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## Managing Emotions During Social Protests and the Political Subjectivity of the Protesters<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The paper's aim is to check whether there is a relationship between the effectiveness of emotion management techniques and the protesters' subjectivity level in Poland. In this case, it is necessary to analyse selected significant social protests in terms of the emotions felt by the ruling elites, the emotions they evoke among the protesters, and the level of political subjectivity possessed by the latter. In June 1956, the technique of masking emotion management was used effectively. The intensification technique in October was fully effective. In December 1970, only the use of the intensification technique brought results. In June 1976, the masking technique proved to be effective within a limited time range. In the summer of 1980, the party-state apparatus was not able to effectively manage emotions. The breakthrough was the introduction of martial law and forcing a significant part of society to be submissive and conformist. Managing emotions by intensifying them during the Women's Strike proved to be partially effective. Crossing the threshold of subjectivity by opposition social groups makes the management of emotions generally ineffective. The paper offers an innovative research design for analysing the relationships between the management of emotions and the political subjectivity level.

**Keywords** *Poland, emotional management, political empowerment, social protests*

### Introduction

Social protests in Poland not only in communist times must be considered one of the most important events. They were the most visible manifestation of the constant tension between the ruling party and a significant part of Polish society. At the same time, they were closely correlated with internal transformations within this party. The changes in the position of

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the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, and thus the reconfiguration of the relations of forces between interest groups within the party-state apparatus, were temporarily convergent with the largest social protests. At the same time, social protests in the times of the Polish People's Republic and later can also be considered important stages in acquiring (or reducing) political subjectivity by large social groups not associated with the ruling party. Mass demonstrations during the pandemic will also be analysed to enrich the comparative approach.

The breakthrough social events in this respect include mass street demonstrations in June 1956 in Poznań, a nationwide opposition movement in October of the same year, strikes and demonstrations mainly on the Coast in December 1970, demonstrations in June 1976, mass strikes in the summer of 1980 and protests after the introduction of martial law, and finally social reactions after the murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko. The most important protest movement during the pandemic was the Women's Strike – weeks of mass demonstrations taking place from October 2020 to January of the following year. Due to the multiplicity of decision-making centres and the dispersion of protest actions, it is not possible to analyse the events of March 1968 in this paper. The outbreak, course, and results of each of these protests have been repeatedly and in great detail described in Polish historiography.

Each of these social protests was treated as a threat at least to the legitimacy of the leadership of the ruling party, if not to the very existence of the entire political regime. Thus, in each of these cases, decisions were made to eliminate the negative consequences of social protests for the regime's stabilisation or existence. In a few cases, repression was avoided, but in each of them, attempts were made to suppress the protests to return to the previous level of regime stabilisation. It could be done through more or less skilful and conscious management of emotions.

This paper aims to check whether there is a relationship between the effectiveness of emotion management techniques and the protesters' subjectivity level. In this case, it is necessary to analyse selected significant social protests in terms of the emotions felt by the ruling elites, the emotions they evoke among the protesters, and the level of political subjectivity possessed by the latter.

Research goals outlined in this way have not been the subject of research in the world so far. Therefore, the results will allow for a more precise study of social protests, ways of managing them, and more effective prediction of their course depending on the techniques used to manage emotions and the level of subjectivity of protest movements.

The paper is divided into four parts. The first is, after a review of the literature, the theoretical framework devoted to managing emotions during social protests in non-democratic systems and the operationalisation of political subjectivity. It is also necessary to present the methodology of the study. The second part is an analysis of the ways of managing emotions during protests; the third concerns the confrontation of their effectiveness with the level of political subjectivity of the protesters; and the fourth captures the final remarks.

## Literature Review, Theoretical Framework, and Methodological Remarks

Emotion management is a research area typical of psychology and pedagogy. However, with the advent of reflection on social movements, works on emotions manifested during often spontaneous social protests began to appear. Classical works on the management of emotions during social protests derive from the tradition of theoretical psychology and sociology and were written mainly by Arie Russell Hochschild (1973; 1983), a well-known sociologist of emotions. She understood emotional management as trying to change the degree or quality of an emotion or feeling (Hochschild, 1979, p. 561).

Around the same time, Paul Ekman and Wallace V. Friesen (1975) and Ekman (1978) proposed five techniques for managing emotions: simulation, inhibition, intensification, deintensification, and masking. Simulation is a pretending of emotion. Inhibition (or neutralisation) is not admitting to an emotion, although in reality it is felt. Intensification is the reinforcement of the articulation of professed emotions, and deintensification is the opposite technique. The last technique – masking – is showing a different emotion than one actually feels (see also Hayes & Mettes, 2008, pp. 377–378). This typology is complete, logical and, above all, a useful tool for recognising the types of strategies used by the ruling elite against protesters.

Many researchers deal with contentious politics understood as the desire to change public policy through the use of disruptive techniques (Ayoub, 2010; Della Porta & Caiani, 2011; Della Porta & Tarrow, 2012; Rak, 2018). However, it is also worth dealing with the opposite relationship. It is especially important in non-democratic states, where protest movements have an important delegitimisation significance. In this case, it is worth using a state approach emphasising the threats created by social protest movements for a given political regime (Davenport et al., 2005; Goldstone & Tilly, 2001).

I agree with the thesis of Paul Chang and Alex Vitale (2013, pp. 19–20) that while in stable Western democratic regimes social protests usually threaten only public order, in autocratic regimes they are perceived as a fundamental threat to the stability of the entire regime. At the same time, I would like to doubly strengthen this thesis and make it more detailed. First, all social protests threaten the vision of social harmony characteristic of monistic political regimes. Thus, their very appearance is a threat not only to stability, but also to the *raison d'être* of the ruling elites (Li, 2019). Second, in non-sovereign regimes (e.g., in countries subordinate to the Kremlin), the outbreak of social protests is treated as a lack of control over the subordinate population. It is a sufficient reason for a centre of empire to treat a country's elites as incapable of exercising power (Bäcker, 2009). In this case, according to the centre, it may be necessary to replace them with a more efficient group of politicians. In this case, any social protests must be treated by the ruling elite of a given country as an existential threat.

In such cases, the reactions of the ruling elite to information about social protests had to be largely emotional and at the same time aimed at ending them as soon as possible.

Political subjectivity is the ability to make independent, to some extent rational, and teleological decisions by large social groups and representations appointed by them. Its antinomy is objectification (reification). Four dimensions of political subjectivity can be distinguished: articulation, organisation, mobilisation, and realisation of interests (Willem's & Winter, 2000, p. 11; 2013). Within the dimension of articulation, I distinguish: 1) individual articulation (supplication), 2) collective articulation combined with aggregation of postulates, their generalisation, 3) institutional articulation (ability to create a political programme). Within the organisational dimension, I distinguish the following stages: 1) individual organisational efforts, e.g., one-person pickets, 2) spontaneous anomic events – Hobsbawm (2017) calls them primitive rebellions, 3) organised and teleological protests, 4) permanent potential for self-organisation, 5) the existence of organisations operating on many levels and with specialised functions. The third dimension concerns the potential for mobilisation, i.e., the ability, will, and acceptance to undertake collective action. The first stage is individual acts of objection. The second is group protests involving clearly separated communities. The third stage is the rebellion of masses, i.e., communities much broader than the community of one factory, but separated from others due to their profession. The fourth stage is the nonconformity of the basic social classes. The fifth stage consists in the rebellion of the combined subordinated society with the denunciation of obedience by a part of the ruling class.

The last, fourth dimension concerns the ability to pursue the interests, needs and aspirations of a given community. The first is simply the lack of such an ability. The second is to obtain individual benefits. The third is to obtain collective benefits of an economic nature. The fourth concerns collective benefits of a status nature. The fifth is to obtain, maintain, or increase a state of domination or hegemony over other social groups. The process of empowerment consists in moving to a higher stage digitally, objectification – to a lower stage.

It is possible to formulate two hypotheses regarding two levels of analysis: the choice of an emotion management strategy and the effectiveness of its implementation. However, before formulating the first hypothesis, it is worth assuming that decisions to use violence against protesters were made in conditions of strong emotional tension containing primarily fear, and the condition for the success of this repression was to impose fear on all those who protested or intended to support the protest (Collins, 2008; 2009, p. 570; Nassauer, 2015, p. 4). Thus, it is assumed that the ruling elites primarily used a masking strategy. The second hypothesis is: as the level of political subjectivity increased, the level of effectiveness of the use of emotion management techniques decreased to the point of their complete ineffectiveness.

A secondary analysis of studies and sources will be used to verify these two hypotheses. It is possible mainly due to the huge number of scientific texts on ground-breaking social events in the times of the Polish People's Republic. However, due to the passage of years, it does not make sense (and in many cases: is not possible) to conduct in-depth interviews

with people participating in the leadership of the party-state apparatus's decision-making regarding social protests. It is also not possible to obtain reliable research results in the case of conducting in-depth interviews with participants of protests in the times of the People's Republic of Poland. Firstly, it is not possible to obtain even relatively representative results, and secondly – contemporary accounts of events from several decades ago (especially in the case of emotions) are largely distorted.

However, it is possible to capture dominant emotions in the case of analysing the quality of decisions (the less rational and inconsistent with the procedures, the greater the emotionality component it probably has). It is also possible to capture emotions in the case of an analysis of the protesters' reaction to given stimuli, i.e., acts of repression by institutions of violence, e.g., police. Therefore, the study covers people participating in decision-making and, on the other hand, protest participants.

Thus, it is necessary to analyse the diaries and direct accounts created during social protests or relatively little later. Such sources accurately reflect not only the ways of thinking (including the achieved level of political empowerment), but also the experienced emotions. It is also necessary to analyse the official speeches of the ruling politicians mainly in terms of the emotional level of pejorativisation of the protesters.

## **Effectiveness of Emotion Management During Social Protests**

### ***A. Poznań June 1956***

On June 28, 1956, strikes in Poznań factories turned into a mass demonstration. About 100 000 people gathered under the building of the Presidium of the Municipal National Council (Imperial Castle) and next to the building of the Provincial Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in the centre of Poznań. The Politburo of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, debated from 10 am and decided to direct military units – two tank divisions and two infantry divisions – against the demonstrators. The decision was made during the peaceful phase of the protest and was in line with the proposals of security police officers from Poznań and Marshal Konstanty Rokossowski. In total, almost 10 000 soldiers were directed against the demonstrators. During the fighting, about 180 000 units of ammunition were fired. On June 29, Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz said in a radio address to the inhabitants of Poznań, "Every provocateur or madman who dares to raise his hand against the people's power, let him be sure that the people's power will cut off his hand" (Cyrankiewicz, 1956; Makowski, 2001; Poznański, 2007, Maciejewski & Trojanowiczowa, 1990).

The general strike in Poznań workplaces and the mass demonstration on the central square of Poznań were treated as a significant threat not only to the regional party-state apparatus, but also to the nationwide one. Andrzej Werblan directly stated: "[Edward Ochab, I Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party] realised that what

was happen in Poznań was a threat. He was afraid that the people's power would fall there" (Walenciak 2017, p. 107). The decision to use military force, including tanks and armoured personnel carriers, shows a desire to end the mass demonstration as soon as possible, at the expense of the fatalities. Such a decision had to be emotionally justified by the threat to the rule of the entire party-state apparatus, and thus at least to maintain its social position. It is impossible to determine whether the main factor was fear, horror, or panic. However, it is worth noting that the decision was made very quickly, with the main concern being the desire to start repressive actions as soon as possible. It is worth recalling the chronology of events: at 7 o'clock Edward Ochab received the first information, after three hours the draft decision of the Politbiuro was ready, in the afternoon military units entered the centre of Poznań. At the same time, care was not taken to limit civilian casualties.

Józef Cyrankiewicz very clearly articulated that way of thinking of the leadership of the party-state apparatus. Any opposition to the apparatus will be met with merciless repression against the protesters. The fear and horror of reprisals are to be strong to completely overpower them. This projection of one's own emotions is typical of the masking technique.

### ***B. October 1956***

The return of the former political prisoner in Stalinist times Władysław Gomułka to the post of First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party was treated as a complete break with the period of repression, forced collectivisation, and the fight against the Church. Rallies, demonstrations, and mass gatherings in towns and villages testified to mass political mobilisation. A huge rally at the Parade Square in Warsaw on October 24, 1956 gathered over a million people.

Almost all Agricultural Production Cooperatives ("collective farms") were dissolved from the bottom up, workers' self-governments were created in factories, Primate Wyszyński returned from "internment" to his previous position, and Soviet citizens, including Marshal Rokossowski, returned to the USSR (Bratkowski, 1996; Rykowski & Władyka, 1989; Machcewicz, 1993). The demonstrators were not repressed.

However, it did not mean a lack of emotional management. The division between the passing world of evil and the coming time of good in which democracy, sovereignty, and human rights are to be respected was strengthened. During the rally at the Parade Square, Władysław Gomułka spoke about trust, understanding reality, self-sacrifice, and deciding at the level of factories (Gomułka, 1956). A natural reaction to Gomułka's condemnation during the VIII Plenum of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party of the ended period of evil and the beginning of the time of good was a fairly frequent atmosphere of carnival joy. However, enthusiasm for Gomułka and what was treated as his programme dominated to the greatest extent (Machcewicz, 2010, p. 225 et seq.). It was combined with the hope for a better life, more freedom, and the ability to decide about one's fate (Juzepczuk, 2013). Gomułka's goal was to completely subordinate the population and the party-state

apparatus to the new leadership. Strengthening optimism, trust, and faith in the future was a useful tool to achieve this goal. In this case, I can talk about the use of the intensification technique.

### C. December 1970

The decision to use weapons against the protesting workers was made on December 15, 1970 in the morning during a meeting of members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and the invited: head of the Administrative Department of the Central Committee, ministers of national defence and internal affairs, and the commander-in-chief of the Citizen Militia. This decision was made by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party Władysław Gomułka, at the same time determining the manner of using the weapon to have as few victims as possible (Kryzys, 2020, p. 486; Eisler, 2020; Kula, 2000).

Gomułka did not react on December 14, when the protests began. He made his decision only the next day. It may indicate decision-making isolation, i.e., the lack of formulation of decision proposals and submission to the decision-maker. The decision to use weapons proves that Gomułka sought to suppress the workers' protests as soon as possible and, at the same time, did not want them to expand. However, there is no information about providing adequate forces and resources to suppress the demonstrations taking place on this day in several cities of the Coast. This lack of decision preparation indicates that it was taken impulsively and without cooperation with other participants of the meeting. Therefore, the hypothesis that Gomułka was afraid and therefore his ability to make a rational decision was significantly limited is plausible. Of course, this does not exclude the thesis about a significant level of bossiness of the First Secretary of the Central Committee excluding collective cooperation. However, it was not a fear of the protest itself, but of the Kremlin. The leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union withdrew support for teams unable to ensure the population's obedience. On December 15, Gomułka already knew that he was fighting to keep his position. This emotional tension was greatly reinforced after each unfavourable news of the increasingly widespread protests. Gomułka's hospitalisation, which facilitated the implementation of the Kremlin's decision to change the position of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, was a consequence and a testimony to this (Przygoński, 2005; Walenciak, 2017, p. 301).

The accounts of the participants of the December events are usually devoid of emotional components. However, sometimes there are such words as horror, despair, rage, indignation, and helplessness (Józefczyk, 2006, p. 140; Tkacz, 2006, p. 102; *Grudzień 1970*, p. 5). The reactions of at least tens of thousands of protesters to Gomułka's decision are best expressed in a ballad written in 1971 at the latest, entitled *Janek Wiśniewski padł* (Dowgiałło). Despair, indignation, rage, and, paradoxically, hope are the most visible emotions in this ballad.



These emotions grew uncontrollably with each day of protest. The first three emotions were a simple reaction to the murder of workers, especially during the “bloody” Thursday, going to their workplace in the Gdynia Shipyard. They were in line with the expectations of Moczar’s faction, which sought to spread protests to reduce Gomułka’s chances of staying in power. While Gomułka was not able to manage the crisis, including emotions, he was relieved by the leaders of competing factions. The first was the head of the nationalist faction – Mieczysław Moczar, the second was Edward Gierek leading a group of heads of regional organisations of the Polish United Workers’ Party. The latter decided to manage the hope for a better Poland. The most famous slogan at that time – “Will you help? We will!” – was to create such a symbolic community of hope. However, Gierek was not able to manage hope as comprehensively as the shipyard workers expected. From the last words of the ballad about Janek Wiśniewski – sounding: “For bread, and freedom, and new Poland” (*Dowgiałło*) – Gierek was able to offer them the realisation of only the first one. In the latter case, we can talk about Gierek’s application of hope management through limited technocratic and populist thinking intensification.

#### *D. June 1976*

On June 24, 1976, Prime Minister Piotr Jaroszewicz announced a significant increase in the state’s top-down established food prices. After the next-day demolition of the Provincial Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party building in Radom, demonstrations in Ursus and Płock and strikes in dozens of workplaces, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party decided to withdraw from this decision. Emotional motivation was best described by Kazimierz Barcikowski (1998, p. 85): “The fear of losing any support was paralysing”. This fear stemmed from the memory of December 1970, that is, the increasingly widespread renunciation of obedience by the masses of society. It is not surprising that the decision to raise prices was reversed in one day and much was done to ensure that there were no fatalities among the demonstrators (Sasanka, 2006). Even more has been done to present itself as a strong, decisive, and capable of the harshest repression political leadership.

The repression toward the protesters was manifold and multi-stage. The first stage was the brutal dispersal of the demonstrations. Then, there were the demonstrations of force, prison sentences, dismissals, and a massive propaganda campaign of hatred against those who dared to protest. Karol Modzelewski treated it as a voice of revenge (Walenciak, 2017, p. 344). The goal was to induce fear and force conformity as far as possible. The first objective has been achieved in the short term. One of the observers of the march of militia platoons around the deserted Radom wrote: “I was handcuffed by a bad fear” (Żmudzin, 1990, p. 3). The sense of powerlessness and overwhelming fear among the protesters slowly disappeared along with the expanding aid action carried out by the Warsaw opposition circles. The conformity level began to decrease only in the spring of 1980. The actions of the party-state apparatus after June 1976 can be described as the use of the masking technique.



### ***E. Summer 1980***

Despite the growing wave of strikes in the Lublin region since July 1, 1980, and then passing through the whole of Poland, Edward Gierek did not make any decisions. He was forced to return from his holidays in Crimea by his closest associates on the day of the outbreak of the strike at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk and he returned to Warsaw on the next day, i.e., August 15. Workers did not take to the streets in the summer of 1980, and the sit-in strikes were very peaceful. It was impossible to break up the sit-in strike in such a large workplace as the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk without huge human losses, and it was already impossible to break up the solidarity strikes in several hundred factories. The variant of repression was not possible. It was necessary to end the strikes peacefully, by signing agreements, and thus recognising the subjectivity of wage earners as a large social group.

Anxiety, nervousness, fears for their future, fear of a completely new uncontrollable situation were typical emotions not only for the leadership of the Polish United Workers' Party, but also for many officers of the party-state apparatus. These emotions were typical for this social group throughout the entire period of existence of the legal "Solidarity", i.e., from the summer of 1980 to December 13, 1981.

Meanwhile, the rapidly forming elites of "Solidarity" and accompanying organisations (NZS, NSZZ RI, etc.) and active supporters of democratic changes felt completely different emotions. First of all, it was a hope for a better tomorrow in a very precise way expressed in the programme of the First Congress of "Solidarity" describing the self-governing Republic of Poland. There was no fear, sense of the necessity of conformity, or submission. The most important values for activists and supporters of new social movements were freedom, subjectivity, dignity, and solidarity. In this case, we can talk about pre-ideological thinking that allows to reasonably rational diagnose the situation and formulate the discussed scenarios of collectively made decisions. Rational thinking became much more important than emotional thinking when making decisions.

In such a situation, attempts to manage emotions on the ruling elite of the party-state apparatus was ineffective. It was the case even in spite of the very clearly articulated threats of Soviet intervention. The strategy of managing emotions by intensifying fear was ineffective.

### ***F. Martial Law***

The martial law was aimed at destroying the subjectivity of significant parts of Polish society. One of the means to achieve this goal was to strive for the liquidation of "Solidarity" and all other independent social organisations. The introduction of martial law came as a surprise to a huge part of their activists and supporters. The reaction learned since August 1980 to any threats to its existence was to join the "Solidarity" sit-in strike. However, the leadership of the party-state apparatus prepared for this kind of reaction very long and ef-

fectively. Much has been done to ensure that as few people as possible participate in such strikes and that they take place in the least comfortable conditions. A few sit-in strikes and street demonstrations (e.g., at the gate of the Lenin Shipyard) were dispersed with the help of Motorized Reserves of the Citizens' Militia (ZOMO) troops. During the pacification on December 16, ZOMO officers killed 9 miners in the "Wujek" mine.

People in managerial positions in the party-state apparatus throughout the entire period of the existence of "Solidarity" felt very strong emotions. It was a fear associated mainly with the possibility of losing their professional positions, and especially their social status. Free, democratic elections, which were not only one of the slogans of "Solidarity", but also implemented in many institutions, including the Polish United Workers' Party before the IX Congress, meant that it was impossible to be sure of holding any position. Since the adoption of the "Message" to the nations enslaved by the Soviet empire by the First Congress of "Solidarity", the sense of fear has greatly strengthened. The Kremlin's nervous reaction to this message meant extending the sense of threat from Solidarity to the entire empire. Moreover, there were false information about the creation of militias by "Solidarity" at least since September 1981. Thus, people in leadership positions in the party-state apparatus began to feel fear much stronger than before. In this case, one can agree with Andrzej Werblan, who spoke about horror (Walenciak, 2017, p. 493). For the functionaries of the party-state apparatus, the sense of threat to life has become one of the significant emotions determining the way of proceeding, including the choice of the so-called "force variant" (Barcikowski, 1998, pp. 294–295; Walenciak, 2017, p. 388).

The internees and their families during the night hours of December 12 to 13, 1981 did not know what was happen, what their fate would be, and even often in what direction they were deported. It is true that from the morning of December 13 they knew what was happen, but they did not know what the scope and, above all, the level of severity of repression was. Confusion gave way to indignation, rage, and anger at the apparatus of power symbolised by General Wojciech Jaruzelski. After the murder of miners in the "Wujek" mine, one of the many mass reactions was the demonstrative withdrawal from the Polish United Workers' Party. The level of moral condemnation was so high that it was decided not to have any ties with the apparatus of power. Breaking with the system was tantamount to creating conspiratorial structures on a massive scale. Their main task was to create an alternative circulation of information, ideas, and national traditions. The sense of harm and injustice was combined with moral indignation at the evil done by the perpetrators of the martial law. Despair and fear appearing from the moment of internment of loved ones was combined with a sense of helplessness (Dębska, 1999; Skoczek, 2000). It was common to feel fear, a sense of evil, uncertainty, and anger. Symbolic figures of the martial law – Kiszcak and Jaruzelski – were treated extremely negatively, until the appearance of a feeling of hatred (Kępiński, 2015, pp. 274–276; Dębska, 2005). At the same time, there was a widespread awareness that violence could not be responded to by violence. Even the most extreme emotions did not determine social behaviour.

The apparatus of power sought to make the emotions it felt much more strongly by its political opponents. In this case, we can talk about intensification. However, it has only been possible in some social communities to bring about the emergence of conformist attitudes. A significant part of the activists and supporters of independent social organisations felt completely different emotions and thus acted contrary to the original expectations of the apparatus of power. Conspirators of “Solidarity”, especially during the first few months of martial law, treated the Polish People’s Republic as an incarnate evil and thus did not want to have anything to do with it. The refutation of the Polish People’s Republic was combined with complete isolation from it. The only success was a significant increase in the social scope of attitudes such as conformity and submission among social communities that did not undergo political empowerment. Managing emotions through the intensification technique was ineffective against political opponents.

### ***G. Murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko***

On October 19, 1984, Security Service officers kidnapped the charismatic priest of “Solidarity” Father Jerzy Popiełuszko on the road from Bydgoszcz to Toruń. He was tortured, murdered, and thrown behind the Włocławek dam on the Vistula River. The driver of Father Popiełuszko was allowed to escape (Pietrzak, 2008). Thus, the news of the kidnapping of the latter could have been spread very quickly. According to the statement of Jan Olszewski during the trial of the Toruń, perpetrators and the principal of the kidnapping, they expected that a wave of repression and mutual terror would begin. Every act of terror on the part of the opposition will then be an opportunity to strengthen the wave of police terror (Olszewski, 1991). Thus, the Solidarity conspiracy, which was not very numerous at that time, will be brutally pacified. Meanwhile, the social reaction was completely different. Throughout the country, vigils and prayers were held in churches in the intention of finding the priest. Popiełuszko’s funeral in Warsaw gathered about 600-700 thousand people (Chińciński, 2004; Polak, 2004).

The principals of Father Popiełuszko’s kidnappers and killers expected to provoke rage and despair, including spontaneous public gatherings. Meanwhile, the social emotions were entirely different. Moral indignation was combined with a huge level of distrust and rejection and a desire to completely isolate oneself from the criminal system.

In this case, we can talk about the total ineffectiveness of the attempt to manage emotions belonging to the type of intensification by the orchestrators of the kidnapping of Father Popiełuszko.

### ***H. Women's Strike***

Mass social protests against the almost complete ban on abortion ordered by the Constitutional Court subordinated to the ruling party lasted from October 22, 2020 to January 19, 2021. Demonstrations took place in all major and medium-sized cities and even in many towns. In Warsaw, they gathered over a hundred thousand protesters several times. Relatively mild forms of repression were used against demonstrators during the protests. These were most often: checking ID cards, detaining a few people, applications for punishment to the Sanepid for non-compliance with epidemiological regulations, and sending indictments to the courts in a few cases. During the demonstrations in Warsaw, physical force was used to disperse the demonstrations. After one-day protests in churches and in front of churches, the president of the ruling party appealed for the defence of temples “at all costs”, naming the demonstrators as criminals (Kaczyński, 2020). Actions of nationalist and fascist militias began, who not only defended churches, but also attacked demonstrators in Warsaw, Wrocław, and Poznań (Rak, 2021; Ambroziak & Sitnicka 2020).

Jarosław Kaczyński's statement (2020) clearly shows the presence of such emotional components as fear, rage, and indignation. The repression of the demonstrators and the extremely negative propaganda campaign on television, in the press, and the electronic media subordinated to the ruling party were supposed to evoke similar emotions. At the same time, the aim was to create a sense of helplessness, meaninglessness, and powerlessness among the protesters. In this case, we can talk about the use of an intensification strategy. It was largely effective, although the demobilisation of protesters was also due to many other factors (Rak, 2022).

### **Political Subjectivity of Protest Movements**

In June 1956, the Poznań workers articulated their demands at the level of individual sup-plications. Spontaneous leaders of strikes and then demonstrations lost the opportunity to direct events already in the initial phase of events on the square in front of the Imperial Castle. According to Hobsbawm, it was a primitive rebellion. It is true that a significant part of the inhabitants of Poznań participated in the first phase of the protest, but the ability to force the implementation of the demands was very small. In this case, one can talk about liberating oneself from the state of objectification, but not about reaching the level of political subjectivity.

A huge wave of rallies and protests in October 1956 was organised mainly by young people organisationally associated with the already existing structures functioning within the party-state apparatus. The most famous example are the clubs of the weekly “Po prostu”, but it is also worth mentioning the spontaneously emerging housing cooperatives or employee self-governments. It is necessary to mention that the rallies in Warsaw were controlled by the Provincial Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. This autonomy of structures

within the party-state apparatus allowed, for instance, to articulate generalised postulates, the emergence of non-conformist attitudes of basic social classes, the organisation of time-limited mass protests, and the collective pursuit of economic interests. It is possible to describe social movements during the October “thaw” as temporarily empowered, and rather at the working communities than the class level.

The strikes and demonstrations in December 1970 were largely exuberant, with very briefly articulated basic economic demands. However, as early as January 1971, sit-ins strikes appeared and the level of organisation of protesters increased significantly, including the appearance of elected strike committees. While the mobilisation level was very high, the ability to implement elementary economic demands until the February strike in Łódź was very small. The workers of the Coast gained experience of subjective actions, but they did not manage to maintain even a state of group subjectivity.

In June 1976, dispersed and spontaneous workers’ protests focused on economic demands (mainly the reversal of the price increase). It was possible to achieve a high level of social mobilisation, but only in a short, several-hour period. The undoubted success of these one-day protests was the decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party to withdraw the draft decision to increase the prices of food products. However, it is impossible to talk about permanent subjectivity even at the level of local or employee communities.

The strikes in the summer of 1980 began a months-long process of acquiring political subjectivity by the basic social classes. The mobilisation level was the highest during the warning general strike in March 1981. In the autumn of 1981, a comprehensive political programme of the “Self-Governing Republic” was formulated, and more importantly, democratic mechanisms for creating political representation were developed. However, with the exception of a not very long period of recognition of subjectivity by the leadership of the party-state apparatus (the August-September agreements in 1980) and temporary collective economic benefits, no permanent status recognition was achieved. During this period, Polish society gained a national level of political subjectivity.

The aim of the martial law was to destroy the subjectivity of the Polish nation. This objective has been achieved only to a limited extent. A significant part of Polish society (including mainly young people and employees of large workplaces) participated in the Solidarity conspiracy. The latter focused on the illegal circulation of information, ideas, and programmes. The nation’s political subjectivity became increasingly multifaceted and rational.

A sheer proof of this was the social reaction to the murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko. It had a religious character, but at the same time it was the most rational scenario of dealing with the intentions of at least part of the leadership of the party-state apparatus.

The demonstrations during the autumn and winter weeks of 2020–2021 were on the one hand initiated, directed, and controlled at the central level by the National Women’s Strike. On the other hand, they were often bottom-up initiatives. That concerned not only a huge part of

local initiatives, but also the participants themselves. The latter showed a significant level of creativity and spontaneity during the demonstrations. In this case, we can talk about a high level of spontaneity and the manifestation of a significant potential for self-organisation, which, however, has not been institutionalised. The articulation concerned general issues, and although a draft political programme was created, it was not accepted by the protesters. In the case of the demonstrations in autumn and winter 2020–2021, we can talk about the existence of real and at the same time impermanent political subjectivity.

## Conclusions

In June 1956, the technique of masking emotion management was used effectively. On the other hand, the intensification technique in October of the same year was fully effective. In December 1970, the masking technique proved to be completely ineffective and only the use of the intensification technique brought results. In June 1976, the masking technique proved to be effective within a limited time range. On the other hand, in the summer of 1980 and the following months of the existence of the legal “Solidarity”, the party-state apparatus was not able to effectively manage emotions. The breakthrough was the introduction of the martial law and forcing a significant part of society to be submissive and conformist. The use of the masking technique against Solidarity activists was only effective for a short time. On the other hand, the techniques of managing emotions during the kidnapping of Father Popiełuszko were completely ineffective.

The technique of masking, contrary to a hypothetical assumption, was not the only one used by the leadership of the ruling party. In October 1956 and from December 1970, the intensification technique was used by Gierek’s team. They were effective, but at the same time associated with the need to make concessions mainly of an economic nature to the population.

The correlation between the level of subjectivity of protesters or opposition social groups and the effectiveness of the management of emotions by the leadership of the party-state apparatus is clearly visible. The greater the level of objectification of the protesters, the more effective the management of emotions. Crossing the threshold of subjectivity by opposition social groups makes the management of emotions generally ineffective. The crowd’s emotions can be manipulated, and it is impossible to control from the outside the emotions of organised social groups that can act less or more rationally and teleologically.

Furthermore, the cases of the emergence of a mass conspiracy after the martial law period and the social reaction to the kidnapping and murder of Father Popiełuszko indicate that it is not necessary to have a high level of organisation and the existence of elites controlling the behaviour of a given social group. The decisive factor is the existence of internalised values that allow to judge a given issue in terms of severity, level of threat, and set of acceptable remedies. Therefore, the existence or non-existence of political subjectivity is determined to the greatest extent by social awareness. Subjectivity is the ability to decide

independently. In the case of the political subjectivity of a nation or other large social groups, this feature should dominate the consciousness of the overwhelming number of members of these groups.

Managing emotions was part of the strategy and tactics of the leadership of the party-state apparatus with social protests. It was one of the components of striving to achieve the most important goal – a return to the *status quo ante*, i.e., the political objectification of all those who dared to collectively oppose the rules of the communist regime. “Restoring order” in its essence has consisted in striving for enslavement or at least to bring about a state of powerlessness by inducing fear, conformity, and a sense of hopelessness.

The paper is only an outline of the way of analysing the relationship between the management of emotions and the political subjectivity level. Conducting more precise research on establishing more accurate relations between the emotions felt by the ruling elites, their decisions, evoked emotional reactions, and protesters’ political subjectivity levels requires developing theoretical tools and a more precise analysis of the emotions of participants on both sides of social protests.

In the first case, it is worth considering, for example, the division of emotions into increasing social ties (creating) and destroying such ties (destructive), e.g., between the rulers and the governed. The use of at least two classifications of emotion management techniques will allow for a multifaceted analysis of the mentioned events. In this case, one can treat the way Gierek’s team managed emotions after taking power as, on the one hand, an intensification of “creating” emotions, and on the other hand, as a deintensification of emotions that destroy social ties between the rulers and the governed.

The relationship between the management of emotions and the level of political subjectivity of the protesters is worth further study.

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