Original Article

Besieged fortress syndrome as an element in building the emotions of populism

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this paper is to show the relationship between the besieged fortress syndrome, understood as a specific social engineering tool, and populism understood as a type of propaganda narrative. Particular attention has been paid here to the emotional aspect related to arousing the atmosphere of the siege. These are negative emotions, which in the siege syndrome are directed beyond the boundaries of the social system, and in the case of populism, negative emotions are directed towards the indicated intra-system entities. An important assumption is a thesis that negative emotions in both phenomena constitute only a starting point for arousing positive emotions towards the community subjected to socio-technical pressure, and above all, positive emotions that are supposed to create a strong bond between the political leader, the propaganda promoter of the threat, and their supporters or followers.
KEYWORDS: the syndrome of a besieged fortress, populism, social engineering of emotions, propaganda

Siege syndrome is a relatively frequent phenomenon in the public political debate. This term describes systems (political and non-political) with closed physical boundaries, and very clear psychological boundaries between "here" and "there", permeated with hostility towards the environment, manifesting aspirations for isolation, autarky (Ziółkowski, 2019; Tyler, 2014). The social engineering and propaganda layer will become the main dimension of the description of the phenomena of the siege syndrome and populism (Ziółkowski, 2016a; Ziółkowski, 2016b.) The author treats them here as useful tools of political influence, shaping political behavior and, consequently, controlling the social system.

One of the dimensions of the research on the besieged fortress syndrome is its psy-

chological layer. Here, the siege syndrome can be understood as a specific phenomenon in the field of individual and collective consciousness, personality, attitudes of its participants, and, very importantly, the role of emotions. Hence, the first aim of the article below will be to trace the meaning of emotions in the construction of the atmosphere of the siege. The article will highlight the target entities of emotions, their consequences, and the relationship of dependencies between negative and positive emotions. Conclusions on such a basis will be imposed on the main directions of emotional arousal used in populist narratives. It seems particularly interesting to investigate the content similarities and the convergence of target entities between the emotions of the siege syndrome and populism. The thesis put forward by the author is the assumption of an affective feedback loop between the siege syndrome and populism. This means using the mechanics of building the emotions of the siege in narratives, situational viewpoint of populism, and on the other hand, using elements of hostility, negative prejudice towards the indicated guilty parties by the animators of the siege syndrome, so frequent in the case of populist narratives. Such assumptions and research goals imply the use of specific research methods. In this case, the following were considered adequate: the genetic-functional method, which makes it possible to study dynamic cause-effect relationships within the studied phenomena, system analysis, which examines the functions and significance of specific elements for the whole and the whole for a part, as well as a comparative method that identifies the similarities and differences between the emotional dimensions of the siege syndrome and populism.

THE SIEGE SYNDROME—CHARACTERISTICS

The siege syndrome as a term appears quite often in public debates. It is most often presented here as a social and psychological phenomenon, specific mechanisms of the feeling of being trapped, paranoia around it, which evoke specific attitudes, reactions, behaviors and emotions. (Aho, 1994; Bar-Tal, Antebi, 1992a., pp. 633-645; Bar-Tal, Antebi, 1992b. pp. 251-275; Bar-Tal D, 1986) Although this kind of psychologization of the phenomenon is an obvious reduction (both in the objective and subjective dimension), this dimension is an indispensable dimension of constructing the phenomenon. The siege syndrome itself can be studied on many levels (Ziółkowski, 2019), e.g.:

— social;
— cultural;
— economical;
— political;
— narrative;
— psychological and others.

In terms of the topics raised here, the use of emotional psychology in social engineering activities deserves special importance, i.e. it is assumed here that emotions characteristic of the feeling of a state of siege are very often used in political activities to achieve political goals. The siege syndrome becomes a tool, a planned and cynical use of psychological and social mechanisms activated in an emergency. (M.

Karwat, 2016) In such a case, emotions are not derived from natural reactions, e.g. to a state of real threat, but artificially stimulated and amplified in order to achieve specific political goals. To this extent, the siege syndrome becomes a social engineering strategy aimed at, for example, arousing the attention of recipients, activating specific psychological mechanisms, and on this basis the self-promotion of animators, often combined with discrediting political rivals. A similar dimension of political goals can be seen very often in populist narratives. In both cases, the key role is played by emotions, without which it would be impossible to achieve the intended effects. (Demertzis, 2006, pp. 103-122; Obradović, Power, & Sheehy-Skeffington, 2020, pp. 125-131)

THE ROLE OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS IN THREAT NARRATIVES

Both the besieged fortress syndrome and populism can be classified as narratives or propaganda and social engineering strategies that derive their strength from arousing, escalating and providing an outlet for a sense of threat. (Beck, 1999, pp. 120-122; Czech; 2009; Ferudi; 1997, Ferudi, 2005; Pałyska, 2012; Pierzchalski, Golinowski, 2016). Their mechanics are quite similar, but they can show some differences. It will not be an exaggeration to say that without activating the dispositions and emotional mechanisms, the construction of viewpoint and narrative of the siege syndrome would not be possible—it is indeed so. Of course, the very feeling of being under siege can be based on rational, cold judgments, calculations. When the enemy surrounds from everywhere, looms, threatens with annihilation, it is not necessarily a derivative of the paranoid search for enemies outside the borders of our own community or the realization of the narrators' political goals. In many cases, however, especially in the sphere of building political narratives, situational viewpoint, it is emotions that allow us to see enemies where our rivals used to be, allow enemies to hate them, when reluctance or even indifference prevailed before, allow enemies to throw off all responsibility for damage, which a given community bears. The siege syndrome is not possible without understanding the affective layer of the phenomenon, although its morphology and dynamics cannot be reduced to emotions only. The siege syndrome is based on the stimulation and escalation of negative emotions—this is usually the starting point, the first and necessary stage of building a dense siege atmosphere. (Beck, 1999) The second step is often complementing negative emotions towards the indicated enemies, with positive emotions directed towards one's own community, and above all, the leaders who are to restore emotional balance and give a sense of security. The "scare and give relief" scheme is a universal principle of *micro-* and *macro-*scale interaction.

The most frequently used negative emotions in building the atmosphere of a siege include (Zaleski, 1998, pp. 185-186):

— distrust;
— fear and anxiety;
— hostility;
— hate;
— envy;

— contempt;

— will for revenge.

Such negative emotions most often in the besieged fortress syndrome support each other. Often the starting point is a high level of general or specific distrust, which is the basis for negative emotions. At the same time, the mistrust itself, understood as an empirical indicator, can be treated as an indirect correlate of the susceptibility to narratives that surround the community. Distrust does not have to be emotional. As a state of anticipation of negative events and actions of others, however, it is an excellent ground for building the emotions of the state of siege. In a situation where we do not trust anyone, we assume that the plans and actions of everyone else will be harmful to us, it is much easier to suggest entities that will be accused of perpetrating undesirable events. In extreme cases, it takes the form of paranoia, conspiracy: the belief that the whole world, especially big politics, business is full of conspiracies, well-hidden, and harmful to us with plans and actions (Pipes, 1999; Fenster, 2008; Gulyas, 2016).

The siege syndrome, however, achieves its essence, mechanics, and causative dynamics primarily on the basis of a sense of conflict and threat (here extended to entities beyond the borders of the individual or community). The specificity of social and psychological consequences of external conflicts is used (Coser, 1956; Brewer, 1999, pp. 429-444; Leyens, Paladino, Rodriguez, Vaes, Demoulin, Rodriguez, & Gaunt, 2000). Other emotions play an accompanying role here, achieving synergy together. The siege syndrome is most often lined with fear as a generalized feeling of anxiety, discomfort, tension towards the future, plans and actions of others, and the changeability of fate (Pierzchalski, 2016). The level of generalized anxiety is also a very important empirical indicator of susceptibility to threat narratives, e.g. the siege syndrome, as well as populism. One of the strategies of social engineering controlling the sense of threat is concretizing the layers of fear to the emotions of fear, which has its specific face, concerns specific entities (Pawełczyk, 2019, pp. 39-47). In the siege syndrome, fear is caused—first of all—by external enemies, and then by their possible agents, helpers within the community, traitors who threaten the encircled group, apostates, and heretics. Other emotions are built on such dispositions: hostility, extremely negative disposition, lined with aggression, hatred, as a negative attitude towards others, based on emotions, towards strangers, enemies, envy as a feeling of injustice, deprivation, a feeling of inferior treatment, higher (and undeserved) the status of enemies, contempt (and often also disgust) as a repulsive disposition, rejecting towards enemies and the will to revenge, behavioral motivation, the will to react in the right way, response, punishment.

Populist narratives are often based on a similar content range of emotions and convergent causal mechanisms. (Rico, Guinjoan, & Anduiza, 2017, pp. 444-461; Obradović, Power, & Sheehy-Skeffington, 2020, pp. 125-131) Here, too, the starting point is often distrust, which grows in times of, for example, economic crisis, anomie, or identity crisis. Distrust combined with frustration (e.g. loss of job, position, status) evoke a feeling of envy, hatred towards those who are treated as those who are guilty of it. Responsibility for failures is rationalized here: from internal to external. It is "we

are not to blame", "we are not aggressive". The subject is indicated, which is treated as the main barrier, hindering the realization of the right goals and interests of the aggrieved. Importantly, populist narratives often mention the violation of rights, economic interests, the level of income, and employment opportunities. The emotions of fear in populism most often do not have an existential dimension. Here, migrants do not want our death, they do not necessarily destroy our culture, but they "only" take our jobs, reduce our income, and harm our interests. On this basis, emotions are built: hostility, envy, hatred, contempt. Some of these emotions are repulsive, resulting in a tendency to increase distance, isolation, ostracism, and discrimination. The will to take revenge may also appear as an emotion reactive to the alleged faults of the indicated enemies.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE THREAT IN THE SIEGE SYNDROME AND POPULISM

Originally, the threat in the siege syndrome had a physical, existential dimension. The enemy attacks, he wants to rape, kill, eliminate (Ziółkowski, 2013). It is obvious that similar physiological, emotional and psychological reactions can be achieved when the enemy is far away, does not attack, murder or burn our land. This is the main usefulness of a siege narrative—it triggers atavistic responses in the event of an attack in situations that do not involve such an attack. Hence, you can build a dense atmosphere of siege, encirclement in situations of alleged:

— economic threats, economic war—the enemies want to destroy us economically, they destroy our interests, they take away our resources and jobs, they do not allow us to earn as much as we deserve;
— cultural threat—enemies want to strip us of our identity, destroy what makes us unique, traditions, beliefs, authorities, customs;
— religious threat—enemies threaten our beliefs, our God, dogmas - here the siege syndrome is a war between good and evil, God and Satan, the enemy is the devil;
— political and ideological threats, external and internal enemies threaten our sovereignty, freedom, ours—that is—those assigned to the nation, state, its institutions and representatives.

It is peculiar that in the case of typical narratives of populism, the dimensions of plotting enemies (and hostility) are usually less ideologically elevated. Populism uses the subjects of enemies, negative stereotyping of enemies, negative emotions. The dimensions of such a threat are most often targeted, related to the everyday life of an ordinary person: their workplace, business, their rights. Such an orientation of populism does not mean, however, rejecting the perceptual patterns of threats to the besieged fortress syndrome. Very often, populists use the viewpoint of being threatened or entangled. This applies both when populists threaten with external enemies, and when the feeling of siege is to concern a specific group within a given system, e.g. "ordinary people", the unemployed, provincial residents, etc.

THE ROLE OF POSITIVE EMOTIONS IN THREAT NARRATIVES

While the role and significance of negative emotions in both the siege and populism are obvious, it is less obvious to recognize the fact that negative emotions most often do not constitute the actual goal of narrative animators. The latter will have nothing to do with the fact that their followers will be afraid or will hate enemies: selected entities or surroundings *en bloc*. The proper goal is to use negative, emotional arousal to build positive emotions towards the narrators. Hence, the siege syndrome is not only based on negative emotions towards the indicated enemies or the entire external environment. In the practice of political activities, such emotions are only a prelude to the narrators, siege animators—political leaders, for the sake of balance and compensation with positive emotions. The mechanics of the terror management theory (TMT) are used here, which assumes that the mechanism that allows to reduce fear (e.g. against death or isolation is to merge with the heroized community and its leaders. who disturb the heroic image of their own community. (Greenberg & Arndt 2012, pp. 398-415; Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 1986, pp. 189-212) Hence, the more the enemy arouses fear, the more hatred he evokes, the easier it is to bestow warm emotions on one's own leaders who so efficiently expose conspiracies and betrayals of their enemies. (Lorenz, 1966; Eibl-Eibelsfeldt, 1973) These are very common assumptions of the mechanics of the siege syndrome and social engineering, propaganda using populist elements. The very arousal of negative emotions changes the nature of cognitive, judgmental and decision-making processes. The greater the threat, fear, and other negative emotions, the greater the need for the subject and actions that will restore the state of psychological comfort, a sense of balance, security and justice. It is often also based on the principle of contrast. The image of one's own community and leaders seems to be better when the stereotype of enemies is worse. Such a subject of negative reference, "bad other", is the basic determinant of evaluation processes. (Volkan, 1985, pp. 219-247) Emotions in the siege syndrome may ultimately concern two entities:

(1) collective community of endangered, cornered and disadvantaged;
(2) leaders, heads of an endangered, besieged community.

In the first case, negative emotions directed towards the indicated enemies often intensify positive evaluation, positive emotions towards "one's own". The more "evil" (on various levels of evil) is what is "not ours", "foreign", the greater the possibility of unconditionally (and automatically) positively evaluating one's own community. Most often, the community of "people" is exclusive, it is a group of "the last rights, the righteous, the honorable." The qualification here is quite simple: "who is not us is alien, hostile". Of course, in this case, it is the narrator who determines what it means "our", what "We" means, where "We" ends. Only what is supposed to be ours generates trust, which in this case is a logical complement to the distrust towards the guilty and enemies. Only our authorities are worth listening to, only our community has not defiled itself with aggression and betrayal. Only our tradition, beliefs and religion are valuable and true. On such a basis, there is a lot of room for positive emotions: love, patriotism, faith, solidarity, sacrifice—but only towards "people". Everyone else

is treated with suspicion, hostility, as a rule, *a priori*.

Such building of an emotionally oriented community towards the indicated enemies is not the last act of managing the siege syndrome. The ultimate goal is to build a positive, emotional bond (or even addiction) on the line: the community of the besieged and their leaders, heads of groups. They play the role of deconspirators of conspiracies and betrayals of enemies, they enlighten the believers with the truths about the mechanisms that govern the world. The more terrible the "discovered" crimes of enemies are, the greater the likelihood of building a cognitive and judgmental addiction. The greater the hatred of enemies, the greater the likelihood of love for leaders in politics, e.g. in the form of charisma, cult of personality, crisis-type leadership. (Wolfenstein, 1967)

Populist narratives are based on similar mechanics. Here, too, individual negative emotions are communitarised by politicians. Both the negative emotions themselves are raised: "you have the right to be pissed off", "prejudices are nothing wrong", "you have the right to hate those who take what is owed to you (us)". Further elevated is the community of the rightly "pissed off": "there ar emany of us", "we are right", "we are the salt of this earth". The ultimate goal and temporal logic are similar to the previous case. First, negative emotions need to be aroused so that later the leaders, wearing feathers, "messiahs of truth", "last incorruptible" can bind the community with emotions.

"HERE" AND "THERE"

In the siege syndrome it is extremely important to understand the relationship between "here" and "there". The narrative of the siege syndrome describes the space in a specific way, outlines the image "there". It is a world beyond the boundaries of a besieged system, a cornered group, a community. The surroundings of the besieged fortress are a world of threats, conspiracies, hostile plots, moral decay, decadence. Hence, the first response of the system should be insulation, building the walls of the fortress, which will withstand threats. Only isolation, autonomy, and self-sufficiency can protect vital interests or even the survival of a community. In the siege syndrome, the image of external enemies is one-dimensional, exaggerated, comprehensive. Everything that is external (i.e. foreign, hostile) is to evoke negative emotions, a priori, without nuance. However, this is usually only a starting point. Not only do the narrators of the siege syndrome ultimately care about disgusting their audience but it is far more important to what extent the dispositions towards the indicated enemies, fear of strangers or the whole environment can influence the internal specificity of the encircled community. Hence, the leader of the besieged group and the leader of the besieged system does not stop at scandalizing enemies beyond the borders. More important is how such a prelude will affect their position, image, support, legitimacy for actions. The most important things here are:

— defining the strict physical boundaries between: "Here"—the sphere of security, positive emotions and "There"—the space of threats, the world of enemies, arousing fear and other negative emotions;

— reduction or even elimination of contacts with the outside world on the basis
of: "I don't know —› I don't trust —› I avoid contact —› I isolate";
— isolation with the environment is to make believers cognitively, ideologically
and emotionally dependent on the leader of the siege system;
— the greater the isolation, the greater the potential for escalating psychological
and emotional siege mechanisms.

In the case of populist narratives, the causative and emotional mechanics based on
space delineation may be slightly different. Most often, the role of external threats
is slightly less exposed. Here, the environment as a whole does not have to arouse
fear or hatred. However, also in this case, entities from outside the community are
often presented as guilty (the scapegoat mechanism), e.g. migrants, culturally aliens,
newcomers looking for work, as well as political organizations, economic groups, the
banking system, etc. first, arousing an external threat, and then, on this basis, regula-
tions within the encircled community, populism primarily looks for enemies inside:
elites, political rivals, "foreigners", etc. Here, the external threat is often presented as
evidence of the inefficiency of political elites, state institutions, rivals.

"WE AND THEY"

Both in the siege syndrome and in populism, the targeting of negative emotions to-
wards the indicated enemies often plays a major role. (Finley, Holsti, & Fagen, 1967)
In the case of populism itself, the division into us and 'them' is far more important
than the division into 'here' and 'there'. Polarization and antagonism appear here as
socio-psychological phenomena. (Myers, Lamm, 1976: 602; Isenberg, 1986; Labovitz,
Hagedorn, 1975, pp. 444-448) Here, the enemies, the guilty ones, are around us, on the
same street, in the workplace, etc. In terms of emotional phenomena, there are several
consequences:
— triggering emotional dispositions towards enemies or, more broadly, the en-
vironment results in a shift in the dimensions of internal entities' assessments
from rational to emotional;
— extremely negative, emotional images of external and internal enemies and
their supposed leaders create conditions for the emotional and positive percep-
tion of one's own leaders;
— extremely negative, emotion-streaked image of the entire external environ-
ment creates a point of reference for a homogeneous, heroic (sometimes messi-
anic) image of one's own community, of a group: "chosen", "true", "pure";
— the emotional image of formidable external enemies enables the internal en-
emies of the siege narrators to be effectively "positioned".
In the case of the siege syndrome, the identification of enemies is derived from sev-
eral determinants, which include:
— the actual threats of a siege situation;
— the goals and interests of the siege narrative wizards;
— the specificity of the community within which the narrative is built;
— conditions of political leaders, siege narrative animators.

In the siege syndrome, which is a reaction to real threats, the situation is relatively clear. When the enemy attacks, it threatens the existential community. Negative stereotyping of the aggressors is not only simple, but most often functional, in order to generate adequate resources of energy, motivation, also lined with emotions to defend. In politics, however, the creation of an atmosphere of siege very often does not result from a simple war situation, a zero-sum game, where the loser disappears, dies, and the winner takes it all. Politicians are well aware that the real foundations of the siege and existential threat are flexible and susceptible to propaganda processing. Here the enemy can be invented, even made out of nothing, or the relation of the community's environment can be changed from multidimensional cooperation / competition to a one-dimensional, Manichean war. Much depends on the goals and interests of the animators of the siege, the very causative mechanics of the besieged fortress becomes the tools, the means of their realization. The greater the susceptibility of the target group, the lower the cost of realizing goals is. A high level of anxiety (resulting, for example, from the geopolitical situation, internalized community traumas, negative stereotypes of the environment based, for example, on envy, a sense of relative deprivation, long-standing resentments) makes even the most paranoid narratives of threat a serious dimension of political discussion. The construction of the siege syndrome is often a derivative of the psychological and personality conditions of a political leader. A paranoid, neurotic, often authoritarian leader infects his followers with his phobias, prejudices and hostility (Kramer & Gavrieli 2004). Negative emotions are an extremely effective factor in creating a leader-follower bond.

The subjects of hostility and negative emotions in the siege syndrome are primarily located outside the community, outside walls, outside borders. Therefore, the defenders of the besieged fortress see the threat there. It is the surroundings that "strangers" should be afraid of or hate. They should separate themselves from them. It is only in the second place that the animators of the siege syndrome, taking advantage of the already inflamed negative emotions towards the entities indicated outside the community, are scared by agents, traitors inside the community who cooperate with their enemies: spoil, fester, harm. In the case of populism, the main direction of drawing the division on the "We-them" line lies in the community itself, in its own system, its dysfunctions. Here, then, conspiracies, betrayals and particularism are investigated. The reach of the "We" and "They" communities is different. In the siege syndrome, one can imagine a situation where the "We" community extends to the entire enslaved community: all groups, elements, including the elite, should therefore cooperate in defense against external threats. In the case of populist narratives, it most often takes the form of internal divisions, for example: "rich-poor", "people-elite", "people's leaders-corrupt politicians", etc. In this case, the community does not include all members, sharp divisions, walls are located in the system itself.

"CLOSE ENEMY"—"DISTANT ENEMY"

The siege syndrome often employs a "distant enemy" scheme. It is a subject beyond the boundaries of the community, distant, foreign, unknown in direct experience. The

community of the cornered knows him primarily through an internalized negative stereotype imposed by animators. Here, often, the more we fear or hate our enemies, the more we do not know them, cannot see them, and cannot confront our ideas with realities. This scheme is very important when the propaganda image of the enemies does not correspond to reality to a large extent. Such a "distant enemy" scheme is very convenient for the creators of the atmosphere of the siege. Assuming that the isolation between the community and the environment is built at the same time, and that the possibility of verifying the narratives being built is reduced, the animators have quite a lot of freedom. Here, often the "distant enemies" are, for example:

— hostile (by default, in principle) neighbors, the bigger, the more aggressive in the past, the better for the narrative;

— international organizations, controlled by enemies, bureaucratic, depriving the community of sovereignty and identity;

— economic enemies who persistently wage economic war;

— distant empires, entities distant, but through their vast interests, long tentacles and resources harm and spoil the threatened community;

— hostile individuals, pure personalized evil, wealthy sponsors hostile to the community of groups and interests.

In populism, the targets of negative emotions are often sought close to the community of those at risk. It is a syndrome of "close enemy" with which those at risk, dissatisfied, "pissed off" have contact, see them, observe them, evaluate them, and have negative emotions. While in the siege syndrome the enemy is often "invented", populists rather "say as it is" and say what "everyone sees", but "is afraid to say". Populists break political correctness, bring inscriptions from the walls and talks from the laundry into salons. Known entities, known to "harm", spoil, pursue the interests of "ordinary", "honest", "hard-working" people, indicate opponents as enemies. Such roles are usually played by slightly different entities:

— elites as such: cultural, intellectual, social, they cannot be trusted, their interests are contrary to the interests of the common man or nation, state;

— the rich as such, their success is suspect, the manner in which they have achieved it is certainly blameworthy, it is easy to arouse envy here;

— politicians, as such, apart from populists, of course, are a kind of paradox, politicians-populists threaten with other politics, other parties. One can also frighten with politics itself, as a dirty, hypocritical game, here politicians-populists are—implicitly—anti-political, apolitical, anti-systemic etc .;

— media that cannot be trusted because they represent the interests of the rich, their point of view, they mock the common man, his beliefs;

— cultural, political, ideological, religious, racial strangers, etc., the glorification of the common man is often exclusive, looking for a scapegoat, for example: migrants taking their jobs.

All of the above and many other entities are treated by populists as threatening, influencing the interests of their target groups. there is less pomposity here than in the besieged fortress syndrome: less existential threat, the Manichean war, the crusade to

defend the values of the saints. There is also less messianism, building a community of the chosen, the last, the only true. Instead, the center of gravity is shifted to mundane but equally essential things: work, earnings, dignity, sovereignty. Thus, populists use the feeling of: injustice, interception of "what we deserve", "what we have earned", this is where frustration, deprivation and, consequently, envy and hatred are born.

EMOTIONS OF THE SIEGE SYNDROME AND POPULISM—CONCLUSIONS

Emotions of populism may or may not be correlated with the specific "We-them" of the siege syndrome. The obvious similarity is the activation and management of negative and positive emotions with a similar content scope. In both phenomena, the change in situational viewpoint, the goals and mechanics are similar, e.g.:

— shifting the social dimensions of political analyzes and evaluations from the "cool", rational, to "hot", emotional dimension;
— reduction of the complex socio-economic and political system to a one-dimensional war, a black and white world, with one dividing line "us-enemies", "us-hostile surroundings";
— elevating the role of enemies, making them demiurges of evil, here everything bad that will meet the community is derived from the existence of enemies, their hostile plots, conspiracies, betrayals, ill will;
— simplifying the complexity of the mechanisms governing the world for simple explanations: here when there is harm, he must have the guilty person personified, preferably a personal "villain";
— transferring to the indicated enemies, guilty of negative emotions of the community, e.g. in times of danger, crisis, economic depression;
— the ultimate goal is to activate positive emotions towards the leaders on the basis of negative arousal towards the enemies.

Both in the case of the siege syndrome and the frequently encountered situational viewpoint of populists, the common political wisdom is used and elevated. In both cases, the animators rely on:

— the apparent cherish of wisdom, sovereignty, the autonomy of the common man, the common vision of politics that breaks political correctness, the sphere of political taboo;
— searching for simple answers to difficult questions, simplifying complexity to simple schemes, glorifying a simple man, brilliant in their simplicity of analyzes, diagnoses, ways of getting out of a difficult situation based on the principle of "iron logic";
— triggering, escalating negative emotions towards the indicated enemies.

At the same time, it is possible to point out some differences in the use of emotions in the propaganda of the siege and populism:

(i) in the siege syndrome, negative emotions are primarily directed outside the system, in populism such subjects are more often internal enemies;
(ii) in the siege syndrome enemies may be alien, unknown, distant and therefore

dangerous, in populism narrators often use the subject of a "close enemy", which is physically available, known and endowed with negative emotions;
(iii) in the siege syndrome, emotions are most often derived from a great threat, holy war; in populism hostility resulting from the violation of the mundane problems of "ordinary people" is escalated.

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