

Mugpie

Is LGBT Oppressed in Poland? - Explaining the Problem on
Basis of the Historical Context and Political Disinformation
in the Mass Media

Version 1.3

2020

Preface

As a Polish furry, I think I owe you some explanation on what is happening in Poland and LGBT. A lot of furries I approached so far – especially those from the United States – are gay or lesbian, with certain exceptions. From my personal experience, I must admit I noticed a lot of misinformation in regard to Poland and what is happening in here, let alone trying to comprehend two radically different cultures despite both belonging to modern democracies.

There is no actual bias against LGBT people - save for these small skinhead people that are present in every single nation. The fact that we do not have same-sex marriage - the exception granted by European Union back in 2004 but untouched both by the respective Post-Communist, Liberal and Conservative parties - comes from the fact Poland regained its full independence *quite recently* in 1989 (some political researchers point out 1994 due to certain circumstances) after ~230 years and simply having no time to develop its society in a healthy way due to constant foreign powers' occupations, ethnic genocides, imperial regimes and so on (Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany being the "most recent" examples).

I not agree that lack of same-sex marriage is a healthy thing, but I also disagree with any sort of extremism – that goes both ways. Issue is, back in 2019 there was a major incident during Pride Parades which involved mocking Christian and Polish symbolism. While I hold a strong belief that freedom of speech allows all kinds of jokes (even the dark ones), there is a line between silly jokes and outright insulting. While it might not be an issue to people who were born in America where all kinds of stunts are possible, we Poles hold some things sacred. And that comes from two things, both of which are sunk deep in our history like a wound that cannot really heal.

Historical Context

Through entire existence of United States, Poland had around fifty years of freedom in total – thirty of which are years after 1990, so the recent history. Chronologically, in the year 1790 Poland was officially dissolved and divided between three superpowers and since then German and Russian empires employed all kinds of abuse towards Poles - starting from something as silly as changing the street names to brutal oppression, such as death for speaking Polish. Poles stood up, preserved the flag and language, as well as history and culture during that uneasy period. When World War I came, it led into very ridiculous scenarios which put Poles against Poles on various front lines between Central Powers (Germany and Austro-Hungary) and Russian Empire. I shall omit entire 1917-1919 period in regard to all types of governments that rose and fell since it is a very boring yet unnecessary to the subject.

There is also a period between 1939 and 1989. In the next 50 years the history, despite short-lived independence (and Sanacja semi-totalitarian period which is still a problem to historians due to many factors, such as situation after war with Soviet Union and political power-play between different groups, marking a lot of shades of gray), Poland was occupied again, first by Nazi Germany - and what they did to many nationalities and ethnic minorities we all know - then by Soviet Union. Now here we go to the second part on why Poland holds one thing sacred: Christianity.

The Soviet regime fought with any group that could not be easily infiltrated and abused Polish denizens (I would not use "citizen" as a word here due to be ironic), including Catholic Church in Poland, other religious minorities and the group that we would call LGBT in our modern times. Despite Communism not openly condemning homosexuality, it actively infiltrated and oppressed these proto-LGBT people with various tactics – like every other single that neither fit nor supported Communism.

So what happened in Soviet Poland? The recent independence between 1918-1939 then falling right away into two separate occupations broke a lot of Polish people and halted the normal social progress, whereas other countries – such as France or the USA – calmly developed in relative peace with wars that never took place on their own soil. Meanwhile Poland was actively cleansed from pro-Western soldiers who fought in World War II, with many who fought in RAF or Polish Corps-in-Exile not able to return to post-WW2 Poland under threat of death from the new Soviet puppet-state – especially in the mock courts that sentenced Homeland Army (AK) for treason that never happened. The citizens themselves were put to prisons, sent to far-away inhumane Siberia or bluntly killed along with entire families – in my opinion, history made a full ironic cycle as it did not differ from the ways that pre-WW1 Russian Empire held strong.

As it was mentioned before, Soviet Poland was a puppet-state closely cooperating with the USSR, and whereas the entire stuff cooled down along with Joseph Stalin's death, entire Communist propaganda did not falter at all and still oppressed the fellow people vowing for more freedom and democracy. The most exact examples would be persecution of the proto-LGBT people and aforementioned Christians.

What Soviets did to Christians was no different to all terrorized groups: from the indirect pushing – such as mocking the people who were Christians to let their “outdated religion go as there is no God” to as going as far as assassinating the Catholic priests (a murder case of Jerzy Popieluszko, for example). That happening in fifty years until 1989 marked a very severe memory in mind of many Polish people. So severe a lot of people treat criticism towards Christianity as echo of such oppression, but also rightfully oppose the aggressive anti-religious propaganda.

Modern Times

The historical context left a lot of distrust and strained relations not only among the Polish people, but also towards Germans and Russians. While history should stay history, the memory of it should not falter – or worse, be alternated for sake of political correctness or even twisted over. The latter was done by German government in the recent years, in which Polish people were accused to help Nazi Germany to kill Jews – and whereas it was true in very few cases, there were immeasurable more Poles who risked their lives to help Jewish people under constant threat of death of their entire families – forgotten, it seems, by such politicians. That however is just example to show how politically turbulent Poland is now among the European nations – and how easy it is to criticize someone without proper knowledge. Integration of black citizens into American society also took some time since 1775 till second half of 20th Century. In 2003 the last State ceased to penalize homosexuals.

When it comes to the main subject, the situation is a bit different. Back in 2019 Poland was declared a very anti-LGBT country due to the fact it responded to situation in which Pride Parades went on insulting Christian and Polish symbolism. The previous part already explained on why it was responded to and hushed upon due to quite problematic aspects of Polish history and culture of a nation that had been constantly occupied and oppressed in the past. And while I agree that putting entire LGBT to the same bag is a bad thing, there is something far more sinister: politicization of LGBT.

The most vocal groups during these protests are the people who have strong anti-clergy political sentiments and express them during Pride Parades that should be held apolitical and unbiased towards any political option ever since all humans should be equal in face of law and rights. However, like nothing in this world, it is nothing like that. First of all, like I mentioned, the most vocal groups are set against clergy – and while I do not disagree that criticism is a vital part of democratic system, there is no place for insults and outright slurs in anyone's direction. The vocal pseudo-LGBT extremist pushed a very insulting mocking towards Christian symbolism and misuse of Polish symbolism – for example, the “Fighting Poland” (*Polska Walcząca*; a popular anti-Nazi WW2 symbol used in occupied Poland stylized PW letters to look like an anchor) on a rainbow flag was violation of Polish law, as the symbol belongs to group of national symbols that cannot be used for political or ideological purposes.

That, along with aggressive behavior of people claiming to be LGBT, gave reasons for Polish government to react and claimed active fighting with defamation of Christian and Polish symbolism, as well as hate of speech maintained during Pride Parades that should be devoid of any political bias. In return, it gave the private-owned media with anti-governmental, if not anti-Polish, mannerism a true river of news with click-bait titles. The opposition political parties also gave their dime or two into

entire scandal and vowed to protect rights of “oppressed LGBT minorities” – in turn, creating even worse mess. Why? It is way complicated issue that needs to be explained a bit.

Not only the Polish opposition parties started an active support for these “oppressed LGBT minorities” – in fact only these most vocal groups that are against Christianity whose claims to be “true LGBT” make as much sense as certain most radical Christian American cults claiming to represent entire Christianity all over the world – but also created an additional problem due to how the opposition political groups used to lead Poland in the past, filled with extreme corruption or what media described as “bandit privatization” (explanation: a forceful claim of possession on basis of fake documents or data of long-deceased people which took place in Warsaw). Some people supporting LGBT and opposition present themselves as Communists what alone brings negativity given Polish history. It also makes things even worse if you take into account that the local government of Warsaw started to swapping back to Soviet Poland’s street names, what gave a very negative feedback as well.

On the other hand, there were some actions – which I honestly did not know about until some Polish furry pointed it out – that suggested anti-LGBT sentiments. In fact, it was against the so-called “LGBT ideology”, which are the misinformation due to the ideologies represented, once again, by that vocal extremist group that claimed to represent LGBT as a whole. Even then, the anti-government media still pushed that as a subject of matter to the foreign news what started lynching against Poland.

However, that issue has yet another source which is unique division between national and local government, as the overall rule is that national government cannot influence the local governments and vice versa, what gives birth to ridiculous situations, such as Soviet street names in capital of Poland restored with no means to hold that procedure, perhaps only through the act that forbids any sort of promotion of totalitarian regime in public life – that has no application to the local politicians due to how political immunity works. As for anti-LGBT policies inside the local governments, the national government has no means to counter these due to aforementioned division between national and local (city, counties) polities – the latter acting independently from the Polish Parliament.

Conclusion

The issue is very complicated and cannot be represented in simplistic version. There is no bias against LGBT in Poland but there is a strong opposition to extremist groups trying to represent LGBT and trying to undermine Poland. While there is no denial government is vowing heavily to support traditional families and traditional values, that comes from sentiments shaped in the last 250 years of Poland as an occupied nation. The nation trying to finally progress its society but also to face aggressive anti-Polish and anti-religious tendencies and disinformation created by those.