevalent neo-liberal rules are constantly presented as expressions of anti-European attacks against the very existence of the Union." (Mouffe 2013, 58)

6   During the World Congress of Families on 26 May 2017 the former US delegate to the UN, Janine Crouse, said that gender mainstreaming means in reality the "LGBT agenda".

7   Demonstration, Demo for All, which gave the name to the German movement Demo für Alle; initially organized against the planned same-sex marriage bill in France.

8   The manifest used to be available here: Internet: http://www.printempsfrancais.fr/467/manifeste (25.3.2015).

9   There are plenty of analyses like that, partly by scholars, partly by activists, see e.g. http://bennorton.com/adolph-reed-identity-politics-is-neoliberalism/ or http://www.feministcurrent.com/2016/09/27/need-braver-feminists-challenge-silencing/ or https://fairplayforwomen.com/gender-new-youth-tribe

10 Janine Crouse said in her speech at the WCF that "there is no-one in the room who would question women's human rights, however, when it comes to human rights in the UN, then it means abortion, quotas and LGBT-issues."

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Die Frauenfrage und der dünne Firnis der Demokratie in Polen nach 1989

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Polen gehört zu den Ländern der Europäischen Union (EU), die sich mit der Umsetzung der EU-Richtlinien zur Geschlechterpolitik seit dem EU-Beitritt schwer tun, unabhängig davon, welche Parteienkonstellation in der Regierungsverantwortung steht (Zielińska 2002). Grund hierfür ist nicht nur die realsozialistische Vergangenheit, in der die Gleichheit aller als ein programmatisches Prinzip galt, sondern auch die gesellschaftspolitisch dominante Rolle der katholischen Kirche.

Der Einfluss der katholischen Kirche auf Gleichstellungspolitiken in Polen

Die polnische katholische Kirche stellte über Jahrhunderte hinweg die einzige beständige Institution in Polen dar, sei es während der Dreiteilung dieses Landes im 18. Jahrhundert, der beiden Weltkriege oder des von der Sowjetunion oktroyierten politischen Regimes nach 1945. Vor diesem Hintergrund hat seit der politischen Wende von 1989 keine regierungspolitisch ambitionierte politische Partei den offenen Konflikt mit der Kirche riskiert. So ist es kein Zufall, dass die Vorbereitung des Referendums über den EU-Beitritt mit einem Arrangement der damaligen Regierung mit der katholischen Kirche einherging. Anlass waren berechtigte Befürchtungen seitens der Politik, dass die zahlreiche ländliche Bevölkerung nicht für die EU stimmen würde (Hierlemann 2005). Nach Einschätzung der Politiker_innen verfügte einzig die Kirche über die nötige Autorität, um dort Überzeugungsarbeit für den EU-Beitritt leisten zu können. Die Kirche, die die Entwicklung der zweiten Welle der Frauenbe-