

How do populist movements use aesthetic means to get attention and lure supporters? Do the followers of the populist creed differ from the rest of society in the way they get dressed, cook, and entertain themselves? Does the aesthetics dimension of politics form an important part of any political movement or is it just an accidental phenomenon without any significance? Can we view and interpret the political struggle as a struggle of two aesthetics? Does democracy need the arts for it to properly function? These are the questions I would like to answer in my research project. The aesthetics dimension of politics has usually been neglected or marginalized, but the recent rise of populist movements puts the question of the relationships between aesthetics and politics at the center of the discourse of cultural studies, as well as political science. Populism is usually connected with building strong identities and it is hardly imaginable that the collective identities could be constructed without an extensive usage of aesthetics tools.

- 1) To reconstruct the aesthetic strategies of populist movements in their various dimensions, from artificially staged public meetings, performances, and works of art to the aesthetics of everyday life. This enables me to reveal the specificity of populist political aesthetics and to have insight into one of the driving forces of populist movements.
- 2) To show the role of aesthetics in democratic society, that is to which extent democracy has to rely on a specific aesthetic activity which facilitates a core of every democratic society – the dialogue and open communication between people and social groups.
- 3) To show that the political struggle between populism and liberal democracy can be viewed as a struggle between two hostiles aesthetics.
- 4) Finally, to present a general theory of political aesthetics. Such a theory will systemize the ways of using aesthetic activities in politics and show their place in the democratic political system.

The research process consists of two parts. In its theoretical part, the research is focused on formulating the theory of aesthetics of populism and aesthetics of liberal democracy. This part of research which refers to the methodology of humanities research will have a clear interdisciplinary character. Creating the theory as part of a planned research project involves the use of methods such as hermeneutics, genealogical method, philological and historical method. The final research results will be included in the cultural knowledge resources. The second part of the research will be carried out in the standards of methodology of qualitative social research. The research will focus on creating a characteristic of the manifestations of aesthetics strategies of populist movements and aesthetics strategies of liberal democracy movements and creating a number of theories of individual objects of everyday social reality