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# **Obrońcy demokracji**

**Tożsamość ruchu społecznego  
i jej źródła**

NOMOS  
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## Summary: Defenders of Democracy

The book poses a question about the collective identity of the Committee for the Defence of Democracy [KOD], a social movement which came into being in Poland after the Law and Justice [PiS] party won the parliamentary election in 2015. The Committee was formed as a direct response to the policies of the Law and Justice party. The author of the study examines how the identity of the movement was formed, and how the foundations of this identity were based on a symbolic universe, in particular how the participants of the movement themselves characterized it in speech and in writing.

The research featured in this book is based on 78 interviews with KOD supporters. The interviews were conducted between May 2016 and April 2017. Political brochures issued by the Committee were also used as additional material in the research. The author's findings demonstrate that democracy is not the only important category for the movement. In the formation of the identity of the movement, such key notions as Europe, the transformation, the period of the rule of the Civic Platform [PO], as well as civility and civil society also played a vital role. In the interviews, the respondents form the image of the movement by constructing comparisons in which PiS is a constant point of reference. In this discursive strategy, as the antithesis of KOD, the policies of PiS destroy democracy. Similarly, different opinions towards Europe constitute a dividing line between the supporters of KOD and the followers of PiS. The view that PiS has misused Poland's resources, which effectively means ruining the achievements of the transformation and the PO government, often triggered emotional responses among the interviewed. To them, the Committee defends not only democracy, but also "normality" achieved through political and economic change. They also view it as a defender of Poland's political status in Europe.

According to KOD supporters, the Committee is formed as part of the civil society and it promotes the idea of civility in Poland. The respondents stress the vital role of "enlightened citizens" in Poland, among whom they include themselves. So, they view the average supporters of KOD as resourceful and entrepreneurial representatives of the middle class, well-educated inhabitants of larger cities. "Others" are viewed by them as less educated, provincial and

lacking knowledge through which they could become complete citizens of the Western world. This is how the supporters of KOD view the followers of PiS, participants of the March of Independence or conservatives supported by the Catholic church. Furthermore, this group also incorporates young and politically inactive people. The sense of superiority towards "others," which appears in the process of creating an antinomic image of the movement is one of the key elements of KOD's identity.

The research conducted for the purpose of this study points to the problem related to the insufficient emphasis put on social relations in Poland. According to the author, this lack of emphasis manifests itself through people's inability to discuss various social phenomena, mainly those related to broadly understood inequalities, in any way different than those proposed in the discourses of transformation developed after 1989. It can be said that these discourses encourage the oppression of the "other", which became the practice of the followers of the movement. This led to a visible dissonance between the Committee's pro-democratic postulates and the ways in which it was building a complex narrative about social reality by shaping its collective identity.