

**P**oland — a country of packed churches; a country where millions enthusiastically welcome the Pope; a country with a ban on virtually all abortions and with restrictions on prenatal tests; a country in which the Church claims the right to be involved in legislative processes about laws concerning neither the Church nor religion; a country in which the Church would like to tell scientists what should and what should not be a subject of their research; where the Church was prepared to set Poland at variance with the EU in order to get God's name into the European constitution.

In this country we are trying to promote rational thinking — RACJONALISTA.pl is currently the biggest center for publicizing free-thinkers and rationalists in Poland. More and more experts from different fields are contributing to our website. Since the website was established seven years ago about 1100 authors - both Polish and foreign — have published with us. Currently we hold about 5800 articles and we have about 15 thousand visitors every day.

Adhering to the tradition of Enlightenment, we advocate scientific reliability and scientific methods of research and thinking. We hunt out prejudices, quackery, lies and phobias which are present in almost every walk of life and are often propagated in the mass media as well as in schools and in churches of all denominations.

RACJONALISTA. pl publishes articles and essays from all important fields of human knowledge. Our aim is to have on the Polish Internet a systematic compendium of knowledge devised by rationalists. At present we mostly stress the study of religions, church history, philosophy, civic education, science, history and ethics.

The teaching of the Catholic religion in all schools (and even in kindergartens) is paid for from the state budget. We, of course, do not get any subsidies from anybody; nevertheless, for young people we are a sort of antidote. The rising popularity of RACJONALISTA shows that there is a demand in Poland for rational thinking in spite of the expansion of the Church and of growing clericalism, intolerance and parochialism.

In January 2005 people connected with RACJONALISTA created the Polish Association of Rationalists based in Wroclaw. We are now trying to organise an association of people convinced of the need for joint action in order to promote the growth of individuals and society along rational lines.

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### PSR: Ideological declaration

Convinced about the need of coordinated activity aimed at individual and society's development according to the idea of rationalism forming the foundations and philosophy of life enabling a man to study the world and understand it more and more thoroughly, as well as influence it by critical discourse based on rational and naturalistic arguments constantly subjected to analysis, and the process of developing and specifying of all the non-dogmatic methods of studying and understanding;

Basing on the ethical directions flowing from the affirmation of man and his creative output, which is the source of culture's most significant values;

Drawing inspiration from the bright pages especially of our continent's history — and from those pages' most illustrious authors;

Hoping to overcome — or at least weaken — human superstitions, harmful mystifications, xenophobia, ignorance, incapacitation of mind, domination of irrational factors in thinking and action, supremacy of stereotypes over open-minded and thorough thinking and purposeful, efficient action — in order to rise over divisions, quarrels and low ambitions in common construction of a better society, Europe and the world;

Convinced that a man can work over himself to overcome his own weaknesses, his imperfections and defects, in order to change for the better; therefore placing the trust in ourselves, in our courage, will and strength, in a man as the only originator of good and evil surrounding us, solely in his activity finding the potential to solve the modern world's most pressing problems and challenges;

Opposing the omnipresent culture of vagueness, shallow hedonism, minimalization and unification of spiritual and cultural needs, and purposeless existence;

Interested in promoting inner growth and self-perfection of an individual, who strives for self-fulfillment by the cultivation of life that is ethical, creative and socially and intellectually active;

Emphasizing in particular civilization-enhancing, philosophical and social value of modern Science, based upon the foundations of the European rationalism;

Appreciating human imagination, creativity — and by that — spiritual significance of Art and the humanities;

Demanding more light dissipating our reality's dark aspects, and an in-depth transformation of the elite for the revival of Polish sense of citizenship;

Caring deeply for democracy which — without cultivation of rational discourse, knowledge and open-mindedness — serves no purpose whatsoever and remains just an empty catchword;

Aiming to consolidate free and intellectually ambitious people open to knowledge and its progress;

We

Rationalists of Poland,

are therefore founding Polskie Stowarzyszenie Racjonalistów (the Polish Association of Rationalists)

To which we have decided to give the following memorandum:

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## The Purposes of the Polish Association of Rationalists

Polskie Stowarzyszenie Racjonalistów (abbreviation: PSR) /The Polish Association of Rationalists/ is a union operating on the basis of the act of 7.4.1989 — the Unions Act and the resolutions of the Memorandum of 24.4.2005, of an ideological, ethical, philosophical and scientific nature of the Polish rationalists who aim to realize the following purposes:

1) to unite and integrate the Polish society with rationalistic views into an association which is able to act for the cause of social dissemination and consolidation of independent, critical thinking, rational and scientific study and explaining of the surrounding world;

2) to develop and propagate the philosophy of life based on the scientific knowledge, reason, experience and secular ethics;

3) to develop tolerant attitudes, fight against biases and support the idea of open-minded society;

4) to oppose the spreading of harmful stereotypes that result in limiting the individual development of man and to act for the benefit of individual's freedom in the boundaries of the operating law;

5) to popularize science and the scientific method; to defend science against the modern attempts to discredit and deform it; to propagate the social meaning of science and to act for the cause of its rehabilitation as a public priority;

6) to act for the benefit of society of knowledge (information);

7) to act for the cause of eliminating the influence of irrational ideologies on state legislation, science's development, artistic activity and general mentality;

8) to act for the cause of separating churches and religious associations from the State, as well as fight for this State's ideological neutrality;

9) to defend the Association's members' interests — to the best of our ability -against ideological, political and social pressures limiting free thinking, acting, the development of science, culture, art; to support and defend the rights of discriminated people's rights, directly and indirectly, especially over their ideology, sexual orientation, nationality, race, ethnic origins, and sex, as well as provide help in those rights' realization;

10) to propagate creative, active attitude, social and civil committal; to work for the benefit of development and realization of interests, knowledge and of widening mental horizons of its members.

### **The Association realizes its purposes through:**

1) popularization of knowledge; shaping social and community ethics of its members

2) organizing courses, exhibitions, lectures, shows, talks, discussions, conferences, symposiums and thematic seminars in the scope connected the Association's purposes

3) organizing meetings and trips of the members and sympathizers of the Association

- 4) maintenance and development of the Association's website, „Racjonalista" ('The Rationalist')
- 5) publishing and distribution of periodicals, leaflets, folders and conducting other publishing activities
- 6) preparing and publishing — in internet and other mass media - declarations, appeals, open letters, polls, analyses and reports involving specific problems, challenges and initiatives;
- 7) initiating, preparing, passing opinions and supporting projects of legal acts, in particular those concerning regulations of religious relations, educational, scientific and social issues;
- 8) organizing competitions that propagate knowledge and creativity in specific areas and topics;
- 9) giving counsel and representation of the Association's members in public organs in their individual affairs connected with the Association's purposes, as well providing other help in this area
- 10) undertaking cooperation with authorities, organizations, institutions, periodicals, social groups, and people interested in the Association's activities
- 11) establishing cooperation with academic and student organizations; forming clubs and circles of rationalists that are converging points of students and academic workers

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We are a member of the Polish Humanistic Federation

Our e-mail: [psr@racjonalista.pl](mailto:psr@racjonalista.pl) (<http://www.racjonalista.pl/mailto:psr@racjonalista.pl>)

WWW: [psr.racjonalista.pl](http://psr.racjonalista.pl) (<http://psr.racjonalista.pl>)

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## [English section of The Rationalist](http://www.therationalist.eu.org)

(<http://www.therationalist.eu.org>)

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Oryginał. (<http://www.racjonalista.pl/kk.php/s,3134>)

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Treść tego zapisu stosuje się do wersji zarówno polsko jak i angielskojęzycznych portalu pod domenami Racjonalista.pl, TheRationalist.eu.org oraz Neutrum.eu.org.

Wszelkie pytania prosimy kierować do [redakcja@racjonalista.pl](mailto:redakcja@racjonalista.pl)