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”Becoming a lawyer in times of constitutional reckoning.
Of challenges, promises and...hopes, too”

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Tomasz Koncewicz, a graduate of the Law Schools of Wrocław and Edinburgh University, is Professor Attorney and director of the Department of European and Comparative Law at the Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Gdańsk/Poland. He is a member of the editorial board of the Oxford Encyclopedia of EU Law, an elected member of the Council of the Jean Monnet Fondation pour L'Europe in Lausanne, specializing in strategic litigation before supranational, international and highest domestic courts. A former referendaire at the Court of Justice and adviser to the Polish Constitutional Court, he authored eleven books and published hundreds of scholarly articles, most recently in the Israel Law Review and the Yearbook of European Law. Koncewicz has taught and researched across the world, among others multiple times at the European University Institute in Florence, the University of California at Berkeley, Princeton University, and Radzyner Law School.

Hungary, Poland, Israel: Three distinct, yet interrelated case studies of the constitutional capture where the law has been abused, manipulated and instrumentalized to hollow out the liberal core of their legal orders. Paradigms that had once been thought of as non-negotiable have been called into question and replaced with competing narratives, doctrines, and understandings of the *raison d'être* of institutions. When institutions fall one by one faced with smart autocratic legalistic schemes, uneasy questions, and challenges, arise: What is the rule of law for, and how does it operate? What does it mean to be(come) a lawyer in these challenging times? How does it affect the core of the law of integration that brought states and their peoples together? How can we lawyers stand up and protect the law itself as well as our institutions? And finally: How can we lawyers think outside the institutional and academic boxes to embed the law and the institutions into the social fabric of our societies? One painful and fundamental lesson that we should have learnt by now is that a comfortable *non possumus* is no longer an option in 2023...and beyond.

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