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Poland's Memory Wars. Essays on Illiberalism

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Angielski

This volume of essays and interviews by Polish, British, and American academics and journalists provides an overview of current Polish politics for both informed and non-specialist readers. The essays consider why and how PiS, Law and Justice, the party of Jarosław Kaczyński, returned to power, and the why and how of its policies while in power. They help to make sense of how "history" plays a key role in Polish public life and politics.

The descriptions of PiS in Western media tend to rework old stereotypes about Eastern Europe that had lain dormant for some time. The book addresses the underlying question whether PiS was simply successful in understanding its electorate, and just helped Poland to revert to its normal state. This new Normal seems quite similar to the old one: insular, conservative, xenophobic, and statist.

The book looks at the current struggle between one 'Poland' and another; between a Western-looking Poland and an inward-looking Poland, the former more interested in opening to the world, competing in open markets, and working within the EU, and the latter more concerned with holding onto tradition.

The question of illiberalism has gone from an 'Eastern' problem (Russia, Turkey, Hungary, etc.) to a global one (Brexit and the U.S. elections). This makes the very specific analysis of Poland's illiberalism applicable on a broader scale.

From the publisher's website: <http://ceupress.com/book/polands-memory-wars>

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