

What happens when Sinister Agents and Skeletons from the Closet are applying for parliamentary elections? The role of suspicion and the fear of conspiracy in Polish politics.

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Abstract

This paper will analyse the role of suspicion, mistrust and the fear of conspiracy in Polish politics. The focus of this paper is on the ways in which these specific emotions are mobilized, exacerbated but also rejected in the ongoing 2023 parliamentary elections. The paper will also examine the role of media in this process.

Current elections are identified as the most important political event in Poland since the 1989, the ultimate ‘battle for democracy’. When the stakes are so high, what techniques and weapons are justified and by whom? Is scaremongering and mobilization of conspiracy theories or the label of conspiracy theories a ‘fair game’? When conspiracy theories are mobilized to defend democracy, are they still an expression of paranoia or perhaps a healthy suspicion of power? Who and how makes the distinction?

Keywords

Conspiracy theories, foreign agents, suspicion, Poland, elections,

Bio

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