

THE ROLE OF PRE-1945 NATIONAL
AND CATHOLIC MYTHS IN TRANSFORMING
AN ILLIBERAL POLISH POLITICAL CULTURE
INTO A LIBERAL POLITICAL CULTURE OF
OPPOSITION UNDER COMMUNISM

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by
Geoffrey Bardell

Department of Politics, American Studies
and History, Brunel University

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF PRE-1945 NATIONAL AND CATHOLIC MYTHS IN TRANSFORMING AN ILLIBERAL POLISH POLITICAL CULTURE INTO A LIBERAL POLITICAL CULTURE OF OPPOSITION UNDER COMMUNISM

The thesis, in exploring how and why illiberal pre-1945 Polish nationalism and political Catholicism were synthesised into a post-1945 liberal political culture of opposition under communism, argues that this process was much aided by universal myths. The thesis shows how these myths enable political culture to be transmitted over time and to be adapted to take on different values and yet retain legitimacy. In so doing, the research may contribute insights into how the political cultures of other Central East European countries were similarly transformed. Chapter 1 argues that the social anthropological literature on myths provides a theoretical framework to better understand the nature of political culture, its dynamics and its relationship with the process of democratisation. Chapter 2 maps the pre-1945 territory of nationalist and political Catholic illiberal and liberal discourse as reflected in the genesis and meanings of key myths. Chapter 3, in exploring how pre-1945 myths were deployed in 1945-1989 Poland, illuminates the relationship of myths with the dynamics of political culture and democratisation. Chapter 4 explores the 1970-1976 process of dialogue between liberal-leaning dissident Catholic and secular left Polish intelligentsia. The chapter sheds light upon the emergence of a liberal political culture of opposition and argues that the dialogue went beyond expediency. Chapter 5, in demonstrating how and why John Paul II deployed pre-1945 myths, argues that the Pope's preachings found practical expression in the formation of *Solidarity*. Chapter 6 in exploring the role of pre-1945 myths in influencing *Solidarity*, argues that these myths acted as vehicles for the union's liberal political culture. Finally Chapter 7 draws together the conclusions of the thesis.

CONTENTS

Abstract 2

Acknowledgements 6

CHAPTER 1: THE ROLE OF MYTHS OF NATIONALISM AND POLITICAL CATHOLICISM IN TRANSFORMING POLITICAL CULTURE

1.1 The Liberalisation Of Polish Nationalism And Political Catholicism 7

1.2 Nationalism And Political Catholicism: Illiberal Or Liberal Political Forces? 11

1.3 The Roles Of Nationalism, Political Religion And Political Culture Within The Democratisation Process 42

1.4 Towards A Theoretical Framework: The Contribution of the Political Culture Literature 50

1.5 The Theoretical Framework: Myths As A Key Tool 55

1.6 Locating The Polish Case 69

PART 1: PRE-1945 (CHAPTER 2)

CHAPTER 2: THE PRE-1945 GENESIS OF POLISH NATIONAL AND CATHOLIC MYTHS

2.1 Introduction: The Aims Of The Chapter 80

2.2 The Emergence Of Polish Nationalism 81

2.3 The Coming Together Of Polish Nationalism And Polish Political Catholicism: The Seeds Of A Post-1945 Synthesis 88

2.4 The Genesis Of The National myths Of 1900-1944 Illiberal Polish Political Culture 99

2.5 The Genesis Of The Myths Supportive Of A Proto-Liberal Polish Political Culture 114

2.6 Conclusions: The Seeds Are Sown 133

PART 2: 1945-1989 (CHAPTERS 3 to 6)

CHAPTER 3: THE ROLE OF PRE-1945 MYTHS IN THE 1945-1989 WAR OF POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

3.1 Introduction: The War Of Political Legitimacy	136
3.2 The War Of Political Legitimacy (1): The Opposition v. The Regime's National Communism	147
3.3 The War Of Political Legitimacy (2): The Opposition v. The Regime's National Non-Communism	175
3.4 Conclusion: The Liberalising Of The Political Culture Of Opposition	209

CHAPTER 4: A MEETING OF MINDS - THE 1970-1976 PROCESS OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN DISSIDENT CATHOLIC AND SECULAR LEFT INTELLIGENTSIA

4:1 Introduction	214
4.2 Some Practical Outcomes Of Dialogue: Examples Of Co-Operation During 1976-1979	216
4.3 The Polish Church's Preference For Supporting <i>KOR</i>	218
4.4 The 1970-1976 Process Of Dialogue	227
4.5 Conclusions: Dialogue And Its Practical Outcomes Prepared The Ground For The Opposition	248

CHAPTER 5: JOHN PAUL II'S DEPLOYMENT OF PRE-1945 NATIONAL AND CATHOLIC MYTHS TO FOSTER A LIBERAL POLITICAL CULTURE OF OPPOSITION

5.1 Introduction: John Paul II, Culture And The Nation	251
5.2 Tools For The Task: Myths, Symbols And Rituals	255
5.3 John Paul II's Deployment Of Pre-1945 Myths To Foster The Cause Of Liberty, Equality And Fraternity	271
5.4 Conclusions: Fostering A Liberal Political Culture Of Opposition	310

CHAPTER 6: THE INFLUENCE OF THE MYTHS, SYMBOLS AND RITUALS OF PRE-1945 POLISH NATIONALISM AND POLITICAL CATHOLICISM UPON *SOLIDARITY*

6.1 Introduction: The Symbiotic Relationship Between <i>Solidarity</i> And Polish Nationalism And Political Catholicism	316
6.2 The Role Of Myths And Symbols Of Pre-1945 Idealistic Nationalism	320
6.3 <i>Solidarity</i> 's Deployment Of The Symbolism Of The National Flag, Anthem And Emblem	324
6.4 <i>Solidarity</i> 's Deployment Of The Ritual Of Protest Singing ...	328
6.5 The Role Of The Ritual Of Holy Mass	332
6.6 The Role Of Myths Of Sacred Omnipotent Saviours	342
6.7 The Role Of Political Catholicism In Influencing <i>Solidarity</i> 's Leader	349
6.8 Conclusion: <i>Solidarity</i> 's Deployment Of A Liberal Political Culture	354

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction	358
7.2 The Role Of Pre-1945 Myths, Symbols And Rituals	358
7.3 Revisiting Some Of The Broader Issues	364
7.4 Post-1989: A Return To History?	367
7.5 Concluding Remarks: Implications Of The Research	371

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Interviews Conducted	378
2. References	379
3. General Bibliography	402

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CHAPTER 1: THE ROLE OF MYTHS OF NATIONALISM AND POLITICAL CATHOLICISM IN TRANSFORMING POLITICAL CULTURE

1.1 The Liberalisation Of Polish Nationalism And Political Catholicism

The main aim of the research is to seek a better understanding of a political paradox concerning Poland that until 1989 had experienced less than eight years of democratic rule.¹ The paradox relates to how and why Polish nationalism and political Catholicism, despite their illiberal pasts, were synthesised into a post-1945 liberal political culture of opposition supportive of democratisation. This post-1945 political culture of opposition, the research argues, found eventual expression in a liberal *Solidarity* that was much shaped by pre-1945 myths and their accompanying symbols and rituals as deployed by an increasingly liberal nationalism and liberal political Catholicism.²

Part 1 of the thesis argues that during the first half of the 20th century Polish political culture was much influenced by an illiberal Polish nationalism and political Catholicism. The main source of illiberalism within Polish nationalism was the social Darwinism of Roman Dmowski (1864-1939). The resulting illiberal nationalism was in tune with other European illiberal nationalisms of the time and expressed itself partly in terms of a conspiratorial enemy mythology, deployed

¹ From 1918-1926.

² These terms will be defined later in this chapter.

mainly against Jews and communists.³ The Polish Church hierarchy adopted the same mythology, in tune with both the prevailing illiberal Polish nationalism and illiberal papal political Catholicism.

However, Part 1 argues, there were also liberal strands of pre-1945 Polish nationalism. Liberal nationalism came to the fore during Poland's brief Enlightenment (c. 1770-1790s), during her romantic period (c. 1820-1860s), her positivist period (c. 1865-1890s), and during her neo-romantic period (c. 1890-1918), when it competed with the aforementioned illiberal nationalism. Part 1 contends that the Enlightenment and positivist periods shaped a realistic nationalism, while the romantic and neo-romantic periods shaped an idealistic nationalism, and that both realistic and idealistic nationalisms had liberal and illiberal aspects. The romantic poetry of the lay political Catholic intelligentsia furthered the cause of liberal idealistic nationalism by propagating myths that served as vehicles for liberal values. These myths redefined the pre-1780s myths of state- and nation-building that had portrayed political Catholicism primarily as defender of the state. The romantic myths now portrayed political Catholicism as defender of the liberal nation and of liberal values. The neo-romantic revival ensured that the romantic myths were not forgotten. The romantic and neo-romantic myths appropriated liberal contributions of the Enlightenment and positivist periods respectively.

³ The cause of liberal nationalism was not helped by the expansionist aspects of Piłsudski's nationalism, by Piłsudski's 1926 *coup d'état*, or by many of the Piłsudski camp increasingly adopting, after his death in 1935, the prevailing conspiratorial enemy mythology.

Part 2 argues that the post-1945 nationalism of opposition, shaped in large part by an increasingly liberal political Catholicism, gradually became more liberal. It did so by discarding its German and Jewish enemy myths and significantly altering the meanings attached to its communist and Russian/Soviet enemy myths, to make clear that it was opposing political systems rather than engendering a hatred of groups of people. Part 2 also contends that although the nationalism of opposition retained its myths of military valour, their purpose now was no longer to mobilise for a violent insurrection. Rather, they were retained to remind those in power that if Poland were reoccupied by the Soviets, the opposition would reluctantly revert to the physical force tradition of idealistic nationalism. Part 2 further argues that the main Polish propagators of the liberal papal political Catholicism that emerged in the 1960s were members of the lay Catholic intelligentsia movement *Znak* and Pope John Paul II (1978 -). The 1970s' coming together of the *Znak* and democratic secular left intelligentsia and their subsequent advisory role within *Solidarity* did much to embed a liberal political culture of opposition. However, there was another 'embedding factor', equally important. That factor was the increasingly liberal values fostered by the pre-1945 myths, symbols and rituals of nationalism and political Catholicism deployed by ostentatious political Catholicism ⁴ and in particular by John Paul II. John Paul II, in preaching a liberal political culture, was able, via his

⁴ Ostentatious political Catholicism to some degree distinguished Catholicism from Protestantism by giving prominence to the veneration of various cults, saints and the Virgin Mary and to participation in such rituals as theatrical pilgrimages, Marian processions and mass rallies. The papal beatification and canonisation processes were particularly suited to creating and fostering myths, symbols and rituals.

deployment of myths, symbols and rituals, to synthesise liberal features of idealistic and realistic nationalism.

The thesis may contribute important insights into how the nationalisms and religions of other Central East European (CEE) countries,⁵ despite also having illiberal pasts, were synthesised into post-1945 liberal political cultures of opposition supportive of democratisation. Until 1989, the other CEE countries also had experienced little liberal democratic rule and their religions were also predominantly directed from Rome.⁶ The myths of Polish nationalism and Catholicism are in essence universal ones, but strike a particular resonance within the CEE region and within CEE post-1945 oppositions deprived of alternative vehicles for expressing their political culture. The region's nationalisms and religions also in part shaped the pre-1945 political cultures of these other CEE countries and their pre-1945 legacies also had to adapt to new post-1945 communist political cultures directed from Moscow.

In exploring its main aim, other secondary research implications became apparent that relate to Polish nationalism and political Catholicism. The research reveals how and why an overt and

⁵ The CEE countries are taken to be Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and East Germany, that is to say countries that were part of the 1945-1989 East European communist bloc.

⁶ Roman Catholicism was and remains the major religion of the CEE region. Estimates of the percentage of the population that were Roman Catholic at about the time of the demise of communism are: Poland 95%; Hungary 54%; Czechoslovakia 65%; and East Germany 6%. (Sword 1990: 110, 92, 54, & 72).

enduring 1945-1989 illiberal *national non-communism*,⁷ rooted in aspects of pre-1945 illiberal political culture and its associated enemy mythology, was propagated by influential factions of the Party-State.

1.2 Nationalism And Political Catholicism: Illiberal Or Liberal Political Forces?

Given the research concerns with illiberal and liberal nationalism and political Catholicism, the nationalism and political Catholicism literatures were explored with a view to better understanding the liberal and illiberal facets of their CEE manifestations and to construct a typology relevant to the concerns of the research.

1.2.1 The Nature of CEE Nationalism

The nationalism literature exploration revealed consideration of two related issues that pertain, directly and indirectly, to the concerns of the research. These issues may be summarised by the following two questions. Is CEE nationalism an inherently illiberal force? Are the roots of nationalism more related to culture/ethnicity/language or to

⁷ *National non-communism* is so termed because of its disavowal of communism in two key ways. One way was to downplay its ties with communism and the Soviet Union. The other way was to deploy the pre-1945 illiberal nationalism of Dmowski. As Chapter 3 will show *national non-communism* was increasingly deployed in the Party-State's war of political legitimacy with the opposition as other forms of legitimation proved ineffective. Accordingly, the research necessitates a reinterpretation of Polish regime nationalism, and possibly of other CEE regime nationalisms, as depicted solely by *national communism*. The 'Party' is used here and elsewhere as shorthand for the ruling communist party, which from 1948 was the Polish United Workers' Party (*PZPR*). (The Polish abbreviations will be given after the names of Polish bodies/organisations). The two key bodies of the Party leadership that effectively ruled Poland were the Politburo and the Secretariat.

the role of the state and the concept of citizenship? This second question relates to the first insofar as some of the writers - [for example Plamenatz (1973/1976) ⁸ and Sugar (1995a)] who compare Western with Eastern nationalism - imply, or directly argue, that Eastern nationalism is rooted more in culture/ethnicity/language. These roots, they contend, tend to make Eastern nationalism illiberal. ⁹

The observation of Anderson (1983/1991: 141), writing of the 20th century, has much relevance, as other chapters will argue, to aspects of 19th and 20th liberal strands of Polish idealistic nationalism.

“In an age when it is so common for progressive, cosmopolitan intellectuals ... to insist on the near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love. The cultural products of nationalism – poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts – show this love very clearly. ”

In 1907, the German historian Friedrich Meinecke (1862-1954) characterised two types of nation, the *Staatnation* and *Kulturnation*. ¹⁰ Most who subsequently compared Western nations/nationalism with

⁸ The first date of publication together with the date, if different, of the actual publication consulted, is given in this chapter. Subsequent chapters give only the date of the publication consulted. First dates of publication are also given in the Bibliography.

⁹ It will be seen later in this chapter that the definition of liberal nationalism adopted encompasses many of the features of Western nationalism, and that the definition of illiberal nationalism adopted encompasses some of the features of Eastern nationalism, as they are depicted here.

¹⁰ In *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat. Studien zur Genesis des deutschen Nationalstaats*. An English version was published as *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*. Princeton University: Princeton, New Jersey, 1970.

Eastern nations/nationalism, for example, Kohn (1944/1967), Sugar (1967/1971b), Plamenatz (1973/1976), Rady (1993), Shelton (1995), Smith (1995/1996a), and Vincent (1997), portray a somewhat oversimplified bi-polar model. Different aspects were emphasised by different writers in their bi-polar models. Kohn (1944/1967), Plamenatz (1973/1976) and Vincent (1997: 277-278) identify Western and Eastern nationalisms, although Hans Kohn (1891-1971) also depicts a CEE nationalism within his Eastern nationalism category. Sugar (1967/1971b), Rady (1993), and Smith (1995/1996a) differentiated between a Western nationalism and an Eastern European nationalism. Holy (1996: 49) juxtaposes a French political model of the nation with that of a linguistic and cultural one, based on the ideas of the French political thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) and the German philosopher Johann Herder (1744-1803).

Kohn (1944/1967: 329) asserts that the emerging CEE nationalism first found expression in the cultural field. Rady (1993) and Smith (1995/1996a: 362-363) see the roots of Eastern European nationalism as based on ethnicity and language. Kohn (1944/1967: 330) and Sugar (1967/1971b: 10) contrast the genesis of Western nationalism based on an effort to build a nation in the political reality and struggles of the present with an Eastern European nationalism tied to the past. For Kohn (1944/1967: 329-331), because of the 'backward state' of political and social development, early CEE nationalism was

“the dream and hope of scholars and poets. ...Each new nationalism ... extolled the primitive and ancient depth and peculiarities of its traditions in contrast to Western rationalism and to universal standards. ... This new nationalism, not rooted in a political and social reality, lacked self-assurance; its inferiority complex was often compensated by overemphasis and

overconfidence. ... The quest for the meaning of ... nationalism, the musing about the 'soul' or the 'mission' of the nation ... all that became a characteristic of this new form of nationalism."

For Sugar (1967/1971b: 11) Eastern European nationalism

"did not tend towards 'a consummation in a democratic world society', but was 'tending towards exclusiveness,' seeking to find a justification, a specific *mission* for a given group ... When such a group ... was willing to include all members of their nationality in their nationalism, eastern European nationalism became *messianic*. Messianism cannot be egalitarian; it claims rights for a chosen people, the *Volk*, not for the individual or the citizen. This *Volk* concept is practically totalitarian."

For Sugar (1995a: 417), during the 19th century Eastern European nationalism begins to take on aggressive and chauvinistic features, and "by the beginning of the twentieth century, the nationalism of all nations of Eastern Europe was 'integral'." Apart from this 'integral' feature, Sugar (1995a: 418-419) asserts that a number of additional common features distinguished 20th century East European nationalist attributes from those of West Europe. These included: a pessimism shaped by a fear that the nation could disappear suddenly and where historical benchmarks were tied to military or political defeats; a search for self-identification; a search among the peasantry for the specific features of their nations; and the lack of coinciding ethnic, ethno-nationalistic, linguistic, and political borders. As the Second World War (WWII) approached, East European 'super-nationalists' everywhere, asserted Sugar (1995a: 422)

"needed a moral code to buttress their arguments and turned to religious bigotry, which had the added usefulness of excluding Jews from their nations. A good Pole had to be a Catholic. ...

This supposedly religious morality also justified the hostility towards atheistic Marxism-communism.”

For Plamenatz (1973/1976: 33-35) Eastern nationalism was one

“of peoples recently drawn into civilisation hitherto alien to them, and whose ancestral cultures are not adapted to success and excellence ... This is the nationalism ... of peoples who come to be called ‘backward’. ... This ‘eastern’ nationalism (is) ... both imitative and hostile to the models it imitates, and is apt to be illiberal. ... Eastern nationalism is disturbed and ambivalent.”

For Rady (1993) the construction of East European national identities were ‘narrow in their definition’ and ‘incapable of accommodation’. For Shelton (1995: 263), East European nationalism was combatively chauvinistic, furtively or openly xenophobic and possessing feelings of insecurity. For Vincent (1997: 277), “it is Eastern nationalism which has given nationalism a bad press in the twentieth century.” ¹¹

The First World War (WWI) defeat of the Axis powers and the Bolshevik 1917 Revolution heralded the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian, German and Russian multi-national empires and resulted, in part thanks to President Wilson’s belief in nation-states and national

¹¹ Reinforcing the illiberal image of East European nationalism is the image presented of Herder. Herder, often described as the ‘father of cultural nationalism’, who influenced Polish romantic idealist nationalism, has, as Daniel Chirot points out, been unfairly portrayed as an ultra-nationalist, hostile to Learning and Reason. Herder, claims Chirot (1996: 6), was also demonised for anti-Semitism and as responsible for a kind of nationalistic particularism that has led to bitter national conflicts, not least those of the 20th century. Chirot gives as an example, Paul Rose’s *German Question/Jewish Question: Revolutionary Anti-Semitism from Kant to Wagner*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1990, 97-109. The philosopher and historian of ideas, Isaiah Berlin (1909-1997) argued that Herder and cultural nationalism had been misunderstood in the 19th century in the West. (See *Vico and Herder: Two Studies In the History of Ideas*. Hogarth Press: London, 1976).

self-determination, in a totally transformed post-WWI East European map and with the creation of new nation-states. However, Wilson's liberal intentions of a new post-WWI world order based on peace and justice ¹² did not result in liberal nationalisms prevailing within the region. Rather it helped fuel new illiberal agendas for East European nationalisms. In large part as a result of the Treaties of the 1919-1920 Paris Peace Conference, Poland regained her independence, Hungary lost about two-thirds of her lands and population (Laszlo 1987: 133) and Slovakia, which for the last millennium had been under the rule of the Hungarian monarchy (Hoensch 1987: 158), became part of a newly created independent Czechoslovakia.

Burgess (1998 Chapter 8) contends that because some forms of European nationalism gave rise to the atrocities of WWI and WWII, this shaped some Western negative perceptions of nationalism, particularly in its CEE forms. Vincent (1997: 277-278) argues that fascism shaped the historical context for the distinctions between

¹² In January 1918, Wilson presented his vision in a Fourteen Points address to the US Congress with points X and XIII directly relating to Central East Europe.

“X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development. ...

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations ... and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.”

(Source: <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/wilson14.htm>).

Eastern and Western nationalism drawn by Kohn and John Plamenatz (1912-1975) and others.¹³

Whether Burgess and Vincent's assertions are valid or not, what does appear to be clear is that several of those that compare Eastern and Western nationalism adopt a simplified bi-polar model. This model tends to portray the roots of Eastern nationalism as related more to culture/ethnicity/language and Eastern nationalism as tending to be illiberal. In contrast the roots of Western nationalism are portrayed to be related to the state and concepts of citizenship and Western nationalism is seen as tending to be liberal.

The thesis argues that Polish nationalism does not reflect this over-simplified picture. The mismatch arises insofar as Polish nationalism also has liberal strands that are underestimated. These liberal strands owe their roots in part to Western liberal influences upon the Polish Enlightenment and upon Polish positivism, to liberal aspects of 19th century Western and Polish romanticism (c. 1820-1860s) and to late 20th century papal political Catholicism.

¹³ Vincent argues that Kohn and Plamenatz had direct or indirect experience of the rise of national socialism in Germany and were deeply sensitive to the dangers of nationalism. Kohn was born in Prague. A WWI prisoner of war, he was exiled to Siberia until 1920. An active Zionist as a student, in the mid-1920s Kohn lived in Palestine, but left for the US, where he started teaching in the early 1930s. Plamenatz was born in Montenegro and came to England in 1919. It should be noted that Kohn locates German nationalism within Eastern European nationalism, while Plamenatz locates it within Western nationalism.

1.2.2 The Nature of CEE Political Catholicism

During the 19th century, papal Catholicism was the principal shaper of political Catholicism, with national hierarchies throughout the Catholic world tending to accept the views emanating from Rome. From the end of the 19th century, lay Catholicism made its own distinctive contributions to political Catholicism.¹⁴ During the second half of the 20th century, some national hierarchies preached a different political Catholicism than that emanating from the Vatican.

In the late 18th and the 19th century, there is little doubt that papal political Catholicism was illiberal. It sided with non-democratic absolutist governments and, as the evidence of its own promulgation clearly shows, was intolerant to other religious, moral and political opinions. Papal promulgation revealed anti-Semitism (Benedict XIV 1751: paras. 2-3) and a condemnation of freedom of conscience (Gregory XVI 1832b: para. 15) & (Pius IX 1864: Errors 15, 77 & 79). It banished to its *Index* important works expressing the new enlightened ideas of such political thinkers as Voltaire (1694-1778), Rousseau, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873).¹⁵ It condemned the emerging late 18th and 19th century liberal nationalisms that sought popular sovereignty and/or national self-

¹⁴ Chapter 2 will contend that in the Polish case, via its romantic poets, the contribution of lay Catholics to political Catholicism was even earlier.

¹⁵ For example, Voltaire's *Lettres philosophiques* (1734), Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1762), Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) and Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* (1848) were all banned. (Source: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/indexlibrorum.html>). It should be noted that Rousseau is also seen by many as an influence upon romanticism, which is often portrayed as an antidote to the Enlightenment.

determination, including French, Italian and Polish manifestations.¹⁶ It also condemned the emerging liberalism and its ideals. (Gregory XVI 1832b: paras 14-15) & (Leo XIII 1888: paras. 15 & 34). Its anti-communist credentials were long-standing and numerous. (Pius IX 1846: para. 16), (Pius IX 1849: paras. 18, 25 & 32), (Pius IX 1864: Part IV) and (Leo XIII 1878: paras. 2 & 10). Papal promulgation condemned others for their dogmatic certainty yet still believed that Roman Catholicism alone possessed the *Absolute Truth* and, that its pope, on occasion, was infallible. (Vatican I 1870: Chapter 4).

Towards the end of the 19th century, papal political Catholicism was less inclined to merely condemn the new liberal impulses. Instead papal encyclicals began at least to address some of the liberal issues that had dominated the century and to put forward their own alternatives. Leo XIII (1891), for example, sought alternative solutions to social problems including the poor conditions of the working classes. Still wary of the emerging liberal democracy however, Leo XIII (1891: paras. 6, 31 & 32) sought a *third way*

¹⁶ For example, the 1789 French Revolution, in part a product of the emerging liberal nationalism that sought to establish the Enlightenment ideals of popular sovereignty and subordinate the Catholic Church to the state, was denounced by Pius VI (1775-1799) in 1791, as unholy. Pius VI also rejected the Revolution's 1790 *Constitution civile du clergé* that demanded an oath of fidelity to the state from the clergy. In 1848, Pius IX was forced to flee Rome when the Italian nationalist Mazzini established a short-lived Roman Republic. Polish nationalism was condemned in (Gregory XVI 1832a: para. 1) & (Leo XIII 1894: paras. 4 & 10-12). Following the first attempted Russian Revolution of 1905, Pius X (1903-1914) recommended to the Polish Catholics in the Russian Empire in his Encyclical Letter *Poloniae Populorum* that they should 'stand on the side of order', should not join the Socialist 'pernicious sect' and should have no contact whatsoever with 'parties of crazy people.' (Stehle 1981: 13).

between what he saw as the excesses of liberal democracy and communism. As European fascism rose in the 1920s-1930s, papal political Catholicism sought an accommodation with it,¹⁷ in part attracted by fascism's vehement anti-communism, which it also still shared (Pius XI 1937b). (Pius XI 1931) deals with the relation of civil society to the state and proposes (para 95) a fascist-influenced *third way* corporatist model. During WWII, Pius XII failed to denounce publicly the Nazi atrocities, not least the Holocaust.¹⁸

In the last decades of the 19th century, lay Catholics across Europe began to openly link their religious faith with a commitment to many of the political values of liberal democracy. By the early 20th century, therefore, with the role of lay Catholicism coming increasingly into play, political Catholicism featured both liberal and illiberal features. This duality is well encapsulated by the Irish Marxist leader of the 1916 Easter Uprising, James Connolly (1868-1916), who in 1913 wrote:

“Catholicism which in most parts of Europe is synonymous with Toryism, lickspittle loyalty, servile worship of aristocracy and hatred of all that savours of genuine political independence on the part of the lower classes, in Ireland is almost synonymous with rebellious tendencies, zeal for democracy, and intense

¹⁷ In 1929, Pius XI (1922-1939) signed a Lateran Pact with Benito Mussolini (1883-1945), in which the papacy recognised the state of Italy, with Rome as its capital, and Italy in return recognised papal sovereignty over the Vatican City. Until 1938, Pius XI maintained good relations with the Italian Fascist dictator. In 1933, Pius XI publicly praised Hitler for his stand against communism (Cook 1987/1998: 328) and the Vatican negotiated a Concordat with Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany. Pius XI also supported the Spanish dictator Francisco Franco (1892-1975) during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

¹⁸ See, for example, Hochhuth (1963/1964) and Falconi (1965/1970).

feelings of solidarity with all strivings upward of those who toil.”¹⁹

WWI accelerated the development of lay Catholic political action and the immediate post-war years witnessed a rapid upsurge in Catholic political movements, including the 1919 formation of the Italian *Partito Popolare (PPI)*. Molony (1977: 12) describes the *PPI* as a centre party “that was neither sufficiently anti-fascist for the left nor pro-fascist for the right.” He claims that the Italian fascist state and the Vatican worked hand in hand to help destroy it.

The aforementioned upsurge owed much to a new mood of confidence among the Catholic laity, resulting in a flourishing of a Catholic component to civil society in the form of not only Catholic political parties and Catholic associations, but also via *Catholic Action* and an *ostentatious Catholicism*²⁰ that, as future chapters will show, could with its close association with myths, symbols and rituals, be deployed to propagate and adapt political cultures.

Lay political Catholicism was greatly fuelled by the inter-war personal Thomism of lay Catholic French intellectuals, such as Emmanuel

¹⁹ ‘Catholicism, Protestantism and Politics.’ *Forward*, 3 May, 1913. (Source: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/connolly/1913/05/cathprot.htm>).

²⁰ Catholic Action was a key expression of Pius XI’s belief, as promulgated in his 1922 encyclical *Ubi Arcano Dei* that Catholicism must assert its ascendancy over the values and structures of state and society. Catholic Action movements of the Catholic laity, acting under the leadership of the clergy, spread rapidly to countries of Europe during the 1920s to bring about a re-Catholicisation of modern life. (Buchanan 1996: 21-22). The ostentatious political Catholicism sought to challenge publicly the secular character of modern life by propagating a distinctively Roman form of religious piety.

Mounier, Jacques Maritain, and Étienne Gilson. Their personal Thomism advocated an active political role for Catholics and sought the liberation of the individual from the twin perils of the totalitarian state and the *anomie* of liberal society. Unlike papal political Catholicism's *third way*, personal Thomism's *third way* strove neither to be associated with the fascist right nor the communist left (Buchanan 1996: Chapter 1).

Of the newly independent post-WWI countries in the CEE region, Catholicism was the majority religion in Poland (Davies 1981b: 404), in Hungary (Laszlo 1987: 133), and in Czechoslovakia, especially Slovakia (Hoensch 1987: 158). The Catholic Churches in these three countries, in tune with the illiberal Vatican, were all illiberal. What distinguished them was only the extent of their illiberality, with Poland the least, and Slovakia the most extreme.

During the inter-war period the rhetoric of many within the Polish Episcopate, led by Primate August Hlond (1881-1948), was similar to that of Dmowski's National Democrats, deploying enemy mythology in the form of blaming foreigners, Jews, Masons and the communists for worsening economic conditions.²¹ In evoking such mythology, the enemies would often be merged together to give hybrid dual-enemy myths. Hlond evoked both the Jewish enemy and hybrid Jewish-Communist enemy myths. In keeping with popular perceptions, it is also clear that the Primate saw Jews as being different in terms of nationality also. There were not Jewish Poles but only Jews and Poles. In a 1936 Pastoral letter Hlond wrote:

²¹ Osa (1995: 201).

““There will be the Jewish problem as long as the Jews remain ... It is a fact that the Jews are fighting against the Catholic Church, persisting in free thinking, and are the vanguard of godlessness, Bolshevism and subversion. ... It is a fact that the Jews deceive, levy interest, and are pimps. It is a fact that the religious and ethical influence of the Jewish young people on Polish people is a negative one.””²²

Despite the Church holding many similar views to Dmowski, the Polish bishops mostly declined to publicly support the Dmowski nationalists. This was because they did not wish to harm their relationship with the regime of Józef Piłsudski (1867-1935) and the post-Piłsudski regime; a relationship that strengthened as the regime became more illiberal with Piłsudski's death. Despite the fact that some three million Polish Catholics also experienced the same war-time fate as the Jews, anti-Semitism within the Polish Church persisted in post-war Poland now under communist rule. Following the August 1945 Kraków and the July 1946 Kielce pogroms,²³ Hlond showed that the Jewish enemy and Jewish-Communist enemy myths were still alive when he publicly declared:

““The fact that conditions for Polish-Jewish coexistence are worsening is to a great extent due to Jews ... trying to impose a system of government that a majority of society does not want.””²⁴

²² As cited by Szulc (1995: 41).

²³ See Chapter 3.

²⁴ As cited by Kwitny (1998: 94).

In Hungary, where some two-thirds of the population was Catholic (Laszlo 1987: 133), the Church supported the *Old Right* authoritarian regime that came to power in 1919 and represented the interests of the landed nobility. Most of the Church clergy participated in the anti-Semitic hysteria fuelled by the *communist* = *Jew* myth that followed the brief 1919 soviet republic. Leading Churchmen advocated restrictive measures against the Hungarian Jews (Laszlo 1987: 119). The Church also showed their sympathy for Mussolini and the fascism of the *New Right* that had prevailed in Italy in 1922.²⁵ Many Hungarian Catholics also considered fascism as a more effective antidote to communism than the traditional parliamentary system. Many showed sympathy not only for the fascist dictatorship in Italy, but also for those in Spain, Portugal and Austria, where all four fascist regimes established occupational corporations in keeping with Pius XI's thinking.²⁶ (Laszlo 1987: 121-122). The Hungarian Church's reaction to the rise of Hitler and Nazism was more critical, particularly when the Reich took schools and other Catholic institutions away

²⁵ Mussolini was among the first to take up the Hungarian nationalist cause of regaining lands lost as a result of the Paris Conference's 1920 Trianon Treaty and the Italian dictator gained much credit amongst Catholics for recognising the sovereignty of the Vatican in the 1929 Lateran Pact.

²⁶ Pius XI (1931: paras. 93-95) envisaged his occupational corporations thus:

“The ... corporations, are composed of delegates from the two syndicates (that is, of workers and employers) respectively of the same industry or profession and, as true and proper organs and institutions of the State, they direct the syndicates and co-ordinate their activities in matters of common interest toward one and the same end ... Strikes and lock-outs are forbidden; if the parties cannot settle their dispute, public authority intervenes ... The various classes work together peacefully, socialist organizations and their activities are repressed, and a special magistracy exercises a governing authority.”

from the German Catholic Church. The Hungarian Church and the Hungarian *Catholic Action* press widely propagated Pius XI's encyclical (1937a) that condemned the German Reich's persecution of the German Church and the Nazi teachings as contrary to natural law and Christian teaching. The Hungarian Primate protested strongly at the government's 1941 decision to enter WWII on the side of Germany. (Laszlo 1987: 122-123). The Church, however, persisted in its anti-Semitism and helped enact 1938 anti-Semitic legislation (Laszlo 1987: 127).²⁷ In March 1944 Germany occupied Hungary and a German puppet-government was established within which from October 1944 to April 1945 the Hungarian fascist Arrow Cross grouping prevailed. When the government started to round-up Hungarian Jews for deportation as part of *The Final Solution*, the Papal Nuncio in Budapest immediately protested.²⁸ The Hungarian Church, preferring to negotiate with the government, was more tardy in issuing a Pastoral Letter of public protest, by which time about half a million Hungarian Jews had been deported to their death (Laszlo 1987: 129).

The picture of political Catholicism in Slovakia was even more starkly illiberal than in Hungary and more closely linked with extreme illiberal nationalism in the form of *clerical-fascism*. In 1919, the Slovak People's Party (*HSL*) under the leadership of the Catholic

²⁷ The bishops were ex-officio members of the Upper House of the Hungarian Parliament.

²⁸ The Nuncio, Monsignor Angelo Rotta, mounted an international rescue effort and intervened daily on behalf of the persecuted. Pius XI sent a personal letter to the Hungarian Regent Horthy (March 1920-October 1944) to persuade him to halt the deportations. (Laszlo 1987: 129-130).

priest Father Andrej Hlinka (1864-1938) unsuccessfully demanded of the Czechoslovakian Republic government recognition of Slovak national identity, of cultural autonomy and of self-government within the Republic (Hoensch 1987: 158). The Catholic Church was directly involved in the governing of Slovakia with, in 1938, well over a quarter of the Slovak State Council seats occupied by priests (Hoensch 1987: 161). At the end of 1938, Czechoslovakian left-wing parties and trade unions were banned and the remaining political organisations within Slovakia were merged in the single Slovak People's Party - Party of Slovak National Unity under the motto *One God, One People, One Party!* (Hoensch 1987: 174). It was not until spring 1939 that the Slovaks gained national self-determination of a kind, when under pressure from Hitler, Slovakia declared its independence. Hlinka's successor and the new leader of Slovakia was another Catholic priest Monsignor ²⁹ Jozef Tiso (1887-1947). The *HSL* was the only significant factor in the formation of 1939-1944 domestic policy within the 'Protectorate of Slovakia', essentially a German puppet-state. The *HSL* newspaper propagated its combination of Catholicism and nationalism with its slogan *For God and the Nation* (Hoensch 1987: 165). Despite Tiso's denial that fascism and national socialism influenced his ideology, barely one third of the approximately 135,000 Slovak Jews survived the 'special treatment' of the German and Slovak governments. After 1939, a number of laws and decrees steadily deprived the Jewish population of their constitutional rights. In 1940 the Slovak authorities without hesitation agreed to German demands for Jewish deportations to Poland and to

²⁹ The title *Monsignor* is reserved for Bishops and Church officials of special importance.

their deaths. A 1941 Jewish codex provided the legal basis for the dispossession, ostracism, internment and finally extermination in 1942 of some 56, 000 Slovakian Jews. Only after repeated Vatican protests did the Tiso regime order a stop to the deportation of the few remaining Jews (Hoensch 1987: 176).

The picture of illiberalism emerging from the above explorations within CEE political Catholicism has to be qualified where CEE lay Catholicism is concerned. At the beginning of the 20th century the influence of West European neo-Thomism resulted in an intellectual renaissance amongst Polish lay Catholic intellectuals. The Polish Catholic intelligentsia, via journals such as the Jesuit *Universal Review* in Kraków, and via writers and theologians such as the neo-Thomist Jacek Woroniecki (1879-1949), dissociated themselves from clerical conservatism, godless socialism and illiberal nationalism. They took a neutral position in the debate between socialists and nationalists, between Piłsudski and Dmowski, between Left and Right. They were offended by the blasphemous messianic metaphors of some of the idealistic nationalists³⁰ and embarrassed by the xenophobic and frequently anti-Jewish utterances of some of the Dmowski-influenced nationalist chauvinists. Showing loyalty to Rome, they raised themselves above the petty concerns of national politics, and yet provided a distinct moral viewpoint on all the important issues.³¹ In the last few years of WWII, there was an important exception to this illiberal picture of Hungarian political Catholicism. In 1943, lay

³⁰ See Chapter 2.

³¹ Davies (1981b: 222).

Hungarian Catholic leaders of the Catholic mass movements³² created a Catholic Social People's Movement that was based on the ideas of Maritain. The Movement was a forerunner of the 1944 Christian Democratic People's Party and the two organisations joined the democratic resistance forces that opposed the 1944-1945 German occupation of Hungary (Laszlo 1987: 128).

The nature of political Catholicism post-1945

The influence of the French personal Thomists amongst European Catholics and of the behind-the-fascist-scenes work of lay Italian Catholics who had been active in *Catholic Action* and the *PPI* (Molony 1977: 199) contributed greatly to the emergence of a predominantly Catholic Christian Democracy seeking a *third way* between liberalism and communism as a major political force in West Europe after WWII. Almond (1948a: 131-132) notes that by August 1948, the Christian Democratic parties headed half of the key ministerial posts in five of the major West European countries.³³ Almond was also mindful that many still considered Catholicism as identified with anti-democratic forces. In (Almond 1948b: 762), he describes the Christian Democratic (CD) parties as having “a left-oriented elite but a primarily traditional and conservative rank and file.” The realities of holding power at the time of the Cold War

³² The two main organisations were the half-million strong Catholic Agrarian Youth League (*KALOT*) and the Association of Catholic Urban Workers (*EMSZO*).

³³ In Austria, Belgium, France, Italy and the Netherlands, Christian Democrats headed nine of the nineteen key ministerial posts, taken to be those of the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Ministers of the Interior and of Defence.

within a US-led essentially Western liberal democratic world, meant that Christian Democracy's *third way* in practice meant siding with liberal democracy against the perceived threat of Soviet communism.

Later, Hanley (1994: 3-8) writing of contemporary West European CD parties observes the difficulty of identifying their common elements given their wide range of political opinion and practice, but does identify some of their common features.

“Christian Democrats remain conscious of their religious roots first and foremost; they are in politics to express a Christian vision of humankind and its destiny.” (Hanley 1994: 4).

Paul Lucardie and Hans-Martien ten Napel in their chapter within (Hanley 1994) detected a drift among leading CD parties towards a neo-liberal orientation in policy and ideology. Commenting upon the fact that CD parties strive for a supra-national identity, Hanley acknowledges that their “tangible discomfort in the face of raw nationalism” is a feature they share with liberals.

“Christian Democrats recognise that humankind fulfils itself in different communities, one of which may well be the nation But equally they know the fine line that often separates genuine identification with one's nation from unwarrantable pride and chauvinism.” (Hanley 1994: 8).

The personal Thomists' liberating influence was also to express itself in the 1960s upon papal political Catholicism as manifested by the more liberal thinking of John XXIII (1958-1963), of Vatican II (1962-1965) and of Paul VI (1963-1978), and later, of John Paul II. Some of the proto-liberal seeds of influence were planted just after WWII in

Rome. Between 1945-1948, Maritain was France's ambassador to the Holy See and was a close friend of the future Pope Paul VI, Archbishop Giovanni Montini.³⁴ Both Montini and another future pope (John Paul II) Karol Wojtyła, then studying in Rome, were known to be sympathetic to Maritain's *third way* thinking (Szulc 1995: 145). The 1960s more liberal papal political Catholicism reflected a genuine concern for the *herenow* issues of human rights and social justice. It heralded a new *spirit of dialogue* to find solutions to world problems. This new spirit went beyond mere tolerance of belief systems such as Judaism and communism, hitherto considered anathema, and involved an open-minded dialogue with traditional 'enemies', including the Jews and communists.³⁵

One consequence of the new papal liberalisation was that some national hierarchies began in the 1960s-1970s to publicly voice political views independently of Rome. This autonomous stance expressed itself most vividly in Latin America. Here liberation theology reinvigorated not only the role played by lay Catholics and priests in politics, but saw several national hierarchies sever their traditional ties with the state, oppose their authoritarian regimes, and support the civil and human rights of the poor. However, these changes were not endorsed everywhere. Some Latin American national hierarchies still supported the military dictatorships (Gill 1994: 403 & 423) and a papal political Catholicism that despite its

³⁴ Montini was then an influential Vatican Under-Secretary of State and was much concerned with building a powerful Italian Christian Democratic Party.

³⁵ See Chapter 4 for a brief exploration of the Christian-Marxist dialogue.

increasing political liberalisation disowned liberation theology as it feared communism more than military dictatorships.

Few contemporary observers appreciated the major political implications that the 1960s' more liberal stance within papal political Catholicism was to have upon CEE politics. Huntington (1991/1993: 78fn.), for example, asserts that 'with rare exceptions' social scientists ignored the significance of Vatican II changes. Pre-1989 recognition of the implications of Archbishop Wojtyła being an important participant to the Vatican II liberalisation process,³⁶ (Kwitny 1998: 195, 197, & 200), (Walsh 1994: 30) & (Szulc 1995: 233), was even harder to discern.

1.2.3 Towards a Typology of Nationalism and Political Catholicism

Towards A Definition of Liberal and Illiberal Nationalism

Not all depictions of East European nationalism were illiberal. Christensen and Bollerup (Bollerup 1997: 280), argue that it can be 'a positive force'.

"The idea of a nation-group provided the alienated East Europeans with an identity and a source of self-esteem when the hollowness of the identity as citizens in a so-called socialist or communist society was revealed. ... Nationalism is an inherently legitimate ideology as it builds on the basic liberal assertion that people should govern themselves."

³⁶ Wojtyła helped draft Vatican II documents on relations with non-Christian faiths (Vatican II 1965a) and on human dignity (Vatican II 1965b).

As Storey (2001: 70) reminded, one can distinguish

“between a nationalism which asserts cultural distinctiveness but which does not involve an assertion of national superiority and a nationalism which is chauvinistic ...(and) which asserts that one nationalism is superior to all others. ... Rather than being automatically associated with regression, nationalism might be linked to progressive democratization.”

Given the variety of quite fundamentally differing nationalisms in terms of attitudes to liberal democracy (Hutchinson 1994: 3) and methods deployed, the thesis accepts Smith’s contention (1996b: 386) “that the differences between nationalisms across periods and continents are too great to be embraced by a single Euclidean theory.” The thesis also accepts the arguments of Haymes (1997) that nationalism is a socially defined concept that varies according to situation and time, that its character is highly context-sensitive and that it is an evolutionary process.

Although the thesis accepts the 19th century connection between the spread of representative democracy in Western Europe and the rise of nationalism, the thesis is not arguing that there is a necessary link between democratic and nationalist ideas. Rather it agrees with the position adopted by Anderson (2000: 95-96):

“At a minimum democracy means self-rule and this is difficult to envisage without bounded communities for some purposes of government. How those boundaries should be drawn and what could hold people together within them in loyal support of democratic procedures in the absence of a national bond is not, at the moment, obvious.”

Wider domains of solidarity than the state as currently constituted may emerge that will provide the basis of sufficient loyalty and trust necessary for democracy but for the foreseeable future democracy is not ill served by liberal nationalism.

Plamenatz (1973/1976: 27) sees “no logical repugnance between nationalism and liberalism.” Goodwin (1982/1997: 261) argues that

“nationalism is best viewed as a myth, whose intrinsic vagueness makes it valuable to propagandists and opponents of the state; like a chameleon it changes to suit the context. Nationalism lacks the utopian element which inspires ideology. It can make no concrete proposals, other than the demand for the independence of the national unit, until it is united with a political ideology. ... Nationalism, then, does not necessarily culminate in liberalism and democratic beliefs, except in cases where the nationalist cause adopts one or both of these ideologies as part of its creed.”

In a similar vein, Freedman (1998: 759) argues that

“when nationalist ideas are found in host ideologies they reflect the features of the host. It is therefore more accurate to talk not of liberal nationalism but of the areas of nationalist discourse within liberal ideologies. ... (Nationality) cannot be removed from a constraining context of ‘equal justice’, ‘equal consideration’, ‘freedom’ and ‘concord’ that takes precedence over nationality. ... Nationalist concepts within liberal ideologies also reflect the universalism of liberalism. For liberals, nationalism has always included the bestowing of an equal right to national expression on a wide range of nations.”

Gamble (1981: 184-185) writes of the emergence in the late 18th century of a nationalism that was ‘a celebration of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity’.

“The ideal of the armed people in revolt against injustice and arbitrary power was the early liberal image of nationalism ... The idea developed that every nation had the right of self-determination. Such a doctrine pointed at the heart of the great absolutist empires.”

During the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries, liberal nationalism evolved to take on board the modern liberal concerns of multi-culturalism and multi-ethnicity, social justice for all with some degree of state intervention, and of checks upon the nation-state via supra-national organisations.

In the light of the above considerations *liberal nationalism*, which in accepting Goodwin and Freedman's arguments is now viewed more as *nationalist liberalism*, is defined as areas of nationalist discourse prevalent within 20th century modern liberalism that incorporate certain of the key universal values, including those of the French Revolution. The areas of discourse relate to:

- *Liberty*, taken to mean a belief in popular sovereignty and national self-determination, in the sense, respectively, of democratic rule by the will of the people and independence from foreign rule/coercion. Liberty also entails a belief in the freedom of all nations to seek self-determination and the need for international law, supervised by supranational bodies, as a counter-check upon any state abusing the liberty of individuals and nations.
- *Equality*, taken to mean a belief in human justice and rights for all citizens of all nations.

- *Fraternity*, taken to mean a belief in the solidarity with fellow nationals and a belief in the solidarity of nations.

Thus the view of modern liberalism as adopted by the thesis is a broad one that encompasses social democracy, in the more recent sense of the term.³⁷

Towards a Definition Of Illiberal Nationalism

Writing of why ethnicity is relevant to modern nationalism, Hobsbawm (1990/1994: 65 & 66) asserts

“visible differences in physique are too obvious to be overlooked and have too often been used to mark or reinforce distinctions between ‘us’ and ‘them’, including national ones. ... ‘Visible’ ethnicity tends to be negative, inasmuch as it is much more usually applied to define ‘the other’ than one’s own group. Hence the proverbial role of racial stereotypes. ... The ethnic-racial homogeneity of one’s own ‘nationality’ is taken for granted.”

Hobsbawm (1990/1994: 107-108) writes that approximately in the second half of the 19th century ethnic nationalism received much theoretical support by “the transformation of that central concept of nineteenth-century social science, ‘race’.” He argues there were two main factors at work.

³⁷ See (Goodwin 1997: 107). That is to say the thesis sees modern social democracy as practised by, for example the British Labour Party or the Polish Democratic Left Alliance (*SLD*), as attempting to give liberal democratic capitalism an acceptable human face by promoting a welfare state and a limited role for the state, including the regulation of the excesses and abuses of the market.

“On the one-hand the old-established division of mankind into a few ‘races’ distinguished by skin colour was now elaborated into a set of ‘racial’ distinctions separating peoples of approximately the same pale skin, such as ‘Aryans’ and ‘Semites’ On the other hand Darwinian evolutionism, supplemented later by what came to be known as genetics, provided racism with what looked like a powerful set of ‘scientific’ reasons for keeping out or even, as it turned out, expelling and murdering strangers.”³⁸

Greenfeld (1992/1995: 12) asserts “in ethnic nationalisms, ‘nationality’ became a synonym of ‘ethnicity’.”

Sugar (1995a: 20) depicts integral nationalism³⁹ as rejecting friendship with other nations, promoting jingoism, militarism and imperialism, and opposing personal liberties if they interfere with the aims of the state. Loyalty to the state comes before all other loyalties, and even religious considerations are subordinated to the ends of integral nationalism. Integral nationalism typically asserts ethnic or racial superiority of a particular group.

The definition of *illiberal nationalism/nationalist illiberalism* adopted here incorporates aspects of the particularistic values associated with ethnic nationalism and integral nationalism. *Nationalist illiberalism* is defined as areas of nationalist discourse prevalent within late 19th/early 20th century illiberalism inspired by the perception that the nation is under threat, either from within or from without. *Nationalist*

³⁸ Hobsbawm (1990/1994: 107-108) adds that anti-Semitism did not acquire a racial as distinct from a religio-cultural character until about 1880.

³⁹ The doctrine of integral nationalism was first formulated at the close of the 19th century by Charles Maurras, the leader of the *Action Française* movement.

illiberalism discourse deploys enemy myths that engender hatred by stereotyping ‘Other’ races or nations. Within *nationalist illiberalism* discourse there has to be an ‘Other’ to hate in order for a sense of ‘us’ to be created: some communities and nations have to be superior to others. Those in the ‘other’ group act as scapegoats for all the difficulties suffered by those in the ‘us’ group. The superiority complexes associated within nationalist illiberalism may lead to justifications for, and enactment of, imperial expansion. Within *nationalist illiberalism* the state has a predominant position, and language is sometimes “but an epiphenomenon, a reflection of race, the indisputable testimony of common descent.” (Greenfeld 1992/1995: 369).

Towards A Definition of Liberal and Illiberal Political Catholicism

Buchanan (1996: 2) provides the thesis with a definition of *political Catholicism* as political movements that claim a significant, although not necessarily exclusively, Catholic inspiration for their actions. Although this conception of political movements does not seek to include all Catholics who engage in political actions, it does seek to encompass not only the papacy and the national hierarchies but also lay Catholics whose faith influences their political beliefs and actions.⁴⁰ Goodwin (1982/1997: 36) identifies the ‘hallmark’ of the liberal as being “a concern with the limits of authority and opposition to state interference with individual activities.” Goodwin (1982/1997:

⁴⁰ Such lay Catholics are to be found principally amongst the intelligentsia and within political parties and a wide range of socio-economic organisations inspired by Catholicism.

36-46) outlines what she sees as the ‘ingredients of liberalism’ and includes toleration, freedom, consent, constitutionalism, the importance of the individual and of social justice. For Goodwin (1982/1997: 44) the liberal concept of tolerance entails that “society should accept a variety of religious, moral and political opinions, and that human and civil rights belong to all by virtue of their humanity.” Under the freedom banner, she observes (1982/1997: 41) “a pluralistic democracy is ... the political outcome of the liberal ideal of freedom.” She takes consent to convey “that government should be based on the consent of the people, which legitimizes it.” (Goodwin 1982/1997: 39). For Goodwin (1982/1997: 40 & 37), constitutionalism entails “some form of constitution that limits the power of government”, and the importance of the individual entails that:

“the individual person is to be regarded as inviolable, and all human life as sacrosanct; violence is therefore prohibited except in a war to preserve liberal society itself. This individualism is based on a morality which commands equal respect for all persons as moral beings with equal sensitivity.”

Finally, for Goodwin (1982/1997: 42) a liberal view of social justice is based upon a sense of deserving/meriting it.

The thesis adopts Buchanan’s definition of political Catholicism and uses it and many of Goodwin’s perceptions of liberalism to define *liberal political Catholicism* as the political Catholicism that propagates the liberal values of toleration, of a pluralistic democracy exercising limitations upon interference from the state, of respect for the individual and of social justice. Following on from this definition, *illiberal political Catholicism* is defined as the political Catholicism

that propagates the illiberal values of intolerance, authoritarianism with few restrictions upon the state, disrespect for the individual, and that is indifferent to the cause of social justice.

The definitions of liberal nationalism and liberal Catholicism adopted incorporate most of the key values that are part of a modern liberal democratic culture. However, individually these values are also to be found in other ideologies. Thus, for example, a belief in the value of social justice or in national solidarity is necessary but not sufficient to demonstrate that the belief is part of a modern liberal democratic political culture. For example, communists would also ascribe to social justice and fascists to national solidarity. However, if social justice and national solidarity are added to the other identified values within liberal nationalism and liberal political Catholicism as presented in this chapter - such as liberty, toleration, pluralistic democracy and respect for the individual - then a picture of a liberal democratic political culture emerges.

Whether one agrees with the contention of the thesis that the Polish opposition under communism in the main supported a liberal political culture may be, in part, a question of definitions. For example, Szacki cites, and implicitly agrees with, Father Jan Piwowarczyk, who in an 1985 *Znak* publication criticised the former Catholic MP and writer Stefan Kisielewski (referred to as Kisiel), a leading theoretician of the *Znak* movement.⁴¹ Piwowarczyk asserts:

⁴¹ Kisielewski (1911-1991) was also a renowned writer and a *Znak* MP (1957-1965).

“What Kisiel calls liberalism is not liberalism. One can call it the politics of emancipation, the postulate of human rights, free trade, the principle of private initiative, but this is still not liberalism. Liberalism is not only human rights, not only free trade and private initiative. It is something more and something different.”⁴²

The broad conception of liberal democracy as indicated in this chapter would concur with Kisielewski's view of liberalism. Agreement or disagreement with the contention may also be a question of differences in judgement as to where the prevailing balance lies between liberal and illiberal strands, undoubtedly both to be found within Poland's pre-1945 and post-1945 political cultures. Of course, it may also be partly due to differences of overall view. Szacki takes the view that

“In their fight against communism, even people of traditionally anti-liberal structures (such as the Roman Catholic Church) manifested clearly liberal tendencies by sometimes defending principles which they would have rejected in other circumstances.”⁴³

Szacki concurs with Ost's judgement of the pre-1989 Polish situation:

“the heart of the problem was state control ... the state's subsumption of society. When the enemy became the state, the opposition became liberal.”⁴⁴

⁴² Jan Piwowarczyk. *Spór o liberalizm* in his *Wobec nowego czasu*, Kraków, Znak, 1985, p. 270 as cited by Szacki (1995: 178-179).

⁴³ Szacki (1995: 73).

⁴⁴ David Ost. 'The Limits of Liberalism in Poland.' *Telos*, 1991. No. 89, p. 91 as cited by Szacki (1995: 73).

It is accepted that some dissident Catholics within the Polish opposition might not have recognised and/or been prepared to concede that their principles were liberal-influenced. For it is acknowledged that post-1950s there were still vestiges of the 19th century heritage of liberalism as an anathema within political Catholicism and that there were still strong critiques of what was perceived as certain acts of excessive individualism within liberalism. If one discounts *third way* or other authoritarian solutions, then, in post-WWII Europe, the only serious contender to communism was liberal democracy. In opposing communism one was *de facto* supporting liberal democracy.

Szacki casts doubts on the depth and sincerity of the coming together of the Polish Catholic Church and the secular left in the last years of communist-ruled Poland.⁴⁵ Szacki argues that their solidarity then was based on the expediency of fighting a common enemy. Szacki further contends that, after 1989, the dissident secular left/liberal ideal of an open pluralistic society based on the acceptance of different conceptions of truth was difficult to reconcile with the Catholic illiberal ideal of *Absolute Truth*. Szacki also argues (1995: 117) that the emergence of a proto-liberalism within the pre-1989 opposition fell short of a ‘mature liberalism’ as

“elements of liberal thinking were intermingled with elements of collective thinking, which finally gained the upper hand as the goal of independence became disseminated among the masses.”

⁴⁵ Szacki (1995: 190-194).

1.3 The Roles Of Nationalism, Political Religion And Political Culture Within The Democratisation Process

Four domains of democratisation literature were explored to establish what emphasises nationalism and ‘political religion’ and their relationship to the transformation of political culture were given within the democratisation process.⁴⁶ The domains explored were the functioning democracy, revolution, East European Study and transition literature.

1.3.1 The Contribution of The Functioning Democracy Literature

During the 1950s-1960s, stimulated by a mid-1940s-early 1950s wave of countries seeking to democratise,⁴⁷ a number of studies that focused on functioning democracies attempted to identify prerequisites for democracy. The literature had several weaknesses. Some of the studies assumed that the functionalist factors identified as necessary for a functioning democracy were the same as the genetic factors required to achieve democracy. However, as Rustow (1969/1970: 346) points out

⁴⁶ The exploration focused mainly upon the initial stage of democratisation up to the point of collapse of the non-democratic regime, where democratisation is taken to be “the overall process of regime change from beginning to end, including both stages of what are generally called ... ‘transition’ to a liberal democracy and its subsequent ‘consolidation’.” (Pridham 1994: 2).

⁴⁷ This wave is referred to by Huntington (1991/1993: 18) as the ‘second wave’. It includes Uruguay’s return to democracy during WWII; the democratisation processes promoted within West Germany, Italy, Austria, Japan and Korea, as a result of Allied occupation in WWII; Argentina, Columbia, Peru and Venezuelan 1945-1946 elections for popularly chosen governments; Brazil and Costa Rica’s shift to democracy in the late 1940s; and Turkey and Greece’s moves towards democracy in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

“the (functionalist) factors that keep a democracy stable may not be the (genetic) ones that brought it into existence: explanations of democracy must distinguish between function and genesis.”

The studies, and earlier ones such as (Weber 1904-5/1965) & (Tawney 1926/1933) that had explored the relationship between religion and the rise of capitalism, were mainly undertaken by American, British and German academics exploring Western democracies. Collectively, they tended to engender a positive bias towards Protestant values and/or Western circumstances. For Max Weber (1864-1920), Catholicism specifically did not lend itself to the rise of capitalism (Weber 1904/1965: 39-40). For Lipset (1959: 75) a certain level of modernisation ⁴⁸ was a prerequisite for democracy. Although the role of nationalism was not highlighted, the functioning democracy literature did, however, highlight the role of certain religions - Christianity and Judaism (Griffith 1956: 103) & Protestantism (Lipset 1959: 92-93) - diversity and conflict (Dahrendorf 1957/1967: 314) and civic culture (Almond 1963/1966: 493) as prerequisites for democracy. However, its principal message was that *Protestantism = rise of capitalism = modernisation = certain civic cultures = democracy*. ⁴⁹

⁴⁸ As expressed by certain levels of wealth, urbanisation, industrialisation and education.

⁴⁹ Huntington (1991/1993: 75) acknowledges the impact of the *Protestantism = democracy* equation that emerged from the functioning democracy and earlier studies. He observed that

“Historically, Protestantism and democracy were linked with each other. ... Catholicism was associated with the absence of democracy or with limited or late democratic development.”

1.3.2 The Contribution of The Revolution Literature

A second domain within the democratisation literature, the revolution literature, identified pre-conditions, often structural factors, necessary for revolutionary democratisation. The studies often associated democratisation with a political culture of opposition that was Marxist/left wing (Leiden 1968: 112), and that adhered to a physical force tradition (Calvert 1967: 1), (Huntington 1968/1996: 265), (Leiden 1968: 19 & 73), (Gurr 1970/1974), (Tilly 1975: 300), & (Goldstone 1987: 206). In addition some of the studies portrayed the political culture of opposition as driven by class conflict (Skocpol 1979: 5) and shaped by middle class/intelligentsia leadership (Leiden 1968: 95) & (Huntington 1968/1996: 300). The studies underestimate two major socio-political changes that occurred in the decades between the classical revolutions and subsequent revolutions that affected the nature of the political culture of opposition considerably. One change relates to the mismatch between theoretical Marxism and the practice of communism. The other change relates to the promotion of non-Marxist democratisation modes, a consequence, in part, of

However, Huntington (1991/1993: 77-78) goes on to argue that although until the 1960s this association between type of religion and democracy ‘seemed unchallengeable’:

“That is no longer the case. The third (democratisation) wave of the 1970s and 1980s was overwhelmingly a Catholic wave. ... Overall, roughly three-quarters of the countries that transited to democracy between 1974 and 1989 were Catholic countries. ... In the 1960s, the Church changed. ... These changes occurred at two levels. At the global level change was introduced by Pope John XXIII. ... Most important, however, the changes flowed from the Second Vatican Council, which he called.”

liberal nationalism and political Catholicism and in part of modern liberal state intervention mitigating the social injustices of *laissez-faire* capitalism.

Although neither the role of nationalism nor religion is highlighted, the revolution studies did at least emphasise the role of the political culture of opposition upon the democratisation process.⁵⁰

1.3.3 The Contribution of The East European Study Literature

The East European study literature explored the factors leading to the collapse of communism within the region.⁵¹ The literature predominantly employed a cross-country approach.⁵² It usually stressed short to medium-term factors, although some actors/observers, for example Dahrendorf (1990: 15), John Paul II (Bernstein 1996: 482) and Rakowski (Kwitny 1997/1998: 592), mentioned communism's inherent weaknesses/flaws, although they usually failed to elaborate on what these were. Most of the explanations were conjunctural, stressing a mixture of structural and actor-orientated factors. The literature highlighted the relationship

⁵⁰ However, few of the characteristic features of the political culture of opposition identified within the revolution literature, particularly the role of class conflict and the use of physical force, had much resonance with the political culture of opposition within post-1945 Poland.

⁵¹ A few other works, not strictly East European study literature, but nevertheless relating to democratisation of CEE countries, were also reviewed.

⁵² It should be noted that publications attributed to editors that purported to be comparative typically comprised country-specific chapters, with the contributing authors working to a common agenda, and the editors in their chapters making the comparisons across-countries.

between economic difficulties and increasing dissatisfaction/decreasing regime legitimacy, for example Sword (1990: 30), Pravda (1992b: ix), Schöpflin (1993/1994: 226), Lewis (1994: 227), Verdery (1996: 36-37), White (1993b: 8), Crampton (1997: 410), and Batt (1993: 205-206). The main, ostensibly actor-orientated factors emphasised the role of political leaderships, but with differing emphasis upon ruling and opposition elite actors and upon the extent that these actors were shapers of their environments. Some explanations, for example in (Bunce 1985: 2 & 46), (Kennedy 1988: 513-514), (Garton Ash 1988), (Kux 1991: 3), (Rakowski 1991: 246-253), and (Koslowski 1994: 218 & 236), were from a decline-of-(Soviet) Empire perspective, and Dawisha (1988/1990: 198) wrote of Mikhail Gorbachev's desire to 'de-Sovietise' Eastern Europe to facilitate 'the Europeanisation of the Soviet Union'.

Few East European studies highlighted the role of the political culture of opposition, not least its nationalist and politico-religious manifestations, within the democratisation process. As the historian Raymond Pearson (1995: 77) notes, some Western observers had persuasively argued that nationalism had been effectively contained by internationalist communism for forty years in East Europe. For example, both the historian Eric Hobsbawm and Ernest Gellner rule out a significant role for opposition nationalism in the democratisation process.

“The changes in and after 1989 were ... essentially not due to national tensions, which remained under effective control even where they genuinely existed, as in Poland.” (Hobsbawm 1990/1994: 167).

“This (East European communist) system had no very great difficulty in suppressing and containing nationalism ... it was not nationalism that brought it down.” (Gellner 1997/1998: 57).

When the role of political Catholicism is mentioned beyond Poland, it is usually as an institutional rather than a political cultural force, for example Huntington (1984: 207-208),⁵³ or the role of John Paul II as an elite actor is stressed. Lipset (1994), although now acknowledging the link between Catholicism and the 1970s-1980s democratisations, retains his modernisation stance by drawing attention to considerable post-WWII economic growth in many major Catholic countries. Schöpflin (1993/1994: 293) explicitly downplays the dissident role of both religion and nationalism within the political culture of opposition. “Neither religion nor nationalism was effective in mobilizing opposition to the existing regimes.” In contrast, Paul Lewis (1994: 263) describes the political culture of opposition that emerged in the 1980s as “often more a form of symbolic expression of national and religious sentiment (most notably in the archetypal emergence of Solidarity in 1980).” Many who stressed the role of the CEE political cultures of opposition were not, however, political scientists; for example, R. J. Crampton, Timothy Garton Ash, Peter Sugar, Raymond Pearson, Ladislav Holy, and George Weigel. The first four are all historians, Holy was a social anthropologist and Weigel is a Roman Catholic theologian. Crampton (1997: 414) argues that one factor “eating away at the vitals of the communist system was a desire for a fair and accurate interpretation of the national past.” Garton Ash (1990: 134 & 136) writes of the 1989 revolution being born as much

⁵³ It should be noted that subsequently Huntington (1991/1993) highlights other aspects of political Catholicism.

of hopes as of discontents and of its *inner history* being of “a set of ideas whose time had come, and a set of ideas whose time had gone.” Sugar (1995a: 429) asserts that “the ideology that made the defeat of communism possible ... was nationalism.” Pearson (1995: 69) writes of ‘the rising tide of nationalism’ during the final years of CEE communism. Holy (1996: 48) contends that nationalism was “the basis for the opposition to communism which culminated in its overthrow.” Finally, Weigel (1992: 34) argues that:

“The Revolution of 1989 was, at its heart, a triumphant revolution of the human spirit. ... The West has too often forgotten that politics is a function of culture, and that at the heart of culture is religion.”

1.3.4 The Contribution of The Transition Literature

A fourth domain within the democratisation literature, the transition literature, focused not upon structural factors but rather upon the processes leading to the 1970s-1980s transitions to democracy that occurred mainly in South America, Southern Europe and Central Eastern Europe. Some observers, for example Linz and Stepan (Linz 1996: 42), linked regime type with differing transition and consolidation pathways. In the CEE regimes of the 1980s, Linz and Stepan (1996: 56) argue there was some space for democratic political cultures of opposition to develop and impinge upon the regimes. *Reforma-pactada, ruptura pactada* was possible between authoritarian regime moderates and democratic opposition moderates or between

mature post-totalitarian regime leaders and the leaders of the incipient or democratic opposition.⁵⁴

1.3.5 Discussion: Similarities of East European and Transition Studies and The Overall Contribution of the Democratisation Literature

There were some similarities between the East European and the transition studies, particularly where the latter related to Central Eastern Europe. The transition study literature also predominantly employed a comparative approach, but across regions rather than countries. The transition studies, although primarily not concerned with possible structural factors leading to democratisation, also tended to identify short to medium-term demise factors. In consequence of the cross-regional/cross-country emphases in the East European and transition studies, both domains of literature sometimes produced not too insightful ‘common denominator’ general conclusions that neglected the differing country-specific impacts of present and past socio-economic, political and cultural factors.⁵⁵ Both domains

⁵⁴ Linz and Stepan (Linz 1996: 61) define *reforma-pactada, ruptura pactada* as the overall process that occurs when regime and opposition moderates make a pact to reform and eventually negotiations lead to an agreed rupture that allows for the dismantling of the non-democratic elements of the state.

⁵⁵ Some of the conclusions drawn by Pridham (1994: 7 & 263) illustrate this danger:

“There is no such phenomenon as a straightforward or easy transition to liberal democracy.” “External factors can hamper democratization ...or further democratization...Historical legacies and cultural factors may hamper or further democratization ... Several conjunctural factors may become crucial in the transition process. ...The success or failure of the transition to democracy seems to depend more on domestic conditions and

identified modernisation factors, for example Pye (1989/1990: 7) in the East European studies and Pridham (1994: 261) in the transition studies. Both domains stressed the significance of Gorbachev's role and/or his policies, for example, (Garton Ash 1990: 140), (Dahrendorf 1990: 13), (Pravda 1992c: 31), (Swain 1993: 189), (White 1993b: 9) & (Crampton 1997: 414) in the East European studies and (Przeworski 1991/1992: 5) in the transition studies.

In summary, although some of the works within some of the democratisation literature domains signalled the significance of the roles of nationalism, religion and political culture in the democratisation process, the literature did not provide a useful understanding of the relationship of nationalism and political religion to the mechanism of transformation of political culture.

1.4 Towards A Theoretical Framework: The Contribution of the Political Culture Literature

The East European study and transition literature in particular appeared to emphasise economic, political institutions and political actor factors largely denuded of a wider political cultural perspective. Consequently, the political cultural literature pertaining to Eastern Europe was next investigated.

The US political scientists Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba were among the first to introduce the concept of political culture to political

on leadership than on external pressure, except in the cases of complete or vital dependence on a foreign power.”

science in the mid-1950s. However, the application of political culture concepts to communist studies did not emerge until the late 1960s - early 1970s.

Two main areas of academic vulnerability of the political culture school relate to methodological problems and explaining the causal process by which political change takes place. (Eatwell 1997: 3-4). Some of the methodological problems stem from the complex subjective nature of political culture, however defined, resulting in neither qualitative nor quantitative methods ever proving completely satisfactory.

One of the main differences in the definitions of political culture emerging from the literature pertains to the inclusion of political actions as an inherent part of the definition. Almond defined political culture in terms of a 'pattern of orientations' where "every political system is embedded in a particular pattern of orientations to political action."⁵⁶ Similarly, Verba in (Pye 1965/1967: 513) defined the political culture of a society as comprising

"the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values which define the situation in which political action takes place. It provides the subjective orientation to politics."

Huntington (1975: 15) and Brown (1977/1979: 1) also excluded political behaviour/actions as an integral part of their political culture definitions. Others, for example White (1979: 1), widened the definition by incorporating overt political actions. The thesis, in

⁵⁶ G. Almond. 'Comparing Political Systems.' *The Journal of Politics*, 1956, 18, p. 396 as cited by Eatwell (1997: 1).

keeping with its definition of culture presented later in this chapter adopts the former approach. The thesis also perceives “political culture ... as that part of culture ... which bears relevance to politics.” (Brown 1984: 155). In other words, political culture is viewed as embedded within the overall cultural system. Huntington also reflects this embedded perspective when he observes (1984: 207):

“Political culture is, presumably, rooted in the broader culture of a society involving those beliefs and values, often religiously based, concerning the nature of humanity and society, the relations among human beings, and the relation of individuals to a transcendent being.”

This observation helps explain why the role of political religion impinges upon political culture. Narrower perspectives of political culture not so embedded as Huntington’s may explain why the role of religion has consistently been underplayed in American political science, as Eatwell (Eatwell 1997: 5) notes.

Tucker reflects a wider embedded perspective when he writes (Tucker 1987: 6) of the Communist party-state as a political cultural formation, and of “an orientation toward the study of political institutions, ideologies, practices, values, etc., as phenomena embedded in the larger cultures of particular societies.” Tucker’s political cultural formation of institutions approach suggests it may well be useful to apply such a perspective when looking at some of the key Polish institutions responsible for the creation of Polish regime and opposition political culture. The thesis adopts this approach with regard to the Catholic Church, the Polish communist Party-State and *Solidarity*.

The definition of culture adopted is a broad one taken to be “the total way of life of a people, the social legacy the individual acquires from his group. ... Culture is a way of thinking, feeling, believing. It is the group’s knowledge stored up ... for future use.” (Kluckhohn 1949: 17 & 23). The thesis accepts Kluckhohn’s (1949: 28) premise that “every culture embraces those aspects of the past which, usually in altered form and with altered meanings, live on in the present.” It also, in agreeing with Kluckhohn (1949: 38) that “knowledge of a culture makes it possible to predict a good many of the actions of any person who shares that culture,” maintains that an understanding of a political culture facilitates prediction of certain political actions of those that share that political culture. Thus the embedded political culture definition adopted is the legitimate concern not only of political science, but also of historical, anthropological and sociological disciplines. Both Brown (1984: 155) and Eatwell (1997: 8) lend support to the interdisciplinary approach.⁵⁷

Given the research’s key concern about the role of political culture in the democratisation process, the issues of how political cultures change and whether political culture can help explain the causal process by which democratisation takes place are critical ones. Huntington (1975: 18) argues that “political cultures rarely give way completely to the new, no matter how ruthless the impact of innovation.” Political culture, he asserts (1975: 32), “tends to resist change and, when it changes, it does so more slowly than ideologies

⁵⁷ A further justification of an interdisciplinary approach is the inherently complex nature of political Catholicism and of nations and nationalisms. As Hutchinson (1994: 3) points out “the study of nations and nationalism cannot be confined to a single disciplinary perspective.”

may desire.” Gray, citing Poland as an example, concludes (Gray 1977/1979: 272) that in those countries that in the past had experienced “the fruitful play of competing ideas and competing interests”, the communist experience

“has not weakened but actually strengthened the conviction among the population that political freedom brings both justice and greater efficiency.”

Writing later, Huntington sees an association between democratisation and cultural factors. Of the ‘factors or preconditions’ that appear to be associated with democratisation, he says (1984: 198) that “to a large extent these factors can be grouped into four broad categories - economic, social, external and cultural.” Later on (1984: 207) Huntington contends: “significant differences in their receptivity to democracy appear to exist among societies with different cultural traditions.” McAuley notes (1984: 23) that if it is to be argued that past culture is a crucial factor in forming present culture, then, it is necessary to trace the process by which perceptions are transmitted over time. Part 1 of the thesis argues that pre-1945 Poland can hardly be characterised as experiencing “the fruitful play of competing ideas and competing interests” and yet agrees with Gray’s above-mentioned observation about the post-1945 strengthening of a liberal political culture.

The thesis accepts Huntington’s observation of the disinclination of political culture to easily change and yet argues that the prevailing pre-WWII illiberal political culture did, post-1945, as adopted by the opposition, liberalise. It therefore remains to find a conceptual tool that can explain how political culture, so often associated with

emphasising the continuity of power and traditions, can explain democratic change.

In summary, although the political culture literature provides useful definitions and convincingly makes the case for an embedded view of political culture within a broadly defined wider culture, it does not provide critical insights into the transforming dynamics of political culture that are necessary to investigate its liberalisation.

1.5 The Theoretical Framework: Myths As A Key Tool

1.5.1 The Contribution of the Nationalism Literature

Some of the works within the nationalism literature - for example, (Barczewski 2000) ⁵⁸ - argued the existence of a close relationship between myths and religious and national identity beliefs. It was therefore decided to explore the role of myths as depicted in the nationalism literature to see if myths might provide the sought-after theoretical framework for understanding how nationalism and political Catholicism contribute to the dynamics of political culture within the democratisation process.

⁵⁸ Barczewski (2000) identifies in the legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood two myths that played an important role in the 19th century construction of British national identity.

The Relationship Between Myths and the Nation, Nationalism and Religion

For some that compared Western nation with the Eastern/East European nation, for example Sugar (1967/1971b: 10), the Eastern/Eastern European nation, in particular, was founded ‘out of myths of the past and the dreams of the future.’ Smith (1995/1996a: 359) sees the nation as sharing common myths. Smith asserts (1996b: 385-386) that there is ‘considerable evidence’ that modern nations are in part created out of pre-existing origin myths, and that pre-modern *ethnies* bequeath to modern nations, a fund of myths.⁵⁹ Davies (1997: 141) observes that some nations have more need of myths than do others and that defeated nations invent myths to explain their misfortune and to assist their survival.⁶⁰

Schöpflin (2000: 80) defines a myth as a set of beliefs, usually put forth as a narrative, held by the community about itself. Myths are, he observes, about perceptions and not ‘historically validated truths’. Using Schöpflin’s definition, a national myth is defined within the thesis as a myth where a significant proportion of the community, perceived as the nation, holds a set of beliefs and/or of emotions that relates to its national identity. Schöpflin (2000: 81) depicts the relationship between myths, rituals, and symbols thus:

⁵⁹ He made a similar argument in (Smith 1986/1995).

⁶⁰ Davies (1997: 141) suggests that Poles may fall into this latter category “as political adversity over many generations seems to have created the sort of imaginative climate in which myths can flourish.”

“Myth is the narrative, the set of ideas, whereas ritual is the acting out, the articulation of myth; symbols are the building blocks of myth and the acceptance or veneration of symbols is a significant aspect of ritual.”

Rituals and symbols are therefore devices that can be used to propagate myths. The close relationship between myths and nationalism and religion is illustrated by Schöpflin (2000: 90-97), who describes a number of common myths that can be found all over the world, but ‘notable in Central and East Europe’. Amongst those Schöpflin depicts that have a particular resonance with the concerns of this thesis are those that may be loosely categorised as myths initially generated first by state- and then by nation-building contexts and another set that may be loosely categorised as myths initially generated by political Catholicism/Christianity. The themes of hopes to be fulfilled and evil enemies to be banished by saviours are to be found in several of these two sets of myths. The myths within the first set are:

- *Myths of military valour* that reflect the special regard in which a collectivity holds itself because of its deeds of military valour and resistance. These myths are sometimes linked to the idea of insurrection or revolution.
- *Myths of foundation* that highlight a particular moment that deserves special note in order to point to the future. They suggest that afterwards everything will be better and that the newly founded system has dispensed with whatever made the old reprehensible.

- *Myths of territory* that claim that there is a particular territory where the nation first discovered itself, assumed the form it aspired to, or expressed its finest self.
- *Myths of ethnogenesis* that claim that because a particular ethnic group was there first, that group has a superior right to that territory over all others.
- *Myths of kinship* that are linked to the organic nature of the ethnic group, to the concept of the nation as a family.⁶¹

The myths within the second set are:

- *Myths of rebirth and renewal* that reflect the Christian idea that the present is tainted and must be cleansed and through that purgation a better world can be created.
- *Myths of redemption and suffering* that claim that the nation is undergoing or has undergone a process of expiating its sins and will be redeemed or, may itself redeem others.⁶²

⁶¹ One of the functions of these kinship myths is to impose a set of moral propositions on a group that is in the process of being welded into a nation. These myths work to exclude ethnic aliens and sometimes evolve into myths of racial superiority.

⁶² The prevalence of these myths in Eastern Europe, Schöpflin (2000: 90-97) argues, can be explained by the legacy of Christianity in conjunction with a sense of geographical, political and cultural marginalisation.

- *Antemurale christianitatis myths* that claim that the nation fought against paganism and other non-Christian ‘faiths’ beyond the borders of Europe to save Europe and its Christian civilisation, and in doing so nearly bled to death.
- *Myths of election* that are of Christian origin and claim that God or History has chosen a particular nation and entrusted it with a special mission because it is endowed with unique virtues.

The thesis will show how these two sets of myths, which for shorthand purposes will be designated as national and Catholic myths respectively, were adapted and used to foster a liberal political culture of opposition via a synthesis of liberal nationalism and liberal political Catholicism within 1945-1989 Poland.

In summary, the nationalism literature proved useful in helping to furnish definitions of liberal and illiberal nationalism and in highlighting the linkage between myths and the nation, nationalism and religion. Both the political Catholicism and nationalism literature highlighted a need to be aware of the evolutionary, contradictory and complex liberal and illiberal natures of both political Catholicism and nationalism, shaped by the specific wider social and cultural contexts within which they operated. Although a useful conceptual key for the research in myths was provided by the nationalism literature, an understanding of its mechanism in relation to the dynamics of the political culture and democratisation processes was still missing.

Therefore the social anthropological literature on myths was explored in the hope that it might provide the crucial insight.

1.5.2 The Contribution of the Social Anthropological Literature

A few works, some already mentioned, have explored aspects of the political role of myths and/or symbols within Polish 1945-1989 politics. (Davies 2001b) ⁶³ is a chapter on Polish national mythology that comprises various unconnected short accounts of pre-1945 myths, with a single post-1945 exception where Davies looks at the mythology surrounding the 1952 Polish Constitution. Apart from one instance, in looking at the pre-1945 myths Davies does not follow them through to any post-1945 manifestations. Mach (1985) in an article that looks at some Polish national symbols, traces their pre-1945 genesis and gives examples of their post-1945 usage. (Plewa 1992) and (Kubik 1994) are the most extensive of these works focusing on Poland. Plewa (1992) adopts an interdisciplinary approach and focuses upon two myths deployed by the opposition during 1980-1983 and also provides some useful definitions of some of the functions of myths. ⁶⁴ Kubik deploys an anthropological perspective and focuses on the role of symbols within the regime hegemonic and opposition counter-hegemonic discourse of the 1970s and within *Solidarity*.

⁶³ Davies (2001b) is a Polish version of the Davies (1997) chapter, which in turn was based on a 1996 Milewski Lecture given in New Britain, Connecticut.

⁶⁴ The miracle and insurrection myths and the functions of consolidating, integrating and mobilising.

From about the mid-1980s, a few works from the social anthropological literature, and in particular Kertzer (1988), significantly contributed towards understanding the mechanism of political cultural change. Before that mechanism is explored, the definitions of symbols and rituals provided by the literature and adopted in the thesis are presented. Symbols are defined as:

“objects, acts, relationships or linguistic formations that stand *ambiguously* for a multiplicity of meanings, evoke emotions, and impel men to action.” (Cohen 1974: 23).

Ritual is defined as symbolic behaviour that is socially standardised and repetitive (Kertzer 1988: 9).

The Relationship Between Myths and the Nation, Nationalism and Religion

The social anthropological literature, like the nationalism literature, also points to the close relationship between myths (together with their accompanying symbols and rituals) and nations, nationalism and religion. For Holy (1996: 3), myths, symbols and traditions make possible national identity. Kertzer (1988: 179) asserts that “without rites and symbols there are no nations.” He observes (1988: 178-179) that the struggle for national identity is waged in part through symbols and accompanying rituals. For example, the relationship between national identity and the symbolism as expressed by national flag, anthem and emblem and the accompanying rituals deploying these national symbols is very strong.

Doty (1986: 33-34) observes that myths very frequently feature the intervention of deities or forces from ‘another world’ discontinuous with this one. Kertzer (1988: 86) points out the potent effects of combining ritual with sacred symbolism by citing Clifford Geertz:

“‘It is in some sort of ceremonial form ... that the models and motivations which sacred symbols induce in men and the general conceptions of the order of existence which they formulate for men meet and reinforce one another.’”⁶⁵

Doty (1986: 33-34) asserts “myths typify qualities associated with highly marked experiences that indicate something transcending ... ordinary personhood .”

The transcendental characteristic of myths reinforces their relationship with religion. This and other characteristics and functions are now explored.

The characteristics and functions of myths, symbols and rituals

Amongst the key, often shared, characteristics of myths, symbols and rituals are the following: *universality*, *transcendentality*, *multivocality* and the ability to *adapt* their multivocality by acquiring new meanings.

⁶⁵ C. Geertz. ‘Religion as a Cultural System.’ (pp. 1-46) in Michael Banton (ed.) *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*. Tavistock: London, 1966, p. 28.

As already noted within the nationalist literature, the basic form of myths and some symbols is fairly universal and can be found in all parts of the world.⁶⁶

Myths are *transcendental* insofar as they answer to moral, spiritual, psychological, and/or emotional needs, and because they transcend human empirical experience, imparting a sense of destiny by giving meaning to the past, present and future.

A consequence of *multivocality* is that the same myth/symbol is understood in different ways. In consequence people with different understandings can be united by identifying with the same myth/symbol. The *multivocality* of symbols can be *adapted*, for as Holy (1996: 131) points out, “symbols serve as vehicles for meaning through their linkage to other symbols” and thus “their meanings can be altered by explicitly linking them to different symbols.” Holy (1996: 131) argues that this adaptation facility means that oppositions, by altering meanings, can contest the authenticity of the myths of those in power. Kertzer (1996: 8) explores how political symbols are constructed and altered, and how people come to recognise certain symbols as legitimate and other as illegitimate. The exploration rests, on the assumption that “political perceptions...are symbolically constructed” and that “people are as driven by emotion as they are by any dispassionate calculation of personal interest.”

⁶⁶ Myth, asserts the German philosopher and educator Ernst Cassirer (1874- 1945), “is a common element in human life that appears, in a similar shape, under the most various and divergent conditions.” (Cassirer 1945/1979: 244). Edelman writes of omnipotent hero-saviours and conspiratorial enemies as being the central archetypal myths. M. Edelman in *Politics as Symbolic Action*. Markham: Chicago, 1971.

Amongst the key, often shared, functions of myths, symbols and rituals are their *transmitting, condensation of meaning, morale-enhancing, solidarity creating, motivating, mobilising, legitimising* and *explaining* functions.

Their *transmitting* function is linked to the ability of myths and symbols to acquire new meanings, and means that myths and symbols from the past can and do re-emerge and carry new interpretations of contemporary events.⁶⁷ Mythical realities, Kubik (1994: 133) observed, also:

“have ... a tendency to force themselves back into history and influence its course as powerful metaphors, endowing historical situations with meaning .”

A consequence of the *condensation of meaning* function is that myths and symbols can embody and bring together diverse ideas. Often they condense meaning into simplistic profane and sacred divisions. Cassirer (1944/1979: 238) writes that a myth

“conceives the world as a great drama - as a struggle between divine and demonic forces, between light and darkness, between good and evil. There is always a negative and positive pole in mythical thought and imagination.”

⁶⁷ For example, the regime banning of a symbolic emblem or hymn can give the symbol new meaning.

Myths, symbols and rituals *enhance morale* by giving confidence or hope, or by helping to overcome grief or adversity. Cassirer (1944/1979: 238) asserts that

“one of the oldest and most widespread motifs in all the mythologies of the world is the idea of the ‘millennium’ - of a period in which all hopes shall be fulfilled and all evils shall be removed.”

Symbols and rituals, insofar as they become dominant, can give one confidence that one is seeing the world as it really is.

“It is hard to argue with a flag ... ; hard to argue with a song ... ; and hard to argue with the view of the world embodied in the funeral rites of a popular leader.” (Kertzer 1988: 184).

Their morale-enhancing function is linked to the function of myths, symbols, ⁶⁸ and especially rituals that serves to *create solidarity* within a community. Kertzer (1988: 62) convincingly argues that “the rites of social communion not only express innate strivings for social solidarity, but also do much to build and renew them.” ⁶⁹ Mass rituals, such as rallies, for example,

“have powerful effects on the participants, increasing their identification with the group and reinforcing their opposition to the foes that are symbolically represented in the demonstration.” (Kertzer 1988: 119).

⁶⁸ For example, the wearing of the same symbolic badge may serve this purpose.

⁶⁹ In this he concurs with Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), who, in formulating his influential theory of social cohesion, emphasised the key role of ritual in producing and maintaining solidarity.

Because ritual is about common participation and emotional argument and not about the specific rationalisations by which one accounts for it, the ritual by transcending its ideological context can serve to produce bonds of solidarity without requiring uniformity of belief. (Kertzer 1988: 45 & 67).

The principal role of myth, argues Cassirer (1944/1979: 237) “is to arouse emotions and to prompt man to certain actions.” The *motivating* and *mobilising* functions of myths can be engendered through the activation of collective memory. Martyrs, unknown soldiers, uprisings and wars are powerful symbols that, through their association with the symbolism of death and the ritual of annual commemoration, can constantly revive the collective ideals of the community. Thus myths and symbols call for a repetition of deeds (Plewa 1992: 16), often through ritual.

Myths, symbols and rituals *legitimise* not only those in power,⁷⁰ but also those challenging/seeking power. Kertzer (1996) looks at how the Italian Communist Party (*PCI*) used myths, symbols and rituals to legitimise itself and its ideology.

Through ritual, nationalist, religious, and other ‘political’ forces seek popular legitimacy by identifying with powerful symbols. Kertzer, (1988: 45) argues that as many of the most powerful symbols of legitimacy are of religious origin, it is unsurprising that

⁷⁰ Durkheim argued that rituals serve to re-enact central values and norms guiding society at large, and to legitimise political systems and political power holders.

“new political forces eagerly rummage through the pre-existing body of religious rituals and symbols to find those that will enrich their own ritual forms.”

Kertzer adds that such legitimation is not limited to cases where the political and religious goals are identical. Ritual, Kertzer contends (1988: 42), is important to the forces of political change just *because* of its conservative properties. These forces can borrow legitimacy from the old by nurturing the old ritual forms, redirected to new purposes.

The *explanatory* function of myths and symbols contributes to the formation or re-enforcement of belief systems and actions. It does this by helping to deal with the chaos and complexity of human experience and put it into a coherent framework by creating a world where the causes are simple and the remedies are apparent. (Kertzer 1988: 8 & 84). Myth, asserts Cassirer (1945/1979: 249), “becomes an interpreter of rite: it enables man to understand what he does.”

Kertzer (1988: 99) observes that rituals do not simply excite, they also instruct with the potency of that instruction depending heavily on the power of ritual to place the individual in a receptive frame of mind.

Myths serve to explain, regardless of whether or not they are based on ‘historically validated truths’. Cassirer (1944/1979: 237) asserts that “to inquire into the ‘truth’ of post-19th century political myths is meaningless, for they are weapons and weapons prove their truth by their efficiency.

The Political Potency of Myths, Symbols and Rituals

The aforementioned characteristics and functions all contribute to myths, symbols and rituals being politically very potent. Part of the political struggle is a struggle over the dominant symbolic paradigm, the struggle for symbolic hegemony.⁷¹ As Holy (1996: 33 & 43) argues, the political significance and potency of symbolic and ritualistic actions of opposition within East European communist-ruled countries, where the official political processes strove to prevent the open formulation of political alternatives, was much greater. Religious rituals, for example, could allow mobilisation where other forms of more explicit political protest were not allowed.

Although the political potency of myths is relevant to the concerns of the thesis, the prime importance for the thesis of the social anthropological insights into myths (and their accompanying symbols and rituals) is that the literature provides explanations for their

⁷¹ Cassirer (1944/1979: 236) writes forcefully of the political potency of the myth. Cassirer, ousted from his teaching post at Hamburg University in 1933 as Hitler came to power, argues “the invention and the skilful use ... of the technique of political myths - decided the victory of the Nationalist Socialist movement in Germany.” Writing of the Nazi’s myth-making of the Jews as a maleficent and Satanic force, he argues (1944/1979: 238-239) that in such myth-making one is encountering something much worse than anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism has ‘existed at all time’,

“but it cannot account for the specific methods of the German anti-Jewish propaganda. What was proclaimed here was a mortal combat - a life-and-death struggle which could only end with the complete extermination of the Jews.”

Kertzer (1996), gives examples of the *PCP*’s manipulation of symbols in ritual contexts, such as public commemorations and anniversaries, and the *PCP*’s use of military valour, hero and enemy myths and symbols in inventing history.

relationships with political culture and with the mechanism relating to the dynamics of political culture and democratisation. The literature explains how their characteristics and functions enable myths, symbols and rituals to serve as vehicles for nationalist and religious political beliefs, values, and emotions, and thereby for political culture and for the political actions it induces. The transmitting function and the adaptability of the multivocality characteristic of myths and symbols meant that the pre-1945 beliefs, values, and emotions could be transmitted and adapted to the post-1945 context. The extension of the multivocality and legitimising attributes of myths and symbols facilitates the adaptation of political culture. These attributes allow new liberal democratic meanings to myths and symbols and yet at the same time permit them to retain legitimacy associated with the continuation of past less liberal traditions. This partly explains why political culture, usually perceived as explaining aspects of continuity, can also explain aspects of ‘adapted continuity’.

1.6 Locating The Polish Case

In order to locate the Polish case within a wider context, a summary of recent Polish history and a brief assessment of how the 20th century Polish political scene compares with that of other CEE countries are presented.

1.6.1 Poland under Foreign Rule: The Late 18th Century to 1918

Andrzej Walicki takes issue with some of the perceptions of East European nationalism and nation-building as they pertain to Poland, arguing that they are ‘simply wrong and misleading’. Thus, for example, Kohn’s depiction of Eastern nationalism, asserts Walicki (1989: ix-x),

“disregards the circumstances that the Poles ... were a ‘historical’ nation – a nation whose national consciousness had reached quite an advanced stage of development under conditions of its own statehood.”

Walicki (1989: 88) asserts:

“modern Polish ‘nationalism’ originated ... in the atmosphere of the universalist ideas of the Enlightenment, as an ideology not of the pre-political folk community, but of the nation-state, that is of a *political* community formed by a common political history.”

During the 18th century, the independent status of the Polish-led Commonwealth (1569-1772) - comprising Poland, Lithuania and parts of the Ukraine - declined as Poland’s neighbours increasingly dominated her affairs. The last monarch of Poland, King Stanisław II (1764-1795), had been handpicked by Catherine II of Russia. Despite this, Stanisław embarked upon a modernisation programme for Poland.⁷² His efforts were constantly undermined by Poland’s Prussian and Russian neighbours, with Russia encouraging non-

⁷² This included the establishment in 1765 of the Knights’ School, the first truly secular college that promoted civil virtues and religious toleration.

Catholic Poles and conservative elements within the Polish nobility to form confederations. In defiance of Russian pressure,⁷³ a group of Polish Catholic nobles, formed, in 1768, the Bar Confederacy and waged a war (1768-1772) of national self-determination against the Russians. The Confederacy's programme combined anti-royalist and anti-Russian sentiments with patriotic and conservative overtones in defence of Roman Catholicism. Their movement strengthened a nascent Polish national consciousness but resulted in 1772 in their defeat and the first partitioning of Poland by Prussia, Russia and Austria. Poland lost about one-third of its territory and population. In the following two decades, there occurred a remarkable Enlightenment period within the remaining Poland, with key reformers such as Hugo Kołłątaj (1750-1812) and Stanisław Staszic (1755-1826) advocating such reforms as improving the status of Polish Jewry and of the still feudal peasantry. Such proto-liberal sentiments found expression in Poland's 1791 Constitution. The Constitution was unacceptable to both Russia and Prussia, fearful of a Polish revival, and in 1793 the two powers partitioned Poland further. The following year, 1794, witnessed the first of a series of ill-fated National Uprisings by Poles to regain national self-determination from the absolutist powers. The defeat of the 1794 Uprising led to the third 1795 partitioning of Poland by her three aforementioned neighbours. Poland now was effectively erased from the map of Europe until 1918.

In the long absence of a Polish state, Polish culture, including its myths, was to play a significant role in maintaining Polish national

⁷³ Pressure that included the presence of Russian troops that terrorised the Polish parliament.

identity. Other Uprisings followed in 1830-1831, 1846, 1848,⁷⁴ and 1863-1864. These Uprisings were fuelled by an idealistic nationalism that in turn was nourished by Polish romanticism. Following the brutal repression of the 1863-1864 Uprising, a more realistic Polish nationalism prevailed. Such nationalism, fuelled by Poland's positivist period, disavowed the physical force tradition of idealistic nationalism and advocated instead that Poland needed, via organic work, to strengthen her society and economy by peaceful means as a prerequisite for regaining national self-determination. When this approach also seemed ineffective, idealistic nationalist sentiments revived, encouraged by a neo-romantic period.

The defeat of the German and Austro-Hungarian Central Powers during WWI, and the collapse of the Russian Empire with the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, made the Wilsonian vision of nation-states and national self-determination appear realisable.

1.6.2 Independent Poland and WWII: 1918-1945

1918-1939 Polish nationalism and political Catholicism, in eschewing domestic fascism, were not as illiberal as their Hungarian and Slovak counterparts. However, the overall picture of an illiberal East European nationalism and political Catholicism, particularly in the 1918-1939 inter-war period described in this chapter, is broadly in keeping with the Polish situation as depicted in Chapter 2. Chapter 2's more detailed exploration of the Polish scene - particularly by

⁷⁴ In 1848, there were two Uprisings centred within Galicia and then Poznań.

revealing pre-1918 liberal strands of Polish nationalism and political Catholicism, illustrates, however, the dangers of over-simplified generalisations.

Poland regained her independence in 1918, led by Piłsudski who had been influenced by Poland's romantic and idealistic nationalist traditions. Piłsudski's nationalism competed with a now more strident realistic nationalism that was dominated by Dmowski and his illiberalism. The influence of the romantic and idealistic traditions upon Piłsudski manifested itself in a desire to restore the Polish Commonwealth, which in turn led to the Polish-Soviet War (1919-1920), as Piłsudski tried to reclaim lost Eastern lands. Although successful in the war, Poland was facing increasing socio-political and economic difficulties. In 1923, a frustrated Piłsudski resigned all state functions. The period of economic depression in the 1920s-1930s hit an already economically backward Poland particularly hard. This, combined with constant national/ethnic minority and border disputes and a prevailing illiberalism propagated by Dmowski and his followers and by most of the Polish Church hierarchy, led to instability and a drift to authoritarianism, as exemplified by Piłsudski's *coup d'état* in 1926.

The partitioning of Poland by the Germans and Soviets at the outset of WWII and their subsequent war-time atrocities had a profound effect on Poles and their nationalism. The war re-fuelled the German and Russian/Soviet enemy myths and saw a divided Polish resistance. Some six million Poles were killed and much of Poland, including Gdańsk and Warsaw, physically destroyed by the Germans. About 1.5 million Poles were deported by the Soviets to the Soviet Union, where

many failed to survive for more than a few years. The main pro-Western resistance was the Home Army. Amongst the other resistance groupings was a small pro-communist force, which, thanks to Soviet support, provided some of the leadership for post-WWII Poland.

1.6.3 Poland Under Communist Rule: 1945 to 1989

Several East European and transition studies argued that compared with the other East European regimes Poland constituted a ‘special case’. For example, the Polish Stalinist period was not as rampant as that experienced by other countries within the Soviet orbit (Crampton, 1997: 221). Some studies asserted that Poland’s regime was less totalitarian (Markus 1982: 91) & (Linz 1996: 256) ⁷⁵ and that her civil society was more autonomous compared with other CEE regimes. The autonomy was reflected by the role of the Church (White 1993a: 36), of *Solidarity* (Garton Ash 1990: 134), and by the existence of a significant private agricultural sector (White 1993a: 36) (Linz 1996: 257) and of a self-organised, *ethical civil society* (Linz 1996: 270-271). Some studies commented upon Poland’s civil society’s ‘nationalist antagonism against the Soviet hegemon’ (Linz 1996: 259) and of Poland’s ‘tradition of revolt’ (White 1993a: 37). Within the political culture literature, Eatwell (1997: 5) asserts that religion and nationalism played a notable role in the mobilisation of dissent in communist Poland during the 1980s.

⁷⁵ Linz (1996: 254) contends that of the 27 post-communist European states, only Poland was authoritarian, while the other 26 were totalitarian during the period of

During the 1945-1989 period, Poland was effectively ruled by Polish communists within the framework of a coercive Soviet hegemony. The Polish communists removed, by civil war, imprisonment, intimidation, or by co-optation, any opposition force that threatened their monopoly of power. Their ascendancy to power was aided by coalition fronts, a rigged 1946 referendum and non-free and unfair 1947 elections. The post-war Polish communist leadership could be loosely divided into ‘Muscovites’ who showed their allegiance foremost to Stalin and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and those that sought a nationalist road to socialism, the national communists. At first, led by Władysław Gomułka (1905-1982), ⁷⁶ the national communists prevailed, but in 1948 Gomułka fell victim to the Stalinist national deviation witch-hunt and was replaced by the Muscovite Bolesław Bierut (1892-1956) as leader of the Party (1948-1956).

There followed a period of Stalinism (c. 1948-1956) within Poland, where national communism within the leadership gave way to almost total subservience to the Soviet Union. Most Polish victims of Stalinism, which included not only national communists but also non-communist opposition figures, were imprisoned rather than executed. Such a figure was Stefan Wyszyński (1901-1981), the Primate of the Polish Catholic Church (1948-1981) who was interned from 1953-1956. Despite the attempts of the regime, the Catholic Church

high Stalinism or before the Yugoslavian ‘heresy’ and mostly evolved into post-totalitarian regimes.

⁷⁶ Gomułka had headed the Polish Workers’ Party (*PPR*) from 1943. Shortly after Gomułka’s downfall in 1948, the *PPR* was renamed the Polish United Workers’ Party (*PZPR*) following a merger forced upon the Polish Socialist Party (*PPS*).

remained the only major institution within Poland that the Party-State was not able to remove or control. This circumstance, coupled with political Catholicism's long anti-communist tradition and Wyszyński's skilful deployment of myths that reinforced the Church's credentials as defender of the nation, meant that the Church, but for the short period of a legal *Solidarity*,⁷⁷ was the effective leader of the opposition.

Stalin's death in 1953 and Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of him in 1956 had a profound undermining effect upon the Stalinist leaderships with the satellite communist states, including Poland's. The mid-1950s de-Stalinisation period saw a revival of the national communists' fortunes but also, particularly following the Soviet intervention to crush the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, witnessed a number of the Polish secular left increasingly questioning whether communism was reformable. The return to power of Gomułka⁷⁸ and the release of Wyszyński during the *Polish October* of 1956 and the appearance of independent Catholic MPs, meant that for a short period, Polish (national) communism experienced a revival as it attempted once more to seek a Polish road to socialism. However Gomułka's popularity was soon dissipated as he increasingly took hard line ideological stances, as his reforms failed, and as he faced the inherent contradiction of dependency upon the Soviets while seeking greater national self-determination. The Catholic MPs were part of a Catholic intelligentsia movement called *Znak* and, as the only voice in

⁷⁷ Between November 1980 and December 1981, and from April 1989.

⁷⁸ For a brief period following Bierut's death in Moscow in March 1956, the Party was led by Edward Ochab.

Parliament prepared to question Party policy, constituted an important element of the opposition. The crushing of the student protests in March 1968, followed by the regime's repressive tactics, which included deploying the Jewish enemy myth and attacks upon the intelligentsia, and the Soviet-led intervention into Czechoslovakia in 1968, had the effects of further disillusioning the now actively dissident secular left, and of increasing co-operation between them and members of *Znak*. Workers' protests in 1970 led to the ousting of Gomułka⁷⁹ and his replacement by Edward Gierek as First Secretary of the Party (1970-1980).

The Gierek-led regime attempted to woo Poles with more consumer goods, but Gierek's attempts at economic legitimation failed and he increasingly resorted to national legitimation devices. Like his predecessor Gomułka, Gierek too was toppled by workers' protests with the emergence of *Solidarity* in the summer of 1980. Several of the key intelligentsia figures that played a significant part in the ground-work that led to formation of *Solidarity* and to the 1989 *Solidarity*-led governing coalition were directly involved and affected by the 'events' surrounding March 1968.⁸⁰ The 1970s witnessed a

⁷⁹ The Party at times of extreme crisis was quite prepared to suddenly and dramatically scapegoat and/or sacrifice its leaders, as 1970, 1980 and 1981 also show, in an attempt to preserve any political legitimacy it had.

⁸⁰ These included Jacek Kuroń (1934-) and Adam Michnik (1946-) on the secular left, and Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927-) and Wojtyła amongst the dissident Catholics. Wojtyła was a particularly pivotal opposition political player. As a former Catholic University of Lublin (*KUL*) lecturer with two doctorates and someone with close ties with the Kraków *Znak* intelligentsia, Cardinal Wojtyła (1967-) served as a bridge between the *Znak* movement and the Polish Church hierarchy, where he ranked only below Primate Wyszyński, the only other Polish cardinal at the time. See also Chapter 5.

dialogue and increasing co-operation between the dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia and the emergence of numerous independent opposition groups, of which the Workers' Defence Committee (*KOR*) was perhaps the most significant. *Solidarity*, led by Lech Wałęsa, was formed following workers' protests in the summer of 1980. It owed its political strength in large part to the stubborn defiance of the workers who were increasingly frustrated by the regime's economic failures. It should be noted, however, that *Solidarity* also owed much of its legitimacy and ability to sustain its 1982-1988 period of illegality, to the support of John Paul II and of the Catholic and secular left intelligentsia.

Gierek was replaced for a short period by Stanisław Kania (1980-1981) as First Secretary, but with the Soviets increasingly concerned about the strength of an autonomous *Solidarity*, Kania was replaced by Wojciech Jaruzelski, Poland's Minister of Defence since 1968. In December 1981, Jaruzelski declared Martial Law and outlawed *Solidarity*. However, Jaruzelski did not attempt a full frontal attack on the Polish Church, much enhanced by the John Paul II papacy. Like Gierek, Jaruzelski, with an inability to achieve economic legitimation and ideological legitimation effectively bankrupt, also attempted nationalist legitimation. With the appointment of Gorbachev as General Secretary of the CPSU in 1985, Jaruzelski had the 'green light' to try and seek an accommodation with the opposition. With the Church and *Znak* intellectuals playing a key behind-the-scenes role, especially during 1988, which also witnessed a resurgence of workers' protests, *Solidarity* and the regime reached a compromise during the *Round Table Talks* in the Spring of 1989. In the late summer of 1989, thanks in part to the defection of the hitherto non-

autonomous regime coalition partners to *Solidarity's* side, Mazowiecki became the first non-communist Prime Minister within the Soviet bloc.

1.6.4 The Approach Adopted

The thesis accepts the special-case arguments for post-1945 Poland being politically distinctive from other countries of the region, not least in its nationalism, political religion and political culture of opposition. The thesis also takes on board the arguments in some of the literatures for the desirability of an interdisciplinary approach. As the key research issue involves complex belief systems and complex processes over a long-time span, it was felt it would be more fruitful to adopt a single-country rather than a comparative approach in order to explore in depth rather than breadth. In the light of all these considerations, Poland was chosen for investigation, using insights into myths, rituals and symbols provided by nationalism and above all by the social anthropological literature, but also using political science concepts from other fields of literature. In the light of the complexity of the research issue and the inevitable subjectivity and ambiguity of the associated definitions adopted, the thesis would deploy a qualitative rather than quantitative approach.

CHAPTER 2: THE PRE-1945 GENESIS OF POLISH NATIONAL AND CATHOLIC MYTHS

2.1 Introduction: The Aims Of The Chapter

A key aim of this chapter is to map the pre-1945 territory of the nationalist and political Catholic illiberal and liberal discourse, as reflected in the pre-1945 genesis and meanings of the myths and their associated symbols and rituals that helped shape the 1945-1989 Polish liberal political culture of opposition. Another key aim is to illuminate the role of myths of pre-1945 Polish (proto-) nationalism and political Catholicism in synthesising these two belief systems.

This chapter argues that during the first half of the 20th century, Polish political culture was much influenced by an illiberal Polish nationalism and political Catholicism. The main source of Polish illiberalism was the social Darwinism of Dmowski, facilitated by illiberal strands of political Catholicism. The resulting illiberal political culture was in tune with other European illiberal nationalisms and the illiberal papal political Catholicism of the period, and expressed itself chiefly in terms of an external and internal enemy mythology deployed mainly against Russians/Soviets, Jews and communists. However, this chapter contends that there were also proto-liberal strands within pre-1945 Polish nationalism and Polish political Catholicism as expressed in certain myths and symbols that had evolved over centuries and that constituted the seeds of a post-1945 liberal political culture of opposition.

2.2 The Emergence Of Polish Nationalism

Poland's inception as a state is usually linked to the beginning of the Piast dynasty, c. 960. The 960-1770s state-building and subsequent national consciousness-building period is significant for Polish modern nationalism in a variety of ways. The period provided the genesis of many of the myths to be deployed by modern Polish nationalism. Also Poland experienced similar state- and national consciousness-building influences as those exerted upon Western countries. For example, the sense of solidarity to a common monarch arising from the struggles against external threats and a sense of common identification arising from the ascendancy of the vernacular over Latin with the advent of print-capitalism.⁸¹

Flag, Anthem and Emblem: Symbols of Club Membership

The appearance of a commonly recognisable emblem, flag and anthem greatly contributed to state-building and national consciousness-building. As Hobsbawm observed these three symbols are emotionally charged signs of club membership through which an independent

⁸¹ Thus 16th century Poland saw the first printed book translated from the Latin into Polish - *Raj Duszny* (1513) by Biernat of Lublin - and the encouragement of Polish literature in the vernacular by Mikołaj Rej (1505-1569) and Jan Kochanowski (1530-1584). In 1661, the first newspaper in Polish appeared. By about the 1780s, Polish was the established language of educational instruction and of intellectual life. Anderson (1991: 46) notes that

“the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation.”

country proclaims its identity and sovereignty, and as such they command instantaneous respect and loyalty, and reflect the entire background, thought and culture of the nation.⁸² The Polish state/national emblem to be, the eagle, appeared on Polish money as far back as the 12th century. Originally it appeared uncrowned, but with the subsequent coronations of kings of Poland, the eagle gained a crown and became the emblem of state. The eagle, together with the flag and anthem were to feature constantly and prominently in Poland's subsequent history: at first as symbols of the Polish state and later as symbols of the Polish nation and/or state. Although these politically powerful symbols changed little in outward appearance, significant differences in meanings attached to them did emerge, as this and future chapters will show. During its war of independence against Russian domination, the Bar Confederacy adopted as its emblem a white-and-red flag with a silhouette of the Virgin Mary.⁸³ In 1831, during the National Uprising, the white and red colours were incorporated within the emblem in the form of a white eagle with a red background. During the Second Republic (1918-1939) the crowned eagle was reconfirmed as the official emblem of the Polish state. During WWII, the Home Army's emblem was a crowned eagle, while the pro-communist People's Army adopted an uncrowned eagle. The 1944 Lublin Manifesto announcing a new pro-communist authority for Poland was bedecked with the Polish white-and-red flag and the uncrowned eagle. Apparently, the pro-communists uncrowned

⁸² Hobsbawm (1985:11). Such observations were originally made in an Indian government brochure as mentioned by Firth (1973: 341).

⁸³ Mach (1985: 27).

the eagle in order to symbolise the liberation of the Polish people from class hierarchy and the relics of feudalism.⁸⁴

Dąbrowski's Mazurka the future national/state anthem was composed in Italy in 1797 by Józef Wybicki (1747-1822) for General Jan Henryk Dąbrowski (1755-1818) who helped to incorporate into Napoleon's army the thousands of Poles who had escaped Poland to join the Polish Legions.⁸⁵ *Dąbrowski's Mazurka* contained several of the usual features of national anthems that help create a highly emotionally charged atmosphere of national solidarity⁸⁶ and thereby help explain their political potency. The first verse of *Dąbrowski's Mazurka* reads

‘Poland has not perished yet
So long as we still live
That which alien force has seized
We at sword point shall retrieve.’

The second and third verses contain the lines:

‘we will be Poles,
Bonaparte showed us
how to win.’

⁸⁴ Mach (1985: 30).

⁸⁵ The Poles hoped that Napoleon, in his opposition to the three partitioning powers of Poland, would deliver to them national self-determination. Some 100,000 Poles joined Napoleon in his ill-fated attempt to conquer Russia.

⁸⁶ Kertzer (1988: 73) observes that from their late 18th century inception to their current global spread, the content and sentiments of national anthems are remarkably similar. Often calling for God's blessing, they effusively praise the nation, call for undying loyalty, and use martial music together with graphic symbolism to create a highly charged emotional atmosphere of national solidarity.

‘we will come back across the sea
to save our motherland.’⁸⁷

In addition, *Dąbrowski's Mazurka* was even further emotionally and politically charged. Unlike most anthems that are written when a nation has a state, it was written shortly after the final partitioning of Poland. Thus it had the dimension of contemporary protest against an alien state. In 1815, following Napoleon's defeat, the Tsarist and Prussian authorities banned the anthem. *Dąbrowski's Mazurka* was banned again in 1860. Yet it lived on in numerous variants, sung during the Uprisings and WWI and II, when the name *Dąbrowski*, who features in the refrain

‘March, march Dąbrowski,
from Italy to Poland.
Under your command
we will reunite with the nation’

was replaced by names of contemporary Polish military leaders, such as Piłsudski during WWI and Władysław Sikorski (1881-1943) during WWII.⁸⁸ Following Piłsudski's *coup d'état* in 1926, *Dąbrowski's Mazurka* became Poland's official National Anthem.

⁸⁷ The fourth verse appeals to basic sentimentality:

“Father, in tears, says to his Basia:
‘Just listen,
It seems that our people
are beating the drums.’”

Source: http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/repertoi/dabrowski.html

⁸⁸ Sikorski was, like Piłsudski, a symbol of idealistic nationalism. Before WWI, Sikorski established a secret Polish military organisation. During WWI Sikorski was a war commissioner in the Polish Legion that served with the Austrian Army fighting Russia. After WWI, Sikorski distinguished himself in the 1919-1920

The genesis of modern Polish nationalism

The genesis of modern Polish nationalism was in large part a reaction to the annihilation of the Polish state with the successive partitioning of Poland in 1772, 1793 and 1795 by the absolutist powers of Prussia, Russia and Austria. This reactive Polish nationalism was kept alive mainly by the Polish educated classes, chiefly the nobility, the clergy and the intelligentsia. During the course of the 19th century the Prussian and Russian imperial governments shifted from a policy of legitimacy based on loyalty to divinely sanctioned monarchs to one based on a secular ideology of state. In consequence, Polish nationalism also reacted to the increasing official state nationalisms of these partitioning powers, and to the resulting *Germanisation* and *Russification* that took place within their respective partitions.⁸⁹ From 1918-1939, Poland regained independence and showed an active, expansionist nationalism in incorporating parts of the old Commonwealth back into Poland. In 1939, Poland's western and eastern neighbours again partitioned Poland and again the annihilation of the Polish state fuelled a Polish reactive nationalism.

A key question for Polish nationalists was whether to seek national sovereignty via deployment of the physical force tradition or whether

Polish-Soviet War. During WWII, from 1939-1943, Sikorski headed the Polish Government in (Western) Exile.

⁸⁹ *Nationalism and Multi-national Empires* (pp. 3-35). 1963 essay in (Seton-Watson 1964: 20-23).

to seek it via more gradual, non-violent means. During the partitions, the two different approaches expressed themselves in the form of Polish idealistic and realistic nationalism, with the latter strand opting for the peaceful strategy.⁹⁰ Idealistic nationalism was more influenced by political romanticism and neo-romanticism and the myths of political Catholicism, while realistic nationalism was more influenced by the Enlightenment, positivism and secularism and their associated myths. A key myth emerging from the Polish positivist period was the organic work myth that did much to influence subsequent Polish political culture. The realistic nationalist assessment that physical force would not gain Poland her independence following the defeat of the 1863-1864 Uprising, contributed to the formation of *the myth of organic work* or as Zamoyski puts it: “the nebulous dreams of the Romantics’ New Jerusalem were superseded by ‘scientific’ visions of earthly paradise.”⁹¹ The myth held that economic strength was a prerequisite for national independence. The Polish organic workers viewed the nation as an organism that they wished to strengthen in order for it to withstand the pressures of the occupying powers. In order for an organism to function, it was necessary, they believed, to take care that every element was properly functioning, as an ‘illness’ can affect the entirety. From this tenet came a concern for the poorer sections within society, and a belief in the equal rights for ethnic

⁹⁰ Bromke (1967: 2) wrote of Poles being divided into political idealists “who imagine the world to suit their policy,” and political realists “who arrange their policies to suit the realities of the world.” Laun (2000) identifies idealism and realism as the two dominating Polish nationalist ideologies.

⁹¹ Zamoyski (1987: 316-317).

minorities. An evolutionary rather than revolutionary approach, organic work glorified the perseverance in collective, civilising, and constructive work. The organic workers valued the benefits of the experience of work in common, and of the need to respect all workers and all forms of work. This in turn helped further to lessen the rigid class/estate compartments separating the peasantry and other workers from the nobility/gentry and the emerging bourgeoisie.⁹² The philosophical poet Cyprian Norwid (1821-1883) helped turn the belief in organic work into a myth of redemption/salvation. He perceived organic work not in a typical positivist way, but as a means of redemption. For Norwid, work ‘whose end is Resurrection,’⁹³ was the path to personal liberation and salvation. Norwid shared with communists the belief in the centrality of labour and its alienating dangers, and asserted that ‘work cannot be treated as merchandise.’ However, whereas communists also emphasised the need for class-war to bring about liberation, Norwid, as did other organic workers, emphasised the common aspects of all who worked and the need to respect all workers and all forms of work, thereby attenuating rather than exacerbating religious and class tensions.⁹⁴

The leading realist and idealist nationalists of the early 20th century were Dmowski and Piłsudski, respectively. Dmowski simultaneously

⁹² Halecki (1942: 204).

⁹³ From his *Promethidon* (1851).

⁹⁴ Norwid defined a nation as ‘the internal union of inter-related races.’ Following a Polish anti-Russian demonstration in the 1860s, in which Jewish participants were singled out by the Czarist authorities for extra beatings, Norwid wrote a poem, *Polish Jews*. In it, he argued that Poland had the ‘priceless heritage’ of two different, but great cultures - Polish and Jewish.

denounced policies of conciliation and of armed uprising.⁹⁵ In contrast, Piłsudski was convinced that armed struggle was the only effective way to achieve independence. Before the outbreak of WWI, Piłsudski organised Polish Legions as an underground army of about 10,000 Poles to fight for Poland's independence. Idealistic nationalism tended to see fellow Western Christian nations as its natural allies and to perceive Russia/Soviet Union as its greatest threat to national sovereignty.⁹⁶ Realistic nationalism tended to see Germany as its greatest threat to national sovereignty and accordingly sought alliances of support from Russia/Soviet Union. The idealist nationalist orientations were expressed most vividly in the 1768-1772, 1919-20, and WWII Home Army (*AK*) Western-supported resistance to Russian/Soviet hegemony. The realistic nationalist orientations were expressed in the anti-German, People's Army (*AL*) supported by the Soviet authorities.

2.3 The Coming Together Of Polish Nationalism And Polish Political Catholicism: The Seeds Of A Post-1945 Synthesis

The onset of the Polish state was closely related to the advent of Catholicism within Poland. In 966, the first Piast ruler of Poland, Mieszko I (c. 960-992), together with his court, were baptised into Christianity, to be followed shortly afterwards by mass conversion of

⁹⁵ Zamoyski (1987: 329) and Wandycz (1974: 291-293).

⁹⁶ The German-Russian/Soviet distinction is encapsulated by a saying attributed to Piłsudski's successor, Marshall Śmigły-Rydz (1886-1943) shortly before the outbreak of WWII: "With the Germans we will lose our freedom; with the Russians we will lose our soul." As cited by Bromke (1967: 39).

his subjects. From its inception, the organisation of the Polish Catholic Church was common to the whole territory of Poland. Following the 11th century east-west schism of the Christian Church, the Polish Church stayed loyal to Rome.

The Genesis of the Madonna Myth

The Madonna Myth was to prove one of most potent of the political myths deployed by the opposition in post-1945 Poland. In 1382, the Madonna was said to have manifested herself within a Church and a fortified Pauline Monastery founded in the same year at Jasna Góra in Częstochowa, southern Poland. The Monastery is the site of the shrine of the *Black Madonna*, so called because the face of the Byzantine icon of the Virgin Mary has become blackened over the centuries.⁹⁷ During the 15th-18th century, myths evoking the Black Madonna as Defender of the State did a lot to portray political Catholicism's close ties with the state. The Częstochowa shrine became the focus of Catholic resistance to attacks upon its faith and upon Poland, be it from a 15th century precursor of Protestantism, Bohemian Hussitism, from 17th century Swedish Protestantism, or from 18th century Russian Orthodoxy. In a 1430 invasion, the *Black Madonna's* face was slashed by a sabre cut inflicted by a Hussite soldier, and ever since the Virgin Mary was referred to by the faithful as *The Queen of Poland*. In 1655, the Swedish General Müller, despite several thousand soldiers pitted against a mere 150 Polish noblemen and sixty monks, was, after forty

⁹⁷ According to one legend, Saint Luke the Evangelist painted the icon on the wooden plank that was the Holy Family's table at Nazareth.

days of abortive attempts, forced to call off his siege of the Monastery. The defence of Jasna Góra inspired Poles to fight harder and marked a turning point in Polish efforts to free their country from the harsh rule of the Protestant Swedes. Many Catholic Poles believed that the successful defence of the Monastery against the Swedes was thanks to God and their *Lady of Jasna Góra*. Their belief was perhaps fuelled by the following 1688 account, which, not untypically, links the Madonna myth to another sacred hero-saviour, God.

““Yet Jasna Góra was not saved by men. The holy place was preserved by God, and more by miracles than by the sword. ... Müller himself saw a Lady in a shining robe on the walls, priming the canon and tossing shells back in the direction from which they came ... Of course, no heretic will believe that canon-balls were repulsed from the walls of Jasna Góra by supernatural means ... But all that I have described is true.””⁹⁸

The belief in the Madonna as defender of the faith and of Poland was to endure over the centuries, with kings, noblemen, burghers and peasants acknowledging the spiritual presence and control of the Black Madonna over their lives through acts of unconditional submission to her divine authority.⁹⁹ After his return to Poland in 1656, the Polish King Jan Kazimierz vowed to entrust the country to the authority of Mary, officially proclaiming her, Queen of Poland.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ W. Kochowski, *Annalium Poloniae Climacter Secundus*. Kraków, 1688. Published in Polish translation as *Lata Potopu 1655-7*, L. Kukulski (ed.) et al., Warsaw, 1966. As cited by Davies (1981a: 452-453).

⁹⁹ Kubik (1994: 10).

¹⁰⁰ Szajkowski (1983: 4-5).

Davies (1997) argues that this was a key moment in the growth of the *Pole = Catholic myth*. He points out that, given that one third to one half of Poland's population then was not Roman Catholic,¹⁰¹ the growing association of Polishness and Catholicity was to prove divisive.

During the period of Commonwealth, the Catholic Primate of Poland served as *interrex* figures, acting Heads of State between the death of a king, who was often not Polish, and the election of his successor. The Polish Reformation saw many Polish nobles convert to Protestantism, but by the 17th century and the Polish Counter-Reformation, the Protestant influence declined and Polish Catholicism strengthened. The century became the age of a triumphant Catholicism, which became increasingly more intolerant and severe toward dissenters. The Roman Catholic Church had never enjoyed a monopoly in the religious affairs of the multi-faith, multi-national Commonwealth. Yet Catholicism's influence gradually increased in response to the plundering by Swedish and Prussian Protestants, and Orthodox Russians. Polish Catholicism became more ostentatious, with religious ceremonies such as Holy Mass and pilgrimages to venerate holy figures becoming important and colourful social manifestations, complete with the ritual of hymn-singing and the symbolism of banners. These ostentatious features, not least the venerating traditions of cults, beatification and canonisation,¹⁰² all

¹⁰¹ Mainly Protestants, Orthodox Catholics, Uniates and Jews.

¹⁰² The tradition of making certain of the venerated figures (usually ones beatified or canonised) patrons of a country, also facilitated the relationship between

lent themselves particularly well to the creation and deployment of national myths, symbols and rituals.

From 1768-1772, as mentioned, a group of Polish nobles named the Bar Confederacy waged a war of independence against ever increasing Russian domination. The 1768 Bar Confederacy Manifesto expressed attachment to the Catholic Faith and especially to “the Częstochowa fortress, famed for its miracles” and proclaimed its intention “to save the homeland, faith and freedom, rights and liberties of the nation.”¹⁰³ The Manifesto also called for armed, bold and self-sacrificing action, conducted under the watchword *Jesus-Mary* and with Mary silhouetted against a white-and-red flag as their emblem. A Bar Confederacy poem declares:

“... For Freedom, I’ll die:
My faith not deny. ...
The Cross is my Shield,
Salvation my Loot...
When Poland’s Fate
Is to enter the Battle
As Mary’s Breastplate. ...
She succours her Knight,
And Thee, Sweet Fatherland.”¹⁰⁴

political Catholicism and the state, and later, the relationship between political Catholicism and the nation.

¹⁰³ As cited by Suchodolski (1986: 119).

¹⁰⁴ *Poezja barska* ed. K. Kołbuszewski, Kraków, 1928 as cited by Davies (1981b: 19).

Helping to fuel the Black Madonna myth, the last centre of the Confederacy's forlorn resistance against the Russians was at the Jasna Góra Monastery in August 1772.

With the absence of a Polish state, during the course of the partitioning (1772-1918) and re-partitioning (1939-1945), Polish political Catholicism succeeded in strengthening its nation-building activities by becoming a defender of civil society and thereby the nation. This process was much aided by *three* factors. *First*, the Church's loss of powers and privileges, but not its annihilation, during partitioning and re-partitioning. *Second*, the reaction of political Catholicism to the pressures of the predominant non-Catholic religions/belief systems of the two major partitioning and re-partitioning powers, the Prussians/Germans and the Russians/Soviets. Finally, *third*, lay political Catholicism's creation of new political myths and symbols and its redefining of old ones.

The romantic poetry of the lay political Catholic intelligentsia furthered the cause of liberal idealistic nationalism by propagating myths that served as vehicles for liberal values. The Romantic poets Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855) and Juliusz Słowacki (1809-1849)¹⁰⁵ were to have an immense influence on the mindset of generations of future Poles, and to become enduring symbols of idealist nationalism. The romantics created new myths evoking sacred Catholic omnipotent saviours such as God, Christ and the Black Madonna, and redefined the pre-1780s myths that had portrayed political Catholicism primarily

¹⁰⁵ Together with Zygmunt Krasiński (1812-1859), they were known as the Romantic Bards. Later Norwid was to become known as the 'fourth Bard.'

as defender of the state. The romantic myths now portrayed political Catholicism as defender of the proto-liberal nation and of proto-liberal values. The neo-romantic period ensured that the romantic myths were not forgotten.¹⁰⁶ The romantic and neo-romantic myths appropriated liberal contributions of the Enlightenment and positivist periods, respectively.

During the course of the 19th-20th centuries, a symbiotic relationship developed between Polish nationalism and Polish political Catholicism. At times the cause of Polish nationalism was served by Polish political Catholicism, at other times the cause of Polish political Catholicism was served by Polish nationalism. In the end, both belief systems gained from the relationship; a relationship that was often aided by the deployment of myths and symbols that served both causes. Increasingly during the 19th century myths evoking the Black Madonna deployed the symbolism of state by portraying her as Queen, but also deployed the symbolism of the nation, by portraying her as Queen of the Poles and Defender of the Nation. Under

¹⁰⁶ The neo-romantic anti-positivist *Young Poland* literary movement centred around Kraków, situated within the relatively less repressive Austrian partition, led to the works of the Polish Bards becoming more widely known and the 'discovery' of Norwid. In Kraków, Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve*, Krasiński's *Irydion* and *Un-Divine Comedy*, and many of Słowacki's plays were staged for the first time. In fiction, one of the most prominent artists of the *Young Poland* period was Nobel Prize Laureate Władysław Reymont (1867-1925), famous for the novels *The Promised Land* (1899) and *The Peasants* (1902-1909). Stefan Żeromski (1864-1925) produced stories and novels emphasising patriotism and social criticism, among them *Ashes* (1904), a historical novel of the Napoleonic Wars, and *The Faithful River* (1913). Stanisław Wyspiański (1869-1907) was the most eminent dramatist of the *Young Poland* era. His dominant concern was Polish nationalism and individual freedom. Among his plays are *Varsovienne* (1898), *Liberation* (1903), *November Night* (1904), and *The Wedding*, first staged in 1901.

partitioning, the Black Madonna became the *Main Revolutionary* supporting the insurrectionists in their attempts to gain national self-determination, while exiled Poles called her *the Patroness of the Exiles*.¹⁰⁷ One such exile, Mickiewicz did much to keep the Madonna myth alive. Mickiewicz writes of Mary in his epic poem *Pan Tadeusz* (1834) thus:

“O Holy Maid, who Częstochowa’s shrine
Dost guard and on the Pointed Gateway shine ...
As thou didst heal me by a miracle ...
So by a miracle thou wilt bring us home!”¹⁰⁸

In 1854, Pius XI declared Virgin Mary’s *Immaculate Conception* dogma, raising yet further the high veneration status that Mary enjoyed within the universal Catholic Church. Later, Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846-1916)¹⁰⁹ also evoked the Madonna myth. His *The Deluge* (1886) deals with the 1650s’ Swedish assault on Poland and deploys the mythology of Madonna and God as sacred omnipotent saviours. Sienkiewicz recounts a speech by the Prior of the Jasna Góra Monastery during the 1655 defence against the Swedes:

“But no matter how low our nation has fallen, or how deeply steeped in sin it might be, there is a limit ... which none of our people would ever go beyond. They turned their backs on their King and the Commonwealth but they never ceased to honour and worship their Patroness and Mother who has always been the true Queen of Poland ... We’ve lost {all our former virtues} but

¹⁰⁷ Kubik (1994: 109).

¹⁰⁸ As cited by Kwitny (1998: 20).

¹⁰⁹ In 1905, Sienkiewicz received the Nobel Prize in Literature for *Quo Vadis?* (1896), in which the vista of the fall of empire (the Roman Empire) and of the triumph of religion (Christianity) is presented.

one, and that is our Faith and the honor we show to the Holy Mother, and that is the foundation on which we can reconstruct the rest. ... (Our enemies) understand what is at stake here ... they'd never dare strike at Jasna Góra. Because that day would be the beginning of the end of their supremacy and the beginning of our awakening.”¹¹⁰

The hymn *God Who Protects Poland*, particularly in the light of the responses of the partitioning powers, also did a lot to bring political Catholicism and nationalism together. In 1816, the poet and priest Alojzy Feliński (1771-1820) composed the hymn that included the key verse:

“ O God who through the ages
Hast girded Poland with power and fame,
Whose shield hath kept Her in Thy care
From evils that would cause her harm.
Before Thy altars, we bring our entreaty:
Restore, O Lord, our free country.”

God, the protector of Poland, was to give Poland back her sovereignty, and the hymn was to become part of the nationalist mythology repertoire. Like so many of the nationalist protest songs, the context and accumulating symbolic baggage surrounding the hymn, explains much of its political potency. The hymn was written to mark the anniversary of the creation of the Kingdom of Poland, a personal fiefdom of the Russian Czar, gained at the 1815 Congress of Vienna as a result of the defeat of Napoleon. Polish nationalism and political Catholicism were to exploit the symbolic significance of the timing of

¹¹⁰ As cited by Weigel (1992: vii). Shortly afterwards Reymont wrote *Pilgrimage to the Mountain of Life* (1894) an exploration of the mood of a group making a pilgrimage to Jasna Góra.

rituals, by invariably holding demonstrations/commemorations on the anniversary dates of significant nationalist/religious/political past events which were associated with their present cause. In this respect, rituals involving protest singing are, observes Kertzer (1988: 122)

“important in attaching participants to a longer tradition of protest, lending the legitimacy obtained by the earlier protest movements to the newer movement.”

Feliński's hymn became particularly popular and was sung at the end of the Holy Mass throughout the land. Considered the unofficial national anthem by many Poles, the last line of the key verse in particular stirred religious and nationalist hopes. In the years preceding the 1863-1864 Uprising, patriotic fervour was intense and *God Who Protects Poland* was openly sung in the streets.¹¹¹ In 1872, Mieczysław Ledóchowski (1822-1902), the Primate within the Prussian partition, succumbed to *Kulturkampf*¹¹² pressure and agreed that Feliński's hymn would not be sung at Mass.

With the regaining of independence in 1918, the hymn was again openly sung during the period of the Second Republic, but with one major symbolic difference. The key verse's last line *Restore, O Lord,*

¹¹¹ Davies (1981b: 349).

¹¹² Literally translated as *culture struggle*, *Kulturkampf* was a conflict between the Roman Catholic Church and the German Empire. In 1870, the First Vatican Council (Vatican I) moved to strengthen the power of the Pope by promulgating the dogma of papal infallibility. The German Chancellor, Bismarck, felt that the increasing subservience of German Catholics to Rome, combined with the political power of the Centre party (composed of Catholic groups) threatened the authority of the Empire. Accordingly, Bismarck initiated a series of laws aimed at reducing the powers of the Roman Catholic Church.

our free country was changed to *Bless, O Lord, our free country*. However with the onset of WWII , the original line was once more deployed. A report on the Polish national situation in Soviet-occupied Poland observed that “today, they are singing *God Who Protects Poland* in the churches.” ¹¹³

Nationalist sentiment manifested itself first within the lay Catholic intelligentsia and faithful, and amongst Catholic priests. Many Catholics lost their lives participating in the National Uprisings of 1794, 1830-1831, 1846, 1848 and 1863-1864. Within the Prussian partition, the 1870s’ *Kulturkampf* attacks on the Church resulted in the politicisation of priests on a mass basis. ¹¹⁴ At first, members of the Hierarchy were influenced by their loyalty to a papal Catholicism that opposed Polish nationalism. Like the papacy, the Hierarchy initially opposed physical force and any fundamental realignment of the alliance between the state and civil society, but gradually, and often reluctantly, it was drawn into the nationalist struggle. To a significant degree the Hierarchy’s increasing involvement with Polish nationalism was a result of excessive attacks upon the Church by the Russians before, during and after the 1863-1864 National Uprising, and by the Germans following the *Kulturkampf*.

¹¹³ *Raport gen. Michała Tokarzewskiego-Karaszewicza do. gen. Kazimierza Sosnkowskiego, o sytuacji na terenie okupacji radzieckiej, z 17 III 1940r.* As reported by Sobańska-Bondaruk (1998: 255).

¹¹⁴ Leslie (1980: 30).

2.4 The Genesis Of The National myths Of 1900-1944 Illiberal Polish Political Culture

In the last decades of the 19th century and during the early decades of the 20th century, some European nationalisms, for example in France, developed strongly illiberal strands. These strands entailed more than just an intolerance of 'others' or a dislike of particular political systems. They entailed a strong loathing of particular groups of people. These illiberal components were boosted by pseudo-scientific theories of race and social Darwinism, and later fuelled by economic depression. At the end of the 19th century, integral nationalism appeared in France. With the 1917 Russian Revolution, a virulent anti-communist and anti-Soviet component was added to an already existing virulent anti-Semitic component. In Germany *Blut und Boden*¹¹⁵ thinking was incorporated into Nationalist Socialist ideology. Poland was not immune from these illiberal influences, and the prevailing illiberal political culture during this period generally reflects the East European illiberal political culture as portrayed in Chapter 1. Subsequently, the atrocities inflicted upon Poles during WWII served to reinforce and justify many of the prevailing prejudices of Polish illiberal nationalism and political Catholicism. Thus during the 1900-1945 period, enemy mythology, whether internal and conspiratorial, or external, was deliberately exploited by Polish illiberal nationalists and illiberal political Catholics.

¹¹⁵ The slogan came into political prominence in Germany in the early 1920s when it denoted an integral link between the tribe and the land, a link to be defended by blood if necessary. (Bramwell 1985: 55).

2.4.1 The Genesis of Internal Enemy Myths

The aforementioned illiberal influences to a large extent explain the c. 1900-1920s genesis within Poland of *myths of territory, of ethnogenesis and of kinship*, the related *Pole = Catholic myth* and the *Jewish and communist enemy myths*.

The Genesis of the Jewish Enemy Myth

For the first six decades of the 19th century, the *Polonisation* of Jewish culture and the assimilation of Jews into Polish society were advocated both by Jewish reformers and by Polish liberals alike. After the 1863-64 Uprising and aided and abetted by the partitioning powers' anti-Semitism, attitudes hardened in both Jewish and Catholic communities. The Austrian authorities treated the Jews as a social anomaly, but with more tolerance than the Prussian and Russian authorities.¹¹⁶ Increasingly, young Jewish nationalists saw assimilation as a threat to their own national aspirations,¹¹⁷ and condemned co-operation with Catholic Poles out of hand.

¹¹⁶ Zamoyski (1987: 344-345). The greater repression within the Prussian and Russian Partitions resulted in the Jews congregating in the Austrian Partition. (Kwitny 1998: 34). Andrew (1990: 4-5) notes that by far the most persecuted group in the Russian Empire was the Jews. The assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, for example, unleashed a wave of anti-Semitism, resulting in pogroms. Here, state-sponsored anti-Semitism, which was particularly virulent at the turn of the 19th/20th century, led to the exodus of several million Russian Jews and may well help to explain why communism spread more rapidly among the Jews than among any other ethnic group in the Russian Empire.

¹¹⁷ During the 1890-1918 period, anti-Semitism became an explicit political and economic weapon that in turn encouraged Jewish nationalism. By the end of the 19th century Zionism on the one hand and Jewish internationalist socialism on the other inhibited any assimilation tendencies that had survived.

At the beginning of the 20th century, industry and trade in Poland were predominantly in the hands of the German and Jewish ethnic minorities. At about this time, the concept of integral nationalism was first voiced in Poland ¹¹⁸ and the *Piast myth*, which may be seen as having some of its roots in the Sarmatian myth and as an example of a myth of ethnogenesis, came to the fore. ¹¹⁹ In the period when monarchs of Poland were elected (1573-1764) and often not Polish, it was customary for all the Polish candidates for the throne to be given 'Piast' as a first name. ¹²⁰ The early 20th Piast myth was propagated by the Polish Peasants' Party (*PSL*) and by the National Democrats (*ND*) led by Dmowski. The *Piast myth* claimed that some thousand years before, the Polish nation had lived in its ancestral home-land in unity and harmony under the rule of the Piast kings. ¹²¹ Over the

¹¹⁸ Walicki (1988: 23) describes Dmowski as the founder of modern, integral nationalism in Poland.

¹¹⁹ In the 10th century a French chronicler described the Poles as Sarmatians. The Sarmatians were originally of Iranian descent, and in the 6th - 4th centuries B.C. settled in the Urals, and then in other parts of South European Russia and the east Balkans. The *Sarmatian myth* emerged in 16th and 17th century Poland. The myth embraced a number of mainly illiberal concepts propagated by members of the Polish gentry. These included the beliefs that Poles were descended from the brave Sarmatians; that the Polish way of life should be defended against foreign influence; and that cultural and moral values should be strengthened. The myth also engendered an hostility to scientific and economic progress, and emphasised the greatness and the ancient history of the Polish people; and the necessity of limiting royal power, especially that of foreign kings.

¹²⁰ Later the *Piast myth* was appropriated by the romantic nationalists, for example Słowacki, who tried to change the myth of ethnogenesis into a paradise lost myth by portraying the Piast era as a distant pagan past, full of mysteriousness, simplicity and abundance. (Davies 2001b: 62).

¹²¹ Following the first Piast dynasty (c. 960-1138), there was a brief second Piast dynasty between 1306 and 1370 ending with Kazimierz the Great, King of Poland (1333-1370). Kazimierz was remembered for his concern for the development of

following centuries, as the myth has it, the Poles lost their unity and lost control of their native land. Unlike during Piast times when Poland was ruled by Polish kings, during the Commonwealth period with its elective system, the majority of the kings of Poland were not Poles. All manner of aliens and intruders – Germans, Jews, Ukrainians and Russians – abused Poland's natural hospitality, foreign kings were seated on the Polish throne and Poles were robbed of their inheritance. The import of the myth was clear: 'Poland for the Poles.' All patriotic Poles had a duty to unite and drive all foreigners from their native soil.

The Second Republic, albeit less heterogeneous than the Commonwealth, still had sizeable ethnic minorities. The 1931 census revealed that 14% of the population were Ukrainian, 9% Jewish, 3% Belorussian, 2% German and 3% were from other ethnic minorities.¹²²

Dmowski's social Darwinism fitted well with the Piast myth and its associated intolerance of ethnic minorities. Like the organic workers, Dmowski also perceived the nation as an organism, an integrated social whole. However the social Darwinism of Dmowski, a biology and zoology graduate, resulted in excluding rather than including minorities, which for him, whether based on caste, religion or ethnic differences, were alien bodies within the nation. He thought of nations as the natural product of ethnic differentiation, defining them in terms

the Polish economy, for money reform and codifying the laws and for the defence of the country, and for establishing in 1364 the first university in Poland, at Kraków. He reunified the state, brought comparative peace to Poland, and more than doubled its size.

¹²² The percentage of Poles was 69%. The census was based on linguistic criteria. The figures are as cited by Davies (1981b: 404).

of language and ethnic origin.¹²³ For him the nation was a biologically distinct ethnic group fated to struggle against other national organisms to ensure its survival and development.¹²⁴ Dmowski's thinking contributed greatly to the legitimisation of the *Pole = Catholic myth*, an archetypal myth of ethnogenesis and antiquity. In 1927, Dmowski wrote:

““A Polish state is a Catholic state ... It is Catholic because our state is a national state and our nation is a Catholic nation ... Catholicism is not a supplement to the Polish national character, but is inherent in its very essence.””¹²⁵

Dmowski rejected the old Polish Commonwealth tradition of defining the nation in multi-national terms irrespective of ethnicity. He advocated that former Commonwealth territory be incorporated into a unitary Polish State where Belorussians and Ukrainians would be expected to assimilate, and where it was believed Germans could not, and Jews should not, be assimilated.¹²⁶

Dmowski also argued against religious toleration. Significant elements within Polish Catholic society, particularly those that supported the ever strident Dmowski-influenced illiberal nationalism of the National Democrats with their slogan *Poland for the Poles* and their

¹²³ Gomułka (1990: 34).

¹²⁴ Gomułka (1990: 8).

¹²⁵ As cited by Ludwikowski (1991: 201-202).

¹²⁶ Brubaker (1997: 99-100).

journal *Polakatoklik*, voiced their anti-Semitism even more explicitly. Dmowski regarded tolerance as a sign of national weakness that could lead only to national extinction.¹²⁷ Many now equated Polishness with being Catholic. Even less chauvinistic Poles believed that Catholicism exerted so great an influence on Polish culture that the culture as a whole could not be separated from Catholicism without the loss of its very identity.

During the inter-war period, as explored in Chapter 1, the Polish Church in the main supported Dmowski's illiberalism, and evoked both external and internal conspiratorial enemy myths, particularly the Jewish and communist ones, to blame minorities for the deteriorating economic situation in Poland.

The Genesis of the Communist Enemy Myth

Such is the adaptability of myths that they often link-up with other myths. Such a linking-up occurred with the Jewish and communist enemy myths. The *Jew = Communist myth* that held that there was a world-wide Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy emerged following the 1917 Russian Revolution. It was fuelled by the Polish-Soviet War and by Polish and Western politicians, including Winston Churchill.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Shelton (1995: 267).

¹²⁸ During the attempted Polish advance into Soviet territory in the 1919-1920 Polish-Soviet War, Jewish soldiers and officers of the Polish Army were not allowed to fight and were even put into detention camps. The Army and the Church openly professed an anti-Semitism that intensified during the war. (Mosse 1985: 180). In early 1920, Churchill, who was closely involved in the Polish-Soviet War, wrote an article entitled *Zionism versus Bolshevism: A Struggle for the Soul of the Jewish People*. In it, Churchill depicts a Jewish conspiracy behind

During WWII, in the zones initially occupied by the Russians. Polish anti-Semitism persisted and the *Jew = Communist myth* was reinvented to become the *Jew = Enemy of the Nation myth*. The widely held stereotype now perceived Jews as first enthusiastically welcoming the Red Army and then collaborating with the Soviets in the local administration and the apparatus of coercion. As the Nazi's moved into the Soviet partition from June 1941, many hundreds of Polish Jews were allegedly killed by fellow Poles, who saw them as collaborators in the Stalin repression.¹²⁹

During the 1900-1944 period, another internal enemy myth, *the communist enemy myth*, that as mentioned was linked-up to the Jewish enemy myth, emerged within Poland. Between c. 1880s-1930s Polish nationalism successfully competed with socialism, the other dominant political ideology within Poland, with many Polish socialists, as typified by Stanisław Brzozowski and Piłsudski, moving from an international socialist stance to an increasingly pro-independent, national one. Throughout this period, Polish communism was a marginal political force, in large part because of its anti-nationalist

the Russian Revolution. (London *Sunday Illustrated Herald*, 8 February, 1920, p.5). Later, Nazi politicians were also to deploy the Jew = Communist myth.

¹²⁹ For example, an estimated 1,500 Jews were allegedly killed by fellow Poles in several villages in what is now North East Poland during the months of July and August 1941. ('Mord Żydów w Jedwabnem.' *Dziennik Bałtycki*, 1 September, 2000, p. 7), ('Dowody z MSW'. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 7-8 April, 2001, p. 4) and ('Wykonawcami byli Polacy'. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21-22, April, 2001, p. 5). The Germans allegedly turned a blind eye or aided and abetted them. For sources that dispute the role of Poles in the killings see www.geocities.com/jedwabne/english/.

stance both during partitions ¹³⁰ and during the 1918-1939 Second Republic years of Polish independence. Paradoxically, during partitions, Marx, Engels and Lenin all supported Polish nationalism.¹³¹ The subordination of the Polish Communist Party (*KPP*), established in December 1918, to Soviet foreign policy and to the *Comintern* led Polish communists to disavow Polish independence, and the Polish Army, and to side with the Red Army during the Polish-Soviet War.¹³² Polish communists were considered by many as traitors to the nation, which helps explain the genesis of the *communist ≠ Pole* and the *communist = enemy of the nation* myths.

¹³⁰ The first Polish socialist group *Proletariat*, founded in 1882, was markedly anti-nationalist. The *Social Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania* (*SDKPiL*) – formed by a 1900 merger of the main Polish Communist Party, *The Social Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland* (*SDKP*) with *The Social Democratic Party of Lithuania* (*SDL*) – actively opposed the union of Polish lands. Its leaders, who included Róża Luxemburg and Feliks Dzierżyński, devoted most of their energies to the German and Russian Revolutions. In 1921, Dzierżyński conceded: “our mistake was in repudiating Poland’s independence for which Lenin always rebuked us.” As cited by Dzięwanowski’s *The Communist Policy of Poland* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959, p. 103) as cited by Bromke (1967: 54). The Polish Socialist Party (*PPS*), founded in 1892, agonised over the priority between national and social justice. By the time Piłsudski emerged as its leader in 1918, he no longer regarded himself as a socialist, and adopted a strongly nationalist line. (Davies 1981b: 65) and (Jeleński 1982: 181).

¹³¹ Their support was pragmatic in the sense that they saw Polish independence as a means of weakening the partitioning absolutist powers and thereby as a means of spreading revolution.

¹³² In 1920, during the Red Army’s advance on Warsaw, the Polish communists formed a revolutionary government in Białystok and gave active support to the Red Army. (Coutouvidis 1986: 117).

2.4.2 The Genesis of External Enemy Myths

The German and Russian/Soviet ¹³³ enemy myths that evolved over the centuries of Polish conflict with her neighbours were much fuelled by repressive acts against Poles during partitioning and repartitioning. In August 1939, Poland's two key historic enemies signed the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact with its secret re-partitioning protocol whereby the Germans would take western Poland and the Soviet Union would take eastern Poland.

The Genesis of the German Enemy Myth

Given their belief in the physical force tradition, myths of military valour were normally associated with idealistic nationalism. However, it was realistic nationalists - such as Dmowski and Sienkiewicz, who was to aid Dmowski during WWI, and the WWII communist partisans - who saw the Germans as a greater threat to Poland than the Soviets and who helped create the 1410 Battle of Grunwald myth and transform it into a German enemy myth.

The 1410 Battle of Grunwald represented a major Polish-Lithuanian-Ruthenian ¹³⁴ victory over the German Knights of the Teutonic Order

¹³³ Many Poles saw the Soviet regime as merely a continuation of the Czarist regime's coercive hegemony.

¹³⁴ The term Ruthenia was applied to the Ukraine in the Middle Ages, which was to become part of the Jagiellonian/Commonwealth territory. Later, in Austria-Hungary, the term *Ruthenians* was used to designate the Ukrainian population of West Ukraine and Carpathian Ukraine. In 1772, Ruthenia was divided between the partitioning powers, Austria and Russia. The Austrian portion, Galicia, was returned to Poland in 1918. After 1918, the term Ruthenia was applied only to the easternmost province of Czechoslovakia, which was also known as Carpathian

and was to give rise to a *German enemy myth*. The German defeat at Grunwald heralded two centuries of Polish growth. It also marked the end of the Order's expansion along the south-eastern coast of the Baltic Sea and the beginning of the gradual decline of the pre-eminent military power of the age. More than four and a half centuries after the Battle, the myth remained. A famous 1878 painting by Jan Matejko (1838-1893) of the 1410 Battle helped stir collective memories. Two decades later Sienkiewicz revisited the myth in his *The Teutonic Knights* (1900).

Dmowski's social Darwinism also helped to engender external enemy mythology. Dmowski believed that international relations were subject to the severe Darwinian 'survival of the fittest' laws and that it was pointless to believe in the final victory of the 'right cause', since the fate of any cause depends first of all on material forces. In a social Darwinian manner he asserted: "Struggle is the foundation of life. ... Nations morally degenerate and decay whenever they cease struggling."¹³⁵ Dmowski advocated the concept of *national interest*, emphasising that each nation had a natural right to 'healthy national egoism'. Dmowski's *real-politik* view meant that the primary duty of the nation was to pursue its own interests. The only principle of

Ukraine. In 1945 Galicia was annexed to the USSR. There is no ethnic or linguistic distinction between Ukrainians and Ruthenians. Culturally, however, the Ruthenians were distinct from the Ukrainians, especially after 1596, when the Orthodox Church of the Western Ukraine entered into union with the Roman Catholic Church, and after 1649, when a similar union was effected in Hungary. When in 1945 all Ruthenians were united in Soviet Ukraine, government pressure resulted in the secession of the Ruthenian Uniate Church from Rome and its reunion with the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1989 the Uniate Church broke with the Russian Orthodox Church and re-established its ties with Rome.

¹³⁵ *Thoughts of a Modern Pole* (1903) as cited by Bromke (1967: 15).

international relations, he argued, was that of strength or weakness, never that of being morally right or wrong.¹³⁶ Dmowski accused his countrymen of clinging to the ideas of their romantic poets, that is, to the comforting but foolish illusion that all nations were brothers and that conflicts could be solved on the basis of an abstract ‘justice’.¹³⁷

The *Rota*, a song protesting the process of Germanisation within the German partition, had a refrain that asked for God’s help. *Rota* was first performed on 15 July 1910 at the Grunwald Memorial in Kraków, precisely a half millennium after the 1410 Battle of Grunwald.¹³⁸ The setting of the protest at the Grunwald Memorial had the characteristic features of conscious 20th century political manipulation. Edelman (1964: 96) observes that political settings are contrived. “They are unabashedly built up to emphasize a departure from men’s daily routine.” He notes (1964: 190) that

“the settings of formal political acts help ‘prove’ the integrity and legitimacy of the acts they frame, creating a semblance of reality from which counter-evidence is excluded. Settings also help leaders find the roles and identifications that are significant to the followers.”

As both Kertzer (1988: 120) and Holy (1996: 33) note, and as Part 2 of the thesis will also show, opposition mass demonstrations usually

¹³⁶ Walicki (1982: 338).

¹³⁷ Walicki (1982: 350).

¹³⁸ Source: <http://www-personal.engin.umich.edu/~zbigniew/Hymny/HRot.html>. The lyrics to *Rota* were written by Maria Konopnicka (1842-1910)

take place in locations of symbolic value to the demonstrators, rather than in the centres of the holders of political power.

During the 1939-1945 re-partitioning, the Germans killed an estimated three million Catholic Poles and three million Jewish Poles. These atrocities fuelled the German enemy myth but did not abate the Jewish enemy myth.

After WWII, the Polish communist regime, conveniently forgetting the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact and the role of the much larger Home Army, were to make much of the communist partisans' anti-German WWII exploits. Two exceptions to the pre-1945 communists = internationalists rule were Gomułka¹³⁹ and Mieczysław Moczar (1913-1986). With the outbreak of WWII, Gomułka was released from prison and went on to direct communist resistance to the Germans in Warsaw.

In January 1942, at the initiative of the Stalin-controlled *Comintern* (1919-1943), the Polish Workers' Party (*PPR*) was formed. As its Party name suggested, Polish communism was learning from its past mistakes of disavowing Polish nationalism and of highlighting its ideology. Shortly afterwards, the *PPR* established the People's Guard (*GL*)¹⁴⁰ that constituted the main force entering the People's Army

¹³⁹ Paradoxically Gomułka's Polish imprisonment (1936-1939) by the post-Piłsudski regime probably saved him from summary execution. In 1938, Stalin abruptly dissolved the Polish Communist Party (*KPP*). All ranking Polish communists not then in Polish prisons headed to the Soviet Union and to their death at Stalin's behest.

¹⁴⁰ The *GL* numbered about 11,000 of which about 1400 were partisan units.

(*AL*), established in January 1944 by the *PPR*, headed by Gomułka from 1943. Moczar was a district commander in the (*GL*) and then the *AL*. The anti-German *GL* and *AL* took their directives from Moscow.

The Genesis of the Soviet Enemy Myth

The original antemurale myths within Poland were probably fuelled by Tartar and Turkish threats to Poland, and in particular by the Polish King Sobieski's victory over the Islam Turks in 1683. In the 20th century, the antemurale myth had to adapt to new circumstances. The Polish mission now was to save Christian Europe from a new faith, in the form of Soviet communism. There were two key 'opportunities' to fulfil this mission and in doing so fuel the Soviet enemy myth. The first opportunity was during the Polish-Soviet War and the second was at the end of WWII when the Home Army tried, by attempting to liberate Poland first, to prevent a Soviet 'take-over' of Poland.

After WWI, Marshall Piłsudski was to become the chief overseer of Poland's brief 1918-1939 taste of national sovereignty after nearly one and a half centuries of foreign rule. The cavalrymen in his Polish Army, resplendently attired in their four-cornered caps, were a source of great national pride. The Polish Army was also Piłsudski's means of enacting the Commonwealth myth. The myth that subsequently evolved around the 1920 Battle of Warsaw conveniently forgets that the Polish Army 'invaded' neighbouring Lithuania and the Ukraine in an attempt to reconstitute the former Commonwealth. The 1920 Battle of Warsaw was the turning point in the Polish-Soviet War. When the Red Army attacked Warsaw in August 1920, most of the diplomatic

corps had already retreated to Poznań. Achilli Ratti - the future Pius XI – remained, for he thought it his duty to brave the hordes of the Antichrist in person.¹⁴¹ The Soviet commander of the Western front wrote that, had they not lost, the war might have been the link by which the 1917 October Revolution would have united with the West European revolution.¹⁴² The 15 August, a decisive turning point in the Battle, was, coincidentally, also the date of *The Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, and as Assumption Day, the 15 August was a national holiday¹⁴³ of the Second Republic. Following the 1920 Battle of Warsaw, Dmowski's National Democrats, preferring that God rather than Piłsudski gained the credit, described Poland's victory over the Soviets as the *Miracle of the Vistula*. The Battle of Warsaw/Miracle of the Vistula had all the ingredients for a good antemurale myth in that it combined the sacred symbolism of Christ, God and Mary with Piłsudski and the Polish Army as hero-saviours, and communism and the Soviets as enemies.

The Soviet Union's WWII re-partitioning and subsequent atrocities against the Poles further deepened Polish anti-communist and anti-Soviet antipathy. During 1939-1941, the Soviets deported an estimated 1.5 million Poles to Siberia and Kazakhstan for slave labour and massacred some 22,000 Polish Officers and reservists in the

¹⁴¹ Davies (1972: 18).

¹⁴² *Pochód za Wisłę. VIII Rewolucja z zewnątrz*. Łódź; 1989 as presented in (Sobańska-Bondaruk 1998: 142).

¹⁴³ It was also a holy day of obligation for Catholics.

Katyń, Kharkov and Miednoje areas.¹⁴⁴ In 1944, in terms of numeric strength the *AK* was by far the largest Polish WWII resistance grouping.¹⁴⁵ The *AK*-led Warsaw Uprising, which post-1945 evolved into a myth of military valour, commenced in August 1944 and resulted in some 250,000 Polish deaths and in the complete destruction of the capital by the Germans.¹⁴⁶ However, the Uprising was not only to fuel the German enemy myth, but also the Soviet enemy myth, for the Soviet Red Army was on the opposite banks of the River Vistula and failed to intervene. The Soviets even refused to allow Allied planes to land on Soviet-controlled airfields after dropping supplies to the Poles. The ties between the *AK* and Catholicism were close. Every *AK* member had to swear a solemn religious oath on the Holy Cross (the Christ-invoking symbol of martyrdom and salvation), before God the Almighty, and before the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Crown of Poland.¹⁴⁷ Following in the tradition of the national uprising insurrectionists, the *AK* had army

¹⁴⁴ The reservists killed were not career soldiers but from the professions and represented Poland's intellectual elite.

¹⁴⁵ The *AK* numbered some 300,000; the National Armed Forces (*NSZ*) some 65,000; and the *AL*, 50,000. In addition, the other major resistance grouping, the Peasant Battalions, numbered some 160,000. (Mizerski 1996: 59). The right-wing *NSZ* WWII resistance group that included National Democratic supporters stressed the Germany - USSR two-enemy concept.

¹⁴⁶ The Uprising saw heroic street fighting. The capital's sewers were used as lines of communication and escape. The people of Warsaw were under heavy bombardment for 63 days. After surrendering, many civilians and soldiers were executed or exterminated in concentration camps. Kasprzyk (1997).

¹⁴⁷ Bruce (1974: 32).

chaplains.¹⁴⁸ With the post-1945 communist regime's attempts to 'conveniently forget' the role of the Home Army, the *AK* evolved into a myth as defender of the nation against communist and Soviet hegemony.

2.5 The Genesis Of The Myths Supportive Of A Proto-Liberal Polish Political Culture

Although the illiberal political culture expressed by the national myths depicted above was the prevailing culture of pre-1945 Poland, it should not be forgotten that there were proto-liberal nationalist strands within Polish political culture. The influences of the West European Enlightenment and positivist movement had a liberalising influence upon strands within Polish nationalism. Strands of liberal nationalism came to the fore during Poland's brief Enlightenment (c. 1770-1790s), during her romantic period (c. 1820-1860s), her positivist period, and during her neo-romantic period, when it competed with the aforementioned illiberal nationalism. Around the 1760s-1770s prominent West European enlightened writers, including the English philosopher John Locke (1632-1704), Voltaire and Rousseau, were translated en masse within Poland,¹⁴⁹ resulting in the first signs of a proto-liberal realistic nationalism that briefly manifested itself during the short-lived Polish Enlightenment. As Walicki (1989: 88) notes, the key representatives of the Polish Enlightenment, Kołłątaj and Staszic,

¹⁴⁸ Post-1945, one such *AK* chaplain, Stefan Wyszyński, was to become Polish Primate; two others were to become members of the Workers' Defence Committee (*KOR*).

¹⁴⁹ Suchodolski (1986:140-141).

both Catholic priests who became deists, represented a nationalism “that was par excellence ‘Western’, making conscious reference to the French model.” Polish positivism built upon aspects of West European positivism that believed that liberal democracy was the proper basis for a nation and saw the state as an organism founded on the co-operation between all its inhabitants.¹⁵⁰

Part 2 will show how the opposition increasingly advocated popular democratic sovereignty, respect for other nations, civil rights for all citizens, toleration of ethnic minorities, and social justice for all citizens. These liberal values were reflected in the myths and symbols associated with the proto-liberal strands within Polish nationalism and political Catholicism.

It is difficult to discern when a sufficiency of cognate symbols evolves into a myth, or when the numbers believing in myths relating to national identity constitute to a ‘significant proportion’ and thereby allow one to designate it a national myth. It is also difficult to categorise myths, given their multivocal, adaptable and ambiguous meanings. Some only achieved ‘myth status’ post-1945, and the values associated with them also were often reinforced, extended and/or significantly changed by post-1945 circumstances. Notwithstanding these important caveats, the myths and symbols that reflect the above-mentioned liberal values are presented sequentially below.

¹⁵⁰ Kietlińska (1998: 279-280).

2.5.1 The Genesis of 3 May Myth and of a Belief in Popular Sovereignty

Values contained within both early idealistic and realist Polish nationalism contributed towards the concept of Polish national sovereignty taking on the modern French Revolutionary aspect of encompassing the will of the entire nation rather than just that of the first and second estates of the Church and nobility. The Bar Confederates were conservative, in the sense that they wanted to defend the political privileges of the nobility/gentry and appealed to the ‘wisdom of their ancestors’. However, at the same time, their criticism of absolutism gave the Confederates a proto-liberal edge, and they included within their concept of the ‘good citizen’, one who was prepared to protest and resist and willing to lay down his life in resistance to the established order. The loss of privileges and power of the large Polish nobility/gentry and clergy following partitioning helped radicalise them and also to reduce class/estate tensions.

The May 3 Myth

The 1791 May 3 Constitution was the first liberal *written* constitution in Europe.¹⁵¹ The Constitution furthered the universal ideals of the American (1775-1783) and French (1789) Revolutions. The Constitution strengthened and liberalised the government, in that,

¹⁵¹ The May 3 Constitution was only second to the American Constitution of 1789. The American Constitution was drafted in 1787, but became effective in 1789. The first draft of the *written* French Constitution was approved in July 1790, but the final draft was not completed until Autumn 1791. The *oral* French 1789 *Declaration of the Rights of Man* was attached in written form to the Constitution.

following the American model, it established three independent branches of government: the executive, the legislative and the judiciary.¹⁵² Karl Marx would praise the Constitution as the only work of freedom that Central Europe had produced of its own accord.¹⁵³ Engels went even further:

“‘The constitution of 1791, embodying the rights of man, became the banner of the revolution on the banks of the Vistula and made Poland the vanguard of revolutionary France.’”¹⁵⁴

Written just before the second partitioning and adopted in the face of violent opposition from a section of the Polish nobility/gentry, the Constitution saw the nation in the modern terms of the entire nation rather than privileged sections of it. Most importantly, it referred not only to the ‘will of the people’, but also to ‘all citizens’, and ‘national sovereignty’. The Constitution characterised with the prefix ‘national’ such concepts as ‘religion’, ‘army’, ‘government’ ‘constitution’, ‘laws’, ‘integrity’, ‘needs’, ‘authority’ and ‘liberty’. At the same time, the Constitution moved from an elective to hereditary system for choosing its monarch. The Constitution, however, curtailed the executive power of the King and the Royal Council which was answerable directly to the Parliament via Custodians of the National Laws which included the Primate of Poland.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Zamoyski (1987: 248). The Constitution also abolished the infamous *liberum veto* whereby a single vote in Parliament could prevent legislation.

¹⁵³ Davies (1981a: 535).

¹⁵⁴ Engels, *Der Volksstaat*, 24 March, 1875 as cited by Marx (1992: 389).

¹⁵⁵ Zamoyski (1987: 248).

The short-lived 3 May 1791 Constitution, like so many other facets of Polish nationalism, would remain an example of the reconciliation of contradictions. Although it was essentially a product of the realistic nationalism of the Polish Enlightenment, idealistic nationalists had contributed to its making ¹⁵⁶ and it was later appropriated and mythologised by the Romantic idealistic nationalists, who saw the Constitution as an act of spiritual liberation of the nation and as a model of mild revolution. For the romantics, the *3 May myth* signified that the Polish nation by its own means would have been capable, but for the 1793 partitioning, of reforming the political system of the Commonwealth and restoring Poland's independence and grandeur. ¹⁵⁷

2.5.2 Solidarity of Nations and the Genesis of the Christ of Nations' Myth

Despite the fact that Poland is surrounded by Slav nations to its south and east, *pan-Slavism*, although a presence in the 19th century, never developed strong roots within Poland. ¹⁵⁸ However, Polish idealistic

¹⁵⁶ Julian Niemcewicz (1757-1841), a poet and an adjutant of Tadeusz Kościuszko (1746-1817), and Bishop Adam Krasiński (1714-1800), one of the leaders of the Bar Confederacy, joined with Kołłątaj, and others, in its preparation.

¹⁵⁷ Plewa (1992: 130).

¹⁵⁸ This was in large part because the only independent Slav state of the time, Russia, used the pan-Slavic movement to cover her expansionist designs. As Poland figured within these designs, Polish nationalists accordingly regarded the movement's veiled Russophilism with grave suspicion (Clark 1969: 338). Pan-Slavism in the years before World War I came to mean the liberation of non-Russian Slavs from their Ottoman, German, and Austro-Hungarian rulers.

nationalists expressed their solidarity/fraternity with other (Christian) nations to the West by not only fighting in the American Revolution, but also in Napoleon's (Polish) Legions; in France, Italy, Germany, Austria and Hungary in 1848; in the Paris Commune of 1871, and with the British during WWII.¹⁵⁹

The most famous of the Bar Confederacy's commanders, Kazimierz Pułaski (1746-1779), went on to fight for the American Revolution as had Kościuszko, the leader of the first Polish National Uprising in 1794. Kościuszko found 'national egoism' intolerable and believed in the international brotherhood of peoples.¹⁶⁰

The Polish Romantics shared several of Herder's convictions.¹⁶¹ Their belief in a nation's specificity did not mean a dismissal of other nations' specificity; on the contrary, it meant an appreciation and solidarity with other specificities, for they believed all cultures were valid. They were not illiberal nationalists. They believed in a brotherhood of nations and perceived a nation, as Herder did, as 'a wild garden full of bad plants and good.' They were strictly anti-imperialist, and their opposition to the Enlightenment was not because they were hostile to learning and reason, but rather because they disagreed with the Enlightenment's tendency to reduce human

¹⁵⁹ Towards the end of WWII there were almost 230,000 Poles under British command in Western Europe.

¹⁶⁰ Walicki (1989: 126).

¹⁶¹ See Chirot (1996).

behaviour and the entire natural universe to a set of rational laws devoid of passion and spontaneity.

Polish idealistic nationalist sentiments of solidarity of nations were to be found within the 1830-1831 Uprising and within the Christ of Nations' myth. During a January 1831 Warsaw demonstration commemorating the 1825 Decembrist Uprising,¹⁶² and just weeks after the commencement of the 1830-1831 National Uprising, the Polish leftist patriot Adam Gurowski (1805-1866) declared:

“Freedom not to one country or one people, but to all on earth, all humanity is one. Whoever wants his country to throw off the yoke will respect foreign freedom, too. Self-seeking interested parties divide and sow discord between one people and another.”¹⁶³

During this demonstration, the slogan *For Your Freedom and Ours!* first appeared on Polish banners. The exiled Mickiewicz was to write with appreciation that they were Polish banners, and that the word *Your* was put before *Ours* - in defiance of all previous diplomatic and realistically pragmatic logic. Later, Mickiewicz succeeded in forming a Polish Legion which fought for Italian nationalism under the slogan: *Wherever there is evil, there is our homeland!*¹⁶⁴ Elsewhere, the

¹⁶² The Decembrists, mainly Russian army officers, were influenced by French liberal ideas and tried to prevent the accession of Tsar Nicholas I after the death of his eldest brother Tsar Alexander I.

¹⁶³ As cited by Suchodolski (1986: 192).

¹⁶⁴ Davies (1981b: 342). The Legion fought in August 1848 against the Austrians in Lombardy, in April 1849 in Genoa against the Royalists, and in June 1849 in the vain defence of the Roman Republic.

Polish idealist concept of brotherhood of nations was also put into practice. In Italy, Polish generals helped various armed forces fighting for Italian nationalism and one Polish general, Józef Bem, a hero of the 1830-1831 National Uprising, took part in 1848 Revolutions in Austria and Hungary.

The Christ of Nations' Myth of Election

The Christ of Nations myth held that because Christ died for the sins of others, Poland, 'the Christ of nations', through fighting for freedom, would redeem not only herself, but, by her suffering, other Christian nations also. Poland's sacred mission was to break the chains of absolutism and thereby bring universal freedom.

In numerous articles published during the 1830-31 National Uprising, the poet and literary critic Kazimierz Brodziński (1791-1835) developed ideas typical of myths of election, particularly in *About the Nationality of the Poles* (1831). Brodziński felt the Polish nation mission was:

“‘to grow the tree of freedom and brotherhood under the sun of religion’ and overcoming the natural egoism of the nation, to teach other nationalities that none of them should be an object in itself, but all should concentrate like planets around the unique sun, meaning ‘the co-operation of all mankind.’ By this token the Polish nation ‘appeared like the Copernicus of the moral world.’”¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ As cited by Suchodolski (1986: 168).

Polish 19th century Messianism, stripped of its extravagant mysticism, may be summed up in two ideas, that of sacrifice in the Christian sense and that of the solidarity of nations.¹⁶⁶ Disinterested sacrifice to achieve independence for one's own and for other Christian nations transformed Polish Messianism from the religious to the political, and the romantic poets were able to elevate sacrifice to sublime heights.

The *Christ of Nations* myth bordered on the blasphemous. Traditional Catholics found it difficult to accept that the political fate of a people may be compared, even metaphorically, to the crucifixion of Christ. Although officially disapproved of by the Catholic Church, political Messianism did not lack sympathisers within the clergy, and it contributed greatly to a revival and renewal of Catholicism amongst the ordinary faithful in Poland.¹⁶⁷

Mickiewicz contributed a great deal to the creation of *the Christ of Nations* myth. Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve* (1823 and 1832) gives expression to the bitterness of a defeated nation, but also a sense of hope as a result of Poland's sufferings. One of its characters, Father Piotr, in an emotional passage regarded as a defining influence on the Polish literary tradition of Messianism, equates the martyrdom of Poland with the martyrdom of Christ and urges a moral revival. In *Tomes of the Polish Nation and the Polish Pilgrimage* (1832), Mickiewicz argued that Poland had sacrificed herself for others: "Christian Poland became a natural defense of Western civilization,

¹⁶⁶ Halecki (1942: 195).

¹⁶⁷ Pomian-Srzednicki (1982: 39) and Davies (1981b: 216).

which originated from Christianity.’”¹⁶⁸ He also prophesied that “‘the Nation shall arise, and free all the peoples of Europe from slavery.’”¹⁶⁹

2.5.3 Civil Rights for All and the Genesis of the Commonwealth Myth

The Jagiellonian/Commonwealth myth has its genesis with Jadwiga (c. 1374-1399), the daughter of King Ludwik of Hungary and Poland, who was born in Hungary about 1374. From 1384-1386 she was, apart from the Madonna, the one and only Queen of Poland. In 1386, she married the Grand Duke Jagiełło of Lithuania, who thereby became King Władysław II of Poland. The following year, 1387, Jagiełło returned to Lithuania and put in motion the conversion of his people to Christianity by receiving mass baptism. Jadwiga was revered for being devoutly religious, for extending the eastern territory of Poland and for devoting her personal wealth to the development of the Kraków Academy/University. Shortly after her death, she became a cult figure and in 1419 a list of the miracles that were said to have occurred by her grave was drawn up. Legend had it that Jadwiga asked her husband to build a church for the Virgin Mary.¹⁷⁰

Poland and Lithuania were from 1386 united via the Jagiellonian dynastic union and, in 1569, Poland and Lithuania were formally

¹⁶⁸ As cited by Suchodolski (1986: 191).

¹⁶⁹ As cited by Davies (1981b: 8-9).

¹⁷⁰ Backmann (1999: 58-59).

merged into a 'Commonwealth of Two Peoples'.¹⁷¹ The Commonwealth was then the largest state in Europe.

Jews originally moved eastward into Poland from about the end of 13th century, fleeing persecution and banishment from Western European countries.¹⁷² The Commonwealth 'sheltered' some four-fifths of the world's Jews. They fitted fairly comfortably into its political, economic and cultural framework, and there was no serious Jewish 'problem', rather a Polish-Jewish symbiosis, with Jews granted more autonomy, rights and privileges than elsewhere in Europe.¹⁷³

Following the 1772 partitioning and the dismemberment of the multi-national, multi-ethnic Commonwealth, a *Commonwealth paradise lost* myth evolved. The myth tended to be propagated by idealistic nationalists, including Lithuanians who had assimilated Polish culture, who sought to restore a modern version of the Commonwealth, which they saw as an ideal. With the onset of partitioning, the idealistic nationalists, mainly Polish and Lithuanian nobility/gentry, the latter having adopted Polish ways, looked to the *Jagiellonian/Commonwealth myth* for sustenance. Although looking to the past, the myth sustained proto-liberal concepts. Davies, writing of the Commonwealth nobility noted:

¹⁷¹ One of the Polish words for Commonwealth is *Rzeczpospolita*, (*RP*) which comes from the Latin *res publica* and signifies the sovereignty of the nation in relation to the state. The inter-war designation of Poland was *RP II*, a designation that was not changed to the Polish People's Republic (*PRL*) until 1952. The first *RP* relates to the 1569-1772 Commonwealth and *RP III* to the post-*PRL* republic.

¹⁷² For example, Jews were banished from England in 1290, France in 1306 and 1394, Spain in 1492 and Portugal between 1496-1497. Rohozinska (2000: 2).

¹⁷³ Rohozinska (2000: 2).

“In an age when most Europeans were lauding the benefits of Monarchism, Absolutism, or of state power, the noble citizens of Poland-Lithuania were praising their ‘Golden Freedom’, the right of resistance, the social contract, the liberty of the individual, the principle of government by consent, the value of self reliance. These concepts feature widely in the ideologies of modern, liberal democracies.”¹⁷⁴

Later, the myth was revitalised by the Polish Socialist Party (*PPS*) and Piłsudski’s Independence Movement. Piłsudski envisaged a nationally tolerant society and was a believer in the Jagiellonian/Commonwealth myth. Piłsudski was committed both to the democratic traditions of *Res Publica* and the multinational tradition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.¹⁷⁵ Accordingly, Piłsudski and his followers revived the Jagiellonian/Commonwealth myth as propagated by early idealistic nationalism following partitioning. In power, Piłsudski sought to establish a Federation of States covering pre-1772 Commonwealth territory (which included parts then lying mainly in Lithuania and partly in the Ukraine) and sent forces eastwards to achieve this aim, which in turn triggered the 1919-1920 Polish- Soviet War. His aim was to grant a wide autonomy to the different nationalities and encourage them to develop their national individuality.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Davies (1981a: 371).

¹⁷⁵ Shelton (1995: 268).

¹⁷⁶ Brubaker (1997: 99).

In its multi-faith and multi-ethnic values, the *Jagiellonian /Commonwealth myth* embraced a concept of civil rights irrespective of religious or ethnic criteria. Such thinking was apparent in both realistic and idealistic nationalism in the decades that followed the Commonwealth's demise.

The 3 May 1791 Constitution begins with the words. 'In the name of God, One in the Holy Trinity' and its first Article declares that:

"The dominant national religion is and shall be the sacred Roman Catholic faith with all its laws. Passage from the dominant religion to any other confession is forbidden under penalties of apostasy."

However, the first Article continues in a more tolerant and liberal tone, in guaranteeing the right to worship for other non-Catholic faiths:

"Inasmuch as the same holy faith bids us love our neighbors, we owe to all persons, of whatever persuasion, peace in their faith and the protection of the government, and therefore we guarantee freedom to all rites and religions in the Polish lands, in accordance with the laws of the land."¹⁷⁷

Kołątaj and Staszic's Enlightenment-influenced realistic nationalism assumed that all inhabitants of the country ought to become conscious of being Poles, irrespective of their ethnic origins or religion. Staszic tried to convince the nobility/gentry that they were not 'the whole nation,' but only one of its estates. Staszic saw Polish society as an

¹⁷⁷ Constitution, 1791: Article 1. *The Dominant Religion*.

inclusive ‘moral entity’. This entity, he argued, comprised all, whether they were nobility/gentry or peasants, townspeople or Jews.¹⁷⁸

Kościuszko, the leader of the 1794 National Uprising, was a polonised Belorussian who saw Lithuania as part of his native land. During the Uprising, an *Act of Insurrection of the Lithuanian Nation* was signed and for a few months the two parts of the Commonwealth were reunited. Kościuszko and the 1794 National Uprising he led proclaimed the universal ideals of both the American and French Revolutions. The Uprising’s *Manifesto of Połaniec* promised a reduction of the burden of feudal labour. Kościuszko sought freedom for all classes and all religions in Poland. He sought the co-operation of Greek Orthodoxy and equipped a Jewish Legion as part of the Polish Army.¹⁷⁹

Although regarded as the supreme representative of Polishness, Mickiewicz was born in Lithuania within an impoverished noble family. He began *Pan Tadeusz* with the invocation: ‘O Lithuania, my Fatherland! You are like health to me,’ and the 1846 National Uprising Manifesto *To The Polish Nation* appealed to “‘Our brothers ... fighting with the enemy in Lithuania and in Ruthenia.’”¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Staszic opposed separate Jewish aspirations and in 1816 wrote the pamphlet *Concerning the reasons for the Obnoxiousness of the Jews*.

¹⁷⁹ Kohn (1967: 526).

¹⁸⁰ As cited by Davies (1981b: 337).

2.5.4 Toleration and the Genesis of the Old Testament Myth

A more tolerant attitude to Jews leading to an acceptance of Jews as Polish citizens by Polish Catholics may well owe its roots to the Old Testament myth of election.

O'Brian links the genesis of the very first nationalism to the Jewish religion of the Old Testament and argues that for a period Judaism and nationalism became indistinguishable. "God chose a particular people and promised them a particular land."¹⁸¹ In the 16th and 17th century, O'Brian contends, the Old Testament was read again in the sense of its apparent, literal meanings, including its nationalist meaning.¹⁸² The famous sermons that the Polish Jesuit priest and counter-reformationist Piotr Skarga (1536-1612) delivered before the Polish parliament in 1597 support O'Brian's contention. Skarga's eight sermons appealed to the patriotism of Poles and were written after Parliament's failure to address the Turkish threat. In one sermon, Skarga dealt with the subject of patriotism, which he defined as the love of one's country. Contrary to the later Polish concept of Fatherland, Skarga talked mainly in biblical and metaphorical terms of

¹⁸¹ O'Brian (1988: 3). According to the Old Testament, Moses was commanded by God to deliver his people out of Egypt and slavery. Historians date the commencement of a movement out of Egypt to c. 13th century B.C. Some three centuries later, in c. 10th century B.C., according to the Old Testament, King David, eventually delivered his fellow Israelites to the 'Promised Land' (Israel/Palestine). David made Jerusalem his capital and the 'Holy City of the Jews'.

¹⁸² O'Brian (1988: 7).

‘Our own Jerusalem,’ and ... ‘our sweet Mother’. ¹⁸³ Shortly afterwards, in 1618, a translation into the vernacular of the poem *Jerusalem Liberated* (1581) inspired attempts at epics on proto-national themes.

The Messiah in both Judaism and Christianity is the saviour or deliverer. King David is described in both Old and New Testaments as the Son of the Messiah, and the New Testament describes Christ as the Messiah. The post-Romantic development of political Messianism was based, for the most part, upon the work of the Polish philosopher, Andrzej Towiański (1799-1878), who drew parallels between the fate of Old Testament Israel and partitioned Poland. Towiański appeared in Paris in 1841, in the guise of a mystic-prophet foreseeing a new era of Christendom in which politics - thanks to the Polish, French and Jewish chosen nations - could become truly Christian. He attracted a considerable following among Polish émigrés, including Mickiewicz and Słowacki. Mickiewicz established with Towiański a group that believed that Poland was ‘the Messiah of nations’ and that its suffering was to bring the world liberation from the evils of thralldom as well as universal freedom. Poland was called upon to relive in modern times the acts and fate of ancient Israel. ¹⁸⁴ In his *Manifesto for a Future Slav State Constitution* (1848), Mickiewicz declared that

¹⁸³ Davies (1981a: 358).

¹⁸⁴ Suchodolski (1986: 168) and Wandycz (1974: 181). After two years, Mickiewicz parted company with Towiański. Backmann (1999: 111).

‘all citizens are equal - Israelites, too’,¹⁸⁵ and just before his death, Mickiewicz attempted to form Jewish Legions to fight the Russians.¹⁸⁶

In 1886, Sienkiewicz wrote *The Deluge*. One meaning of the Polish word for deluge is the Old Testament *Flood* in which Noah, chosen and protected by God, heroically survives. Almost six decades later, in Nazi-occupied Kraków, Wojtyła, future Pope, wrote three plays, *David*, *Job*, and *Jeremiah*.¹⁸⁷ In his three plays:

“There are constant references ... to the situation of Poland. The mystique of sacrifice and the recognition of the moral decadence of Israel/Poland are underscored ... with soliloquies on the value of suffering and the longing for a new national liberation. Israel/Poland in its time of trouble, Wojtyła warned, had to be defended not only with the sword but above all through spiritual renewal.”¹⁸⁸

2.5.5 Social Justice and the Genesis of the Stanisław and Albert Myths

The Genesis of the Stanisław Myth

In 1079, Stanisław Szczepanowski (c. 1030/5-1079), the Bishop of Kraków (1072-1079), was murdered by, or on the orders of, the Polish King, Bolesław II (1058-1079). The event resulted in a papal interdict

¹⁸⁵ As cited by Szulc (1995: 68-69).

¹⁸⁶ Grudzińska-Gross (1995: 296).

¹⁸⁷ *Job* and *Jeremiah* were published in Poland, shortly after Wojtyła’s election as Pope. The manuscript for *David* did not survive.

¹⁸⁸ Bernstein (1996: 53).

upon Poland and engendered different political and mythical interpretations as shown by the Polish historians and chroniclers Gallus Anonymous (c. turn of 11th/12th century) and Wincenty Kadłubek (c. 1150-1223). In 1088 Stanisław's body was buried in Wawel Cathedral,¹⁸⁹ but in c. 1112 Gallus depicted Stanisław as a traitor who was justly killed by the king. From c. 1150 the cult of Stanisław as a holy martyr began.¹⁹⁰ In c. 1190, Kadłubek, later Bishop of Kraków (1208-1218), depicted Stanisław as a martyr who died fighting for justice, and emphasised the right of subjects to remove a 'tyrant.'¹⁹¹ In 1253,¹⁹² Stanisław was canonised by Pope Innocent IV (1243-1254). Stanisław became a co-patron saint of Poland and his canonisation led to the writing of several stories about his life. Subsequently prophecies were heard that the Nation would soon be united, thanks to the intercession of the Saint whose body had miraculously reassembled after dismemberment.¹⁹³ Stanisław now became a popular symbol of justified resistance against the excesses

¹⁸⁹ Wawel Cathedral in Kraków was to become the burial place of several future national heroes and kings of Poland.

¹⁹⁰ Backmann (1999: 164-165).

¹⁹¹ In doing so, Kadłubek pre-dated Locke, who in his *Two Treatises of Government* (1690) attacked the theory of divine right of kings and the nature of the state as conceived by the English philosopher and political theorist Thomas Hobbes. Locke argued that sovereignty did not reside in the state but with the people, and that the state is supreme, but only if it is bound by civil and what he called 'natural' law. In England, the myth of Stanisław has its counterpart in what might be termed the myth of Thomas Becket.

¹⁹² Some sources give the date as 1254.

¹⁹³ Suchodolski (1986: 14).

of royal/secular power.¹⁹⁴ His cult played a big role in unifying the Polish state during the second half of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century. The myth of Stanisław as omnipotent-saviour was being formed. Several centuries later, during partitioning, Słowacki's *King-Spirit* (1847) kept the Stanisław myth alive by using the symbolism of an agonised Stanisław in the context of the contemporary struggle for independence to inspire future generations.¹⁹⁵

Aided by the impact of neo-romanticism at the turn of the 19th/20th century, when numerous Stanisław bibliographies appeared, the Stanisław myth lived on. Piłsudski was known to greatly admire Słowacki. At the reburial of Słowacki at Wawel Cathedral in June 1927, Piłsudski ended his funeral oration with the words: "He is going forward as King-Spirit." Piłsudski then turned towards the officers carrying the coffin and said: "In the name of the government of the Republic, I command you to take the coffin to the king's crypt, so that he be the equal of kings."¹⁹⁶ In 1928, *King-Spirit* was published in full, having only been published partially in 1847. Wojtyła, greatly influenced by romanticism, took part in WWII underground performances of *King-Spirit*.

¹⁹⁴ Kubik (1994: 130).

¹⁹⁵ Słowacki's *King-Spirit* expressed the genesic idea that the material world is an expression of the ever-improving spirit capable of progression into ever-new forms.

¹⁹⁶ Piłsudski (1927).

The Genesis of the Albert Myth

The painter and friar, Brother Albert, whose real name was Adam Chmielowski (1845-1916), took part in the 1863-1864 National Uprising against the Russians, where he was wounded and lost a leg. In 1884, ordered by the Czarist authorities to leave the Russian partition, he went to Kraków, where, gripped by a sense of national service, he devoted his life to the most deprived. Even during his lifetime, he knew fame as a saintly person. Shortly before his death, the neo-romantic writer Stefan Żeromski depicted him in his novel *The Conversion of Judas* (1916) as someone searching for the means to fight Satan. All sections of Kraków society - nobility, academics, artists, office-workers, tradesmen and the homeless - took part in Albert's funeral procession. In the early 1930s, moves were begun to beatify Brother Albert and on 11 November 1938, the Polish President decorated him posthumously for his services to the country and society.¹⁹⁷

2.6 Conclusions: The Seeds Are Sown

The chapter has explored the pre-1945 genesis of myths of Polish nationalism and Polish political Catholicism and suggested that the myths identified were to play a significant role in shaping post-1945 Polish political culture. The chapter also explored the gradual synthesis of Polish nationalism and Polish political Catholicism and argued that this process of synthesis was aided by the sharing of

¹⁹⁷ Gach (1997: 229 & 231).

common myths. These common myths, and in particular the Madonna myth, served both the aims of nationalism and of Catholicism and in doing so brought the two 'belief systems' closer together.

The chapter argued that pre-1945 Polish nationalism manifested itself in two differing strands: an idealistic and realistic strand. The chapter contended that the Enlightenment and positivist periods shaped the realistic strand, while the romantic and neo-romantic periods shaped the idealistic strand, and that both realistic and idealistic strands had liberal and illiberal aspects.

The chapter argued that the prevailing political culture of the Polish Second Republic was increasingly illiberal and that this culture was greatly influenced by an illiberal Polish nationalism and political Catholicism. The chapter contended that the main source of illiberalism within Polish nationalism was the social Darwinism of Dmowski. The resulting illiberal nationalism was in tune with other European illiberal nationalisms of the time and expressed itself partly in terms of a conspiratorial enemy mythology, deployed mainly against Jews and communists. The chapter also argued that the Polish Church hierarchy adopted the same mythology during the 1918-1939 period, in tune with both the prevailing illiberal Polish nationalism and illiberal papal political Catholicism. However, the chapter also indicated that there were liberal aspects of Polish political Catholicism.

Finally, the chapter identified certain pre-1945 myths associated with the proto-liberal strands within Polish nationalism and political Catholicism. Part 2 of the thesis will show how and why these pre-

1945 myths associated with proto-liberalism and their accompanying symbols and rituals served as vehicles for the post-1945 liberal political culture of opposition. In doing so, Part 2 will show how and why, thanks to the characteristics and functions of myths and symbols, associated pre-1945 political values were reinforced, extended and/or significantly changed. It will also show how and why the opposition, although retaining many of the sentiments of idealistic nationalism, adopted the realistic nationalist organic work strategy of evolutionary peaceful means. It will demonstrate how and why the opposition discarded the illiberal features of Polish nationalism and political Catholicism, including German and Jewish enemy myths and how it transformed the communist and Soviet enemy myths into myths indicating an opposition to a political system rather than a hatred of others. Part 2 will show how and why the process of synthesising of Polish nationalism and political Catholicism that commenced in the 19th century reached a high-point with the political preaching of John Paul II, in large part due to his deployment of myths that served both the aims of liberal nationalism and liberal political Catholicism. In addition, Part 2 will also show how and why this synthesis found practical expression within *Solidarity*.

The next chapter not only looks at the above processes as they occurred within the opposition's political culture, but also explores how the official and non-official regime nationalisms deployed and adapted myths and symbols of the pre-1945 era.

CHAPTER 3: THE ROLE OF PRE-1945 MYTHS IN THE 1945-1989 WAR OF POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

3.1 Introduction: The War Of Political Legitimacy

The 1945-1989 war of political legitimacy was a struggle between the political cultures of the opposition and the Party-State for political hegemony over the Poles. The war included a struggle for national identity waged in large part through the deployment of pre-1945 nationalist and religious myths and their associated symbols and rituals. Over the 1945-1989 period the intensity and nature of the struggle was in part shaped by the changing regime positions regarding Polish nationalism and Catholicism and by the changing opposition positions regarding the degree to which liberalism shaped their nationalism and political Catholicism. Broadly speaking, the regime in its national communism propagated a Polish ‘national road to socialism’ during the periods where Gomułka led the Party, that is to say 1943-1948 and 1956-1970, and during these two periods the regime tolerated the existence of the Polish Church. In the interim 1948-1956 period, the regime, under the shadow of Stalinism, propagated internationalism and disavowed national communism and took a much tougher anti-Church stance. With ideological legitimacy becoming a spent force,¹⁹⁸ Gomułka’s national communist formula *the Polish socialist state = the nation* evolved during the 1970s and 1980s into Gierek’s and Jaruzelski’s national non-communist formula,

¹⁹⁸ It was particularly weakened as a result of the August 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, in which the Polish Army participated, and as a consequence of the December 1970 massacre of unarmed striking Polish shipyard workers by regime forces.

the Polish state = the nation. ¹⁹⁹ Broadly speaking, the opposition during the 1945-1989 period, gradually freed itself of the pre-war shadow of illiberal nationalism and political Catholicism and increasingly adopted more liberal stances. Key events that shaped this liberalisation process were the period of de-Stalinisation following Stalin's death in 1953 and Khrushchev's 'secret' speech in 1956, the invasion of Hungary in 1956, the events in Poland and Czechoslovakia in 1968, the renaissance of civil society during the 1976-1979 period, the changes in papal Catholicism from the 1960s and the election of John Paul II as Pope in 1978.

Before specific manifestations of this struggle are examined, some assertions of the nature of the political cultures of each side are stated. Justification of these assertions will rest upon the empirical evidence presented.

3.1.1 The Political Culture of Opposition

In the context of a Poland under a communist rule that sought an ideological monopoly and where the Church was at best tolerated, but never fully approved, by the regime, and where the Church at best tolerated communism but never fully approved it, the Polish Church was, almost inevitably, part of the opposition. To a significant extent nationalism and political Catholicism shaped the post-1945 political culture of opposition. Although initially this political culture featured both liberal and illiberal facets, it gradually became more liberal, in

¹⁹⁹ The concepts of legitimacy and national non-communism are explored later in this chapter.

large part because its nationalism and political Catholicism became more liberal. As national non-communism deployed the pre-1945 illiberal enemy myths, so the opposition gradually discarded them, as its political culture became more liberal. From about the mid-1960s, the opposition began to distance itself from the German and Jewish enemy myths, in part due to the influence of Vatican II upon political Catholicism. In a September 1972 Pastoral Letter, marking the 200th anniversary of the first partition of Poland, the Polish bishops defined Christian patriotism thus:

““True love for one’s country entails profound respect for the values of other nations. ... It eschews hatred, for hatred is a destructive force that leads to a diseased and degenerated version of patriotism.””²⁰⁰

By the late 1980s, thanks partly to the impact of Gorbachev, the opposition had, to a significant extent, redefined its Russian/Soviet enemy myth. The opposition was now not in the business of evoking hatred, but of putting its liberal beliefs, via *Solidarity*, into practice.

This liberalisation process was facilitated by three factors. One was that the opposition deployed certain of the myths associated with the proto-liberalism that constituted part of the pre-1945 political culture discourse. A second was that the attributes of myths facilitated a legitimate, politically potent and adaptable political culture. The third was that the opposition discarded or re-interpreted the enemy myths associated with 1900-1944 illiberalism.

²⁰⁰ As cited by Kubik (1994: 124).

By 1945, communists controlled the new Polish regime. They owed their power to the Soviet Union and the war-end dispositions of its Red Army. Most Poles perceived communism as a non-democratic ‘alien import’ and Poland as being part of a coercive Soviet hegemony. In consequence the regime was deemed not to have political legitimacy in the sense of not commanding the respect of the majority of Poles, of not being “a political order marked by respect for authority and law.”²⁰¹ This essentially liberal democratic interpretation of legitimacy did not materialise suddenly after WWII. It slowly evolved over the decades of communist rule. Two key factors in this process of evolution were the increasing disillusionment of the dissident left with ‘practising communism’, resulting in their abandoning communism for liberal democracy, and the increasing liberalisation of political Catholicism. The perception of a coercive hegemony reinforced the legacy of recent centuries of non-sovereignty due to Russian/Soviet partitioning and repartitioning and resulted in two key opposition aims, both construed in a liberal sense. One aim was to seek popular sovereignty and the other was to seek national self-determination. Thus for the opposition, popular sovereignty was increasingly a belief that only rulers, freely and fairly elected by the nation, had the right to command obedience. Rulers, so chosen, would better serve the interests of civil society.²⁰² National self-determination increasingly meant that a Polish government so elected should be allowed to rule free of any coercive non-Polish influence.

²⁰¹ Held (1998: 334).

²⁰² Civil society is defined for the purposes of this thesis as the section of society ‘independent of the formal structures of power’ and engaging in ‘a sphere of action distinct from that of state forces.’ White (1993a: 38 & 193).

The key constituents of the mainstream opposition were initially members/followers of the Polish Catholic Church and of the Catholic intelligentsia *Znak* movement,²⁰³ and later, from 1976 and 1980 respectively, also of the Workers' Defence Committee (*KOR*)²⁰⁴ and of the political-cum-trade union movement, *Solidarity*. For most of the 1945-1989 period, the Church led this mainstream opposition, and it should not be forgotten that *Solidarity* only enjoyed the freedom of action that legal status gave it for less than two years under communist rule.²⁰⁵ For most of the 1945-1989 period, the Church constituted the only organised opposition that was tolerated by the regime.²⁰⁶ The mainstream opposition as defined did not, of course, have a uniformity of views. Some were atheists, some Catholics, but increasingly from the 1970s, three factors unified the opposition. One was having a common enemy in the communist state, the other was an increasing

²⁰³ The *Znak* movement owed its origins to the *Polish October* of 1956. It represented the backbone of the Catholic anti-regime intelligentsia. Amongst the more prominent *Znak* intellectuals were Jerzy Zawieyski, Stanisław Stomma, Jerzy Turowicz, Jacek Woźniakowski, Mazowiecki, Bohdan Cywiński, and Kisielewski. From 1957 to 1976, the *Znak* movement comprised a loose federation of five MPs; five Clubs of the Intelligentsia (*KIKs*); the editorial boards of three Catholic periodicals, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, *Znak*, and *Więź*; and, between 1967-1976, the Centre for Documentation and Social Studies (*ODiSS*). After 1976, the independent *Znak* MPs were replaced, due to regime pressure, by a less critical group of neo-*Znak* MPs, but the importance of the independent *Znak* movement was undiminished. By the autumn of 1981, for example, the numbers of *KIKs* had grown ten fold, from the permitted five to a tolerated fifty. Gomulka (1990: 147).

²⁰⁴ *KOR*, although influential, only existed from 1976-1981. Several of its members, however, were to play key roles during 1980-1989 within *Solidarity*.

²⁰⁵ Between November 1980 and December 1981, and from April 1989. Although *Solidarity* was still a political force when driven underground and illegal, it often fell to political Catholicism to represent its interests. Konieczny (1996) and Sobociński (1996).

²⁰⁶ Wal (1998).

acceptance of the values of liberalism, which included attitudinal shifts relating to how the secular left viewed Catholics and vice versa, and the third was an acceptance of the authority of John Paul II as the spiritual leader of this opposition.²⁰⁷ This mainstream opposition will be referred to in shorthand simply as the opposition, although it is recognised that there were other elements within civil society that opposed the regime. The latter were less-influential and included the following organisations established during the 1976-1982 period: the Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights (*ROPCiO*), the Confederation for Independent Poland (*KPN*), the Young Poland Movement, the Polish League for Independence (*PPN*), and *Fighting Solidarity*.

The opposition's political culture was unofficial in the sense that it was not sanctioned by the Party-State and was advocated by groups that were deemed illegal or strongly disapproved of by the regime. This unofficial political culture was essentially a response to not accepting the 'present realities' of Soviet hegemony and of a Soviet-installed Polish communist regime. However, to the extent that the opposition increasingly appreciated that these realities could not be altered by the physical force tradition, it opted, in keeping with the pre-1945 organic work myth, for a more evolutionary and peaceful approach, that was less reckless than during the Uprisings.²⁰⁸ In so

²⁰⁷ See Chapter 4.

²⁰⁸ An example of the dying legacy of recklessness was a small student group called *Ruch* (The Movement), which was established in 1965. The arrest of its members for planning to set fire to the Lenin Museum in Poronin in 1970 led to *Ruch*'s demise. *Ruch* opposed Russian domination and openly embraced Polish nationalism. Osa (2002: 19). *Ruch* was unusual insofar as it comprised some left-leaning members and Catholic youth, and because its goals and tactics were

doing, the opposition did not discard the possibility of the use of force in exceptional circumstances,²⁰⁹ as reflected by its deployment of pre-1945 myths of military valour. Nor did it quite become cautious, reasonable and unheroic, as exemplified by *Solidarity*'s very existence that defied the norms of *realpolitik*.

3.1.2 The Political Culture of the Regime

In the People's Republic of Poland (*PRL*),²¹⁰ the Party-State sought to control virtually all aspects of public life and thereby eliminate a

subversive, namely to other-throw the state. Its methods included robberies to finance its operations and arson. *Ruch*'s members included: co-founder Stefan Niesiołowski, later, a co-founder of Łódź Catholic Club of the Intelligentsia (*KIK*) and a 1980 *Solidarity* member, Andrzej Czuma, later a co-founder of *ROPCiO* and a *Solidarity* adviser, and Emil Morgiewicz, later a *KOR* member and arrested in August 1975 for trying to establish a Polish branch of Amnesty International. Although *Ruch*'s conspiratorial mode of operation, influenced by the traditions of pre-1945 idealistic nationalism, was to be rejected by the mainstream opposition, its significance lies in the co-operation of left-leaning and Catholic young intellectuals, that was to find more effective expression in 1976 within *KOR*.

²⁰⁹ For example, although falling short of advocating armed resistance, Primate Wyszyński, in a letter issued in January 1961, told his clergy to be prepared for any sacrifice in defence of the faith. Bromke (1967: 146) citing *The New York Times*, 4 March, 1961. In a sermon, probably also in early 1961, Wyszyński declared:

“Woe to those who seek to deprive others of freedom. ... In defense of his personality and human dignity, man will descend into the catacombs and will begin a life of conspiracy toward the outside world.” Bromke (1967: 146) citing *Polish Affairs*, April 1961.

See also Chapter 5, for an example of the extent of resistance advocated by John Paul II.

²¹⁰ *Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa* (*PRL*) was the official name of the Polish State from 22 July 1952 until 29 December 1989. *PRL*, however, will be used as shorthand to depict the period from 1945-1989 when Poland was under communist rule.

genuinely autonomous civil society. Within this context, any activity not approved by the Party-State could be considered political, but, clearly, there was a wide spectrum of activity ranging from explicit, organised opposition to implicit opposition that simply ignored some of the dictates of the regime. To a significant extent national communism and what might be termed ‘national non-communism’ shaped the regime’s political culture. National communism sought a Polish road to communism. National non-communism sought merely to maintain power, and disavowed communism in two key ways. One way was to downplay its ties with communism and the Soviet Union in order to mitigate the effects of the popular pre-1945 communism and Russian/Soviet enemy myths. The other way was to deploy the pre-1945 myths associated with the illiberal nationalism of Dmowski, namely the Pole = Catholic, the Piast, the Jewish enemy and the German enemy myths. In consequence, national non-communism tended to be pro-Catholic, anti-Semitic, and anti-German. National communism differed insofar as it tended to be anti-Catholic, anti-Zionist, and was against West German imperialism.

The regime’s claim to political legitimacy rested on both a Marxist-influenced and a liberal-influenced view of legitimacy. The regime claimed it had the right to rule because it was

“the repository of history, ... the most rational and efficient force in the state, (and) that it represented the best and most progressive elements of the national tradition.”²¹¹

²¹¹ Schöpflin (1994: 228) describing the basis of legitimacy of ‘Soviet type systems’.

This claim justified the use of coercive power to repress opposition where necessary. As with more explicitly military regimes, the Polish Party-State, in deploying its Marxist-influenced political legitimisation was seeking to appropriate popular sovereignty by claiming to ‘embody the national interest’ and to ‘represent the people’. ²¹² The Party would represent the people/nation via the dictatorship of the proletariat. In time, indeed, the Party’s First Secretary was to be described in the regime-controlled media as ‘the leader of the Polish Nation.’ ²¹³ However, Polish civil society was becoming less and less willing to accept such ideological national communist legitimacy, and the regime preferred not to use coercive means if possible. Accordingly, the regime began to increase its simultaneous deployment of two other forms of more liberal-influenced legitimacy; (liberal-influenced in the sense that the legitimisation did not rely on coercion but rather on authority.) ²¹⁴ These forms were socio-economic ²¹⁵ and national non-communist legitimacy. De-Stalinisation and the fact that by the end of the 1960s and 1970s, respectively, national communist and socio-economic legitimacy were transparently

²¹² See Beetham (1991: 233) for the use of national legitimisation by military regimes.

²¹³ This phrase began to be applied to Gierek from 1976. Głowiński (1993: 12).

²¹⁴ Goodwin (1997: 306) defines authority as attached to offices and requiring a subjectively deferential attitude on the part of citizens to be fully established. Goodwin points out that those in authority may also have recourse to other means to exercise power. Goodwin identifies five increasingly coercive archetypes ranging from the ability to influence, to rights of the office-holder, to coercive power, to force and finally, to violence.

²¹⁵ Socio-economic legitimacy was linked to the implicit social contract concept that rested on the premise that the legitimacy of communist rule resided in an implicit contract for civil society “to accept a limited range of political liberties in exchange for a modest but steadily improving standard of living.” White (1993b: 8).

spent forces, meant that the Party-State, although not abandoning these approaches, increasingly resorted to national non-communist legitimacy. The regime's main motivation in simultaneously deploying a national non-communist strategy was to win the war of political legitimacy with the opposition. National non-communism, it was hoped, could more easily reap the political harvest to be gained by deploying pre-1945 myths.

The regime's national communism was partly a recognition of the pre-1939 political illegitimacy of its internationalism; partly a response to misgivings about the 'present realities' of Soviet hegemony, and partly a result of seeking legitimacy ²¹⁶ with the nation. National communism varied considerably over the 1945-1989 years in terms of the degree of subservience to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Polish Party leaders had always to walk a tightrope between the demands of Moscow and the aspirations of Poles for national self-determination. Apart from the Stalinist era (c. 1948-1956), there existed a national communism that was partly a reflection of political expediency and partly an expression of genuine nationalist sentiment.

The Polish émigré and sociologist Maria Markus has defined the overt and covert process of legitimation used by East European communist regimes as involving:

“a simultaneous reference by the officials of the regime themselves to two different and often contradictory principles in the same sphere, one of which is openly proclaimed on ‘public’

²¹⁶ Legitimacy is used henceforth in the thesis, unless otherwise stated, in its liberal democratic sense.

occasions and the other in a more covert way in dealings with individuals and smaller groups. ...(The covert mode) role ... is not merely an auxiliary one, for it is believed to be more effective, appealing as it usually does to more popular, sometimes traditional, sometimes 'external', so-called 'petty bourgeois' values. ”²¹⁷

The overt and covert modes in the Polish context pertain to national communism and national non-communism, respectively. However, in Poland, the regime's deployment of national non-communism was not just in the piecemeal, private and covert way, but was also as a systematic, public, and overt political legitimation process.

The regime's national communism was official in the sense that it was driven by communist ideology and was sanctioned by the Party-State apparatus. The regime's national non-communism was non-official in the sense that it was based on the nationalism of non-communist ideologies and was sanctioned usually only by some factions, albeit powerful ones, within the Party-State apparatus.

Although using the rhetoric of autonomy and independence, in practice national communism accepted and required Soviet hegemony to maintain power. Perceived by its pre-1939 internationalist legacy and shaped by an ideological doctrine that had internationalism, friendship with the USSR, and the acceptance of the Soviet right to intervene as built-in components, national communism had little legitimacy, but hegemonic and ideological considerations meant that the regime was obliged to retain its national communism. The built-in

²¹⁷ Markus (1982: 88).

internationalist dimension of national communism was always going to undermine it.

The war of political legitimacy may be seen as having two dimensions. The first dimension involved a war between the political culture of the opposition and political culture of the regime as shaped by its national communism. The second dimension involved a war between the political culture of the opposition and the political culture of the regime as shaped by its national non-communism.

3.2 The War Of Political Legitimacy (1):

The Opposition v. The Regime's National Communism

In the war between the opposition and the regime's national communism, each side sought to define the symbolic paradigm. The opposition sought a paradigm that defined the true nation as liberated and the false state-nation removed; the Party-State sought a hegemonic paradigm that defined the state and the nation as one.

The post-1945 rejection of 'present realities' meant that the opposition tended to look to the past and the associated myths and symbols, for inspiration and as a vehicle to articulate an alternative legitimate order. Many within post-1945 civil society, for example, perceived the partitions (1772-1918) and repartitions (1939-1945) as periods of heroic struggle for national self-determination. Moreover, many within post-1945 civil society perceived the Second Republic period not in terms of a failure of democracy, but as a period of freedom and independence, viewed with patriotic pride, with Piłsudski a national hero-saviour rather than an authoritarian leader.

The omnipotent hero-saviour myths and sacred symbols that the opposition often deployed in their war of legitimacy battles were kept to the fore of national consciousness by the use of rituals, in particular political pilgrimages, Holy Mass and annual commemorations. Pilgrimages within Poland had declined during the Stalinist era of harassment, but by the 1960s had recovered their pre-WWII vitality.²¹⁸ Polish Primate Wyszyński exploited the political dimension of pilgrimages during the 1960s and 1970s, and from 1978-1989, John Paul II was to exploit political pilgrimages, as Chapter 5 will show, even further. Holy Mass became more politically potent when, in the mid-1960s, following Vatican II, the Polish vernacular was introduced into services, thereby contributing to a more personal reception of the messages of political Catholicism and undermining unreflective participation.²¹⁹ The annual commemorations observed by the opposition, whereby the dates of politically significant events were commemorated, constituted a useful device to maintain the potent force of history. In the context of Polish censorship and fears of repression, such commemorations allowed the political messages associated with the event to be implicitly expressed when explicit expression proved impossible. The ability of rituals to create solidarity was given significant confirmation, when, in the early 1980s, the Polish sociologist and priest Władysław Piwowski carried out some extensive studies into the participation by Poles in religious rituals. Piwowski concluded that the religious rituals contributed less to the

²¹⁸ In the 1970s, an estimated annual average of 1.5 million visited the Marian shrine of Jasna Góra alone. Kubik (1994: 117).

²¹⁹ Kubik (1994: 116-117) makes this point too.

deepening of religious ties, but rather more to the deepening of social and national ties and to the identification with the Polish nation.²²⁰

Myths and symbols had proved a potent force in legitimising new European states in the 19th and 20th centuries.²²¹ However, national communism was largely based upon more recent traditions of communism and upon the discontinuation of older pre-1945 traditions and their associated myths and symbols.

A major problem for the new post-1945 Polish regime was that its ideological-bound national communism usually obliged it to attack/replace/ignore many of the pre-1945 traditions and their politically rich reservoir of myths and symbols. The Second Republic years, for example, were treated in official discourse in terms of their dialectical historical role in the evolution of socialism in Poland or were selectively ignored.²²² Thus, for example, the regime's 'official line' as expressed by the Party's daily newspaper *Trybuna Ludu* in the 1960s followed the Soviets' official line, and viewed the decision to stage the 1944 Warsaw Uprising as one of the most tragic Polish 'sins', resulting in 'futile sacrifice.'²²³ The regime thus had to invent

²²⁰ 'Przemiany globalnych postaw wobec religii' by W. Piwowarski in *Religijność ludowa. Ciągłość i zmiana*. W. Piwowarski (ed.). Wydawnictwa Wrocławskiej Księgarni Archidiecezjalnej: Wrocław, 1983, p. 346 as cited by Kubik (1994: 124).

²²¹ See Rigby (1982: 3).

²²² See Harper (1997).

²²³ 'Spór o ideały wychowawcze socjalizmu'. *Trybuna Ludu*. 26 April, 1963 as cited by Bromke (1967: 197).

new legitimising traditions, and one way in which the regime sought to 'traditionalise new material' was via official, often mandatory, Party-State rituals of confirmation, such as May Day and Independence Day ceremonies that sought to reinforce the mythology/symbolism associated with the newer traditions of communism.²²⁴ The regime decreed that streets, including private houses, had to be decorated with national flags for such rituals of confirmation. Further evidence of the regime's appreciation of the political potency of myths and their associated symbols and rituals is demonstrated by the regime's actions to attempt to monopolise the use of symbols and rituals and prevent the opposition availing itself of such political weapons. In 1955, for example, the regime decreed the unauthorised use of the national/state emblem and colours as illegal. In the early 1960s, the regime introduced a Parliamentary Bill which removed the Catholic festivities from the calendar of official state holidays.²²⁵ In 1976, it banned the unauthorised use of the national flag and emblem and the singing of the National Anthem, and in the early 1980s, the regime decreed the use of all unregistered symbols, including those of *Solidarity*, as illegal.²²⁶

Three key *battles* in the first dimension of the war of legitimacy between the opposition and the regime's national communism will be termed the *Battle of the Second Millennium*, the *Battle of May Days*, and the *Battle of Foundation Days*. The dynamics of the three battles

²²⁴ Kubik (1994: 246).

²²⁵ Bromke (1967: 230).

²²⁶ Mach (1985: 34).

were driven by the opposition's desire for popular sovereignty and national self-determination and by the regime's official position that Poland already enjoyed such status. Thus, in the Battle of the Second Millennium, the Church sought to link the nation to a millennium of Polish Catholicism where Madonna, an omnipotent hero-saviour, was there to save and protect the nation. The Party-State sought to link the nation to a millennium of the Polish state, where the Party was the omnipotent hero-saviour, there to save and protect the nation. In the Battle of May Days, the opposition sought to promote the values associated with the 3 May myth, while the Party-State sought to propagate the values associated with the 1 May.²²⁷ Lastly, in the Battle of Foundation Days, the opposition sought to propagate the values linked to the 11 November 1918 Independence Day foundation myth, while the Party-State sought to propagate the values associated with its foundation myth, the 22 July 1944 Liberation Day. The focal point of each battle was usually a ritual commemoration of a particular event/myth by one of the warring sides. Such commemorations by the opposition were more than symbolic in the sense that they frequently led to brutal beatings and/or arrests by the state security forces.

²²⁷ During 1982-1988, illegal *Solidarity* also attempted to mark its own 1 May commemorations. In so doing, *Solidarity*, by boycotting the official commemorations, was demonstrating that the fight for social justice could be undertaken outside of the 'legality' as defined by the Party-State. Without exception, *Solidarity*'s attempts led to clashes with the state security police in each of the seven years, 1982-1988. See Kuroń (1996: 316, 318 & 319), Helsinki Watch (1986a) and Biernacki (2000: 76, 94, 110, 120, 135, 144 & 157).

The regime's national communist ritual ceremonies associated with Second Millennium, May and Independence Day celebrations were meant, as Kubik (1994: 248-249) observes with regard to those during Gierek's era, to legitimise the Party-State in the official Marxist sense, for they were partly designed to engender socialist patriotism and to propagate sufficient Marxist-Leninist 'noise' to hinder self-reflection by society. The Second Millennium and May Day ceremonies also sought to portray the Polish People's Republic as a culmination of the victorious march of the forces of progress through history.

3.2.1 The Battle of The Second Millennium

Implicit in the Battle of Second Millennium was a conflict between a Church-led opposition and the Party-State as to who best represented the values of the nation. It was a conflict essentially between two myths: the *Church = nation* and the *Party-State = nation*. It was a battle between two different perspectives of Poland's second millennium. On the one side of the battle was a Church-led nine-year (mid-1957 to mid-1966) celebration of a millennium of Polish Christianity.²²⁸ Known as the *Great Novena*,²²⁹ the celebration stressed Poland's pre-1945 heritage and in particular its close ties with Roman Catholicism. On the other side was a regime-led seven-year (1960 to 1966) celebration of a millennium of the Polish State. The regime-led celebration presented an evolution of statehood, with

²²⁸ In 966, Poland officially became a Christian country, following the baptism of Mieszko I, and his court.

²²⁹ *Novena* normally refers to devotion consisting of special prayers or services on nine successive *days*. In the case of the *Great Novena* it was used to refer to nine successive *years*.

Communist Poland representing the apogee.²³⁰ 1966, the final year of both celebrations, was the climax of the battle.

Each year of the *Novena*²³¹ was devoted to one major theme relating to religious and/or national renewal. The more contentious themes were propagated between 1963-1966 and related to 'justice and social love'; 'the struggle against national vices and the acquisition of Christian virtues'; and 'the protection of the mother of God, Queen of Poland.'²³² The political impact of the *Novena* was greatly strengthened by the Church's deployment of the Madonna myth, assisted by its use of the rituals of pilgrimages, annual celebrations and Holy Mass and by its use of nationalist and religious symbols. Thus demands for religious freedom and the right of cultural expression were accompanied everywhere by the national emblem, the crowned rather than uncrowned eagle,²³³ by the red and white national colours, by the yellow and white papal colours, and by the blue and white colours of Mary.²³⁴

²³⁰ Wandycz (1992: 1021).

²³¹ Conceived by Wyszyński while still under detention, that is to say before his release in 1956.

²³² Kubik (1994: 111).

²³³ According to Mach (1985: 30) the crowned eagle symbolised the period in Poland's past when the nation had attained full independence.

²³⁴ Osa (2002: 12).

In 1966, the Częstochowa *Black Madonna* icon ²³⁵ was sent on a pilgrimage to every one of Poland's eleven thousand parishes. The pilgrimage's purpose, the Episcopate explained later:

“was to obtain the help of the Holy Mother in moral renewal of the Nation ... It was to be realized through the Jasna Góra Vows of the Nation and the Great Novena.” ²³⁶

The regime attempted to stop the pilgrimage, by preventing the use of the icon. The Church responded by sending the icon's empty frame from parish to parish, where it was met with the same fervour the *Black Madonna* had received. ²³⁷ During 1966, Wyszyński also toured the entire country, province by province. Everywhere tens to hundreds of thousands of people greeted him.

According to Osa (2002: 18), initially the dissident Catholic intelligentsia ²³⁸ criticised the *Novena* as too nationalistic, too traditional and not in tune with the liberal, ecumenical spirit of Vatican II. Subsequently, as the regime-Church confrontation developed, the Catholic intelligentsia closed ranks, with *Znak*

²³⁵ Some accounts talk of a duplicate icon being used.

²³⁶ Episcopate Letter of 27-28, June 1980, quoted in *Krzyż Nowohucki*, No. 2, 1980 as cited by Kubik (1994: 110).

²³⁷ Kubik (1994: 116) and Kuroń (1996: 302).

²³⁸ Particularly those based around the *Znak* Warsaw publication *Więź*.

publications producing a number of articles that explored Polish Marian traditions and their historic/national significance.²³⁹

The Party saw the *Novena* as:

“aimed at the brutal exertion of pressure on non-believers, at the strengthening of the political position of the Church in social life and at encouraging the faithful to oppose the people’s power.”²⁴⁰

The Party-State’s response to the *Novena* was to refute the *Church = nation myth* and to propagate its own national communist counter-myth of the *Party-State = nation*.

The scale and severity of the regime’s response to the *Novena* shows how seriously the regime felt the *Novena*’s political potency challenged its own political legitimacy. The regime proclaimed the 1960-1966 period as a ‘jubilee of Polish statehood and culture.’ Processions were staged to emphasise the patriotic and progressive traditions of the Polish people across the ages. Party-controlled youth organisations launched a huge effort to build ‘a thousand schools for a thousand years.’ In February 1966, Interior Minister Moczar held a meeting at which plans to thwart the Church’s 1966 millennium celebrations were discussed. The entire state-controlled mass media, together with the entire Party apparatus were to be mobilised. Special operational, administrative and propaganda means to counteract the

²³⁹ One such member of the Catholic intelligentsia, Józefa Hennelowa, told this author how she realised that Wyszyński set out in 1956 quite consciously with his *Great Novena* to mobilise the Church. Hennelowa (1998).

²⁴⁰ *Dokument nr. 67* – a June 1970 analysis by the Party’s Central Committee of its 1960s’ religious policy. In (Aneks 1996: 317).

Church's celebrations and guidelines were set for other governmental departments to obstruct the rival celebrations.²⁴¹ At a 7 June 1966 secret police meeting, the Deputy Interior Minister disclosed that the entire activity of his Ministry and of other Party-State bodies was concentrated on the Church millennium celebrations. He characterised the addresses of Wyszyński and other Church leaders as 'hostile and trouble-making.' Moczar stated that Wyszyński 'clearly was pushing for a showdown' and was particularly dangerous for the authorities.²⁴²

On 22 June 1966 the authorities ordered the Madonna icon back to Częstochowa and informed the Church that the icon could not leave the monastery without its permission. In response there were anti-regime demonstrations in Gdańsk, Kraków, Lublin, Opole and Warsaw.²⁴³ Commenting on a 26 June Warsaw demonstration, Wyszyński noted how a regime-organised crowd gathered outside the Curia, provocatively sang the 'Internationale'²⁴⁴ and shouted such

²⁴¹ These guidelines included:

- broadcasting, at the time of the Church's millennium celebrations, popular radio and television programmes and extending them to the night hours
 - preventing foreign tourists from travelling to places where the Church millennium celebrations were taking place,
 - reducing the communications to places of pilgrimages, and
 - organising communications so as to get pilgrims away as quickly as possible.
- (Dominiczak 1997: 226-227).

²⁴² Dominiczak (1997: 230).

²⁴³ Dominiczak (1997: 229).

²⁴⁴ The *Internationale* (1888) was written to celebrate the 1871 Paris Commune, and later the Bolsheviks made it their Soviet national anthem. It remained so until 1944, when Stalin, with his own brand of national non-communism, replaced it with the *Hymn of the Soviet Union* as WWII battlefield reports indicated soldiers were more willing to die for *Mother Russia* than for the 'international working class.'

slogans as ‘Send Wyszyński to Rome’ and ‘Traitor, traitor ... we do not forgive.’²⁴⁵

A Church-led opposition and the Party-State fought a *confrontation of slogans* with churches, state buildings and streets, the fighting ground for these competing nationalist symbols. Thus it was *Poland’s Sacred Millennium* v. *A Thousand Years of the Polish State*; *For God and Country* v. *Socialism and Fatherland*; *The Nation is with the Church* v. *The Party is with the Nation*; *Poland Always Faithful* v. *Socialism is the Guarantee of Peace and Frontiers*.²⁴⁶

As both Weigel (1992) and Osa (1997) appreciated, the *Novena* was of major political importance. It provided ‘a paradigm of confrontation’:²⁴⁷ the united nation - with its long Church-safeguarded tradition of political myths, rituals and symbols, with Madonna to the fore - *versus* the secular state - with its more recent Party-safeguarded traditions of political myths, rituals and symbols.

For Wyszyński, according to Weigel:

“the Great Novena would ... challenge the communist attempt to separate the Polish people from their past in order to subjugate them in the present. It would do so by giving back to the people ... their historical memory.”²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Wyszyński (1996: 130-131).

²⁴⁶ Davies (1981a: 19-21).

²⁴⁷ See Osa (1997: 352).

²⁴⁸ Weigel (1992: 114).

The political significance of the Church deploying traditions and symbols of the past was immense, for, as Osa (1997: 365) recognised:

“While the state reigned supreme in the official sphere of coercive political power, the Church dominated in the realm of national symbols and historic authority. Polish Catholicism managed to relocate its confrontation ... from the substantive ground of public policy to a higher plateau of symbolic politics, where the Church and society *could win*.”

The *Great Novena* was a new *Kultürkampf*: this time Polish political Catholicism was pitted against Polish communism, but now, a century later, the outcome was reversed, with political Catholicism now succeeding in undermining the authoritarian state’s official nationalism.

3.2.2 The Battle of May Days

As Kubik (1994: 212) notes, under communist rule the 1 May was one of two major celebrations of the new social and political order, while 3 May was for the regime taboo, an occasion to be erased from the collective memory. Attendance at 1 May celebrations was virtually compulsory until the end of the 1970s, with slogans to chant provided from above.²⁴⁹ All the Party-State organs participated in countrywide rallies, processions, marches and reviews to commemorate the

²⁴⁹ The state authorities exerted much pressure on Poles to participate in 1 May celebrations. Maleszka (2000: 21). For example, attendance lists were made at schools and workplaces, and absentees from the celebration suffered consequences, including low marks for pupils, and lack of promotion for workers.

international day of labour. Fraternal communist parties offered their congratulations.

For many, however, the state's 1 May symbolised not only a workers' celebration, but also in its internationalist and Soviet overtones, Poland's lack of national self-determination,²⁵⁰ however many Polish flags were displayed.

The 3 May celebrations symbolised for much of civil society a more liberal nation governed by popular sovereignty. The 3 May was also the Polish Church's *Feast Day for Mary, Queen of Poland*. It was this opportune coincidence that enabled the Church to combine the 3 May myth with the Madonna myth. On 3 May 1966, for example, the culmination of the *Novena* celebrations and also the 310th anniversary of King Kazimierz's 1656 dedication of Mary as Queen of Poland, the Church rededicated Mary to the Polish nation. To try and thwart the rededication, the regime specially switched the date of a football match between Hungary and Poland from 24 April to 3 May 1966 as a counter-attraction.²⁵¹ Notwithstanding, about one million faithful made the pilgrimage to Jasna Góra. Wyszyński had invited Pope Paul VI, but the authorities refused to give him a visa. The Polish Church retaliated by displaying the Pope's portrait on an empty chair, wreathed with roses in the national red and white colours. The *Black*

²⁵⁰ 1 May was the international day of labour as originally designated by the International Socialist Congress of 1889. It was thereby linked with the revolutionary internationalism of the precursor of the *KPP*, the *SDKPiL*. From 1 May 1890, Polish socialists in Warsaw and in Southern Polish towns, began to celebrate the day. Wandycz (1974: 296).

²⁵¹ Dominiczak (1997: 227).

Madonna icon was removed from the chapel and paraded amongst the crowds before being placed above the empty chair,²⁵² bedecked with a papal crown as it had been in 1717 and 1910.²⁵³ In the closing sermon, Wyszyński did not mince his words.

“In the face of a totalitarian threat to the nation, due to the sheer force of Moscow, in the face of an atheistic program supported by the PZPR ... a great supernatural current is needed, so that the nation can consciously draw from the Church the divine strength that will fortify its religious and national life. Nowhere but in a Poland totally threatened does one feel such a close union as that between the Church and the Nation. Our ‘temporal theology’ demands that we give ourselves into the hands of the Holy Mother, so that we can fulfil our task.”²⁵⁴

A decade later, as was evident in 1977, political Catholicism had extended its liberal repertoire to include social justice backed by international law. On 3 May 1977, there was a ceremony in Częstochowa to commemorate the renewal of the Jasna Góra vows of 26 August 1956,²⁵⁵ when some one million people had sworn allegiance to Mary, Queen of Poland. Then, Wyszyński was still in detention. Now in 1977 at the famous Marian shrine, he preached how in 1656 King Kazimierz stood up for the underprivileged and how Kazimierz’s Vows ‘declared the enfranchisement of the farming population.’ He also preached how in 1791, the 3 May Constitution “‘was also to take up the cause of the underprivileged.’” The Primate

²⁵² Szajkowski (1983: 22).

²⁵³ Kubik (1994: 109).

²⁵⁴ Wyszyński (1996: 74-75).

²⁵⁵ The date when the image of the Virgin Mary was said to have appeared at Jasna Góra is taken to be 26 August 1382.

added: ““today, we are ... supported in our Christian demands by such international documents as the ‘Charter of Human and Civil Rights.’”²⁵⁶

It was a classic sermon using the Madonna and 3 May myths as vehicles for adapted political values and reinforced by the political power of the rituals of pilgrimage, Holy Mass, and annual commemoration to invent tradition. An invented tradition that aligned symbols of a feudal state (the king) with the emancipation of the peasantry and the cause of social justice.

The political potency of the 3 May celebrations can be judged by the regime’s reactions. In 1946 the 3 May celebrations were banned by the regime, but some took place anyway. The Kraków 3 May celebrations were explicitly anti-communist and led to physical conflict between the state authorities and the participants.²⁵⁷ In 1950, the regime declared the 1 May a state holiday²⁵⁸ and in 1951 they banned the 3 May as a national holiday.²⁵⁹ 3 May celebrations were now effectively deemed illegal and were now in direct conflict with 1 May manifestations. To thwart the opposition’s celebrations, the state authorities always ensured that the national flags were removed before the 3 May. With *Solidarity* still legal and strong, the 3 May 1981

²⁵⁶ As cited by Kubik (1994: 122).

²⁵⁷ See (Kuroń 1996: 286) and (Habielski 1998: 144) for details of 3 May 1946 conflicts.

²⁵⁸ Habielski (1998: 161).

²⁵⁹ Habielski (1998: 164). The national holiday ban also related to some other Church days of celebration.

witnessed the first ever 3 May celebrations under communist rule not disrupted by security forces.²⁶⁰ At times of great tension and in the absence of a legal *Solidarity*, the 3 May saw the return of conflict between the opposition and state security forces; for example, in 1982, 1983, 1984 and 1986.²⁶¹

3.2.3 The Battle of Foundation Days

Post-1945, the opposition and the regime were to create myths of foundation around two different dates, 11 November 1918 and 22 July 1944 respectively. The different dates symbolised their different interpretations of what constituted national self-determination. The 11 November 1918 date was the Independence Day of the Second Republic and symbolised the end of foreign rule and new nationally self-determined beginnings. It became known as ‘the miracle of 11 November’.²⁶² It was also the date when Piłsudski was appointed Chief of the Polish military and the German Governor abandoned Warsaw.²⁶³ Thus, like all politically potent myths, the opposition’s 1918 foundation day myth combined a number of powerful inter-connecting, mutually reinforcing, symbols and myths. These centred upon national self-determination, the hero-saviour Piłsudski, and the defeat of the German and Russian/Soviet enemy. The 11 November foundation myth entailed the belief that Polish national self-

²⁶⁰ Biernacki (2000: 44).

²⁶¹ Biernacki (2000: 76-77, 94, 110, & 135).

²⁶² Plewa (1992: 32).

²⁶³ Wandycz (1974: 367).

determination was gained by Polish efforts, not least by those of Piłsudski and his Polish Legions/Polish Army before November 1918 and again during the Polish-Soviet War, particularly during the War's turning point, the 1920 Battle of Warsaw. The foundation myth also encompassed the belief that Poland would have regained its independence after WWII but for the efforts of the Home Army being thwarted by the Red Army. The 22 July 1944 date was the day when the so-called Lublin/July Manifesto of the pro-communist Polish Committee of National Liberation (*PKWN*) was proclaimed. It symbolised the end of fascism, liberation and new pro-communist beginnings ²⁶⁴ for a new socialist Poland after recent centuries of servitude under capitalism and its offspring, fascism. The 22 July foundation myth entailed the national communist belief that Poland had gained national self-determination at the end of WWII thanks to the efforts of the Polish communist partisans, ²⁶⁵ aided by their Soviet allies, and that post-1945, Poland was a sovereign country.

The Opposition's Deployment of the 11 November Foundation Myth

During the Battle of Foundation Days, as the following 1978 example of the 60th anniversary celebration illustrates, the opposition deployed both the rituals of Holy Mass and of annual commemoration. The example also shows how the beliefs and emotions surrounding the 11

²⁶⁴ Habielski (1998: 128). The *PKWN* had been established in Moscow the previous day as a 'provisional authority' for Poland.

²⁶⁵ The WWII role of the Home Army was conveniently forgotten by national communism for most of the 1945-1989 period.

November myth were extended, by linking the myth to other politically potent pre-1945 myths and symbols of idealistic and proto-liberal nationalism.

In October and early November 1978, opposition leaflets and posters depicting two Polish eagles, one - dated 1978 - chained, the other - dated 1918 - with the chains broken, were distributed throughout Warsaw.²⁶⁶ The symbolism deploying the national emblem was self-explanatory.

KOR, although critical of aspects of the Second Republic period, in a special declaration celebrating the 60th anniversary, acknowledged this period's successful realisation of the values of sovereignty, independence and pluralism.

In November 1978, the Polish Church, energised by the recent papal election of John Paul II, tried to make political capital of the 60th anniversary. Special 60th anniversary Holy Mass was celebrated in churches in many Polish towns, including Kraków, Warsaw, Gdańsk, Łódź, Poznań, Szczecin, Wrocław, Przemyśl and Lublin. The Episcopate ordered the singing of Feliński's 1816 hymn, *God Who Protects Poland*. In the event, many Churchgoers were to sing the 'subversive' version that included the original *Restore, O Lord, our free country* line as sung during the periods of Polish partitioning and repartitioning, rather than the *Bless, O Lord, our free country* line as sung during the Second Republic.

²⁶⁶ Kubik (1994: 170).

On 10 November 1978, a plaque commemorating Piłsudski was unveiled in a Warsaw church. On the 11 November, two further plaques honouring two Home Army leaders were unveiled in another Warsaw church. In the evening, some 20, 000 within and overflowing crowds outside, celebrated a commemorative Holy Mass at Saint John's Cathedral, Warsaw. Amongst the participants were veterans of the Polish-Soviet War and members of the underground WWII Home Army.²⁶⁷ Afterwards some 10,000 marched to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.²⁶⁸ Anderson showed his appreciation of the powerful nationalist and religious symbolism of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier when he wrote:

“No more arresting emblems of the modern culture of nationalism exist than cenotaphs and tombs of Unknown Soldiers. ... Yet void as these tombs are of identifiable mortal remains or immortal souls, they are nonetheless saturated with ghostly *national* imaginings ... If the nationalist imagining is so concerned, this suggests a strong affinity with religious imaginings.”²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 9. Nos. 3-4, Autumn 1981, p. 175.

²⁶⁸ In official ceremonies, the Party, in an example of *symbolic co-optation*, depicted the Warsaw Tomb of the Unknown Soldier solely as a symbol of Polish heroism against the Germans. Kubik (1994: 177). The regime's strategy of *symbolic co-optation* may be seen as falling between its national communism and its national non-communism, insofar as it retained the official national communist line, but also sought to co-opt an element of the opposition's political culture. The co-optation strategy entailed partially acknowledging pre-1945 tradition as national non-communism did, but celebrating it within a symbolic official framework that distorted or blurred the meaning of the event/myth. See Kubik (1994: 173).

²⁶⁹ Anderson (1991: 9-10).

The Polish opposition also appreciated such symbolism. Wreaths were laid at the Tomb, and religious hymns and patriotic songs, including the Polish National Anthem; *God Who Protects Poland*; and the 1831 *Warszawianka* were sung. Slogans such as ‘Freedom and Independence’, ‘There is no bread without freedom’, ‘Long live the Pope and the Primate’ were chanted.²⁷⁰ In Gdańsk, a solemn Holy Mass was celebrated in the Marian Basilica, followed by a march of about 1,000 that headed for the Jan III Sobieski Monument. The monument evoked not only the *antemurale christianitis bulwark of Christendom myth* by stirring memories of Sobieski’s 1683 victory against the Muslim Turks, but also evoked national self-determination emotions associated with Piłsudski and the 1919-1920 Polish Soviet War.²⁷¹

In Kraków there was a Holy Mass at Wawel Cathedral in the morning of 11 November 1978 to the memory of ‘the soul of ... Piłsudski.’²⁷² In the evening, there was a Pontifical Mass in the Marian Church, during which Bishop Grobicki explicitly challenged the official *22 July myth*. “‘No outsider gave us Poland. Poland came into being as the result of the nation’s struggles – and prayers.’”²⁷³ After the Mass,

²⁷⁰ Kubik (1994: 171-172).

²⁷¹ The monument had been brought to Gdańsk from Lwów, the town that Piłsudski’s Polish Army had defended during the 1919-1920 Polish-Soviet War. Lwów was lost to the Soviets at WWII end.

²⁷² Wawel Cathedral has become a nationalist shrine. The gothic Wawel Cathedral, situated within Wawel Castle, was built between 1320-1364. Saint Stanisław and several Polish Kings and distinguished nationalist heroes are buried there, including Mickiewicz and Słowacki.

²⁷³ As cited by Kubik (1994: 172).

some 400-500 marched to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. General Mieczysław Boruta-Spiechowicz (1894-1985), a co-founder of *ROPCiO*, was the central figure at both the Mass and at the Tomb. Boruta-Spiechowicz had fought in Piłsudski's Legions, in the Polish Army (*AP*) during WWII, and in the Polish Army (*WP*) until 1946, when he was dismissed. He therefore combined the symbolism of Piłsudski and of the *WP*, together with the symbolism of opposing the communist regime.

In a Pastoral Letter read on Sunday 12 November 1978 throughout the churches of the land, the Episcopate asserted that “the anniversary after two centuries of foreign subjugation must not be omitted from our history.”²⁷⁴ Given that the first partitioning of Poland had occurred in the 1770s, the assertion implied that two centuries later, 1970s' Poland was still subject to foreign subjugation. The Letter also referred to the 1795 partitioning of Poland, to the 3rd May 1791 Constitution, and to those Poles who had died in the Polish-Soviet War. Furthermore, the Episcopate declared:

“the Poland Nation never gave up ... the right of every Nation to freedom, to self-determination within one's own borders. Testifying to this are both the Armed Uprisings and also the organic work movement.”²⁷⁵

This was an explicit example of an attempted synthesis of seeming contradictions by evoking myths of military valour and the physical

²⁷⁴ As cited in *Opinia*, No. 10, October-November, 1978, p. 16 as reported in *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Summer 1980, p. 176.

²⁷⁵ Primate's Secretariat (1988: 378).

force tradition of idealistic nationalism with that of the *organic work myth* of peaceful realistic nationalism. The bishops' Letter made clear where they felt responsibility for Poland's lack of full sovereignty lay:

“Responsibility for the freedom and the sovereignty of Poland, falls upon the men whose task it is to govern our country. It is necessary to create conditions of social life such that the nation can feel it is fully master in its own country.”²⁷⁶

The Letter revealed the bishops' appreciation of the political significance of the ritual of annual commemoration in sustaining historical memory.

“It is therefore imperative to keep reminding ourselves of this date, so important for our Nation. ... The nation has the right to know the whole truth about its own history.”²⁷⁷

On 11 November 1978, several thousand participating in ‘the Pilgrimage of Independence’ arrived in Częstochowa and Piłsudski's army insignia were deposited in the Jasna Góra treasury.²⁷⁸ Two idealistic myths - the 11 November and Madonna myths - had converged with the idealistic symbolism of Piłsudski, and the relationship between political Catholicism and nationalism was brought ever closer.

²⁷⁶ As cited by *OR*, 30 November, 1978, p. 8. The abbreviation *OR*, used henceforth, is short for *L'Osservatore Romano*, the semi-official weekly Vatican newspaper. The English edition is cited throughout unless otherwise stated.

²⁷⁷ *Opinia*, No. 16, October-November, 1978 as cited by Kubik (1994: 173).

²⁷⁸ *Opinia*, No. 16, October-November, 1978 as mentioned by Kubik (1994: 173).

In November 1979, Independence Day celebrations were again conspicuous. In Warsaw, there was a Mass in Saint John's Cathedral, followed by a procession of some 2,000 to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Here the crowd was reminded of the specific symbolism of the Warsaw Tomb, which was the 1925 grave of a Polish soldier who had fought at Lwów during the Polish-Soviet War. In Gdańsk, after a celebratory Holy Mass in the Marian Basilica celebrated by around 5,000 people, some 1,500 marched to the Jan III Sobieski monument.

On 10 November 1980, the legality of *Solidarity* was reluctantly conceded by the regime. The next day, 11 November Independence Day celebrations took place and were not disrupted by state security forces.²⁷⁹

The Party-State's Deployment of the 22 July Foundation Myth

Under successive Party leaders, the regime invented new versions of the *22 July myth*. This was done, as the following empirical evidence illustrates, by shifting the symbolism associated with the *22 July myth* from liberation, to the creation of a People's Poland, to a millennium of Polish statehood, to Poland's independence, and finally to symbolic co-optation of the 11 November myth.

For the first anniversary of national communism's foundation date in 1945, the pro-communist ruling body, the Polish Committee of National Liberation, declared the 22 July a public holiday.

²⁷⁹ Biernacki (2000: 33).

Furthermore, on 22 July 1952, the communist regime proclaimed a new Polish Constitution for Poland. Poland was now officially a Peoples' Republic. Modelled on the 1936 Soviet Constitution,²⁸⁰ the Constitution had all the hallmarks of Stalin and of the *sovietisation* and *communisation* of the country.²⁸¹ This provided ammunition for the opposition's association of the *22 July myth* with a post-1945 lack of national self-determination.

In 1966, Gomułka specially chose the 22 July to commemorate the millennium of Polish statehood.²⁸² In 1977, Gierek, in a speech to Parliament, introduced yet another regime interpretation of the *22 July myth*. Now it was to explicitly signify independence, thereby directly challenging the opposition's *11 November myth*.²⁸³

Although the Gomułka regime had ignored the 50th unofficial anniversary of independence in November 1968, the Gierek regime in 1978, in the face of a much stronger opposition, felt it could not ignore the 60th anniversary. Instructions were issued to various Central

²⁸⁰ Konopka (1999: 79) and Habielski (1998: 168).

²⁸¹ Stalin personally submitted several dozen drafting amendments. Konopka (1999: 79). The symbolism of the *sovietisation* and *communisation* of the country was conveyed by the change of the country's name from Republic of Poland to People's Republic of Poland, and the uncrowning of the national emblem, the eagle. The Constitution also confirmed the formal separation of the state and church, and the removal of the pre-WWII Senate and Presidency. The symbolism was further strengthened when on 22 July 1974, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of new Poland's foundation, the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev was awarded the *Virtuti Militari*, a Polish order usually awarded for exceptional bravery in the field. Basista (1999: 291).

²⁸² Later, the Jaruzelski regime was to choose the 22 July 1983 to lift Martial Law.

²⁸³ Głowiński (1993: 101).

Committee departments on how the official press should deal with the anniversary. The Party line was to deploy symbolic co-optation. It declared that Poland regained her independence in 1918 thanks to

“the unyielding patriotic attitude of our nation, its devoted struggle for its own state and national independence. ... (But), the final success in the long struggle for freedom was made possible due to the Great Socialist October Revolution ... We see ... that from the point of view of our sovereignty, continuity and safety of Poland, the historical breakthrough of 1944 was the most important event making possible the fulfilment of the task initiated sixty years ago.”²⁸⁴

Thus, regime celebrations of the 60th 11 November anniversary culminated on 6 November 1978, the 61st anniversary of the 1917 Russian Revolution,²⁸⁵ and the official press reported regime 60th 11 November anniversary celebrations alongside accounts of 61st 6 November anniversary celebrations.²⁸⁶

The Political Potency of the 11 November Foundation Myth

Once more, regime responses are a good measure of the political potency of the political myths propagated by the opposition. Alongside its symbolic co-optation of the 1978 celebrations of the 60th anniversary of 1918 Independence, the regime tried to frustrate the

²⁸⁴ *Opinia*, June 1978 as cited by Kubik (1994:169).

²⁸⁵ The 1917 October/Russian Revolution took place between 24-25 October according to the then prevailing Julian calendar, but between 6-7 November, according to the Gregorian calendar adopted by the Soviet Union in 1918.

²⁸⁶ Kubik (1994: 173-174).

opposition celebrations as the following empirical evidence illustrates. The police confiscated *ROPCiO*'s special declaration of the anniversary celebration.²⁸⁷ Prior to the Gdańsk celebrations, security forces detained people distributing leaflets about special commemorative Holy Mass services. Several houses were searched and a police trap in the flat of a *KOR* activist prevented a 'fairly large number' from participating in the main Gdańsk Mass.²⁸⁸ Because of police harassment, only a few hundred of some 1,000 who started the march after the Mass reached their destination, the Jan III Sobieski monument.

In November 1988, for the 70th anniversary, manifestations took place in nearly every Polish town, with the majority broken up by the police.²⁸⁹ Some 15,000 attended the Warsaw manifestation.²⁹⁰ Paradoxically, the 11 November 1988 might easily have acquired further significance as a *re-foundation myth*: it was the date that had been originally scheduled to conclude the *Round Table Talks* between regime and mainstream opposition, specifically time-tabled so that the expected successful outcome could be celebrated on the 70th anniversary.²⁹¹

²⁸⁷ Kubik (1994: 171).

²⁸⁸ Lipski (1985: 278).

²⁸⁹ Biernacki (2000: 163).

²⁹⁰ Keesing, December, 1988, p. 36321.

²⁹¹ Kemp-Welch (2001: 18) citing *Archivum Andrzeja Stelmachowskiego, Stelmachowski-Wałęsa*, 1 October 1988.

The Battle of Warsaw Myth and The Opposition's Belief in National Self-Determination

The mythology of the 1920 Battle of Warsaw was a myth of military valour and also a component of the opposition's foundation myth and an indication of its belief in national self-determination. The Polish Church's post-1945 deployment of the 1920 Battle of Warsaw myth and the regime's negative reactions illustrate the myth's politically charged nature. In its deployment, the Church exploited the myths of omnipotent hero-saviours (God and Mary), together with the Battle's pro-Catholic and national self-determination symbolism. The Church was greatly helped by the fact that the Battle had been designated *the Miracle of the Vistula* and by the fact that a decisive turning point date in the battle, the 15 August, was also *The Assumption Day of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. The Church also exploited the political potency of the rituals of Holy Mass and of the annual commemoration, whereby focus was given to the 15 August. For much of post-WWII civil society, the 1920 Warsaw August battle also brought to mind the 1944 one, the Warsaw Uprising, and its associated political symbolism of the Red Army's prevention of the Home Army liberating Poland.²⁹²

In 1970, an Episcopate Letter initiated by Primate Wyszyński was drawn up. It was to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Battle of

²⁹² Stalin had been involved personally in both events. He was a political commissar with Red Army forces attacking Warsaw in August 1920. In August 1944 during the Uprising, as effective commander of Soviet Armed forces, he decided "that Soviet interests would be best served by doing nothing either

Warsaw/*Miracle of the Vistula* and was to be read out in all the churches throughout the land. A July 1970 Note from the Party's Central Committee to Gomułka²⁹³ charged that the political aim of the Letter was to make evident the alleged mission of the Polish nation. The Central Committee Note quoted several fragments of the Letter to support its charge, emphasising one in particular that alluded to Soviet interference in Polish affairs. ““As Poles,”” the bishops proclaimed:

““we are responsible for the nation and its perspectives because we are the hosts in our own fatherland. Nobody will dictate to us, how we are to rescue Poland and the nation, because this is our Polish, domestic affair.””²⁹⁴

The Party's Note suggested that if negotiations with the Church to prevent the Letter being read out proved unsuccessful then the Letter and Wyszyński should be attacked in the country's (regime-controlled) press. If, despite this, the Letter was read out, the Note proposed that a Church seminary should be closed down and that Wyszyński and those bishops not accepting the ban should be temporarily prevented from travelling abroad. Gomułka accepted all the Note's proposals. In the event, the Episcopate Letter was withdrawn at the last moment as a result of pressure from the regime, which in turn, according to US journalist Jonathan Kwitny, was responding to Soviet demands for its revocation.²⁹⁵ The Central

through action by the Red Army ... or by aerial supply of the *AK* by Western air forces.” (Coutouvidis 1986: 101).

²⁹³ The Note was from the Central Committee's Administrative Branch. *Dokument nr. 68* in Aneks (1996: 334-337).

²⁹⁴ As cited by Aneks (1996: 335).

²⁹⁵ Kwitny (1998: 229).

Committee's Note proposed celebrating the 22 July 1970, the 26th anniversary of Poland's 'liberation', in such a way as to counteract the opposition's celebration of the 50th anniversary of *the Battle of Warsaw* on the 15 August 1970.

In February 1979, Politburo Member, soon to be First Secretary, Kania met with Bishop Bronisław Dąbrowski, the Secretary General of the Polish Episcopate, to discuss the dates for John Paul II's first pilgrimage to Poland. Kania told Dąbrowski that the authorities were not prepared to accept a period around the 15 August 1979, the 59th Anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw.²⁹⁶

3.3 The War Of Political Legitimacy (2):

The Opposition v. The Regime's National Non-Communism

The second dimension of the war of political legitimacy, as mentioned, involved a war between the opposition and the regime's national non-communism. This dimension will now be explored from the regime's perspective which entailed two main strands: mitigating the effects of the Russian/Soviet and communist enemy myths and deploying the other myths associated with the Dmowski-influenced illiberal political culture of 1900-1944 Poland.

²⁹⁶ Originally, the Pope had wanted to come in May 1979 to celebrate the 900th anniversary of the death of Saint Stanisław, but the authorities rejected this. Kania also ruled out the period around 17 September 1979, the fortieth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland. (Raina 1995a: 349).

3.3.1 Mitigating the Effects of the Russian/Soviet and Communist Enemy Myths

The post-WWII Polish communist regime was faced with a major dilemma. The Polish Party-State was now intrinsically dependent politically, economically and militarily upon the unpopular Soviet Union and yet to have a legitimate political culture, it felt it would need to downplay these links to mitigate the effects of the Russian/Soviet enemy myth. For the regime's national non-communism, the 'Russian/Soviet past' was an embarrassment to be suppressed, conveniently forgotten or invented. For example, before WWII, Bolshevism and Bolshevik were words of offence in Poland. After the war, these words virtually disappeared from the regime's vocabulary.²⁹⁷

For many Poles, particularly during the 1900s-1950s, the Russian/Soviet enemy myth was associated with an antipathy for the Russian/Soviet people rather than with an antipathy for the system of Russian absolutism and/or Soviet communism. The myth was popularly associated with Piłsudski, his 1920 defeat of the Soviet Red Army and with the sentiments encompassed in the 19th century's idealistic nationalism linked to the National Uprisings, particularly the 1830-1831 and 1863-1864 ones, that were initially against Russian rule.

²⁹⁷ Głowiński (1993: 13).

The regime's national non-communism tried to mitigate these anti-Russian/Soviet sentiments by seeming to stand up to the Soviet Union, and by seeming to be empathetic to the aspirations of the idealistic nationalist tradition, which included the symbolism of Piłsudski.

In 1945 Gomułka sought to appropriate the pre-1945 insurrectionary myth of military valour.

“In the struggle against the German invader ... we reverted to the patriotic, insurrectionist tradition of the Polish people. ... Our partisan units followed the example of the best fighters for Freedom and Independence of the Polish nation. ... We have every right to regard ourselves as successors of the insurrectionist tradition.”²⁹⁸

On coming back to power in 1956, Gomułka successfully negotiated the repatriation of Poles who remained in the USSR after WWII.²⁹⁹ In

²⁹⁸ *W walce o demokrację ludową*. Vol. II. W. Gomułka. Łódź, 1947, p. 220 as cited by Bromke (1967: 59). A 1962 best-seller by a Colonel Zbigniew Załuski attempted, according to Bromke (1967: 191 & 199), to provide a political ideology for the WWII national communist partisan group, by linking the romantic insurrection tradition of the Uprisings during Partitions with the insurrectionary of the Polish communists during WWII. The partisan Party-faction tended to be veterans of WWII communist underground resistance who subsequently occupied key posts in either the security apparatus or armed forces. They argued in both nationalist and communist terms and saw their war-time resistance as a deciding turning point in Poland's history. They tended to be strongly anti-intelligentsia, scornful of the latter's lack of ideological commitment and of their critical appraisal of Poland's history. Because of their background the partisans for years had been fairly close to Gomułka. Apart from General Moczar, Bromke (1967: 199) included in their numbers, General Franciszek Szlachcic (1920-1990) - like Moczar, a Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs - and General Jaruzelski, then Chief of Staff of the Polish Army and a Deputy Minister of National Defence.

²⁹⁹ Kuroń (1996: 94). Gomułka also took a stand against key CPSU ideological positions. For example, Gomułka granted the Polish Catholic Church some degree of autonomy. He released from 'monastery arrest' Wyszyński, with whom he reached a short-lived accommodation. Gomułka also took a stand against forced

July 1966, in a special parliamentary session, Gomułka defined his Party's heritage in sweeping pre-1945 terms as:

“everything that was done in the past for Poland, for her development and for her benefit by other classes, estates and social strata – the monarchs and gentry, the town patricians and the clergy, men of science and culture ... we are the heirs of the whole rich and complex historical heritage of the nation.”³⁰⁰

An example of the regime's appropriation of the pre-1945 idealistic tradition was the adoption of the Romantic bards, Mickiewicz and Słowacki. Between 1945-1975, for example, the regime published some 12.5 million copies of Mickiewicz's works³⁰¹ and there were also regime-approved stage and television versions of certain of his works. However, the regime's adoption backfired. In 1947, for example, the staging of Słowacki's *Kordian* was banned,³⁰² as were, in 1948 and 1968, theatre premiers of Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve*.

In 1978, Gierek attempted to sweeten nationalist tempers aroused by his failure in socio-economic legitimation by allowing the erection of a statue to Piłsudski.

collectivisation by allowing Polish peasants to retain their privately owned small plots of land. In opposing these ideological positions, Gomułka was also seen as opposing the Soviets. It was not surprising therefore that, at least for a short while, Gomułka gained some degree of political legitimacy for himself and to a lesser extent for the system. Such national support that Gomułka had, soon dwindled, however, as he increasingly adopted a hard line, and as his economic reforms, and thereby his socio-economic legitimacy, proved ineffective.

³⁰⁰ As cited by Kubik (1994: 114).

³⁰¹ Suchodolski (1986: 236).

³⁰² Tusiewicz (1993: 89).

The Jaruzelski-led regime issued postage stamps with the picture of a celebrated patriotic painting of 19th century Polish partisans fighting the Russians. Soldiers now performed the changing of the guard at the capital's *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier* to a patriotic song of the 1830-1831 National Uprising, and they were now dressed in hats that were copies of those worn by the pre-1939 Polish Army. The state radio started to broadcast marching songs of Piłsudski's Polish Legions.³⁰³ However, for Jaruzelski, evoking the symbolism of Piłsudski was not just a matter of expedient national non-communism. Just as Stalin had, in his Great Russia nationalism, identified with its great dictators, military leaders and conquerors,³⁰⁴ so Jaruzelski also personally identified with another great dictator, military leader, and conqueror: Piłsudski.³⁰⁵ The Jaruzelski-led regime ventured into even more dangerous and taboo areas. Following a visit of Jaruzelski's to Gorbachev in April 1987, a Polish-Soviet Historical Commission was established. Amongst the 'blank spots' of history now to be investigated were the Polish-Soviet War and the 1940 Katyń massacre.³⁰⁶ Hitherto, the Soviets said the Germans had carried out the massacre, a line supported by the Polish regime. Katyń had long fuelled the opposition's political culture as a symbol of Soviet crimes against Poland. Furthermore, the opposition took the regime's support

³⁰³ Garnysz (1984: 53).

³⁰⁴ Rigby (1982: 58).

³⁰⁵ See Jaruzelski (1992: 147, 188, & 375).

³⁰⁶ Stalin's pre-WWII repression of the Polish Communist Party members was also to be examined by the commission. A TASS statement on 13 April 1990 acknowledged Soviet responsibility for Katyń and also for other mass WWII massacres of Poles. (Sienkiewicz 1997: 65) and (Gorbachev 1996: 481).

of the Soviet line as evidence of Poland's lack of national self-determination. Crosses in memory of the Katyń victims were surreptitiously placed at night in the Powązki military cemetery in Warsaw, only to be removed by irate authorities in the morning.³⁰⁷ Nevertheless, in October 1987, the main Party weekly, *Polityka*, raised the issue of Katyń³⁰⁸ and in March 1988, *Trybuna Ludu* published a letter by Polish intellectuals and political dissidents, including Wałęsa, requesting Soviet intellectuals to 'speak out in public about the Katyń murders'.³⁰⁹

In June 1988, the Polish regime accepted the removal of the Polish Army's oath of loyalty to the Soviet Red Army. Furthermore, in February 1989, the Polish parliament passed legislation to reinstate the 11 November as a public holiday.³¹⁰

The regime's mitigating of the effects of Soviet enemy myth was largely unsuccessful, for much of civil society regarded the regime's downplaying of its ties with the Soviet Union as merely symbolic 'winks' that constituted a form of 'double con'. The aim of this

³⁰⁷ *Central Europe Review*, Vol. 3, No. 11, 19 March, 2001. (Internet Journal. (<http://www.ce-review.org/>)).

³⁰⁸ 'Prawo do własnej historii.' *Polityka*, 3 October, 1987 as referred to in Mason (1988: 439).

³⁰⁹ *Trybuna Ludu*, 12 March, 1988 as reported in *Radio Free Europe RAD BR/43*. 15 March, 1988.

³¹⁰ Biernacki (2000: 170).

‘double con’ was to deceive the population into thinking that their rulers were trying to deceive the Soviets.³¹¹

Mitigating The Effects of The Communist Enemy Myth

As mentioned, national non-communism sought to downplay its ties with communism in order to mitigate the effects of the pre-1945 communism enemy myth. It did so by downplaying the communist nature of the state and by downplaying the Communist Party’s leading role.

As Głowiński observed, *communist* was a word not very often used in regime language.³¹² The regime avoided the word and instead used words such as Polish, Poland, nation and national in order to gain nationalist legitimacy. The regime, for example, cloaked the various Party-State bodies in a garb of labels that emphasised *Polishness* and the nation and de-emphasised the institutions’ inherent links with the communist party and state. After WWII, the Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, Romanian (after 1965), Yugoslavian, and Soviet Parties all featured the word *Communist* in their official titles.³¹³ When the *Comintern* decided to reactivate the Polish communist party in 1942, it was called the *Polish Workers Party (PPR)*. Despite the absence of the word

³¹¹ Garnysz (1984: 58).

³¹² Głowiński (1993: 96).

³¹³ The Hungarian Party also used the word *Communist* in its title until 1948, but between 1948 and 1956, like its Polish counterpart, it was merely a *Workers’* party. From 1956, the Hungarian Party joined the East German Party in deploying the word *Socialist*. (Swain 1993: 121).

communist, the Soviet dependency legacy of the *KPP* weighed heavily on the *PPR*, particularly during WWII. In 1948, the *PPR* was renamed the Polish United Workers Party (*PZPR*). Yet paradoxically, the continued absence of the word communist and the continual presence of the word Polish within the official Party title were indicative of the post-WWII strength of the opposition's political culture and the weakness of the regime's national communism.

The names adopted by the Polish regime for their communist-controlled front coalitions also tried to exploit popular nationalism by using words such as national and Polish to downplay communism and the omnipresent State. Its use of words such as national and Polish also served to hide the fact that these bodies constituted the first steps of Stalin's policy of the communist take-over of Poland.³¹⁴

In October 1952, the Bierut-led regime set up the *National Front* (*FN*). It was the first of several post-1945 nationalist badged but communist-dominated ruling political coalitions. In November 1956, the *FN* was redesignated the *National Front of Unity* (*FJN*) and in May 1983, the *Patriotic Movement for the Renewal of the Nation* (*PRON*). In November 1981, the Party leadership considered setting up a *Front of National Accord*, but instead, with the Declaration of Martial Law in December 1981, Jaruzelski established the *Military*

³¹⁴ In 1943, Polish communists in the USSR established the *Union of Polish Patriots* (*ZPP*, 1943-1946). At the end of 1943, the *PPR* founded the *All-country National Council* (*KRN*). On 22 July 1944, the *KRN* formally established the *Polish Committee of National Liberation* (*PKWN*) as a 'temporary authority' for Poland. The *PKWN* was to be the first of several communist-dominated ruling political coalitions.

Council for National Salvation (WRON), seemingly for the Polish Army to rule the country in lieu of the Party.

Gierek and Jaruzelski, often remembered in the West for their respective use of socio-economic and coercive power legitimation, in emphasising the *Polish state = the nation* formula, furnish further empirical evidence of the regime's appropriation of non-communist characteristics. In December 1970, Gierek replaced Gomułka as First Secretary and addressed the nation. His speech aimed to appeal to Polish nationalism by deliberately mentioning all sections of the nation, including the intelligentsia, whom he had attacked so viciously in March 1968. Only fleetingly did he refer to socialism. He used phrases such as: 'the entire society'; 'put the fatherland in ... great danger'; 'wide consultation with the working class and the intelligentsia'; 'we turn to the workers, to the intelligentsia, to the scientists, to all sections of society'; 'the matters that we take up concern our entire nation – party and non-party, believers and non-believers', and 'each citizen.'³¹⁵ Gierek replaced the portrait of the Party leader that had hung obligatorily in every state office, with the pre-WWII national emblem, the Polish eagle, albeit uncrowned. He also decided to restore the Royal Castle in Warsaw, a potent pre-1945 national symbol, destroyed by the Germans during the 1944 Warsaw Uprising.³¹⁶

³¹⁵ *Trybuna Ludu*, 21 December, 1970 as cited by Tusiewicz (1993: 259).

³¹⁶ Schöpflin (1994: 168) and Bromke (1972: 11).

The Jaruzelski-led regime issued postage stamps with the picture of the revered anti-communist émigré Polish writer and poet Czesław Miłosz, who had been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1980. Jaruzelski clearly appreciated the political potency of national myths and symbols. “Mythology,” he wrote, “is an inseparable part of social life. ... Probably Piłsudski said, that Poles ‘do not think with facts, but rather with symbols.’”³¹⁷ During the 1982-1988 period there was a discernible tilt in Jaruzelski-led policies towards national conciliation. The regime hoped to gain political legitimacy by emphasising pre-1945 still-popular state institutions and by creating new post-1981 state bodies.³¹⁸ These it portrayed as there to defend the interests of the nation against the abuses of the communist system and as not inherently linked to communism and the Party. The pre-1945 institutions included the Parliament, the Presidency, and above all, the *WP* Polish Army. That their popularity remained was perhaps because their associations with communism were relatively brief and because the legacy of their pre-1945 mythology and symbolism prevailed. Thus, for example, the Parliament and the Polish Army had long pre-1945 traditions of serving the nation. The Parliament had existed since the 15th century and the Army had existed in nascent

³¹⁷ Jaruzelski (1992: 426).

³¹⁸ In March 1982, for example, a State Tribunal was set up to adjudicate upon the accountability of those, virtually all Communist Party members, occupying the highest state posts. In April 1985, a Constitutional Tribunal was established to decide whether new laws were in keeping with the Constitution. In December 1986, a Consultative Council of the Chair of the Council of State was formed. In July 1987, a Civil Rights Ombudsman was appointed to guard the rights and freedoms of citizens. Similar constitutional moves were also afoot in Hungary, and a few years later within the USSR, where Gorbachev also tried, in the late 1980s, to distance new constitutional state institutions from the Party.

form from the beginning of the 19th century ³¹⁹ and was given official status with the gaining of independence in 1918.

The Appropriation and Deployment of the Polish Army Myth

On 21 July 1944 the communist-controlled All-Country National Council (*KRN*) appropriated the *WP*. It did so by merging the short-lived pro-communist Polish Army (*AP*) ³²⁰ and the pro-communist People's Army (*AL*) ³²¹ into the *WP*. The Polish Army myth had evolved mainly from the Army's pre-1945 actions, but partly also from its post-1945 actions and *inactions* in defending the nation's interests. ³²² For many Poles, even details of military uniform evoked the one-time greatness of the Polish Army. The symbolism of the uniform was linked with heroism and national self-determination and its replacement by a foreign uniform was an omen of misfortune. ³²³ The post-1945 *WP* was still revered for having saved Poland by defeating the Soviet Red Army during the 1920 Battle of Warsaw.

³¹⁹ Despite partitions, a 100,000 strength Polish Army had participated on the side of Napoleon in the 1812-1814 French-Russian War. Mizerski (1996: 52).

³²⁰ The *AP* was set up in the Soviet Union in March 1944.

³²¹ The *AL* was set up in January 1944.

³²² In 1956, the Army was believed to have supported the Party faction supporting Gomułka's reinstatement as leader of the Party against the wishes of the CPSU leadership. The Army had been widely rumoured to have secured the non-intervention of Soviet forces during the December 1970 workers' protests. It was believed by many that the Army, headed by Jaruzelski, refused to forcibly suppress the August 1980 Baltic workers' protests (that paved the way to the Gdańsk Agreement that heralded *Solidarity*) and prevented Soviet intervention in 1981. Sanford (1986: 97-98) concludes "the evidence is that the Polish Army ruled out the possibility of military repression of the Baltic seacoast workers' upsurge." See also Avery (1988: 128-129).

³²³ Mach (1985: 26-27).

Furthermore, the *WP* was seen as being more disciplined and less corrupt than the Party and, as it was a conscript army, as being more representative of the nation. It even still had its own Catholic chaplains.

Gomułka on his 1956 return to power succeeded in his demand that the Polish Defence Minister, Soviet Marshall Konstanty Rokossovsky,³²⁴ together with 32 other high-ranking Soviet advisers be relieved of their Polish Army duties. Under Gomułka, the Polish Army underwent a process of *re-Polonisation*; the Polish uniform, flag, and insignia were all restored.³²⁵

In his December 1981 Declaration broadcast to the nation, Jaruzelski characterised his imposition of Martial Law not as an attempt to restore communist rule but as a pre-emptive measure to avoid Soviet military intervention.³²⁶

Jaruzelski made no mention of the Party³²⁷ or of communism. Jaruzelski addressed the nation 'as a soldier' and not as First

³²⁴ Rokossovsky had dual Polish and Soviet nationality.

³²⁵ Fejto (1968: 32).

³²⁶ It is still not clear whether the Soviets would have invaded Poland otherwise. The Soviet leadership certainly put heavy pressure on the Polish leadership to put 'their house in order'. For example, Soviet Marshall, Viktor Kulikov, the Warsaw Pact Commander-in-Chief, visited Poland some 22 times in 1981. Micgiel (1998: 4). See also Jaruzelski (1992: 387 & 396) and *Radio Free Europe RAD BR/64*. 14 April, 1987, pp. 1-2 for 1981 accounts by Jaruzelski and Colonel Ryszard Kukliński. Kukliński was Head of the Strategic Defence Department of the General Staff of the Armed Forces from 1976 until November 1981, when he defected to the West.

³²⁷ Sanford (1986: 118) also highlights this point.

Secretary: as a General and not a comrade. His efforts to achieve national understanding had been torpedoed by *Solidarity*.³²⁸ The Declaration started with the opening bars of the National Anthem, and was littered with phrases with strong nationalist resonance such as: ‘the people’; ‘the nation’; ‘a national catastrophe’; ‘in our country’; ‘a crime towards the nation’; and ‘the nation’s instinct’.³²⁹ The message he wished to give was clear. The Polish Army, not the Communist Party, was saving the nation. Jaruzelski would impose military rather than communist rule. The military then exploited the positive symbolism of the Polish Army uniform. Polish Army officers took over the running of many civilian state enterprises, including the large state-owned factories and television announcers were conscripted and appeared in their army uniforms.³³⁰

3.3.2 Deploying the Myths Associated with 1900-1944 Illiberal Political Culture

The Deployment of Piast Myth and the Pole = Catholic Myth

The regime’s national communism was anti-Catholic, but this was a major obstacle to gaining legitimacy in a country where over 90% of

³²⁸ Sanford (1986: 118) also notes this.

³²⁹ From *Jaruzelski: Prime Minister of Poland*. Robert Maxwell (ed.). Pergamon Press: Oxford, 1985, pp. 28-30 as cited by Stokes (1991a: 214-215).

³³⁰ According to Mach (1985: 31) patrolling police were often dressed in army uniforms. Mach may possibly have confused the ordinary police with the paramilitary police that were also frequently deployed during Martial Law.

the population were Catholic.³³¹ The regime's national non-communism in an effort to gain greater political legitimacy therefore set about appropriating a key ingredient of many Pole's national identity, namely their Catholicism. To help in this appropriation it deployed the Piast, Pole = Catholic, and the enemy myths associated with the Dmowski-influenced illiberal political culture of pre-WWII Poland. The consequences of this deployment were enormous and entailed the regime in a number of 'non-communist' actions including trying to create a state Catholicism, trying to appropriate Catholic rites of passage and Catholic symbols, trying to establish Catholic trade unions, the forced mass deportations of ethnic minorities, collusion with pogroms, and attacking the opposition as non-Polish enemies.

Before WWII, over 30% of the population in Poland comprised ethnic minorities, mainly Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Belorussians, Russians, Germans and Jews. Some six decades later, the overall ethnic minority percentage was an estimated 2%.³³² There were three main reasons for this dramatic drop, of which the first two, WWII deaths, particularly of the Polish Jews, and WWII-end border changes, are the ones best known. A third significant cause was the deliberate policy,

³³¹ With the single exception of Italy, communist Poland was the most Catholic country in the world, with over 90% of the post-1950 population baptised as Catholics. The 'over 90%' figure should, however, be treated with some caution as percentages obviously fluctuated over the 1950-1989 period, and those describing themselves as Catholic or baptised as Catholic ranged from nominal Catholics to deeply devoted Catholics. GUS (1994: 65) gives a figure of 95.8% of the 1991 Polish population being Roman Catholics believers. A figure of 91% of the 1992 Polish population being baptised Roman Catholic can be deduced from GUS (1994: 44 & 61) data. Similar estimates of about 90% of the post-1950 population being Catholic are given by Davies (1981b: 406) and Piwowarski (1976: 315-320).

³³² The figure is for 1999, as given by Nieuwsma (1999: 1).

with Stalin's backing, to enact the Piast myth by creating a Poland for 'true Poles'. The regime set about this task during the 1945-1950 period by ridding the country of its predominantly non-Roman Catholic ethnic minorities. These were forcefully deported, scattered, or simply went 'missing'. Poland was transformed from a pre-WWII multi-ethnic, multi-faith (chiefly Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Greek Catholic, Protestant and Jewish) country to a post-WWII almost mono-ethnic, mono-faith one. Nearly all the deported, scattered or 'missing' minorities/faiths came from the three enemy myth groups, viz. the Soviets, the Germans and the Jews. Between 1946-1950, an estimated 3.4 million Soviets, Germans and Jews - some 14% of Poland's 1946 population - left or were forced to leave Poland.³³³

³³³ Before WWII there were over 6 million Ukrainians and Belorussians living in Poland. Despite WWII deaths and the new post-WWII Poland shifting westward on the map of Europe, there were more than one half million Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Lithuanians living in the new Poland. Most of them were not to become Polish citizens. Instead, during the period 1945 to 1946, some half million left Poland for the USSR. Habielski (1998: 146). It is estimated that as at least 120-150,000 Ukrainians were forced to leave Poland and in 1947 a further 80,000 Ukrainians were scattered throughout Poland. (Nieuwsma 1999, 2-3). A Ukrainian perspective, commemorating the 50th anniversary of *Operation Vistula* (see below), gives much higher estimates of the numbers involved:

"The forcible resettlement, involuntary deportation and massacre by the Polish government of more than 650,000 Ukrainians from their native ethnic territory took place in two phases: from 1944 to 1947 the Polish government deported 500,000 Ukrainians to the U.S.S.R. (many of whom were subsequently sent to labor camps in Siberia, imprisoned or killed); and throughout the spring, summer and fall of 1947 the Polish government conducted an operation of planned destruction code named Akcja Wisła (Operation Vistula) that forcibly resettled 150,000 ethnic Ukrainians, as well as those of mixed Polish-Ukrainian marriages, from their homes in eastern Poland to territories in northern and western Poland." *The Ukrainian Weekly*, December 28, 1997, No. 52, Vol. LXV. (<http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/1997/529711.shtml>).

After WWII, Gomułka exploited the illiberal sentiment associated with the Dmowski-influenced myths. As Secretary General of the Party and as Minister of the 'Recovered Territories' (1945-1948), he was well placed to do so. Maps were drawn up to show that Poland's frontiers under the Piast dynasty coincided almost exactly with the post-Yalta frontiers of the new Polish People's Republic. In the biggest population exchange in European history millions of 'non-Poles' were expelled from their homes and forcefully 'repatriated' to neighbouring countries. Conversely millions of Poles, whose homes were now in territory 'recovered' by the Soviet Union, were expelled to Poland.³³⁴

During the Stalinist era, the Party-State tried to appropriate Polish political Catholicism. It did so in three main ways. First it attempted not only to bring the Polish Church under its control, but also to invite pro-regime lay Catholic groups – of which *Pax*³³⁵ was the most prominent - to join its (nominally) ruling government coalition. Second, it took over Catholic charities and used them as cover for

³³⁴ Davies (1997: 153).

³³⁵ *Pax* numbered several former falangists within its leadership. It was the most important of several pro-regime lay Catholic groups that the Party encouraged and became part of the 'ruling' parliamentary coalition. *Pax* was granted considerable political and economic licence by the authorities. From 1945 to 1979 it was headed by the former falangist Bolesław Piasecki. A recent publication by Professor Henryk Dominiczak, who gained access to Interior Ministry documents after the fall of Polish communism, confirms the mid-1950 allegations that Piasecki was also a secret police collaborator. Dominiczak (2000: 22). In October 1953, ties were established between *Pax* and the 'patriotic priests' and subsequently the two merged under the leadership of *Pax*. Bromke (1967: 84). Piasecki's political programme was much shaped by the realistic nationalism of the Polish Count Aleksander Wielopolski (1803-1877), Governor (1861-1863) of the Czarist Kingdom of Poland. In the realm of practical politics, *Pax* accepted communism, while rejecting its materialist outlook. Bromke (1967: 221).

political activism. Third, it encouraged so-called ‘patriotic priests’ to act as Trojan horses within the Church.³³⁶

From the late 1950s, having failed in its crude attempts to establish a legitimate state Catholicism, the regime sought a different appropriation approach. The new approach was more subtle and included deploying Catholic rites of passage and Catholic symbols such as the family, ‘true Catholicism,’ and (moral) renewal and salvation. As with other East European regimes,³³⁷ the Polish regime recognised that the popularity of religious rites of passage, such as such as christenings, marriages, and funerals, constituted one of the major bonds between the people and the Church; a bond that constituted an obstacle to the regime’s desire to monopolise loyalties. Accordingly the regime offered state alternatives, thinly disguised by a veneer of secularism. In the late 1960s, for example, the rite of name giving, the equivalent of christening was introduced, and by the early 1970s became more widespread. The law of People’s Poland required all marriages to be regime-sanctioned, each accompanied by a civil ceremony with vows of conjugal fidelity,³³⁸ and by the 1970s, there were several choices of regime-sanctioned funerals to die for.³³⁹ In February 1976, the Party adopted a resolution concerning ‘the

³³⁶ These priests had declared their first loyalty to the state rather than Catholicism.

³³⁷ For example within the USSR, where despite considerable state resources, the alternative state rites of passage met with little success. Kertzer (1988: 115).

³³⁸ In state weddings in the Soviet Union, traditional symbols were also carefully blended in with state symbols. Kertzer (1988: 116).

³³⁹ Kubik (1994: 38-39).

necessity of increasing the significance of various events of family and private life.’³⁴⁰ During the 1970s, the word *family* was incorporated into official slogans such as *Work and the Family*, *The Polish Family*. The regime was applying the formula ‘the good of the country’ = ‘a happy family’ = ‘the development of Poland’.³⁴¹

Another approach of national non-communism involved the regime surreptitiously planting letters in Party newspapers. For example in 1977 letters were planted in the Warsaw Party Committee’s daily newspaper, *Życie Warszawy*. The letters criticised the Hunger Strike in a Warsaw Church in support of the *KOR* dissidents imprisoned in May 1977. They were supposedly written by *true Catholics* in the name of ‘millions of *faithful Catholics* sincerely devoted to *God and the Fatherland*.’³⁴² *Życie Warszawy*’s 27 May 1977 editorial proclaimed of the hunger-strikers: “‘half of them entered a Church certainly for the first time.’”³⁴³ National non-communism was reviving the *Pole = Catholic myth*, a tactic reminiscent of the regime’s non-official use of the *true Poles* phrase with its anti-Semitic connotations. Its use of *God and the Fatherland* was a part-appropriation of the Home Army’s motto *God, Honour, The Fatherland*, which in turn was appropriated from the period of partitioning. The regime, or regime-sponsored bodies such as *Pax*,

³⁴⁰ Kubik (1994: 38). The resolution was adopted at the Third Plenum of the Central Committee.

³⁴¹ Głowiński (1993: 34-35).

³⁴² Głowiński (1993: 86).

³⁴³ As cited by Green (1977: 4).

was not averse to deploying, for legitimising purposes, Catholic/Christian concepts such as (moral) renewal and salvation. In March 1958, *Pax* launched a nation-wide campaign in its major periodical *Kierunki* of ‘moral renewal’ aimed at coping with the ideological indifference undermining the ‘social morality’ and construction of socialism in Poland.³⁴⁴ During the strikes leading to *Solidarity* in August 1980, in a speech at the Central Committee’s Fourth Plenum, Gierek spoke of the need for moral renewal.³⁴⁵ The Jaruzelski-led regime renamed its nominal ruling socio-political coalition *The Patriotic Movement for the Renewal of the Nation*, and, to run the country during Martial Law, which lasted from December 1981-July 1983, Jaruzelski created the *Military Council for National Salvation*.

In the 1980s, the regime, in what may be viewed as a sophisticated variant of symbolic co-optation, proposed that the mainstream opposition create its own more visibly Catholic socio-political organisations. In a secret meeting in early October 1984, Politburo and Secretariat Member Kazimierz Barcikowski proposed to Wałęsa that he form Christian Trade Unions in place of *Solidarity*. Wałęsa rejected the proposal.³⁴⁶ In the spring of 1988, following strikes, the authorities floated the ideas of Catholic Workers’ Associations,

³⁴⁴ ‘Przeciw Indyferentyzmowi.’ Zygmunt Przetakiewicz. *Kierunki*. 23 March, 1958.

³⁴⁵ Głowiński (1993: 165). That same day, Gierek implored Primate Wyszyński to ask the striking Baltic workers to call off their strikes.

³⁴⁶ Kaczyński (1996). Kaczyński was present with Wałęsa at the October 1984 meeting that took place at the Episcopate’s premises in Warsaw. The proposal re-emerged in 1987.

Catholic Cabinet Ministers, a new group of independent Catholic MPs, and the creation of a Catholic Democratic Party.³⁴⁷

The Deployment of the Jewish Enemy Myth

Before WWII there were over three million Polish Jews living in Poland. The Germans during the war killed most of them. After WWII, with some returning from USSR internment, there was only about 100, 000. Despite the virtual post-WWII absence of Jews and despite the fact that some three million Polish Catholics also experienced the same war-time fate as the Jews, anti-Semitism persisted in post-war Poland. The Party-State's national non-communism decided to exploit that fact by reinventing the *Jewish enemy myth*. Following the August 1945 Kraków pogrom, and particularly after the July 1946 Kielce pogrom, carried out with the acquiescence of the local authorities,³⁴⁸ the majority of the remaining Jews decided to emigrate.³⁴⁹ Following the anti-Semitic actions of a Moczar-led Party faction in 1968, a further 13,000-20,000 emigrated.³⁵⁰ Henceforth, there were only a few thousand practising

³⁴⁷ *Radio Free Europe Polish Situation Report/11*. 21 July, 1988 citing AFP, 23 June, 1988, *Financial Times*, 25 May, 1988 and *The Washington Post*, 13 June, 1988.

³⁴⁸ Kuroń (1996: 286). During the 1946 Kielce pogrom, neither the military and secret police commanders, nor the local Party leaders did anything to stop the attack on the Jews that led to some forty being murdered. Szaynok (1998: 3). In 1992, a new investigation reaffirmed that the local authorities had failed to undertake decisive steps to stop the pogrom. The Kielce pogrom was a turning point in the post-WWII history of Polish Jews. Between July and September 1946, over 60,000 Jews left Poland. Szaynok (1998: 7 & 8).

³⁴⁹ Habielski (1998: 146).

³⁵⁰ The lower figure comes from D. Stola's *Kampania antysojonistyczna w Polsce 1967-1968*. Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk:

Jews and perhaps a similar number of non-believers ‘of Jewish origin’ remaining.³⁵¹

The regime’s national non-communism first had to overcome the effects of the pre-1945 *Jew = communist* myth by breaking the popular association between Jews and communism. In a letter to Stalin in December 1948,³⁵² Gomułka voiced his concern about the over-representation of Jewish comrades in the Party-State apparatus. This situation, he argued, created hostility among the working class, and the Party would suffer if it did not change its pro-Jewish CPSU-dictated cadre policy. Such a policy change was given the green light when CPSU-led anti-Semitic purges were launched and reached their height just before Stalin’s death.³⁵³ Paradoxically, Stalin’s nationalist deviation witch-hunt merged into a campaign against ‘cosmopolitans’ that was mainly directed against Jews. Henceforth, communist regime attacks against cosmopolitanism and Zionism were coded attacks against Jews. Everyone was encouraged to expose ‘Zionists’, and the trials of East European national communist leaders constantly featured

Warsaw, 2000. The higher figure comes from Radziwiłł (1994: 202-203). It has been estimated that two-thirds of the few remaining Polish Jews emigrated as a result of the ‘administrative pogrom’ following the March 1968 events. Osa (2002: 15) citing Z. Pelczynski’s ‘The Decline of Gomułka’ in Leslie (1980: 391).

³⁵¹ GUS (1994: 61). The indirectness of the phrase ‘of Jewish origin’, invariably used in Poland today, may be indicative of the extent of anti-Semitic baggage that still persists.

³⁵² The letter was found in both Polish and Russian archives and was published in ‘Ostatni spór Gomułki ze Stalinem.’ Andrzej Werblan (ed.). *Dziś*, No. 6 (1993) as referred to in Gluchowski (2000: 16 & 31).

³⁵³ Seton-Watson (1964: 165).

accusations of Zionism.³⁵⁴ The Soviet Union now adopted a consistently anti-Jewish approach in cadre polices in Poland and elsewhere.³⁵⁵ Following Stalin's death in March 1953, Poland's Jewish communists, particularly those who served as investigative officers in the secret police, emerged as the major scapegoats for the Stalinist 'period of errors and distortions'.³⁵⁶ However, as Gluchowski noted, it was not enough for Poland's communists to shift blame for Stalinism on Jews in the security apparatus. The Jew = Communist equation had to be rewritten and thereby the Jewish enemy myth reconstructed. The Jew = Stalinist = Zionist =

Trotskyist³⁵⁷ = Enemy road had to be forged.³⁵⁸

During the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War, 5-10 June 1967, key elements within the Catholic opposition sided with the Israelis, while national communism adopted an anti-Zionist position and national non-communism took an anti-Semitic stance. On 6 June 1967, Primate

³⁵⁴ Hosking (1992: 258-259).

³⁵⁵ Schöpflin (1994: 118). This was a reversal of Stalin's wartime and immediate post-war nationalities and cadre policy with respect to Poland, which, in addition to favouring those who had taken Soviet citizenship and Soviet party membership, preferred 'comrades of Jewish origin' for many important posts. Gluchowski (2000: 1). This original policy led in Poland to a disproportionate number of Jews (compared with their proportion of the total population) in key posts within, for example, the Politburo, and the Public Security and Foreign Affairs Ministries. See Gluchowski (2000: 8).

³⁵⁶ Gluchowski (2000: 3).

³⁵⁷ Trotsky was 'of Jewish origin.' He was also head of the Red Army during the 1919-1920 Polish-Soviet War.

³⁵⁸ Gluchowski (2000: 4).

Wyszyński, during a Warsaw mass, appealed to his congregation to pray for the fighting Israelis. The Israeli nation, he added, in what might well be an indication of the Old Testament myth influence, had been condemned to death many times in the past despite the fact that it had the right to an independent existence.³⁵⁹ The deployment of the *Jewish enemy myth* by Gomułka in June 1967³⁶⁰ and by Moczar in March 1968 in trying to forge the aforementioned road are fairly well known in the West. Less well known are three examples now presented of the myth's deployment by other elements within the regime to attack the opposition. The first example relates to the 1968 role of Politburo Member Gierek in supporting Moczar in his attack on Jews and intellectuals. The second example relates to the 1976-1977 scapegoating of Jews for the 'excesses' of *KOR*. Finally, the third example relates to the autumn 1980-autumn 1981 anti-Semitism associated with Moczar³⁶¹ and his followers and its use against *Solidarity*.

At a 14 March 1968 rally in Katowice, Silesia, Gierek declared:

“The dirty scum, who have flowed on the wave of the October events of eleven years ago, they have not been removed from the

³⁵⁹ In addition, on 10 June 1967, a *Znak* MP spoke at a Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee meeting in favour of Israel and of a more flexible regime policy towards it. Rozenbaum (1998: 3).

³⁶⁰ In an infamous speech to the Sixth Trade Union Congress, Gomułka resurrected the Jew = Fifth Columnist = (Conspiratorial) Enemy myth. See Rozenbaum (1998).

³⁶¹ Dismissed from the Politburo and Secretariat in 1971, Moczar returned to the Politburo in December 1980.

current of our life. ... It's not difficult to guess who provided the organisation for the disturbances in Warsaw and the country. They are ... the successors of the old system, revisionists, Zionists, lackeys of imperialism. ...

The Silesian water was not and never will be the grist to their mill. And if some of them still try and return to the current of our life adopted by the path of our nation, then the Silesian water will break their bones.””³⁶²

““The Zambrowski's, the Staszewski's, the Słonimski's and company, people like Kisielewski and Jasienica ...(constitute) irrefutably prove that they are serving foreign interests.””³⁶³

The sub-text of Gierek's outburst was multi-layered. His declaration was an attempt to create mythical Jewish and intellectual enemy scapegoats for the wave of opposition sweeping the country triggered by the banning of a production of Mickiewicz's *Forefather's Eve*. By using such language as 'successors of the old system' and 'Zionists', and by juxtaposing the name of Zambrowski with Staszewski, Słonimski, Kisielewski and Jasienica, Gierek was redefining the mythical equation to Jew = Stalinist = Zionist = Intellectual = Enemy.³⁶⁴

³⁶² *Trybuna Ludu*, 15 March, 1968 as cited by Tusiewicz (1993: 214).

³⁶³ As cited by Kuroń (1996: 303).

³⁶⁴ Roman Zambrowski (1909-1977) had been the co-leader of the *Puławy* Party faction of 1956 that had accused the *Natolin* Party faction of anti-Semitism and anti-intellectualism. (Kuroń 1996: 92). He was a leading Party member in the 1940s to early 1960s. He was also a Jew, a close colleague of Gomułka before 1948, and with fellow Jews Jakub Berman (1901-1984) and Hilary Minc (1905-1974), part of a ruling elite associated with the Stalinism of Bierut. Stefan Staszewski, a leading *PPR* communist, believed in a democratic Marxism unspoilt by the autocratic tradition of the Russians/Soviets such as Lenin and Stalin. (Kuroń 1996: 47). The trio Słonimski, Kisielewski and Jasienica were respected dissident intellectuals. In 1964, for example, all three had signed the Letter of 34,

The second example also illustrates the often used tactic of interconnecting enemy myths by incorporating different symbolic elements to adapt their meanings. It shows how the Party-State's national non-communism now deployed the mythical equation Jew = *KOR* member = non-Pole = German enemy. The purpose was, via a *divides et impere* strategy, to discredit *KOR* which was increasingly proving an effective opposition to the regime. The example also shows how the Jew = Zionist = Enemy road was being reconstructed. The literature theorist Michał Głowiński and the historian Jan Józef Lipski ³⁶⁵ both observed the ways that elements within the Gierek-led regime deployed *the Jewish enemy myth* in its 1976-1977 attacks upon *KOR* members and associates. Ursus and Radom workers ³⁶⁶ were now warned not to take money from the *KOR* Jews. Ludwik Dorn, a

the first collective protest against the regime's cultural policies. All three had attended the 29 February 1968 Extraordinary Meeting of the Warsaw Branch of the Union of Polish Writers (*ZLP*). The meeting had been called in connection with the banning of a production of *Forefathers' Eve*, and at the meeting the trio singled out by Gierek, had strongly criticised the regime's actions and cultural policy. Kisielewski had spoken of the 'dictatorship of the unenlightened'. (Kisielewski 1998: 8). A few days later, the 3 March 1968, marked the disappearance of Kisielewski's column in the Catholic *Tygodnik Powszechny*, a *Znak* weekly, but regime-censored. On the 11 March 1968, 'unknown perpetrators', which invariably meant secret police, beat up Kisielewski. (Kisielewski 1998: 8). Antoni Słonimski (1895-1976), *ZLP* President from 1956-1959, was best known for his lyrical reflections upon the tradition of Polish romanticism. Catholic, Paweł Jasienica (1909-1970) was a writer and historian, and former Home Army member.

³⁶⁵ Lipski was also a *KOR* member.

³⁶⁶ In June 1976 Ursus and Radom workers had gone on strike against government introduced price rises. As a result many were imprisoned and victimised and *KOR* was set up in defence of them and their families. There were a few smaller strikes elsewhere also.

Jewish *KOR* associate, suffered anti-Semitic verbal abuse while he was being beaten up in the Radom police headquarters. ‘KOR IS JEWS’ slogans, daubed in give-away green paint not available in normal shops, were, uncharacteristically, allowed to remain unremoved for long periods of time.³⁶⁷ One way of alluding to *KOR* member Michnik being Jewish was for the regime to adopt the language of Dmowski’s anti-Semitic National Democrats by using the style of speech adopted by pre-WWII uneducated Jews.³⁶⁸ Between 14-21 May 1977, Kuroń, Michnik, Blumsztajn, Lipski and Macierewicz, along with six other *KOR* members and associates were arrested and imprisoned. The arrests were followed by a campaign of slander, often anti-Semitic, waged by the secret police and the Party press, of which *Życie Warszawy* was the most virulent, but where others, including *Trybuna Ludu*, did not lag far behind.³⁶⁹ In Łódź, a characteristic feature of the secret police’s *conversations* with the parents of young, but legally liable *KOR* associates, was the use of anti-Semitic motifs.³⁷⁰ On Easter Sunday, 1977, *Życie Warszawy* carried a major article claiming Michnik and the former-communist Leszek Kołakowski (1927-) had made links on *KOR*’s behalf with the West German neo-fascist newspaper *Nazional Zeitung*.³⁷¹ In another attack on Michnik on 30 May 1977, the ‘Michnik = non-Pole’ subtext was alluded to. “‘Michnik is working not for Poland, but for

³⁶⁷ Lipski (1985: 139).

³⁶⁸ Głowiński (1993: 21).

³⁶⁹ Lipski (1985: 154).

³⁷⁰ Lipski (1985: 239).

³⁷¹ MacDonald (1977: 3).

foreigners. For foreign people, foreign interests, foreign values.””³⁷² On 1 June 1977, the *Pax* newspaper *Słowo Powszechne* reported that one of its MPs, Zenon Komender, had spoken in Parliament of ‘anti-Polish and cosmopolitan centres’ attempting to weaken ‘the moral-political unity of all Poles.’³⁷³ A few days later, an article in the regime press questioned the integrity of the *KOR* supporters. ““Do these people have very great benefactors in the world, who look after them not just financially, but morally?””³⁷⁴ The subtext translated as immoral *KOR* member = Jew = non-Pole = Enemy. They have rich foreign benefactors. They are cosmopolitan, and thus certainly Jews. If *Zionist* was the key 1968 synonym for Jews, then in the late 1970s, in both regime-forged and Party propaganda, it was being joined by *Trotskyist*.³⁷⁵ On the 11 June 1977, a *Życie Warszawy* journalist in an interview for a Swedish newspaper³⁷⁶ explained that the *KOR* ideology included Trotskyist and Zionist components. The Zionists, he said, had collaborated with Hitler and had made known their activities in 1968. *KOR*, the Party journalist informed his Swedish readership, had contacts with people who had emigrated from Poland out of hatred.³⁷⁷

³⁷² Bogdan Maciejewski. ‘Męczennik’. *Sztandar Młody*, 30 May, 1977 as cited by Głowiński (1993: 66).

³⁷³ Głowiński (1993: 76).

³⁷⁴ Article by Tokarz Wojdyga, as cited by Głowiński (1993: 92).

³⁷⁵ Lipski (1985: 139) talks of the Trotskyist synonym beginning even to replace the Zionist one.

³⁷⁶ Bohdan Roliński’s interview appeared in *Svenska Dagbladet*.

³⁷⁷ Lipski (1985: 155). As part of a 1976-1977 campaign, the Polish authorities repeatedly turned back former Polish citizens, mainly Jews, that had emigrated to

From the autumn of 1980, the *Jewish enemy myth* was again deployed by members within the Party leadership. This time its target included not only *KOR* but also *Solidarity* members. The new mythical equation was Jew = Stalinist = *KOR* member = *Solidarity* member. The new purpose was to discredit *Solidarity*, which constituted a major challenge to the Party's monopoly of power. In a speech reported on 8 October 1980 in *Trybuna Ludu*, Politburo Member and Interior Minister Stanisław Kowalczyk warned of 'cosmopolitans' and nationalists 'of every description' entering the authentic workers' movement.³⁷⁸ The hard line/neo-partisan faction within the Party's leadership was much strengthened by the return of Stefan Olszowski in August 1980,³⁷⁹ by the appointment of Mirosław Milewski, in lieu of Kowalczyk, as Interior Minister in October 1980, and by the return of Moczar to the Politburo in December 1980.³⁸⁰ Olszowski had

Sweden during the 1968-1969 period, despite the fact that other former Polish citizens were usually admitted to Poland. Lipski (1985: 309).

³⁷⁸ The 'of every description' phraseology was vintage March 1968 language as used by Gomułka. Wałęsa protested and Kowalczyk was dismissed as Interior Minister. Głowiński (1993: 217).

³⁷⁹ When Moczar had been dismissed from the Politburo and Secretariat in 1971, many of the national communist partisans transferred their support to a new hard line Party faction known as the neo-partisans, which included Olszowski, who had been dropped from the Secretariat in December 1971, but remained in the Politburo. Keesing: 1960-1994 CD.

³⁸⁰ Olszowski was Foreign Minister from 1971 to 1976 and from 1982 to 1985; a Member of the Politburo from December 1970 to November 1985, a Member of the Secretariat from November 1968 to December 1971, and from December 1976 to 1982; with a brief intermission from both the Politburo and Secretariat from February to August 1980. Milewski was Interior Minister from October 1980 to July 1981, and a member of the Politburo and Secretariat between July 1981 and May 1985.

supervised the anti-Semitic press campaign in March 1968.³⁸¹ Milewski's patron was known to be Moczar, his boss at the Interior Ministry.³⁸² Moczar was also once more, from 1980 to 1983, head of the partisan Union of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy, which had served as his 1964-1972 power base. In January 1981, Moczar was appointed a Deputy Chairman of the National Front of Unity, and Olszowski was appointed to its Presidium.

In March 1981, Party hard liners supported the establishment of the illiberal nationalist anti-Semitic *Grunwald Patriotic Union*,³⁸³ whose purported aim was to prevent other national groups from dominating Polish life.³⁸⁴ The *Union* called for demonstrations to support the victims of 'Zionist workers in the secret police' during the Stalinist era and to oppose the March 1968 anniversary commemoration at Warsaw University of those victimised by the regime. When the *Solidarity* press began to write about Polish national minorities, including the Jews, in a positive light, the *Union* responded with anti-Semitic slogans from the communist propaganda machine.³⁸⁵ It also denounced the 'Jewish miasma' at the heart of *KOR* and *Solidarity*.³⁸⁶

³⁸¹ Tusiewicz (1993: 209).

³⁸² Keesing: 1960-1994 CD.

³⁸³ Krupa (1997: 150). The Union's use of the name Grunwald (after the 1410 battle) was another example of the close association made between the Jewish and German enemy myths.

³⁸⁴ The *Grunwald Patriotic Union* conveniently forgot that post-1950 Poland was one of the most ethnically homogeneous societies in Europe.

³⁸⁵ Wróbel (1997: 566).

³⁸⁶ Kuroń (1996: 311-312).

In August 1981, Politburo hard line member Albin Siwak said in a speech to the Central Committee's Second Plenum, using language evoking the Piast myth, that before WWII the 'fifth columnists' comprised foreign tribes – the Germans, the Jews, the Lithuanians and the Ukrainians. Now they constituted all those that criticised the Party, above all *Solidarity* supporters. The Party press had expressed similar statements, but Siwak's Plenum speech was the first time that such sentiments were expressed so crudely in such an important forum.³⁸⁷

By Autumn 1981, Poland was in crisis with *Solidarity* and the Party in major conflict and the CPSU putting extreme pressure upon the Jaruzelski regime to quash the opposition movement. In November 1981, speakers at a Warsaw meeting of the *Grunwald Patriotic Union*, quite possibly with Soviet encouragement,³⁸⁸ denounced 'the treacherous activity of the Zionists who made a tragic contribution to the abuses of the 1950s' and claimed that Michnik's 'true name' was Szechter.³⁸⁹ Also in November 1981, the *National Renaissance of Poland*, a body ideologically similar to the *Grunwald Patriotic Union*,

³⁸⁷ Głowiński (1993: 311).

³⁸⁸ Towards the end of 1981, according to KGB defector Colonel Oleg Gordievsky, the *Moscow Centre* of the KGB was pointing to the prominent role of Jewish 'internationalists', such as former *KOR* members Kuroń, Michnik and Mojzesz Finkelsztejn, as evidence of a Zionist conspiracy. *KOR* had decided to disband in September 1981, but Kuroń and Michnik were now key advisers to the *Solidarity* leadership. Several other East European countries, including the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, took up the Zionist conspiracy theme in public. Ruane (1982: 134) and Andrew (1990: 484-485).

³⁸⁹ Ruane (1982: 134).

was formed with regime approval.³⁹⁰ Forged pamphlets, probably the work of the secret police, were distributed in Warsaw on 11 November 1981, the opposition's 'foundation day'. The pamphlets purported to be a patriotic opposition manifesto. The manifesto, complete with the crowned eagle,³⁹¹ was 'signed' by five known dissidents, including three who had been *KOR* members. The manifesto conveyed anti-Semitic undertones by writing of 'people of unknown origin', a known synonym for Jews.³⁹² National non-communism was becoming more devious, by attempting to portray the opposition rather than the regime as exploiters of the Jewish enemy myth.

The Deployment of the German Enemy Myth

Post-1945, the German enemy myth was to be appropriated by the regime's national non-communism. Its anti-Germanism differed from the official regime anti-capitalist, anti-expansionist West-Germanism in several ways. It equated West Germans to all Germans, partly by omitting to explicitly exclude fraternal East Germans from its attacks. It portrayed Germans as not only the past enemy but also the present enemy still shaped by fascism. What is more, it depicted the Germans, together with Jews, as acting against the interests of the Polish nation.

³⁹⁰ Mac (2000a: 23). The *National Renaissance of Poland* officially registered as a Party in 1992 (*sic*).

³⁹¹ According to Mach (1985: 31) in all opposition actions against communists, when the national emblem was deployed it always retained its crown.

³⁹² Głowiński (1993: 339-340).

After WWII, partly as a result of Poland's borders moving westward, there were some three million Germans living in Poland.³⁹³ According to some estimates by 1950, in large part thanks to the enactment of the Piast myth, virtually all three million had been forcefully displaced from Poland,³⁹⁴ or had died in post-war labour camps, in forced labour, in transit to Germany,³⁹⁵ or as victims of Polish security forces.³⁹⁶

The Gomułka-led 1956-1970 regime tried to maintain the demonic view of the Germans, who, but for communist vigilance, would yet again attempt a *Drang nach Osten*. Shortly after his 1956 return to power, Gomułka, referring to the remilitarization of West Germany asserted that "German revisionism," represented, "as the gruesome historical experience indicates – a threat to Poland, to our borders, to

³⁹³ According to the 1931 census, there were some 0.7 million Germans then living in Poland. Polish mythology conveniently forgets that during WWII in Poland, over three and a quarter million signed the *Volklist* as Germans. Some 0.8 million signed in categories I and II, and a further 2.5 million in categories III and IV. (Mac 2000b: 40). Of the three million Germans living in Poland after WWII at least two million had been resettled in the part of Poland incorporated in the German Reich in 1939.

³⁹⁴ Szajkowski (1983: 21-22) gives a figure of some three million 'forced evictions' of Germans. Habielski (1998: 146) gives a figure of about 2.8 million Germans 'leaving' Poland during 1945-1950. Officially, the 'forced displacement' was as a result of a decision taken by the Allies.

³⁹⁵ It has been estimated that about 400, 000 Germans who found themselves in Polish and Soviet post-war territories died in such ways. (Bogusz 2000: 28). Most of the victims were children, the elderly, invalids and women. (Mac 2000b: 39).

³⁹⁶ For example, Polish guards burnt alive some 48 people, the entire population of several villages of the Opole region, situated within the Western 'Recovered Territory'. (Mac 2000b: 39).

our security.’”³⁹⁷ In November 1965, the Polish bishops, in defiance of the sentiments of the German enemy myth, sent a letter to the West German bishops in which they proposed mutual forgiveness for the wrongs each nation had inflicted on the other.³⁹⁸ The Polish regime responded by launching a furious media campaign against the Polish bishops, depicting them as acting against the interests of the nation and even as traitors to the Polish *raison d'état*.³⁹⁹ During the 1967 anti-Zionist campaign following the Arab-Israeli War, when the official media linked West German with Israeli aggression, Polish Defence Minister, Marian Spychalski, attending a graduate ceremony at the General Staff Academy, spoke of ‘Hitler’s epigones from Bonn.’⁴⁰⁰

As long as West Germany and other key Western powers failed to recognise Poland’s post-WWII Western border, the Polish regime had a powerful political legitimacy card to play. This was a card that could also be used to justify its political realist stance that only the Soviet Union could guarantee its Western border. More difficult was the

³⁹⁷ *Premówienia, 1956-1957*; W. Gomułka, Warsaw; p. 200 as cited by Bromke (1967: 110).

³⁹⁸ The letter offered pardon for the atrocities inflicted by the Germans on Poles throughout Polish history, particularly during WWII. In addition the Polish Episcopate asked for forgiveness for the forced eviction of some three million Germans from ‘Recovered Territories’ after WWII. (Szajkowski 1983: 21-22).

³⁹⁹ Szajkowski (1983: 22). An example of this campaign was the article ‘In Whose Name?’, *Życie Warszawy*, 10 December, 1965, p. 5.

⁴⁰⁰ Rozenbaum (1998: 8). Spychalski had been a Politburo Member from 1945 to 1949, and from 1959 until 1970. Like Gomułka, he had been both a WWII communist resistance fighter against the Germans and also a casualty of Stalin’s nationalist witch-hunt, when he was imprisoned from 1950-1956.

post-1970 deployment of this card, for in December 1970, Chancellor Willy Brandt recognised German-Polish frontiers and normalised relations between West Germany and Poland. Despite this, the regime's use of the German enemy myth persisted. In attacking *KOR* members, post-1970 national non-communism continued to combine the two enemy myths as expressed by anti-Semitism linked to anti-Germanism. In a diary entry for 29 January 1977, for example, Kisielewski wrote of a claim propagated within ruling circles that *KOR* was a German-Jewish plot.⁴⁰¹ On 25 May 1977, Secretariat and Politburo Member Kania, at a meeting with the Episcopate's Secretary General, rhetorically asked:

“What kind of people are they? Amongst others: Kuroń, Michnik, Blumsztajn, Strassberger and the other Jews? They stand on the margins, but ‘Free Europe’ and the German mass media support them.”⁴⁰²

The anti-German plus anti-Semitic theme was pursued in two articles that appeared in the Party's Central Committee and Warsaw Committee newspapers on 31 May 1977.⁴⁰³ Michnik and Blumsztajn were now accused of being partners and allies of Hupka and Czaja, who previously had been portrayed as two Polish-hating German

⁴⁰¹ Kisielewski (1998: 895).

⁴⁰² Raina (1995a: 308). From the autumn of 1976, Seweryn Blumsztajn was co-editor of the *KOR* periodical *Biuletyn Informacyjny*. He joined *KOR* as a Member in October 1977. Kuroń (1996: 192). Michnik, Blumsztajn and Kuroń had been arrested days before Kania's outburst.

⁴⁰³ *Trybuna Ludu* and *Życie Warszawy*. (Głowiński 1993: 70).

revanchists,⁴⁰⁴ and secret police forged pamphlets, on give-away quality paper, informed one that Hupka and Czaja had generously rewarded the *KOR* saboteurs.⁴⁰⁵

On the 29 August 1980, the day the Silesian miners joined the striking Baltic workers, the German enemy myth was resurrected during the main national TV news and in an article in *Życie Warszawy*. The article contrasted *KOR* members with *true Poles*, suggested Kuroń and Michnik were acting against the ‘most important of our national affairs’ and accused Michnik of wanting to sell out Poland to the Germans.⁴⁰⁶ The *true Pole* concept had also been exploited by the regime in the post-March 1968 period. The implication was clear: the Jews and *KOR* members were not *true Poles*.⁴⁰⁷

3.4 Conclusion: The Liberalising Of The Political Culture Of Opposition

This chapter’s use of empirical evidence to explore how pre-1945 myths were deployed in post-1945 Poland has illuminated the relationship of myths with the dynamics of political culture and democratisation. It has shown how myths can further the synthesis of nationalism and religion. It has shown how political culture can be

⁴⁰⁴ Hupka and Czaja had been expelled after WWII from ‘Recovered Territories’ and went on to lead the (West German) Union of Expelled Germans.

⁴⁰⁵ Lipski (1985: 137).

⁴⁰⁶ *Życie Warszawy*. (Głowiński 1993: 171-172).

⁴⁰⁷ Głowiński (1993: 337).

transmitted over time and how political culture can be adapted to take on different values and yet retain the legitimacy of past tradition.

The changing political culture of the opposition and the regime during the post-1945 period has been reflected in their different uses of pre-1945 myths. Both opposition and regime exploited the attributes of myths that engender political legitimacy and political potency and allow myths to extend and/or change their meanings. However, the opposition increasingly deployed the pre-1945 myths as vehicles of liberalism, while the regime used them as vehicles of illiberalism.

In the Battle of the Second Millennium, the Church's *Novena*, much aided by the Madonna myth, revived the protest repertoire and pastoral mobilisation ⁴⁰⁸ that had its genesis under the state authoritarianism of the partitioning powers. The Madonna myth again furthered the synthesising process between political Catholicism and nationalism. As chapters 5 and 6 will show, the *Novena* acted as a bridge between the pre-1945 deployment of religious myths and their associated symbols and rituals for nationalist purposes and their subsequent post-1978 deployment by John Paul II and *Solidarity* to further the liberal political culture of opposition.

During the mid-1960s-1970s period, as exemplified within the Battle of May Days, political Catholicism, by extending the multivocality of

⁴⁰⁸ Pastoral mobilisation entails programmes designed to strengthen the bonds between Church and society by involving believers in intensive religious activities and in mass rituals that carry forward the Catholic social agenda into the public domain. Pastoral mobilisation differs from other organised collective action including political mobilisation, in that although it carries strong political implications, it lacks explicit political goals. See Osa (1997: 354).

the 3 May myth, became more liberal. It began to link its deployment of the 3 May myth not only with popular sovereignty, but also with national self-determination and social justice, including human and civil rights to be safeguarded by international law and supranational bodies. In large part this liberalising influence was a result of post-Vatican II thinking and the meeting of minds between the dissident Catholic intelligentsia and the secular left, a process explored in Chapter 4.

In the Battle of Foundation Days, the Church adapted the original Russian/Soviet enemy connotations of the Battle of Warsaw myth. The myth now served as a vehicle to criticise an imperial system that prevented national self-determination rather than a vehicle to engender hatred of others.

The deployment of myths evoking sacred symbolism by the Church-led opposition continued the 19th century synthesising process between political Catholicism and nationalism. However, there was now a significant development. The Church hierarchy was now playing a leading role in preaching an increasingly liberal political culture.

Changing attitudes to the Soviets, Germans and the Jews, as reflected by the ways in which the three associated enemy myths were adapted, shaped much of the development of 1945-1989 Polish nationalism and significantly impacted upon the course and outcome of the war of political legitimacy. As the opposition discarded or significantly changed the meaning of these myths, so the regime maintained the illiberal values associated with them. The result was that the political

culture of opposition became more liberal, while that of the regime became more illiberal.

The simultaneous deployment by the Polish regime of two contradictory nationalisms - communist and non-communist - served to undermine them both. The attempts by the regime's national non-communism to mitigate the effects of the Russian/Soviet and Communist enemy myths opened a Pandora's box which, when filled with *the blank spots* of history, served only to expose the regime's double standards and increase its political illegitimacy. The chapter, in identifying a distinct non-communism strand of nationalism deployed systematically by the regime, necessitates a reinterpretation of Polish regime nationalism as depicted solely by national communism.

The war of political legitimacy was increasingly fought according to the agenda of the opposition. For the regime, in deploying socio-economic and nationalist legitimacy, even if for illiberal purposes, was forced to adopt the definition of political legitimacy that incorporates a regime commanding respect from the majority, a liberal definition that, as Held (1998: 334) notes, "suggests the necessity of pursuing the model of democratic autonomy," rather than a Marxist definition that deployed national communist ideological legitimacy and could justify coercive power legitimation. The opposition's agenda, as subsequent chapters will show, was increasingly becoming a liberal democratic one.

The extent of the multivocality and adaptability of myths was perhaps best illustrated by the regime's non-communism. In evoking such mythology, the enemies were merged together to give hybrid dual-

enemy myths that ran the illiberal gamut of the Jewish enemy myth from the Jew-communist, to the Jew-Zionist, to the Jew-Stalinist, to the Jew-intellectual, to the Jew-non Pole, to the Jew-German, Jew-*KOR* member, and finally to the Jew-*Solidarity* member. Chapter 5 will illustrate these multivocal and adaptable attributes equally at work for the opposition's liberalism by showing how John Paul II continued the opposition's liberalising process by extending yet further the meanings attached to the pre-1945 myths. Chapter 5 will also show how John Paul II, much aided by these myths, continued the synthesising process between political Catholicism and nationalism. Chapter 6 will show the influence of a more liberal political Catholicism and nationalism upon *Solidarity*.

During the 1976-1979 period, political Catholicism, as fuelled by the Polish Church, *Znak* and a John Paul II-led more politically liberal post-Vatican II papacy, decided to align itself with *KOR* rather than *ROPCiO/KPN*, the other major civil rights grouping. In so doing, political Catholicism was now co-operating in practice with the liberal-leaning dissident leftist secularism rather than with the more right-wing, Dmowski-influenced, illiberalism advocated by *ROPCiO/KPN*. This decision may well have had a profound impact on the course of the 1980s and the decade's liberal democratic outcome. The background to the decision of political Catholicism to align itself with *KOR* is now explored in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: A MEETING OF MINDS - THE 1970-1976 PROCESS OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN DISSIDENT CATHOLIC AND SECULAR LEFT INTELLIGENTSIA

4:1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to examine the 1970-1976 process of dialogue that led to a meeting of minds between liberal-leaning dissident Catholic ⁴⁰⁹ and secular left intelligentsia. The political significance of this dialogue lies in the subsequent 1976-1979 practical co-operation that in turn contributed to the fostering of a liberal political culture of 1980-1989 opposition. The 1976-1979 co-operative political activities have been covered by several works. For example, Schöpflin (1979) and Raina (1981) give good general coverage of this period and of the emergence of opposition groups, but there is no systematic examination of the 1970-1976 process of dialogue, nor any detailed exploration as to why the predominant pre-*Solidarity* opposition was a liberal-leaning one in Poland, rather than a more conservative national Catholic or populist one. The formative 1970s period was, unsurprisingly, to have a bearing upon the nature of the 1980s' opposition. Within Poland, unlike in Hungary where the 1980s' opposition was divided between national populist and liberal-leaning wings (Sword 1990: 102-103), the 1980s' Polish opposition was essentially united around a liberal-leaning *Solidarity* supported by a liberal-leaning political Catholicism.

⁴⁰⁹ The dissident Catholic intelligentsia came mainly from the ranks of *Znak*.

Some of the participants in the 1970-1976 dialogue, particularly but not exclusively from the ranks of the secular left, had previously been attracted by the theory of communism. However, the practice of Polish and of international communism confirmed existing doubts, stirred by the crushing of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution by the Soviets, as to whether communism was reformable. In particular the Polish regime's anti-Semitism and anti-intelligentsia onslaughts in the spring of 1968 and, to a lesser extent, the crushing of the Czechoslovakian Revolution in the summer of 1968 by Warsaw Pact troops, including Polish ones, had a profound effect on many of the dialogue participants. In coming to the conclusion that communism was not reformable, they moved towards accepting liberal democracy as the only viable alternative political system.

Before exploring the 1970-1976 process of dialogue, the chapter will briefly outline some 1976-1979 examples of the co-operation between dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia that followed this dialogue. In addition, the issue as to why during this 1976-1979 period the Polish Church hierarchy decided to show a preference for supporting the *Committee for the Defence of Workers (KOR)*, rather than the *Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights (ROPCiO)*/ the *Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN)*, will be examined. This preference for supporting *KOR* rather than *ROPCiO/KPN*, the other main civil rights grouping of the time, it will be argued, was an important factor in enabling the liberalisation process of the political culture of the opposition.

4.2 Some Practical Outcomes Of Dialogue: Examples Of Co-Operation During 1976-1979

Although it is difficult to prove a causal link, it is reasonable to suppose that the 1970-1976 meeting of minds' process contributed to four significant 1976-1979 interrelated developments involving practical co-operation between dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia. In turn these developments must be seen also within the context of the re-emergence of a more self-assured, more openly dissident, civil society. From 1976, numerous dissident groups, including those of lay political Catholicism, mushroomed in Poland. Underground newsletters, petitions and periodicals outside the state censorship system began to appear. It was estimated that before 1980, one out of every four Poles had read an underground publication and 200,000 read such *bibuła* regularly.⁴¹⁰ A May 1978 Central Committee pamphlet cited nineteen illegal journals with a total single print run of 20,000 copies. By the time *Solidarity* appeared on the scene in the summer of 1980, it was estimated that there were some fifty underground publications.⁴¹¹ Four underground Catholic publications appeared regularly: *Zgrzyt* (Discord), *Krzyż Nowohucki* (The Cross of Nowa Huta), *Wspólny Dom* (Common Home), and *Spotkania* (Encounters), which appeared twelve times between 1977-1981. *Spotkania* was published in Lublin the home of the Catholic

⁴¹⁰ See Bernhard (1991: 319). *Bibuła*, which literally means blotting paper, was the Polish equivalent of the Russian *samizdat* underground publication.

⁴¹¹ Of these, amongst the most influential publications were KOR's *Robotnik* (The Worker), *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Information Bulletin) and *Głos* (The Voice); ROPCiO's *Opinia* (Opinion) and *Spotkania* (Encounters). *Robotnik* had the largest circulation, at about 10,000 copies monthly. (Vale 1981: 225).

University of Lublin (*KUL*) with which *Spotkania* had links, and was edited and written by young academic chaplains, Catholic students and Catholic intellectuals. *Spotkania* stressed “the necessity to extend the Catholic faith to social principles, and to fight against the deliberate process of social disintegration.”⁴¹²

The 1976-1979 examples of practical co-operation between dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia outlined below had the explicit or implicit support of the Polish Church hierarchy and in particular of Primate Wyszyński and, until his departure to Rome as Pope in October 1978, of Cardinal Wojtyła. The four aforementioned outcomes of dialogue developments, although highly politically significant, are not the main concern of this chapter and others have written about aspects of them. Accordingly, the developments are now only briefly outlined. The first development pertains to the 1976 co-operation⁴¹³ between dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia as expressed in their opposition to the regime’s attempts to amend the Polish Constitution.⁴¹⁴ The second development relates to the co-operation between dissident Catholic and secular left dissidents as expressed by membership of the *Committee for the Defence of Workers (KOR)* established in 1976 and by support for *KOR* activities.

⁴¹² Szajkowski (1983: 56). One issue of *Spotkania* appeared during Martial Law. Its chief editor, Janusz Krupski, was arrested after ten months in hiding. (Szajkowski 1983: 85).

⁴¹³ The co-operation actually commenced in December 1975.

⁴¹⁴ For further details see Raina (1978: 212-213) and Blazynski (1979: 251).

The third development relates to the co-operation between dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia as demonstrated by the activities of the *Flying University*,⁴¹⁵ resurrected in 1977. Finally, the fourth development pertains to the 1978-1979 establishment of links between the dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia (often realised through *KOR* and the *Flying University*) and the embryonic workers' groupings, precursor to the *Solidarity* movement that emerged in 1980.

4.3 The Polish Church's Preference For Supporting *KOR*

The issue as to why the Polish Church hierarchy showed a preference for supporting *KOR* rather than *ROPCiO/KPN* is now explored. As mentioned, the two key civil rights groupings of the 1976-1979 period of opposition in Poland were *KOR* and *ROPCiO/KPN*. *KOR* was established in 1976 to support Ursus and Radom factory workers and their families following regime repression related to the price rise protests. *ROPCiO*, the Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights, was formed in 1977, and in 1979, a group of *ROPCiO* activists established the Confederation for an Independent Poland (*KPN*).

⁴¹⁵ The origins of the original late-19th century *Flying University* that inspired this late-20th century reincarnation are explored later in this chapter.

The Nature of *ROPCiO/KPN*

Initially, *ROPCiO* was regarded by many as more influential than *KOR*. *KOR* was the more liberal of the two and *ROPCiO/KPN* was the more socially conservative and outspokenly nationalist. According to Lipski there was no anti-Semitism within *KOR*, but, although anti-Semitism was not the prevailing sentiment, there was some anti-Semitism within *ROPCiO*.⁴¹⁶

The circumstances of the announcement of the formation of the *KPN* were full of nationalist symbolic and ritual overtones, evoking the German enemy myth. The announcement was made on 1 September 1979 to those gathered at the *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier* in Warsaw to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the German invasion of Poland. *KPN* was aligned to a traditional political Catholicism that bordered on a belief in the Catholic = Pole myth associated with the period of Dmowski-influenced illiberalism. In *KPN*'s Declaration of Principle one read:

“Polish national consciousness has been moulded by an over 1000 years long process ... a process accompanied by the presence of the Catholic Church.” “The irremovable values inherent in the Polish national consciousness (include) ... attachment to the world of values formed by Catholicism and to the principles of Christian ethics.”⁴¹⁷

Moreover, in contrast to the more guarded nationalism of *KOR*, *KPN* was stridently explicit in its criticism of the Soviet Union, a criticism

⁴¹⁶ Lipski (198: 121).

⁴¹⁷ *The Declaration of Principle of the Confederation* as in Raina (1981: 414).

more likely to evoke the Soviet enemy myth rather than opposition to the Soviet political system.⁴¹⁸

The Nature of *KOR*

The influence of political Catholicism and nationalism within *KOR* was greater than is generally perceived, not least by Western observers. These observers tend to portray *KOR* either in unspecific general terms as an intelligentsia-led organisation, for example, (Lewis 1994: 184), or specifically as a secular left-led organisation, for example (Crampton 1997: 364) and (Davies 1981b: 630). A closer look at *KOR* reveals a more complex picture.

Crucially, the Polish Church hierarchy and prominent dissident liberal Catholic intellectuals showed a preference for co-operating, supporting and/or working within *KOR* rather than *ROPCiO/KPN*. This preference, which increased the political legitimacy of *KOR*, was to play a significant part in the genesis and character of *Solidarity*. It was from the ranks of *KOR* and its supporters that several of the key intelligentsia that gave direction and advice to the 1978-1979 nascent, and the 1980-1989 actual, trade union cum political *Solidarity* movement, came. Direction and advice from *KOR* intelligentsia such

⁴¹⁸ Thus in *KPN's Declaration of Principles* one finds phrases such as: the "infamous Yalta Agreement"; "Soviet domination over Poland"; with the Polish Communist Party governing Poland "in a totalitarian way ... a modern form of institutionalized Russian rule over Poland"; "the Polish nation bent in the yoke of slavery for so long, is awakening"; "the historical national community which contains all the past, present and future Polish generations." *The Declaration of Principle of the Confederation* as in Raina (1981: 412-414).

as Kuroń and Michnik, and from Catholic intellectual supporters of *KOR* such as Mazowiecki, contributed to a 1980s' *Solidarity* movement that preached and practised a more inclusive liberal political culture. The question remains as to why key exponents of political Catholicism opted for *KOR*. Three inter-related factors help explain the choice. Firstly, the liberal nature of *KOR* was more in tune with the increasing liberal political Catholicism emerging as a result of 1960s' changes within papal political Catholicism than with the more illiberal nature of *ROPCiO/KPN*. Secondly, the influence of political Catholicism and nationalism within *KOR* was greater than often perceived. Thirdly, the 1970-1976 process of dialogue contributed to a readiness for co-operation between liberal-leaning dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia, a co-operation reflected in *KOR*'s membership.

Primate Wyszyński and Cardinal Wojtyła, in their support for *KOR*, as the following empirical evidence will illustrate, were also supporting modern liberal values of human rights, social justice and popular sovereignty and national self-determination.

After the regime repression following the June 1976 workers' protests over price rises, the Episcopate officially declared its full support for *KOR*. As the Bishops assembled for the November 1976 Episcopate Conference, *KOR*'s co-founder, Antoni Macierewicz, met with Cardinal Wojtyła, and although there was no substantive discussion, Macierewicz clearly felt Wojtyła was encouraging *KOR*'s work and would help as he much as he could. At the November 1976 Episcopate Conference, with Cardinal Wojtyła in the lead, the Bishops demanded an amnesty for the arrested workers who had protested the summer

price rises, and warned the regime that an ‘embittered people’ would not be productive.⁴¹⁹ On Sunday 28 November 1976, all church collections were dedicated to helping the arrested or sacked workers and their families, with the donations being handed over to *KOR*.

On 7 May 1977, a Kraków University student and an active supporter of *KOR*, Stanisław Pyjas, was murdered, most probably by the secret police. Over five hundred attended a Requiem Mass for Pyjas in Łódź. Memorial Masses were also held in Lublin, Poznań, and Wrocław, where both the Cathedral and the square in front were filled with mourners. In Warsaw, crowds overflowed Saint Anne’s Church to attend another Requiem Mass at which Primate Wyszyński spoke. The Primate said that when people demanded

“‘their rights in a drastic and impatient way,’ this was because they felt ‘the loop tightening around their necks’. How could ‘a nation, a state exist without man?’ ... How could it ‘live when basic human rights are not being observed? ... It would then not be a nation ... and with soulless beings neither the nation nor the state would be able to fulfil their tasks.’”⁴²⁰

Wojtyła also protested the murder of Pyjas.⁴²¹ Following a massive funeral march on 15 May 1977 for Pyjas in Kraków,⁴²² Wojtyła spoke out against the regime at the memorial service. He said that the

⁴¹⁹ Kwitny (1998: 271).

⁴²⁰ As cited by Raina (1978: 276).

⁴²¹ Pyjas, like Wojtyła, was a philology student from Kraków University.

⁴²² During the commemoration some 5,000 students announced the formation of the *Student’s Solidarity Committee* in place of the regime-sponsored *Socialist Union of Polish Students*.

student Pyjas was a victim of hatred towards the student democracy movement.⁴²³ Wojtyła condemned all regimes that would commit such acts for political reasons.⁴²⁴

For his 9 June 1977 *Corpus Christi* Sermon, Wojtyła placed, as usual, a biblical quotation across the main outdoor altar. It read “‘Your efforts will not be in vain’ KOR I.”⁴²⁵ In so doing, Wojtyła was showing his support for *KOR*.⁴²⁶ In the sermon, Wojtyła made an indirect mention to the May murder of Pyjas. He attacked the press for its one-sidedness and for not seeing that young people longed for social justice and respect for human and national rights.

“When human rights are not respected people rebel. This is not surprising. People have their dignity ... One cannot solve human problems by relying on police methods and imprisonment ... To dominate is not in the essence of rule. To rule is to protect human, civil and even national and religious rights.”⁴²⁷

Unsurprisingly, the regime was concerned about the Church’s support for *KOR*. At a September 1977 Interior Ministry meeting, for example, a number of the Church Episcopate, including Cardinal

⁴²³ Kwitny (1998: 273).

⁴²⁴ Szajkowski (1983: 49).

⁴²⁵ As cited by Kwitny (1998: 276).

⁴²⁶ Apart from being the initials of the Workers’ Defence Committee, *KOR* was the abbreviation for the Polish spelling of the New Testament book of Corinthians, from which the quote came.

⁴²⁷ As quoted from *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 8, No. 1, Spring 1980, p. 84 citing *Opinia*, Issue 3, June 1977.

Wojtyła, Bishop Tokarczuk, and several priests, were attacked for their contacts with ‘anti-socialist groups,’ and in particular with *KOR*.⁴²⁸

The titles of *KOR*’s two main publications reflect its nationalist and political Catholic influences. *Robotnik* was named after a turn of the 19th/20th century underground publication edited by the future nationalist leader Piłsudski. *KOR*’s *Biuletyn Informacyjny* was named after the main pro-Catholic and nationalist *Home Army* weekly of the same name. Although one of *KOR*’s two co-founders, Kuroń, and other members already-known-in-the-West such as Jan Józef Lipski, Edward Lipiński, and Michnik⁴²⁹ were of the secular left,⁴³⁰ there was also a considerable Catholic presence within *KOR*’s small membership.⁴³¹ Indeed, *KOR* members included a broad spectrum of nationalists, those of the secular left and liberal-leaning Catholics.⁴³² According to Lipski “in *KOR* there was no division between believers and non-believers.”⁴³³ *KOR* as an organisation participated in the most important of the Church’s religious-patriotic ceremonies, which

⁴²⁸ Dominiczak (1997: 309). Tokarczuk was a member of the Episcopate’s Main Council (1967-1993).

⁴²⁹ Michnik was not a *KOR* founder member, but became a member shortly after *KOR*’s inception and his return from France.

⁴³⁰ Raina (1978: 254).

⁴³¹ As a matter of deliberate policy *KOR* always had a small membership, of at most about three dozen. The Founding Members numbered just fourteen. In addition to its core membership, *KOR* had several thousand active supporters known as ‘associates.’ (Lipski 1985: 52-59 & 175).

⁴³² Osa (2002: 27-28).

⁴³³ Lipski (1985: 392).

as the secular leftist Lipski conceded, ‘played a positive role.’⁴³⁴ The other co-founder of *KOR* was the historian and Catholic nationalist, Antoni Macierewicz. Other Catholic members of *KOR* were Father Jan Zieja and Józef Rybicki who had been an officer in the *Home Army*. In 1968, Rybicki spoke out against the regime sanctioned anti-Semitism and he co-operated with the Episcopal Commission in fighting alcoholism. Other Catholics who subsequently became *KOR* members included: the well-known actress Halina Mikołajska; the poet and writer Anna Kowalska, who left the pro-regime Catholic organisation *Pax* in March 1968; Stefan Kaczorowski, a former secretary-general of the Christian Democratic Party;⁴³⁵ and Father Zbigniew Kamiński who, like Father Zieja, had been a chaplain in the *Home Army*. Lipski was to write that these Catholic members joined *KOR* “for purely ethical reasons” and that their Catholicism “was seen among other things as a moral imperative to combat evil in public life.”⁴³⁶

In September 1977, the Madonna myth was enlisted to *KOR*’s cause. There was a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Black Madonna at Jasna Góra by *KOR* supporters and workers from the Ursus and Radom factories who had been involved in the 1976 price protests to mark the first anniversary of the founding of *KOR*.⁴³⁷ In April 1978, sixty-five

⁴³⁴ Lipski (1985: 278).

⁴³⁵ Kaczorowski was also a founding member of *ROPCiO*. He left *KOR* in September 1977.

⁴³⁶ Lipski (1982: 75).

⁴³⁷ *Opinia*, No. 6, October 1977. As reported in *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 8, No. 1, Spring 1980, pp. 85-86.

KOR supporters sent a letter to Parliament demanding an end to all restrictions imposed on the Church.⁴³⁸

The relationship between *KOR* and the *Znak* movement was close. In early 1977, for example, the Head of the Office for Religious Affairs, Kazimierz Kąkol, started court proceedings to seize the *Znak* publications on the grounds that they were supporting *KOR*. Indeed *KOR* leaders were both close friends and political allies of the editors of *Znak* publications.⁴³⁹ At the end of May 1977, for example, a protest fast took place in Saint Martin's Church, Warsaw. The fast was in support of five workers imprisoned for up to ten years for taking part in the June 1976 food price demonstrations, and in support of the release of nine *KOR* members and supporters arrested in the previous two weeks. Bogdan Cywiński⁴⁴⁰ was one of the hunger strikers within the church, and, outside the church, Mazowiecki⁴⁴¹ acted as the strikers' spokesperson.⁴⁴² Wojtyła had given both

⁴³⁸ *Opinia*, No. 13, May 1978. As reported in *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 8. No. 1 Spring 1980, p. 87.

⁴³⁹ Kwitny (1998: 271).

⁴⁴⁰ Cywiński was a *KIK* activist and Chief Editor of *Znak* (1973-1977). Cywiński was also a friend of Cardinal Wojtyła.

⁴⁴¹ A *Pax* member until 1956, Mazowiecki was a *KIK* activist, Chief Editor of *Więź* from 1958 to 1981, and a *Znak* Member of Parliament from 1961 to 1971. From 1953 to 1955, he had been the Chief Editor of the pro-regime *Pax* weekly *WTK*.

⁴⁴² Among the ten hunger strikers there was also a Catholic priest; Henryk Wujec; and Michnik's father. *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 5 No. 4, Winter 1977 and Szajkowski (1983: 49). The Rector of Saint Martin's. Father Bronisław Dembowski gave moral support. Wujec, a physics graduate, was a *KOR* member from 1977. In 1981, Wujec was to become a member of the Presidium of the Warsaw Region of *Solidarity*. According to Kwitny, Father Dembowski was 'one

Cywiński and Mazowiecki his moral support prior to their participation.⁴⁴³

KOR was not an explicitly nationalist movement, but, implicitly, one of its aims was Poland's popular sovereignty and national self-determination. As mentioned, *KOR*'s co-founder Macierewicz was a Catholic nationalist. Several of *KOR*'s members had risked their lives for the struggle to regain national self-determination during WWII as members of the nationalist, anti-communist and pro-Catholic *Home Army*. *KOR* members Lipski, Zieja, Kamiński, Rybicki and Kaczorowski also had taken part in the 1944 Warsaw Uprising led by the *Home Army*. Immediately after the war, Rybicki became a member of the anti-communist Freedom and Independence (*WiN*) underground organisation.

4.4 The 1970-1976 Process Of Dialogue

The exploration of the 1970-1976 process of dialogue examines four of the key factors contributing to the case for dialogue made by the dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia. One factor relates to lessons learnt from the end of 19th century/early 20th century period of Polish partitions. A second factor relates to the contribution of personal Thomism espoused by certain French Catholic thinkers from around the 1920s-1930s. A third factor relates to the 1960s' changes

of John Paul II's favourite priests'. Dembowski, despite secret police pressure took no preventative action when the May 1977 protest fast took place in his church. (Kwitny 1998: 275). Dembowski had close ties with the Warsaw Catholic Club of the Intelligentsia.

⁴⁴³ Kwitny (1998: 273-274).

in the socio-political thinking of Roman Catholics as influenced by John XXIII, Vatican II, and Paul VI. Lastly, the fourth factor relates to the ideas of *new evolutionism* as expressed by Michnik and other dissident intellectuals in the mid-1970s.

4.4.1 The Genesis and Nature of the Dialogue

The 1970-1976 theoretical case made by dissident, mainly liberal-leaning, Catholic and secular left intelligentsia for dialogue and greater solidarity was well encapsulated in six publications. The first three publications to appear were books written by Catholics: *Crossroads and Values* (1970) by Tadeusz Mazowiecki;⁴⁴⁴ *At the Polish Intersection* (1972) by Janusz Zabłocki;⁴⁴⁵ and *Genealogies of the Unconquered* (1972) by Cywiński.⁴⁴⁶ The other three publications were written by two secular leftists in 1976, when Michnik wrote an essay *New Evolutionism*⁴⁴⁷ and the book *The Church -The Left-Dialogue*, (Michnik 1977),⁴⁴⁸ and Kołakowski penned an article

⁴⁴⁴ *Rozdroża i wartości*. Biblioteka wiezi: Warsaw: 1970.

⁴⁴⁵ *Na polskim skrzyżowaniu dróg*. Wydawnictwo ODiSS, Warsaw: 1972. A former *Pax* member, Zabłocki was a *Znak* and neo-*Znak* Member of Parliament from 1965 to 1976 and 1976 to 1985, respectively. He was a co-founder in 1957 of the *Znak* publication *Więź*. In 1967, Zabłocki established the Centre for Documentation and Social Studies (ODiSS).

⁴⁴⁶ Cywiński (1972).

⁴⁴⁷ Michnik (1976). Michnik (1946-), a dissenting Marxist historian, was dismissed from his post at Warsaw University in March 1968. He was imprisoned a number of times for his opposition to the regime. He became a member of *KOR* and was involved in the *Flying University*.

⁴⁴⁸ Written in 1976, it was first published in Paris in 1977.

entitled *Stanisław Brzozowski: Marxism as Historical Subjectivism*.⁴⁴⁹

Judging by subsequent references to these publications, in terms of impact upon the process of dialogue, Cywiński's book, (Cywiński 1972) was the most influential,⁴⁵⁰ followed by Michnik's response to it, (Michnik 1977). Personal Thomism and Michnik's essay, (Michnik 1976) had an important influence upon the opposition tactics and upon the political behaviour of Catholic and secular left intelligentsia, and thereby upon their subsequent practical manifestations of solidarity.

Unsurprisingly, events and debates of the past influenced the six publications. Lessons were extracted from the mistakes and successes of the final decades of Polish partitioning; from the impact of personal Thomism, first developed around the 1920s-1930s in West Europe; and from the aftermath of the fundamental 1960s' changes in the Roman Catholic Church, particularly as expressed by John XXIII, Vatican II, and Paul VI.

Lessons to be learnt from partitioning were first emphasised by Cywiński and then taken up by Michnik and Kołakowski. They subsequently gave rise to greater Catholic-secular left co-operation in practice than under partitioning. In *Genealogies of the Unconquered*, Cywiński, noted that the spread of positivism and radicalism in partitioned Poland during the latter half of the 19th century was responsible for the siphoning off of many of the more able minds from

⁴⁴⁹ Kołakowski (1976). The article in *Survey* was a 'reprint' from the then as yet not published *Main Currents of Marxism, Volume II*. A former Marxist, Kołakowski, a Philosophy Professor, was dismissed from his post at Warsaw University, following the student protests in 1968.

⁴⁵⁰ See, for example, Kuroń (1996: 164).

the Polish Catholic Church, resulting in its intellectual impoverishment. Cywiński linked the stand taken by the Catholic intelligentsia against the partitioning powers with the Polish ‘events’ of 1968. One person from the past that Cywiński praised as a role model for the current political situation was the unorthodox Marxist-turned-Modernist Catholic,⁴⁵¹ Stanisław Brzozowski (1878-1911). There were striking parallels between Brzozowski’s past and the present situation. As with many secular left dissidents in 1968, the student Brzozowski was expelled from Warsaw University in 1897 for helping to organise a patriotic demonstration. Like many dissident intelligentsia in the late 1970s, Brzozowski was arrested in 1898 for *Flying University* activities. The original incarnation of the *Flying University/Society of Scientific Courses (TKN)* owes its origins to the war waged upon Polish culture by the official nationalisms of Germany and Russia during the latter half of partitioning. The repression of Polish culture helped in the realisation, amongst Catholics and non-Catholics and amongst both idealistic and realistic nationalists, that all Poles concerned with the fight for national self-determination had a common interest in protecting Polish culture. Idealistic nationalism focused upon the culture of the past, and realistic nationalism upon the culture of the present. Yet for both nationalisms, the relationship between culture, national identity, and the struggle for national self-determination was so intrinsically linked that it was deemed necessary, despite the grave risks, to maintain Polish culture, illegally, underground. The creation of the first *Flying*

⁴⁵¹ Modernism within Roman Catholicism tended to deny the objective value of traditional beliefs and to regard some dogmas of the Church as symbolic rather than literally true.

University/TKN in the late 19th/early 20th century and their reincarnation in the late 20th century symbolised this realisation. As the Tsarist authority *russified* education within their Partition, underground classes began to be held for the teaching of Polish language, history and religious instruction. During 1882-83, Polish left-wing radicals, as part of their resistance to the Russian imposition of political and ideological restrictions on education, decided that they should establish academic societies to encourage students to preserve their Polish identity and enrich their knowledge through self-education. They initiated uncensored education courses, especially in social, political, and economic sciences, that were secretly conducted by well-known radical professors in private homes. A generation of Poles was introduced to aspects of Polish culture banned from their schools and colleges. In time, four separate *faculties* were established and diplomas were issued to *graduates* ⁴⁵² in what became known as *the Flying University*, or from 1905/1906, the *Society of Scientific Courses (TKN)*, which functioned until 1918.

Kołakowski, (1976: 247) praised Brzozowski in almost hyperbolic terms:

““The intellectual history of twentieth-century Poland cannot be understood without reference to the bizarre and disparate effects of his writings and personality.””

⁴⁵² One such *graduate* was the Warsaw-born Maria Skłodowska (1867-1911). In 1891, Skłodowska went to Paris and as Maria Skłodowska-Curie achieved international fame as the first female and two-time Nobel Laureate in Physics (1903) and Chemistry (1911).

Michnik, like Cywiński, felt linked to the tradition of the *unconquered* intelligentsia of the final period of partitioning, which he affirmed included ‘the tradition of Brzozowski.’

Brzozowski constituted an ideal symbol of solidarity between nationalism and political Catholicism; between proto-liberal political Catholicism and proto-liberal secularism; between political realism and idealism; between questioning left-leaning former Marxist intellectuals and dissident workers. The potential for Brzozowski to serve as such a symbol of solidarity is apparent from observations of both Cywiński and Kołakowski pertaining to Brzozowski’s influence. Thinking of people such as Brzozowski, Cywiński observed that:

““Although the secularist circles of the radical intelligentsia were separated from the Church by a wide rift of mutual antipathy and distrust; the differences were, nevertheless, not insurmountable.””⁴⁵³

while Kołakowski commented:

“The ambiguity and variability of Brzozowski’s influence extended beyond the grave. Young people of the Left were brought up on his novels and other writings ... yet before and during the second world war he was successfully claimed as a prophet of the radical nationalist camp.”⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵³ Cywiński (1972: 420), as cited by Pomian-Srzednicki (1982: 170).

⁴⁵⁴ Kołakowski (1976: 247).

According to Kołakowski, Brzozowski “saw in Catholicism an important and fruitful source of cultural values” ⁴⁵⁵ and “the leitmotiv of Brzozowski’s thought was the desire to safeguard the absolute value of humanity and endow it with absolute meaning.” ⁴⁵⁶ Brzozowski’s socio-political values which stressed nationalism, the importance of cultural values emanating from Catholicism, and the centrality of labour and human dignity, have clear parallels with those of John Paul II’s. ⁴⁵⁷

4.4.2 The Impact of Personal Thomism

Although there was a renaissance of Thomism within papal Catholicism in the 1870s, ⁴⁵⁸ it was not until the 1920s and 1930s that a less theological more political personal Thomism emerged. The latter was as a result of the thinking of lay Catholic philosophers such as the French trio Emmanuel Mounier, Étienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain. The French trio’s personal Thomism facilitated an active political role for Catholics, and gave them a philosophical weapon in

⁴⁵⁵ Kołakowski (1976: 253).

⁴⁵⁶ Kołakowski (1976: 265).

⁴⁵⁷ As a first year undergraduate Polish philology student in 1938-1939, Wojtyła is known to have chosen as one of his options ‘Novels, Memoirs, and Letters of Stanisław Brzozowski’. Szulc (1995: 88).

⁴⁵⁸ In 1879, Leo XIII, although still insisting that Catholicism alone offered a solution to the problems of the modern world, recommended in his encyclical *Aeterni Patris* that Thomism be made the basis of instruction in all Roman Catholic schools. In so doing, Leo XIII helped establish neo-Thomism as the basis of theological orthodoxy for the modern papacy. In 1950, for example, Pius XII, in his encyclical *Humani Generis*, (Pius XII 1950) reaffirmed Thomism as the surest guide to Roman Catholic doctrine.

their fight against liberal egoistic individualism. According to Hanley, personalism saw

“society as composed not of individuals (as in the liberal paradigm), but persons. The person is an outgoing, fundamentally sociable being, whose destiny is realised not in competition (again as with liberalism) but more through insertion into different types of community, be it neighbourhood, church, family or nation. This type of thought is instinctively solidaristic (*sic*).” ⁴⁵⁹

Personal Thomism held that active involvement in the community was part of the religious process. Active involvement in the community provided an opportunity to pursue ‘la lumière de la raison’. One’s task was not to passively endure the travails of earthly life, but to treat the life on earth (the *Herenow*) rather than just the afterlife (*Hereafter*) as a source of enrichment that offered numerous possibilities for spiritual development. ⁴⁶⁰

Before WWII, personal Thomism influenced the development of a re-invigorated Christian Democracy in Western Europe. Personal Thomism also influenced the thinking of Polish Catholic intelligentsia in pre-WWII independent Poland. Before WWII, strong ties were established between liberal-leaning Catholic Polish intelligentsia and Maritain who won a considerable number of Polish readers and a following of close friends. ⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁹ Hanley (1994: 4).

⁴⁶⁰ Hughes (1995: 165).

⁴⁶¹ Suchodolski (1986: 205).

In 1937, Jerzy Turowicz ⁴⁶² met Mounier and other leading personalists. Mounier's *Personalist Manifesto* was translated into Polish during WWII and later, thanks to Turowicz, many of Mounier's other works were also published in Poland. In May 1946, Mounier gave a talk at Kraków University and his Polish experience led Mounier to reflect upon Poland as uniquely suited for a synthesis of Catholicism and socialism. ⁴⁶³

After WWII, the calls of the personalists for the liberation of the individual from the twin perils of the totalitarian state and of the *anomie* of liberal society were to influence the self-evidently successful development of Christian Democracy within Western Europe, including French, Italian, Belgium and Spanish manifestations.

During the 1930s-1950s, personal Thomism also influenced the thinking of two future popes, Paul VI and John Paul II. Before WWII, the future Paul VI, who from 1933 as Giovanni Montini worked within the Vatican Secretariat of State, had been greatly influenced by Maritain's ideas. Just before WWII, Maritain had written *Humanisme Intégral* that called for a greater humanism within Catholicism and during WWII Maritain produced *Christianisme et Démocratie*.

⁴⁶² Turowicz (1912-1999) was an editor of the influential dissident Catholic intelligentsia weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* from mid-1945 and its Chief Editor in 1951-1953 and in 1956-1999. From 1960, Turowicz was also the President of the *Znak* Publishing House. Turowicz was a close personal friend of Wojtyła/John Paul II.

⁴⁶³ Walsh (1994: 20).

Maritain's *New Christendom* that proclaimed *a third way* between Western liberalism and Soviet communism attracted many amongst the Catholic intelligentsia who were uncomfortable with fascism as the third option. Maritain believed the individual should serve the community and the *common good*, which in turn served the person. Maritain believed that the good of the human being is realisable only through the community since man is a social being, and by virtue of his rationality, a political being. Maritain believed that man had a sacred and inviolable right to freedom of conscience. He believed that to exist is to act. He believed that people holding different beliefs should co-operate within 'salutary' political institutions, maintaining that co-operation was always possible when humanity pursued a common good. In post-WWII Rome, where Wojtyła was studying, a battle developed within Roman Catholicism between a conservative theological Thomism and a more liberal-leaning political Thomism. By now Montini was a very influential Vatican Under-Secretary of State (1944-1952), and Maritain was the French Ambassador to the Vatican (1945-1948). In the end, the liberal-leaning Thomism triumphed at Vatican Council II, where Paul VI presided over much of Council's work and in his remaining years embarked upon the implementation of the new Vatican II thinking.

A large part of Mazowiecki's *Crossroads and Values* and Zabłocki's *At the Polish Intersection* focus on the philosophic and social thinking of Maritain and Mounier. Mounier's distinction between spiritual order (*le christianisme*) and temporal order (*la chrétienté*) helped liberal-leaning Catholics to separate two spheres of activities: the religious and the secular. From Mounier's personalism, asserts Bromke, these Polish Catholic intellectuals developed a coherent

program of their own.⁴⁶⁴ In practice, personal Thomism, as was the case with Christian Democracy, proved to be closer to the values of modern liberal democracy than its theory professed.

4.4.3 The Impact of 1960s' Changes in Vatican Socio-political Thinking

As mentioned, the aftermath of the fundamental 1960s' changes in the Roman Catholic Church, as expressed by John XXIII, Vatican II, and Paul VI, had an important influence upon the process of dialogue and upon the ensuing greater solidarity. The 1960s' changes within papal political Catholicism reflected a new 'spirit of dialogue' to find solutions to world problems, a spirit that extended to dialogue with Jews and with secular left non-believers. The changes reflected attitudinal shifts that went beyond mere tolerance of non-Catholic belief systems such as Judaism and communism that were hitherto considered anathema. Moreover, the changes reflected a genuine concern not only for the *Hereafter* but also for the *Herenow*: a concern that expressed itself in political Catholicism increasingly championing the modern liberal values of human rights and of socio-economic justice. In Poland, the dissident liberal-leaning Catholic intelligentsia and some within the Polish Catholic Church hierarchy welcomed the new policy, hoping it might contribute to the improvement of relations between the Church and the Polish communist regime.⁴⁶⁵ One such

⁴⁶⁴ Bromke (1975: 69).

⁴⁶⁵ Bromke (1975: 70).

member of the Church hierarchy was Wojtyła, a protégé of Paul VI and an active contributor to the Vatican II liberalisation process.

John XXIII's 1963 *Pacem in Terris* (*On Establishing Universal Peace In Truth, Justice, Charity And Liberty*) allowed the ideological stalemate between Christianity and Marxism to be broken. It did so by making:

“a clear distinction between false philosophical teachings regarding the nature, origin, and destiny of the universe and of man, and movements which have a direct bearing either on economic and social questions, or cultural matters or on the organization of the state, even if these movements owe their origin and inspiration to these false tenets.” ⁴⁶⁶

Pacem in Terris (John XXIII 1963) affirmed the inviolability of human rights and advocated world peace based on mutual trust. According to Kwitny, John XXIII sent CPSU General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev an advance copy of the encyclical, ⁴⁶⁷ which was ‘very positively received’ by the regimes of the Soviet bloc, ⁴⁶⁸ with the Soviets even lifting a ban on papal publications to encourage distribution of the ‘Peace Encyclical.’ ⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁶ John XXIII (1963: para. 159).

⁴⁶⁷ Kwitny (1998:183). In March 1963, a month before the encyclical's publication, John XXIII received Khrushchev's son-in-law, Alexis Adzhubei. The meeting was the first public contact between a pope and a senior Soviet official. Szulc (1995: 229).

⁴⁶⁸ Szajkowski (1983: 23).

⁴⁶⁹ Kwitny (1998: 170).

John XXIII died in June 1963, but his overtures to communism were continued by his successor Paul VI, who pursued a vigorous *Ostpolitik* that emphasised a step-by-step approach and moderation at the level of public rhetoric.⁴⁷⁰ Paul VI was prepared to mute overt criticisms of the human rights' performances of East European regimes for the sake of maintaining dialogue.⁴⁷¹

Paul VI's strategy was to obtain sufficient breathing space for the Churches in communist Europe, 'to save what can be saved' (*salvare il salvabile*), to achieve a *modus non moriendi* that might, over time, evolve into a genuine *modus vivendi*.⁴⁷² Although the papal *Ostpolitik* was primarily addressed to the communist leaders, any outcomes were

⁴⁷⁰ By the end of his Pontificate, Paul VI had received in private audience the following East European Communist Party leaders: Yugoslav Josip Tito, Romanian Nicolae Ceauşescu, Bulgarian Todor Zhivkov, Hungarian János Kádár and Polish Edward Gierek. Paul VI also saw a number of Warsaw Pact Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers, including the Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko.

⁴⁷¹ On occasion Paul VI clashed with the more traditional and militant anti-communist East European Church leaders such as Primate Wyszyński and Hungarian Primate Józef Mindszenty. At times, for example, the Pope by-passed Wyszyński in dealing directly with the Polish communist regime. Kwitny (1998: 211 & 249). When the 1956 Hungarian Revolution was crushed by Soviet troops, Mindszenty was granted asylum in the United States Legation building in Budapest where he remained until 1971, rejecting Vatican requests to leave Hungary. Then, bowing to entreaties from President Richard Nixon, Mindszenty moved to Rome, where he continued to criticise Vatican policy towards Hungary. Finally, in 1974, Paul VI forced Mindszenty to resign the Hungarian primacy. Kwitny (1998: 241).

⁴⁷² Weigel (1992: 76).

bound to affect all Poles, not least the dissident intelligentsia. According to Bromke, the Polish liberal-leaning Catholic intelligentsia especially welcomed Paul VI's 1967 *Populorum progressio*.⁴⁷³ In the spirit of Mounier, *Populorum progressio* recognised the Catholics' moral commitment to socio-economic progress and presented the necessary conditions for growth in the solidarity of peoples. Paul VI argued that only with an accompanying reflection on liberation from injustice and genuine human values can there be true development towards a more human condition.

The idea of a Christian-Marxist dialogue based on some shared values was not new to the 1960s. In 1947, the French Jesuit priest and philosopher and theologian, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, writing about the Christian and the Marxist, had rhetorically asked:

⁴⁷³ The influence of (Paul VI 1967) was long lasting. John Paul II's encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (*On the Social Concerns of the Church*) (John Paul II 1987) was written to celebrate the 20th anniversary of its publication. In (John Paul II 1987), the Pope criticises economic and political ideologies of both the West and East and expands upon *Populorum progressio*'s concepts of development. In a letter that John Paul II received from Gorbachev in the last week of August 1989, the Soviet Communist Party's General Secretary praised the Pope's writings and stressed that he had been particularly impressed with *Sollicitudo rei socialis*.

“is it not incontestable ... that each of these, to the extent that he believes (and sees the other believe) in the future of the world, feels a basic human sympathy for the other ... arising out of the obscure prediction that both are going the same way, and that despite all ideological differences they will eventually ... come together on the same summit?”⁴⁷⁴

However the intense post-WWII Cold War climate of the times contributed to preventing Teilhard de Chardin’s prediction of a Christian-Marxist dialogue from being pursued until the 1960s. Then during the 1960s, with its new political climate partly reflected and engendered by the changes in Vatican-inspired political Catholicism, the Christian-Marxist dialogue commenced. By the mid-1960s, as a result of this dialogue, prominent members of the secular left were changing their attitudes to Christianity. In 1965, for example, the prominent French Marxist Roger Garaudy⁴⁷⁵ responded ‘in a fraternal manner’ to John XXIII’s *Pacem in Terris* arguments that were addressed not just to Catholics but ‘to all men of good will’ by writing *From Anathema to Dialogue*.⁴⁷⁶ In it, Garaudy wrote of “the absolute necessity for dialogue and co-operation between Christians and Communists.”⁴⁷⁷ Furthermore, during the 1970s, the idea of a *Compromesso Storico* (Historic Compromise) which envisaged

⁴⁷⁴ Teilhard de Chardin’s address to the World Congress of Faiths (French section), 8 March, 1947. Teilhard (1964: 191-192).

⁴⁷⁵ Garaudy had been a member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party (*PCF*). In 1970, he was expelled from the *PCF* for criticising developments in the Soviet Union.

⁴⁷⁶ *From Anathema to Dialogue*, Garaudy (1967), was an English translation of the original French edition *De l’Anathème au Dialogue*, first published in Paris in 1965 by Librairie Plon.

⁴⁷⁷ Garaudy (1967: 25).

collaboration between the Italian Communists and the Catholic Church was initiated by Enrico Berlinguer (1922-1984), General Secretary (1972-1984) of the Italian Communist Party (*PCI*).⁴⁷⁸ Meanwhile in mid-1960s' Poland, Kołakowski, a militant atheist and Marxist in his youth, was also adopting a more open approach to Christianity and recognising its umbilical ties with Polish culture. A young Kołakowski had written in pre-1960s' times that the function of religion was "to promise the exploited the rights which are to be given in the other world, while asking them to renounce their worldly rights." ⁴⁷⁹ In 1965, Kołakowski now asserted:

"any attempt to 'invalidate Jesus', to eliminate him from our culture on the basis that we don't believe in the God in which he believed, is ridiculous and fruitless. Such an attempt is the deed only of unenlightened people who imagine that a crudely formulated atheism can suffice as the view of the world and can also justify someone's curtailing the cultural tradition according to his own doctrinaire plan and by that taking away from it the most vital saps." ⁴⁸⁰

4.4.4 The Impact of a New Evolutionism

As mentioned earlier, for many left-leaning intellectuals critical of the Polish regime – particularly, but not exclusively, those of the secular

⁴⁷⁸ In 1986, the Polish regime took up the *Historic Compromise* motif in discussions with the Polish Church hierarchy. In a meeting in May 1986, General Kiszczak the Interior Minister, asserted that an *Historic Compromise* based on the Italian model, must take place in Poland, although perhaps not immediately. Raina (1995b: 123).

⁴⁷⁹ As cited by Labedz (1988: 151).

⁴⁸⁰ *Argumenty*, December 1965, which appeared in English translation in *Tri-Quarterly*, No. 1, Spring 1967. As cited by Labedz (1988: 152).

left - the 1968 anti-Semitic and anti-intelligentsia attacks upon critics of the Polish regime and the crushing of Czechoslovakia's attempts at 'socialism with a human face', forced such Polish intellectuals to the reluctant conclusion that East European communisms, including Polish communism, were not reformable. A fundamentally different approach to that of reforming communism, as they gradually began to believe, was required: an approach that focused upon civil society rather than upon the regime's authoritarian state. Michnik's 1976 essay, *New Evolutionism* ⁴⁸¹ was to be an important influence upon opposition thinking and action in the remaining years of Polish communism. *New Evolutionism* advocated an opposition strategy of by-passing the state and rebuilding an autonomous civil society outside of Party-state control. Michnik, along with others, proposed a gradualist approach to loosening the communist totalitarian hegemony: a revolution by osmosis, whereby social self-defence groupings would defend their basic interests and gradually reclaim various spheres of civil life appropriated by the communist state. *New Evolutionism* evoked the organic work myth in looking for "progressive and partial changes rather than for the violent overthrow of the existing system." ⁴⁸² The liberal-leaning democratic opposition approach proclaimed the *as if* principle: try to live *as if* you lived in a free country, and emphasised 'change from below'. Michnik evoked the symbolism of Brzozowski in stressing the important role of the

⁴⁸¹ Michnik (1976).

⁴⁸² Michnik (1976: 273).

Church (see later) and of the workers who were “the *sine qua non* of the evolution of national life towards democratization.”⁴⁸³

4.4.5 A Process Based upon Attitudinal Shifts

The consequences of the theoretical case for dialogue and for greater solidarity resulted in a willingness to co-operate and a mutual recognition by both dissident Catholics and secular left intelligentsia that the perceptions, often stereotypical, that each hitherto had held about the other, had either been inappropriate or were now outdated. Authentic and enduring attitudinal shifts were occurring on both sides that went beyond mere expediency of fighting a common enemy. In (Cywiński 1972), Cywiński, concerned to draw lessons for the present from the heritage of the past, recognised the common modern liberal values held by both dissident/unconquered Catholics and the secular left. His conclusions, given their identification of common modern liberal values and the subsequent political repercussions of this identification, warrant quoting at length:

““The up-to-date element in this heritage is the ideals with which the radical unconquered identified themselves, which, with an intuition of ethics, had linked the question of real social progress with a set of values, such as the necessity of social commitment, the respect of human beings and their opinions, a democracy which is never static but is a process of struggle between ideological inertia and social conscience; the ability to analyse one’s own opinions in a creative manner and honestly to correct them; and finally, a proud non-conformism, an indispensable precondition for developing a sense of moral responsibility for society’s future. The most eager hope of any Catholic thinking

⁴⁸³ Michnik (1976: 274).

on these problems would be that in the propagation and defence of these values, all their followers could find in the Polish Church an ally and a source of Christian inspiration. (...) As we consider our contemporary Christian attitudes regarding our mission, and as we think about our ethic of social action, we must find space for an understanding for this ideological and moral tradition, the recognition of these real ethical values, and a respect for the memory of those who have paid witness to it. This will enable us to take a fundamental step in the honest dialogue between believers and non-believers in Poland. This step will enable us to bridge the divide, which we have inherited from the last century, and which is so outdated and mistaken today – a divide which has separated from the Church an important and precious section of the unconquered Polish intelligentsia.””⁴⁸⁴

The secular left dissidents also recognised the liberalisation process within political Catholicism. In his childhood, Michnik had hated Catholic religious education, but by the 1970s he saw the Church in a different light, given that it too was fighting for human rights and against totalitarianism. Michnik's *New Evolutionism* stressed the important role of the Roman Catholic Church. The Church was “an essential element in the situation,”⁴⁸⁵ with the hierarchy, Michnik recognised, moving from a condemnatory attitude to all post-1945 change to an increasingly anti-totalitarian, pro human rights stance. “The jeremiads against the impieties have disappeared, giving way to affirmations of human rights.”⁴⁸⁶ In *The Church – The Left - Dialogue* Michnik argued that if there was any chance of institutional support, it was the Church that was to be relied on. Like Cywiński, Michnik advocated greater solidarity between liberal Catholics and the secular

⁴⁸⁴ As cited by Potel (1982: 120).

⁴⁸⁵ Michnik (1976: 274).

⁴⁸⁶ Michnik (1976: 275).

left, based, Michnik argued, on the realisation that freedom for the Church was the ultimate measure of freedom in society. Michnik asserted:

“we have the political responsibility of defending the freedoms of the Church and the human rights of Christians. ... Human rights are for everyone.”⁴⁸⁷

In tracing his intellectual journey from close association with Marxism to Christian sympathies, Michnik now accepted that what he took as secular ideas of human dignity, personal freedom, and respect for individuals, had their roots in Christianity.⁴⁸⁸

“The children of the Church, who had grown up and departed from her, in the hour of danger returned to their mother. And although in the course of their long alienation they have changed a great deal, though they look different and speak a different language, at the decisive moment mother and children recognized each other. Reason, law, civilisation, humanism - whatever they are called - have sought and found at their source a new meaning and new strength. This source is Jesus Christ.”⁴⁸⁹

In an 1977 interview with Kisielewski, Michnik claimed that the ultimate aim of his work *The Church -The Left – Dialogue* was to create a bridge between two major democratic forces in Poland: the Catholic Church and the secular opposition. Such an aim, Michnik asserted, was not “merely an attempt to use the Church for political ends.” His publication, argues Michnik, was intended to demonstrate

⁴⁸⁷ Michnik (1977: 83) as cited by Connor (1982: 403-404).

⁴⁸⁸ Szajkowski (1983: 46).

⁴⁸⁹ Michnik (1977) as cited by Szajkowski (1983: 47).

to critical members of the secular opposition that the Church is not an obscurantist institution, and to demonstrate to Catholics that non-believers played a positive role in the defence of freedom and national culture throughout Polish history. In another interview, in 1987, Michnik was to say of the Catholic Church:

“It is the guardian of Polish national identity. During the most difficult years of totalitarian oppression, it defended human dignity and cultural identity, including freedom of worship. In the Stalin era, the Church was the only institution from which people did not hear lies. This is one reason why Poles remain faithful to it. Another reason is that the present totalitarian system insists that every person is state property. The Church’s contrary view is that the human being is a child of God, to whom God has granted natural liberty. This God-given dignity is so great that the individual can admire only God, and not the state. It follows from this that in Poland and other communist countries religion is the natural antidote to the totalitarian claims of the state, especially given that the Church relies not upon power, but upon dialogue.”⁴⁹⁰

Another key member of the secular left, Kuroń,⁴⁹¹ believed that the Catholic-secular left dialogue helped not only the left to look again at the problems of the Church and its beliefs, but also the Church to understand its relationship with the emerging liberal democratic left opposition.⁴⁹² Garton Ash claims that initially for Kuroń, the desire for greater solidarity between Catholics and the secular left was more

⁴⁹⁰ Michnik (1988: 28). The interview was conducted with Erica Blair in Gdańsk, October 1987.

⁴⁹¹ Kuroń was expelled from the Party in 1953, although rejoined for a brief spell subsequently. Kuroń was dismissed from his post at Warsaw University in March 1968. He was imprisoned several times for his opposition to the regime.

⁴⁹² Kuroń (1996: 164).

a calculation of political tactics.⁴⁹³ Whether Garton Ash's claim is valid or not, by 1978, in *Ideological Principles*, Kuroń wrote:

“I place among the supreme values the common good, the sanctity of the individual and human creativity. During the past decade, I and many of my friends ... discovered for ourselves the Gospel as a code of ethics of universal significance.”⁴⁹⁴

4.5 Conclusions: Dialogue And Its Practical Outcomes Prepared The Ground For The Opposition

This chapter has indirectly argued that the 1970-1976 dialogue between dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia and their subsequent 1976-1979 practical co-operation contributed to the fostering of a liberal political culture of 1980-1989 opposition. Other chapters argue that pre-1945 myths also contributed to the latter process. The two positions are not, however, contradictory. The role of myths has barely figured in this chapter, which has focused upon the role of the intelligentsia within the Polish opposition. The significance of this chapter to the overall concerns of the thesis is that it has shed light on the ‘how and why’ of not just the fostering but also the emergence of a liberal political culture of opposition. Chapter 6 that will show how and why pre-1945 myths acted as a vehicle for

⁴⁹³ Garton Ash (1991a: 23).

⁴⁹⁴ Kuroń, J. *Mysli o programie działania, zasady ideowe, uwagi o strukturze ruchu demokratycznego*. Warsaw: NOWA, 1978 as cited by Ciolkosz (1979: 62).

this liberal political culture by showing that these myths were to influence the non-intelligentsia component of the Polish opposition, that is to say, upon the ordinary workers that joined *Solidarity* and constituted the backbone of not only the opposition but also of Catholicism. These workers were to find organised voice in the *Solidarity* movement of the 1980s. This movement was to be given much direction and advice by a united dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia that participated in the process of dialogue explored in this chapter.

This present chapter argues that the dissident Catholic - secular left intelligentsia pre-1989 solidarity was based on attitudinal shifts resulting from a process of dialogue. The process of 1970-1976 dialogue and the ensuing 1976-1979 practical solidarity between the two intelligentsia groupings was not merely based on the expediency of defeating a common enemy. Rather, the success of the dialogue and of the ensuing solidarity was in large part a result of learning lessons from the past, as well as a result of the impact of personal Thomism, of changes in Vatican thinking, and of new evolutionism. These factors all helped in the identification of common liberal values, and these values, together with the trust and friendships that gradually evolved during the 1970s, meant that the emergence of dissident Catholic-secular left solidarity was based upon authentic and enduring attitudinal shifts that occurred on both sides. During the process of dialogue the dissident secular left moved beyond dogmatic anti-clerical and class politics. The dissident Catholic intelligentsia, in embracing personal Thomism and the new Vatican II thinking, was

also able to discard dogmatic doctrinal baggage. In consequence, a liberal political culture was emerging.

Chapter 5 now explores how John Paul II was to build upon the liberalisation and solidarity-formation processes initiated by the dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia. Chapter 5 also examines how the new Polish Pope was to extend these two processes to influence significant numbers of urban and rural workers that constituted the backbone of Polish Catholicism. As Chapter 5 will show, John Paul II in large measure achieved his goal of fostering a liberal political culture of opposition by his deployment of the myths and accompanying symbols and rituals of pre-1945 Polish nationalism and political Catholicism.

CHAPTER 5: JOHN PAUL II'S DEPLOYMENT OF PRE-1945 NATIONAL AND CATHOLIC MYTHS TO FOSTER A LIBERAL POLITICAL CULTURE OF OPPOSITION

5.1 Introduction: John Paul II, Culture And The Nation

Appointed a Cardinal in 1967, Wojtyła/ John Paul II was a pivotal player within the opposition, a judgement that others also hold.⁴⁹⁵ In a poll published in April 2000,⁴⁹⁶ Poles were asked which figures had the greatest influence upon Poland's fate during the 20th century. They could nominate three people. The highest ranking was John Paul II (81%).⁴⁹⁷ As the only Cardinal apart from Wyszyński, Wojtyła was already a political force in the 1960s before becoming Pope in 1978, when his authority both formally and in practice, became significantly greater than that of another key political player Primate Wyszyński.⁴⁹⁸ Critically Wojtyła/John Paul II also had key ties with

⁴⁹⁵ Sobociński (1996).

⁴⁹⁶ *Wprost*. 16 April, 2000, p. 27.

⁴⁹⁷ Tying for joint-second rank were Piłsudski and Wałęsa (58%). Dmowski only received 2% of the votes.

⁴⁹⁸ Primate Glemp succeeded Wyszyński in 1981. Although Glemp met often and sometimes secretly with Jaruzelski (Sobociński 1996), the Primate was not considered a key player in terms of political influence and had less authority than his predecessor. (Wal 1998). Płazek described Glemp as a key player who did not play well. (Płazek 1998). Hours before the declaration of Martial Law, on the 12 December 1981, Glemp established the Primate's Social Council, comprising 28 lay Catholics, which was to serve as the Primate's 'think tank'. Although several of the Council's members were to play a key part in the search for compromise between the Party and the opposition in the second half of the 1980s, according to Jonathan Luxmoore and Józefa Hennelowa, the Primate's Social Council as such did not really play an important political role. (Luxmoore 1996) and (Hennelowa 1998).

the *Znak* intellectuals, who in turn, as Chapter 4 showed, increasingly co-operated with the dissident secular left. Płazek (1998), who had met Wojtyła many times, said that during the 1980s, when senior church figures differed with Glemp's political strategy towards the regime, they went straight to the Vatican and that John Paul II exerted 'direct rule' with regard to Polish political Catholic policy.⁴⁹⁹ However John Paul II was not only a pivotal player in terms of being able to deploy the combined institutional forces of the centre and the periphery. The Pope was also a key player in terms of his ideological influence, for John Paul II was also the main propagator of pre-1945 myths that fostered a liberal political culture of opposition.

The key aim of the chapter is to demonstrate how and why John Paul II deployed myths of pre-1945 Polish nationalism and political Catholicism in order to foster a liberal political culture of opposition within Poland. During the 1990s, a number of biographies on John Paul II appeared, for example (Szulc 1995), (Bernstein 1996) and

⁴⁹⁹ Although the Pope's meetings with the Polish bishops were nearly always private ones and his meetings would relate to other matters than opposition to communism many of the biographies of John Paul II, for example (Szulc 1995: 385), support Płazek's appraisal of John Paul II taking a 'direct rule' approach. Throughout the 1978-1989 period, as the semi-official Vatican weekly *L'Osservatore Romano* records, John Paul II would receive in audience key members of the Polish Episcopate leadership, at a slightly less than once a month rate. In addition, he would see other Polish bishops at a similar rate. At times, for example when visiting Poland in the June of 1979, 1983 and 1987, or when the Polish bishops made their *ad limina* trips to Rome, as they did in the winter of 1982 and 1987, the Pope would receive them even more frequently. During the visits, the Pope tried to see the visiting prelates at the beginning and end of their time in Rome, individually or in larger groups. During the Polish *ad limina* trips of 1978-1989, the Pope met the majority of the Polish Episcopate on their two trips, in a total of at least 16 separate audiences. *Ad limina* or 'on the threshold' visits were a requirement laid down by the Roman Catholic's Church Code of

(Kwitny 1998). Their timing can be largely explained by the fall of East European communism and John Paul II's perceived contribution to the fall. Most of these biographies devote several chapters to the pre-1978 influences that shaped the Pope, and subsequent chapters of these biographies portray the Pope as a key political player not only in Poland but throughout the Catholic world. (Bernstein 1996) for example portrays the Pope as a key Cold War warrior in both Central East Europe and Latin America by highlighting the ties between John Paul II's Vatican and President Ronald Reagan's intelligence community. The concerns of this thesis and chapter are not directly related to John Paul II as a world statesman nor to his contribution to the demise of communism, but, clearly, in arguing that John Paul II was an important influence upon the Polish opposition, the thesis suggests the possibility of a direct relation between the Pope's role and the demise of Polish communism. However, Chapter 7 will argue that more research is needed to establish any causal relationship between John Paul II's role and the downfall of Polish communism, let alone other East European communisms. Many of the works on John Paul II explore the political significance of the Pope's 1979 pilgrimage to Poland - for example (Szulc 1995: 303-310) and Kubik (1994: Chapter 7). The present chapter claims to systematically analyse John Paul II's deployment of national and Catholic myths, symbols and rituals during the 1978-1989 period in order to foster a liberal political culture of opposition within Poland.

Canon Law and were quinquennial trips by Church figures (usually, but not exclusively bishops) from throughout the Catholic world, to the Vatican.

For John Paul II, the pre-1945 myths ⁵⁰⁰ not only served to adapt political culture, but were an important component of Polish culture without which Poland's survival was threatened. In his 1987 pilgrimage, the Pope addressed representatives of the Polish world of culture assembled at the Warsaw Church of the Holy Cross. The very setting, as with many of the Pope's settings for public addresses, was full of symbolism. The Holy Cross is the Catholic symbol of martyrdom and salvation. Buried at the Church is the heart of Polish patriotic composer Frederic Chopin, whose music, banned by the Nazis during their WWII Polish occupation, was played conspiratorially underground. ⁵⁰¹ Here, in October 1979, *KOR* and *ROPCiO* members had staged a protest fast in solidarity with persecuted Czechoslovakian *Charter 77* members. From here in September 1980, the first Holy Mass was broadcast by radio to the Polish nation as a direct result of the Gdańsk Agreement between *Solidarity* and the regime. In his 1987 address, the Pope made clear the connection between culture and the nation, and, as he so often did, used the symbolism of previous foreign domination to allude to current domination.

“The nation in fact persists in its spiritual identity through its culture. ... ‘(The) nation exists ‘through’ culture and ‘for’ culture ... I am the son of a nation...condemned to death more than once. Yet she has survived and has remained herself. She has kept her identity and, not withstanding the divisions and foreign occupations, she has kept her national sovereignty, not relying on the sources of physical might, but *relying only on her culture*. ...

⁵⁰⁰ The phrase ‘pre-1945 myths’ will be used as shorthand for ‘the myths of pre-1945 Polish nationalism and political Catholicism.’

⁵⁰¹ Suchodolski (1986: 216).

There is a fundamental sovereignty of society which shows faith in the culture of the nation.’’’’⁵⁰²

Before embarking upon a more detailed analysis of the pre-1945 myths and how the Pope deployed them to liberalise the political culture of opposition in his 1978-1989 war of political legitimacy with the Polish regime, the chapter makes some general observations of the political implications of his use of the ritual of pilgrimage and of his political deployment of venerated sacred figures.

5.2 Tools For The Task: Myths, Symbols And Rituals

John Paul II's main task in his war of political legitimacy was to sustain the opposition by giving them hope, removing their fear, and fostering their nascent liberal political culture so that it could successfully challenge the regime's political culture. To a large extent, John Paul II undertook this task by deploying the tools of myths, symbols and rituals of pre-1945 Polish nationalism and political Catholicism. Within this deployment, the Pope's use of the ritual of pilgrimage and of venerated sacred 'saints' played particularly significant interrelated and reinforcing roles.

John Paul II was to exploit the political potency of pre-1945 myths by altering the meanings of illiberal myths and changing and extending the liberal meanings associated with other myths. He exploited the political potential of these myths above all during his June 1979, 1983 and 1987 pilgrimages to Poland, when he delivered homilies within

⁵⁰² As cited by *OR*, 3 August, 1987, p. 9. Most of this passage comprises the Pope citing from a speech he made to UNESCO in Paris in June 1980.

Holy Masses to the millions of Poles that gathered at Jasna Góra and at numerous other locations throughout the country. There were three other key, although less significant, opportunities for such exploitation.

His first such other opportunity was his October 1978 papal inauguration,⁵⁰³ which was watched in Rome by some 200,000 faithful, including some four thousand Polish pilgrims.⁵⁰⁴ In Poland, almost the entire nation watched it,⁵⁰⁵ the first Holy Mass ever on Polish television,⁵⁰⁶ as streets stood deserted and public activities ceased.⁵⁰⁷ Another opportunity was afforded by his regular weekly *Prayers to Our Lady of Jasna Góra*, which the Pope initiated following the December 1981 introduction of Martial Law. These *Prayers* were published and broadcast by organs of the extensive Vatican media,⁵⁰⁸ which were often used to spread his liberal

⁵⁰³ Described by Bernstein as “a solemn ritual by which the Roman Church raises a man to its post of supreme dignity, transforming him into a splendid monarch like the emperors of Byzantium.” Bernstein (1996: 180).

⁵⁰⁴ Bernstein (1996: 180).

⁵⁰⁵ Szulc (1995: 288). Countless millions in the rest of the world also watched his inauguration via satellite television.

⁵⁰⁶ The Polish authorities had at first said that insufficient funds prevented the showing of the inauguration on television, but their pretext collapsed when the Italian state television network offered to provide free transmission to Poland. Kwitny (1998: 16-17).

⁵⁰⁷ Kwitny (1998: 19).

⁵⁰⁸ The Vatican media included Vatican Radio, the Vatican Television Centre, the Vatican Polyglot Press, the Press Office, and the weekly newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. Papal ceremonies were filmed and broadcast world-wide via satellite link-ups. In times of crisis under communism, Poles avidly listened to Vatican Radio. Despite the best attempts of the Polish authorities at jamming,

preachings to his fellow Poles. Finally, a key opportunity was afforded when the many thousands of Poles were reluctantly allowed by the Polish regime to make pilgrimages to Rome and hear his Vatican homilies preached weekly at his General Audience and Angelus Prayers.⁵⁰⁹

5.2.1 The Political Implications of the Ritual of Pilgrimage

The very day that the Pope's election was announced in October 1978, the Party leadership showed its concern about the political potential of pilgrimages for the opposition during a hastily convened Politburo meeting to discuss the political implications for the regime of John Paul II's election. One minister worriedly asked "What if the new Pope decides to come to Poland?", and the Interior Minister asserted that that the government had to focus immediately on the risk of a wave of Polish pilgrimages to Rome. "Those trips alone might pose a danger to the stability of Poland," he warned.⁵¹⁰ The Party leadership had good cause for concern. With the onset of the John Paul II papacy, the nature of papal pilgrimages was dramatically changed insofar as

Vatican Radio together with Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, BBC World Service, and *Solidarity's* own underground radio, all broadcast in Polish during the 1982-1988 period. There was a Polish edition of *L'Osservatore Romano* from April 1980, with an initial run of 50,000 mailed regularly to Poland.

⁵⁰⁹ The Polish custom of making pilgrimages is quite strong. A significant proportion of the Polish nation takes part in pilgrimages. At the end of the second millennium, it has been estimated that a fifth of all European pilgrims are Poles, with about 15% of the total population, some 6 – 7 million Poles, taking part in a pilgrimage either in Poland or abroad, (usually Rome), each year. There are some 500 places of pilgrimage within Poland, most dating from the 19th century, of which about 85% are associated with the cult of Mary. Łuczak (2000: 26).

⁵¹⁰ As cited by Bernstein (1996: 174).

pilgrims now not only came to Rome, but the Pope also came to the faithful. The *pilgrim pope*, as he often called himself, understood that modern technology made it possible for him to reach *in person* huge numbers during his own pilgrimages outside of Rome, and John Paul II was to be an unsurpassed master of the political exploitation of the pilgrimage ritual, not least within his homeland. Within Poland, John Paul II utilised the ritual of pilgrimage for political purposes in the manner that had been well established by the Polish Catholic Church in the 19th century and recently rejuvenated by Primate Wyszyński's *Novena*, that is to say, with the main focus of pilgrimage being Jasna Góra, Częstochowa, and with the Madonna icon constituting the key symbol of an independent Poland. Importantly, John Paul II utilised the ritual of pilgrimage not only to preach a liberal nationalism but also, influenced by a more liberal papal political Catholicism, to preach other values associated with liberal democracy. His most powerful means of spreading his liberal message was via the use of pre-1945 myths and the direct communication with millions of fellow Poles afforded by his three pilgrimages to communist Poland. About a third of the nation came out to see and hear him on each of the three pilgrimages. Others watched on television.⁵¹¹ These three Polish

⁵¹¹ Poland's total population c. 1979-1987 was about 35-38 million. (GUS 1994: 44). The total numbers who came out to see and hear him, for the 1979 pilgrimage have been variously estimated as 'over 10 million', (Szulc 1995: 303) to 13 million (Szajkowski 1983: 67) and (Weigel 1992:133) to as many as 20 million. (*Daily Mail*, 11 June, 1979, p.1). Although the 1983 crowd estimates were lower, they were still impressive. Counting only those that attended the major events, usually Holy Mass, and those who lined the Pope's routes (that is to say excluding the myriad of smaller events), even the Party's Central Committee gave an overall figure of 7.55 million (Aneks 1993: 293); whilst the *International Herald Tribune* gave a total of 10 million. (*International Herald Tribune*, 24 June, 1983, p. 2). The 1987 pilgrimage also confirmed John Paul II's phenomenal drawing power amongst his fellow Poles.

pilgrimages and particularly the first, were to have a profound effect on the spiritual, psychological and political scene.

During his 1979 pilgrimage, the Pope empowered the Polish nation, by giving them a strong sense of national solidarity. Afterwards, Poles tended to see themselves not as a communist nation, but just as a nation in a communist state. Poles increasingly realised that their national identity could be defined in terms that excluded the communist state. The Polish Church, for example, organised an army of lay Catholics to marshal the public gatherings; literally, and in people's minds, the regime's police had been replaced. The dissident leftist Polish novelist Andrzej Szczypiorski contemporarily observed: "it suddenly became obvious that 'the emperor had no clothes.' ... During ... the Pope's visit all functions of the state were subordinate to the desires of society. This is a precedent which may be decisive for the nation."⁵¹²

Other sections of the opposition, including *KOR*, publicly identified with the liberal values fostered by the Pope during his 1979 pilgrimage. After the pilgrimage *KOR* proclaimed unequivocal praise for the Pope:

"The millions of Poles, whatever their religious views, listened to his words with understanding, enthusiasm and emotion. The unending applause has shown how much his words were heeded, how exactly his message about the supreme importance of the individual fitted the deep spiritual need of the people who reject the denial of human and national rights. The Pope's message

⁵¹² Szczypiorski (1979: 29 & 32).

created for many of us ... an obligation to undertake or else to intensify the campaign in defence of freedom.’”⁵¹³

““Very seldom can one man speak in the name of the whole nation, expressing the thoughts and desires of all. ... Each of us was given a chance. And it depends on us whether we can create a community of conscious people, honourable and brave, believers and non-believers, people living in truth.’”⁵¹⁴

John Paul II’s 1979 pilgrimage, in empowering civil society at the expense of the state and in stressing the need to live an ethical life with meaning and in truth, gave Poles not only a sufficient sense of national solidarity but also sufficient fearless hope that a year later *Solidarity* was to live in truth and undertake the seemingly hopeless task of challenging the all-powerful communist state.

John Paul II’s focus upon hope, ethics, the individual, and the nation as opposed to the state, had been echoed by other East European dissidents. The Polish dissident secular leftist Kołakowski (1971) had concluded that it was impossible to change the state, all one could do is change oneself, and that the basis of hope in a hopeless situation was living an ethical life. The Czech dissident Václav Havel (1989) believed that hope was not procrastination about the future, but the conviction that something had meaning which permitted the undertaking of the difficult enterprise of living in truth.

The effect upon the dissident secular left of John Paul II’s three pilgrimages, particularly of the first, supports Kertzer’s contention that

⁵¹³ As cited by Ciolkosz (1979: 62).

⁵¹⁴ *Robotnik*, 20 June, 1979 as cited by Kubik (1994: 274 & 276).

“the power of the ritual transcends its ideological context.” ⁵¹⁵ One Pole, writing shortly after the Pope’s 1979 pilgrimage, commented:

“a believer will observe certain customs because for him they have a religious and national significance, whereas for a non-believer these same customs have only a national significance. But it is impossible to claim that the commitment to the nation of one or the other is ‘better’ or ‘stronger’.” ⁵¹⁶

Szczypiorski believed that the majority of those demonstrating their support for John Paul II in 1979 were concerned with civic rather than religious matters. Although it is true that non-Catholics, including secular left dissidents, and indifferent Catholics were also part of the enthusiastic 1979 crowds, Szczypiorski overstates his case and creates a false dichotomy. The majority were concerned with civic and religious matters. This reservation notwithstanding, Szczypiorski writing shortly after the Pope’s 1979 pilgrimage, identifies some of the key aspects that help explain John Paul II’s psychological impact upon the Polish nation, and as such warrants citing at length:

“They were showing their attachment to the Polish tradition, to Polish history, to the western world, to Latin civilisation, to their thousand-year-old ties with western culture and to democratic principles. For centuries this Latin world shaped the Polish mentality, and the Pope is a symbol. ... For the Poles, cut off from their own Western roots for decades, (John Paul II’s election) ... came as a great moral and psychological compensation. The Poles have felt many times that they were abandoned and betrayed by the West, with which they have had

⁵¹⁵ Kertzer (1988: 45).

⁵¹⁶ Anon. (1980: 198).

many bitter experiences in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. ... Is it surprising that (John Paul II's election) ... was one of the most significant events in their history? And that it produced a moral and psychological breakthrough for all society. ... Poland is a different country. ... the recreation of authentic social ties among the people – suddenly became a possibility ... This is irreversible.”^{517 518}

Several other Polish commentators, also analysing contemporaneously, appreciated the enormity of the political significance of John Paul II's 1979 pilgrimage. For example, Kołakowski wrote:

“there is nothing in the history of empires to prove that their disintegration process cannot be given impulses from peripheries – and this is what is happening right now.”⁵¹⁹

The psychological impact of the 1983 and 1987 pilgrimages may have been less than that of 1979, but they were still highly politically significant for both opposition and regime alike. One month after his 1983 pilgrimage, Martial Law was lifted. The timing of the Pope's second pilgrimage had been made conditional upon the political

⁵¹⁷ Three examples of the abandonment/betrayal felt by many Poles are:

- i) The lack of Western support for the Poles in their 1830-1831 and 1863-1864 National Uprisings.
- ii) The lack of Western support at the beginning of WWII when Poland was invaded by Nazi and Soviet forces.
- iii) The agreement reached at Yalta in 1945, when the US and UK effectively acquiesced to Soviet coercive hegemony of Poland.

⁵¹⁸ Szczypiorski (1979: 30-32).

⁵¹⁹ ‘Introduction’. Leszek Kołakowski. *Survey*. Vol. XXIV, Autumn 1979. p.6.

situation in Poland.⁵²⁰ Some years later, in 1998, Jaruzelski conceded: “The Pope’s visit and his message were a valuable incentive for the closing of that stage.”⁵²¹ Furthermore, within months of John Paul II’s mobilisation call to Baltic shipyard workers (see later) during his 1987 pilgrimage, these workers were flexing their muscles again in spring and summer 1988 strikes that were to lead to the resurrection of *Solidarity* and shortly thereafter to the fall of Polish communism.

5.2.2 The Political Deployment of ‘Saints’

The traditional Catholic veneration of esteemed figures, particularly those associated with cults, beatifications and canonisations, lent itself especially well not only to the creation but also to the maintenance of myths. John Paul II proved particularly adept at politically exploiting the mythology surrounding some of the most esteemed of these figures for his Polish liberalisation project.

John Paul II significantly altered the saint creation process, which aided him in this exploitation.⁵²² For example, he has beatified and

⁵²⁰ Szajkowski (1983: 184).

⁵²¹ BBC (1998b: Jaruzelski).

⁵²² Not all those beatified become saints, but saints will be used loosely in this chapter to refer to both beatified and canonised figures, and also to the highly venerated Virgin Mary, considered a ‘patron saint’ of Poland. A patron saint within the Catholic Church is a saint venerated as a special protector or intercessor. Saints usually become patrons of countries through popular devotion rather than by official designation, although recent popes have also named patron saints.

canonised in record speed and numbers.⁵²³ However it is in his influencing of the selection of potentially politically symbolic candidates and their subsequent exploitation, together with his changing of the Rome location of ceremonies to include ones that lay on the routes of his numerous foreign visits, that he has demonstrated the brilliance of his art of using the mythology and symbolism of saints for political purposes. He has demonstrated this art particularly in his war of political legitimacy with the Polish communist regime. In almost eight 20th century decades of Italian popes, only two Polish saints were created.⁵²⁴ In barely a decade, that is to say, the 1978-1989 period, as pope, John Paul II canonised two and beatified eight 'Poles'.⁵²⁵ His choice of candidates who nearly all suffered acts of repression, usually administered by Russians, and the ways in which the Pope deployed their biographies during beatification and/or canonisation ceremonies, clearly demonstrates John Paul II's political

⁵²³ Until John Paul II became Pope, the process of beatification and canonisation were normally hugely extensive processes, sometimes lasting hundreds of years. They culminated in ceremonies in Rome, and, except in the case of martyrs, involved certifying that two miracles, worked by God through a candidate's intercession, had been performed. In 1983 John Paul II speeded up the saint creation process by easing the criteria required for candidacy and by doubling the number of 'judges' that examined nominees. Paul VI named a mere 84 saints during his 1963-1978 tenure. In just over two decades, John Paul II named 283, more than all his predecessors in the 20th century put together. He also beatified some 919, of which the clear majority, some 700, were martyrs. (*Time*, 14 June, 1999, pp.30-31).

⁵²⁴ Andrzej Bobola (1591-1657) and Klemens Hofbauer (1751-1820).

⁵²⁵ John Paul II canonised Rajmund Kolbe (1982*); beatified and canonised Adam Chmielowski (1983 and 1989*); and beatified Rafał Kalinowski (1983), Urszula Ledóchowska (1983), Karolina Kózka (1987), Jerzy Matulewicz (1987*), Michał Kozal (1987), Queen Jadwiga (1987) and Wacław Koźmiński (1988*). All the ceremonies, apart from those asterisked, took place in Poland during his 1983 and 1987 pilgrimages. Jadwiga and Matulewicz were 'assimilated' or 'adopted' Poles.

deployment of these sacred Polish figures in his war of political legitimacy. Seven of the ten beatifications and canonisations were carried out before millions of Poles during his 1983 and 1987 pilgrimages, when the Pope did not fail to draw contemporary political lessons from the lives of those figures.⁵²⁶

The Polish Church hierarchy also showed an awareness of the political potency of the mythology and symbolism of saints. For example, Cardinal Macharski in his first letter to the Pope - his predecessor as Archbishop of Kraków - after Martial Law was declared in December 1981, made two requests. One was to canonise Kolbe⁵²⁷ and the other was to beatify Chmielowski.⁵²⁸

⁵²⁶ Kalinowski and Chmielowski were both freedom fighters in the National Uprising of 1863-1864 and victims of the ensuing Russian repression: Chmielowski was wounded and both were deported to Siberia. The sixteen year old, Kózka was a rape victim and martyr to a Russian soldier in 1914. Ledóchowska had been forced by the Russians in 1914 to leave her missionary work in Saint Petersburg. Her uncle was the Polish national hero Primate Ledóchowski, who had been imprisoned by the Prussians during the *Kulturkampf*. Koźmiński (1829-1916), a Franciscan friar, had been active in the Russian Partition of Poland, at a time when the Russians were openly liquidating the Roman Catholic monasteries. Matulewicz (Bishop of Wilno, 1918-1925) had acted as a mediator in the national dispute between the Poles and Soviets over parts of Lithuania which Piłsudski had regained in 1919. Kozal and Kolbe, were both martyrs to Nazism, killed in Auschwitz and Dachau concentration camps in 1941 and 1943 respectively.

⁵²⁷ Kolbe, a Catholic priest, died in 1941 in an Auschwitz death cell from a lethal injection after offering himself in place of a fellow prisoner condemned to execution by the Nazis. Auschwitz is the German name for the town and concentration camp at Oświęcim in south east Poland not far from Kraków.

⁵²⁸ Macharski (1998).

Unsurprisingly, the political symbolism of John Paul II's beatifications and canonisations did not go unnoticed by the Polish Party leadership. In November 1986, for example, Kazimierz Barcikowski ⁵²⁹ expressed his concern ⁵³⁰ that the proposed beatification of Karolina Kózka during the Pope's 1987 pilgrimage 'might have a subtext.' Previously there had been regime concerns about the beatification of Kalinowski. During the actual 1987 pilgrimage, as a result of concerns about the political messages of the Pope's addresses, in particular his exploitation of Kozal and Kózka, the Party hastily dispatched Barcikowski, Stanisław Ciosek ⁵³¹ and Jerzy Kuberski ⁵³² to speak to Cardinal Agostino Casaroli. ⁵³³ A few days after their dispatch, a secret analysis of the Pope's 1987 pilgrimage, presented to the Politburo, commented, respectively, on the Pope's beatification of Kozal and Kózka thus:

⁵²⁹ Barcikowski was a Secretariat Member from 1970 - 1974 and 1980 -1985, and a Politburo Member from 1980-1989. He was also a Member of the Joint Government-Episcopate Commission from 1980-1989.

⁵³⁰ At the 36th Session of the Joint Government-Episcopate Commission. Aneks (1993: 486).

⁵³¹ Ciosek was a member of the Secretariat from 1986-1989 and a member of the Politburo from 1988-1989. He was also a member of the Joint Government-Episcopate Commission from November 1986.

⁵³² Kuberski was a member of the Central Committee from 1975-1981, and from 1980 to 1982, Head of the Office for Religious Affairs, and a member of the Joint Government-Episcopate Commission. In 1982 he became Head of the Polish Government's Delegation in Rome.

⁵³³ Aneks (1993: 506). Casaroli, as Secretary of State, was the Vatican's next highest ranking official after the Pope, and was considered by many to be John Paul II's right-hand man. At the suggestion of the Vatican side, the Party envoys met John Paul II as well.

“the choice of persons to be beatified was not by chance. On the one hand the beatification of a person who was killed by the hand of German fascism (Germany), whilst the second person, who perished at the hands of a Russian soldier (Russia) – which had a clear political subtext.”⁵³⁴

The Party’s reaction to symbolism that, at first sight, might appear an unlikely political threat, the symbolism of fascism and ‘czarism’, may well be explained by their appreciation of how John Paul II deployed the German and Russian/Soviet enemy myths. He did so, not by an illiberal engendering of hatred, but rather by invariably linking Prussian absolutism and German fascism with Russian absolutism and Soviet communism via the concept of totalitarianism.⁵³⁵ Thereby he made these two enemy myths serve the liberal purpose of criticising the contemporary Soviet political system with its illiberal expansionist imperialism that was preventing Poland achieving full national self-determination and popular democratic sovereignty.

Wojtyła particularly venerated the Virgin Mary/Madonna and three notable Polish figures who shared his own close associations with Kraków: Szczepanowski, a distant predecessor of his as Bishop of Kraków;⁵³⁶ Jadwiga, Queen of Poland (1384-1386); and the friar

⁵³⁴ Politburo meeting of 19 June 1987. Aneks (1993: 506).

⁵³⁵ Interestingly the Pope, like many Polish dissidents - see, for example, Michnik (1988: 26-28) - did not make the distinction between authoritarianism and totalitarianism with regard to 1945-1989 Poland as made by many Western observers, for example, Linz (1996: 255). Accordingly, the chapter uses the totalitarianism label to reflect this Polish perspective even although the author recognises that 1945-1989 Poland, particularly if the 1948-1956 Stalinist era is excluded, was significantly different from the excesses of Germany under Hitler or the Soviet Union under Stalin.

⁵³⁶ Shortly after becoming Pope, John Paul II completed a poem entitled *Stanisław*, as a tribute to his martyred predecessor.

Brother Albert/Chmielowski. As Pope, John Paul II deployed the mythology associated with all four figures in his war of political legitimacy, but in particular he deployed the mythology related to Stanisław and the 'honorary saint', the Madonna. Both Stanisław and the Virgin Mary were regarded as patron saints of Poland and both had accumulated a considerable mythological legacy over many centuries. Their patron status and legacy greatly facilitated the Pope's linkage of their myths with messages of political Catholicism and of Polish nationalism.

John Paul II was determined to fix the foci of attention for his first and second pilgrimages to Poland around these two figures, and the Polish regime did all it could to prevent him.

The Polish Church had adopted 8 May 1079 as the date of Stanisław's murder.⁵³⁷ Just one week into his papacy, in October 1978, the Pope said in a message to Poles, that he wished to make a pilgrimage to his homeland in May 1979, to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the death of Saint Stanisław. First Secretary Gierek told Wyszyński at a January 1979 meeting that, while accepting that the Pope's pilgrimage to Poland could take place, a May visit would give the pilgrimage a political character and he was concerned with opposition from Party hard liners.⁵³⁸ In February 1979, Politburo Member Kania told Bishop Dąbrowski, the Secretary of the Polish

⁵³⁷ Other accounts, for example Basista (1999: 40) & Gach (1997: 66), give 11 April 1079. However, historical accuracy was not the key point. What was more important for political Catholicism was to have a date that could be deployed to exploit the powerful religious/political possibilities of annual commemoration.

⁵³⁸ Raina (1995a: 329).

Episcopate, that the authorities were not prepared to accept the May date.⁵³⁹ In March 1979, the Party's instructions for teachers, published in the underground *KOR* publication, *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, stated that the Pope:

““is dangerous, because he will make Saint Stanisław the patron of the opposition to the authorities and a defender of human rights. Luckily we managed to manoeuvre him out of the date of May 8.””⁵⁴⁰

On the 8 May 1979 anniversary date, a defiant John Paul II delivered from outside Poland a pastoral letter in which he wrote:

““In this year in which the Church in Poland celebrates the nine-hundredth anniversary of the martyrdom and death of Saint Stanisław, Kraków's bishop, the bishop of Rome, Saint Peter's successor cannot be absent. Too significant is this Jubilee, too much related to the history of the Church and the Polish Nation, which for more than one thousand years of its history united with this church in a particularly deep way.””⁵⁴¹

In the above two sentences, the Pope linked the emotive symbolism of martyrdom and death with Stanisław. He linked Stanisław with himself as Bishops of Kraków. He linked Saint Peter with himself as

⁵³⁹ Nor, for that matter, added Kania, perhaps ironically, the 15 August 1979 - the 59th anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw - or the 17 September 1979 - the 40th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland. Raina (1995a: 349).

⁵⁴⁰ *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, 30 April, 1979 as cited by Kubik (1994: 135).

⁵⁴¹ As cited by Kubik (1994: 136).

Popes and Bishops of Rome.⁵⁴² He linked the Polish Church with the nation. Lastly, he linked a millennium of Polish history with the Polish Church.

In the event, the pilgrimage took place in June 1979. As far as the Church was concerned, although a month later than desired, the pilgrimage was still officially in the name of the 900th anniversary commemoration of Stanisław's martyrdom. John Paul II still had the last word, for the myth of Stanisław's martyrdom, as noted by Jan Kubik, constituted the keystone of the papal discourse during the 1979 pilgrimage. It assured a flawless transition from the transcendental order to pragmatic-political issues. Saint Stanisław was confirmed as a symbol of opposition to secular power and as a patron of all defenders of human and civil rights.⁵⁴³

The political symbolism of Mary and of annual commemorations were to be a factor in the choice of dates for the Pope's second Polish pilgrimage. The date when the image of the Madonna was said to have first appeared at Jasna Góra, is taken to be 26 August 1382. The Pope had wanted to make his second pilgrimage in August 1982 to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the appearance. A nervous communist regime prevented this.⁵⁴⁴ The Pope, however, was again

⁵⁴² The pope is also head of the Italian Church and Bishop of Rome. Saint Peter is regarded by the Catholic Church as the first of an unbroken succession of popes and as the founder of the Church in Rome.

⁵⁴³ See Kubik (1994: 149-150).

⁵⁴⁴ On 11 June 1982, the Polish Politburo held an unexpected meeting and two days later the official Polish Press Agency (PAP) accused the Polish Episcopate of making 'unilateral decisions' not yet cleared by the Vatican and the Polish government. The PAP statement asserted:

not deterred. Although prevented from being in Poland for August 1982, he was still able to exploit the symbolism of Mary and the power of the ritual of annual commemoration from Italy. In addition, the enormity of the power of centenary commemoration and the value given to the symbolism of the Madonna made it possible for him to plausibly and effectively commemorate the 600th anniversary during his June 1983 pilgrimage to Poland.

5.3. John Paul II's Deployment Of Pre-1945 Myths To Foster The Cause Of Liberty, Equality And Fraternity

John Paul II frequently deployed the emotive pre-1945 mythology and symbolism of military valour, extreme suffering and sacrifice, and the ultimate sacrifice - martyrdom/death. In his deployment of military valour and death, the Pope gave meaning to Anderson's words:

“the nation's biography snatches ...exemplary suicides, poignant martyrdoms, assassinations, executions, wars and holocausts. But, to serve the narrative purpose, these violent deaths must be remembered/forgotten as ‘our own.’”⁵⁴⁵

To demonstrate John Paul II's deployment of the pre-1945 myths within his liberalisation project, an analysis was undertaken of their

“The visit should be preceded by thorough organizational arrangements for which adequate socio-political conditions are indispensable. These conditions depend on the progress of normalization in Poland.” As cited by Szajkowski (1983: 184).

Eventually the pilgrimage went ahead in June 1983. just one month before Martial Law was lifted.

⁵⁴⁵ Anderson (1991: 206).

deployment by the Pope in the 1978-1989 period, in terms of the liberal values identified within the definitions of liberal nationalism and liberal political Catholicism that are associated with *Liberty, Equality and Fraternity*. The key liberal values identified with liberty were national self-determination and popular sovereignty; with equality, they were social justice and tolerance; and with fraternity, they were solidarity with other nations and with fellow nationals.

John Paul II was particularly adept in extending meanings by linking one concept with another, a skill that was frequently employed in his linking one myth/symbol with another. Often, as the following two examples illustrate, he was able, in the space of a few sentences, to touch upon a broad range of issues that spanned more than a single liberty, equality or fraternity category.⁵⁴⁶

The first example pertains to his Victory Square Mass in Warsaw in June 1979 attended by some quarter of a million Poles.⁵⁴⁷ Here John Paul II made references to the ‘Tomb of the Unknown Soldier’ that stood close by:

⁵⁴⁶ Hence, given the multivocality and changing meanings associated with myths and symbols, precise categorisation according to specific liberal values is difficult.

⁵⁴⁷ Before World War II, the Square had been called Saski Square, named after the Polish King August III Saski (1733-1766). After WWII allied victory, it had been renamed Victory Square by Communist rulers confident of success in shaping a new Communist Poland. With the fall of communism, it was to be renamed yet again: this time Piłsudski Square. Far greater numbers were to attend other Masses he held in Poland in less restricted spaces. The Masses were all-ticket affairs, with Poles sometimes queuing for days to obtain them.

“In the history of Poland – past and contemporary – this grave is reflected and justified in a particular way. How many are the places on this native soil where this soldier fell! How many are the places in Europe and the world where his death said that there can not be a just Europe without an independent Poland on its map? How many are the battle-fields where, dying ‘for our freedom and yours’, he testified to the rights of man, embedded deeply in the inalienable rights of the nation?”^{548 549}

In the above example, John Paul II manages in a few brief sentences to link the past Polish experiences with present ones, to evoke the emotional symbolism of death via tombs and soldiers sacrificing their lives for their country, and to raise the liberal concepts of national self-determination as a universal right, of solidarity with other nations, and the rights of man.

The second example relates to Sunday 28 August 1988, when the Pope addressed Polish pilgrims visiting Rome to commemorate the 26 August anniversary appearance of *Our Lady of Jasna Góra*.⁵⁵⁰ It was at a time of great tension in Poland.⁵⁵¹

“Today we go to Częstochowa ... Important events such as the defence of Jasna Góra, Poland, and freedom of conscience in the mid-sixteenth century, during the Swedish invasion ... are

⁵⁴⁸ As mentioned in Chapter 3, although the exact identity of the soldier buried in the tomb was unknown, it was known that he was a soldier of Piłsudski’s Polish Army, who had died in defence of Lwów during the 1919-1920 Polish-Soviet War.

⁵⁴⁹ Pax (1989: 38).

⁵⁵⁰ Her first appearance at Jasna Góra, it will be recalled, was taken by the Church to be 26 August 1382.

⁵⁵¹ On the 24 August 1988, for example, riot police fighting Polish striking workers had sealed off the port of Gdańsk, forcibly taken a Szczecin bus depot, and stormed three Silesian mines.

associated with Jasna Góra and the image of the Mother of God. The sanctuary has also played a role in the defence of the faith and culture, and the conservation of the national identity, particularly during the long period of the partition of Poland. During the Second World War Pope Pius XII said: 'Poland has not perished and will not perish because Poland believes, and prays; Poland has Jasna Góra'. In the difficult years after the war, during the years of the organised and systematic spread of atheism, Jasna Góra, under the guidance of the Cardinal Primate Stefan Wyszyński, became a meeting place for the creation of effective programmes and pastoral initiatives. It also became a reference point for social regeneration, such as Solidarity or other groups and movements of social renewal. From this comes the terse and appropriate definitions, such as 'Here beats the immortal heart of Poland'. The image has often been called 'the icon of liberty' and the 'sign of the unity of Christian east and west' ... Mary, Queen of Poland, I am with you; I remember; I keep vigil.'"⁵⁵²

In a few short passages, the Pope in classic style combined the political mythology of the Madonna with the power of the ritual of annual commemoration, and linked the periods of partitioning and re-partitioning with Poland's contemporary fate. At the same time, John Paul II signalled his disapproval of the regime, as well as his support for freedom of conscience, for national self-determination, for the social role of the Polish Church under Wyszyński, for *Solidarity*, and for the unification of East and West Europe. The Pope also alluded, in his reference to WWII, that he was not a pacifist and that in extreme times Poles should be prepared to die for the liberty of their country.

⁵⁵² As cited by *OR*, 5 September, 1988, p. 20.

5.3.1 The Deployment of Myths Fostering Liberty via National Self-determination and Popular Sovereignty

For John Paul II, the issues of national self-determination and of popular sovereignty were intrinsically linked. The lack of the former prevented the latter. In fostering sentiments of national self-determination and, particularly during the December 1981 to July 1983 period of Martial Law, of popular sovereignty, John Paul II above all deployed the Madonna myth. In doing so, he followed the example of Wyszyński in linking this myth with the 3 May myth. He also exploited the symbolism of ‘holy geography.’⁵⁵³ The Pope’s use of the Madonna myth was usually explicit, but sometimes contextually implicit, in the sense that his political message was delivered at a related location, usually Jasna Góra, or during a day or prayers devoted to Mary, but without the myth being directly evoked.

When addressing more than 1.5 million at a Holy Mass during his 1983 pilgrimage to a Poland still under Martial Law, John Paul II indicated his preference for a peaceful road to Polish independence. As he invariably did, he would mention the past as his way of talking about the present. In doing so, he would use key phrases that were highly relevant to the contemporary situation. He asserted:

“‘Just as the individual feels the need to achieve a moral victory if his life is to have sense and meaning, so also does a nation, which is a community made up of individuals. So throughout the

⁵⁵³ O’Brian described Herder as ‘the high priest of cultural nationalism’ and as ‘strong in holy geography’ whose ‘landscape is invested with a specifically national aura’. O’Brian (1988: 51).

nineteenth century untiring attempts were made to achieve moral reconstruction and to regain political independence. ... We all understand that it is not a question of military victory, as it was three hundred years ago, but rather a moral victory. ”” 554 555

Here, the key phrases were ‘moral victory’ and ‘regain political independence’.

The Deployment of the Madonna Myth

The above example, while advocating peaceful means, also indicates that John Paul II was not a pacifist. Often, when advocating peaceful means, he would remind his audience that in certain extreme situations, such as under partitioning or repartitioning, Poles had been prepared to deploy the physical force tradition to achieve national self-determination. Another such example, this time also indirectly evoking the Madonna myth, was on the 4 August 1982 with Poland under Martial Law, when as part of his weekly Prayer to *Our Lady of Jasna Góra*, the Pope commemorated the 38th anniversary of the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising. He said:

“Today ... I recall the Warsaw insurrection... I implore: save my country from a similar destruction! ... help us preserve the same love of fatherland, the same readiness to serve the cause of its independence and of peace, as was manifested in that generation.”” 556

⁵⁵⁴ A reference to Jan III Sobieski’s 1683 victory in Vienna over the Turks.

⁵⁵⁵ As cited by *OR*, 27 June, 1983, p.8.

⁵⁵⁶ As cited by *OR*, 9 August, 1982, p8.

John Paul II on several occasions indicated the dangers of an illiberal expansionist nationalism. One such occasion was in late 1981, with the possibility of Soviet intervention imminent. On the Catholic Holy Day of Mary's Immaculate Conception, 8 December, just five days before Martial Law⁵⁵⁷ was declared in Poland, John Paul II wrote:

“‘An excessive desire for expansion impels some nations to build their prosperity with a disregard for - indeed at the expense of - other's happiness. Unbridled nationalism thus fosters plans for domination.’”⁵⁵⁸

As the following two examples show, John Paul II often evoked the Madonna myth in its 19th century form of Mary the defender of the nation. During a Jasna Góra Holy Mass in June 1979, when some two million had lined his route or gathered on the hill of Jasna Góra,⁵⁵⁹ the Pope tried to instil hope into the nationalist cause when he invoked the Madonna myth, via *Pan Tadeusz*:

“‘how Brightly you defend Częstochowa,’ wrote Mickiewicz, speaking the language of faith, and at the same time the language of the national tradition.’”⁵⁶⁰ ...

“‘Hearing the beating heart of the nation in the heart of the Mother. How many times has it vibrated with the laments of the

⁵⁵⁷ Martial Law lasted from 13 December 1981 to 22 July 1983. It will be recalled that 22 July was the Polish communist regime's public holiday of liberation/independence.

⁵⁵⁸ As cited by *OR*, 4 January, 1982, p.5.

⁵⁵⁹ *Daily Telegraph*, 5 June, 1979, p.1.

⁵⁶⁰ As cited in Pax (1989: 64).

historical sufferings of Poland, but also with the shouts of joy and victory! ...

Every threat ... against the family and the nation has its source in our weakness ... Before Our Lady of Jasna Góra ... this is what I am entrusting to you. Do not succumb to weakness!’”⁵⁶¹

In June 1983 in Jasna Góra, at the 194th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate, John Paul II evoked the symbolism of the Madonna as a defender of Poland’s national self-determination who protected Poland from external threats.

“‘From the time in which Jasna Góra resisted the pressure of the Swedes, from when subsequently the entire homeland was freed from the invaders, (there has been) a particular bond between the sanctuary of Jasna Góra and the increasingly difficult history of the nation ... During my previous pilgrimage in 1979, I said at Jasna Góra that here we have always been free. It is difficult to express in a different way what the Image of the Queen of Poland became for all the Poles during the time when their homeland was wiped off the map of Europe as an independent State ... And it is here too that we have learned the fundamental truth about the freedom of the nation: the nation perishes if it deforms its spirit - the nation grows when its spirit is ever more purified, and no external power is able to destroy it!’”⁵⁶²

The key phrases in the above example were ‘independent State’, ‘freedom of the nation’, and ‘no external power is able to destroy it!’, while the subtext read that, just as Mary had protected Poland from the Swedes, so she would protect Poland from the Soviets.

⁵⁶¹ As cited by Kwitny (1998: 326-327).

⁵⁶² As cited by *OR*, 4 July, 1983, p. 5.

In the Holy Mass during his 1983 pilgrimage at Jasna Góra to commemorate the 600th anniversary, John Paul II also deployed the mythology of God's intervention to restore national self-determination. The Pope said:

“The hope of the nation also relied on ... the persistent striving for obtaining independence, expressed with these words:

‘Before Thy altars, we bring our entreaty:
Restore, O Lord, our free country.’”⁵⁶³

Here, there were two key phrases ostensibly linked to the past but for contemporary application. The first phrase was ‘persistent striving for obtaining independence’, the other ‘Restore, O Lord, our free country.’ The latter was the last line from the 1816 patriotic hymn *God Who Protects Poland*. After 1945, the regime attempted to have the line replaced with “Bless, O Lord, our free country.” Such a change had been made during the 1918-1939 period of Polish independence. Nevertheless, post-1945 many in communist-ruled Poland defiantly sang the original line. Now the Pope, too, was openly defying the authorities in the cause of national self-determination. Garton Ash describes how the state television cameras ‘were directed elsewhere’ and not to the scene that followed on hearing the defiant version. The meadow in front of the Jasna Góra monastery ‘turned into a forest of hands raised in the V-for-victory sign’ and half a million voices cried, as they cried at the end of other masses, the unofficial ‘Restore, O Lord, our free country’.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶³ Pax (1989: 366-367).

⁵⁶⁴ Garton Ash (1991b: 49).

The Deployment of the 3 May Myth

As used by John Paul II, the 3 May Constitution was a symbol of popular sovereignty and of national self-determination, lending some support to Kertzer's view that the political legitimacy gained from the continuity of ritual and the symbolic value of a Constitution as a unifying force can be more meaningful than its actual content.⁵⁶⁵ The 1791 Constitution was a symbol of popular sovereignty insofar as the then government sought the respect of all the nation, and insofar as the Constitution put in place safeguards against abuses of state power. John Paul II also deployed the myth in the cause of national self-determination. In this he was helped by the 19th century romantic nationalist 'political spin' which stressed that, shortly after the Constitution's adoption, it was annulled due to Poland's loss of national self-determination as a result of the 1793 partitioning by the absolutist powers. The Pope also used the circumstance of a common date to link the Madonna myth with 3 May myth.⁵⁶⁶ Again, his political messages contained key phrases ostensibly linked to the past but with a contemporary resonance. During a Mass for the *Solemnity of Mary* in May 1982, a few months after the Declaration of Martial Law, John Paul II said that the 1791 Constitution had:

“shaped the life of the nation even under foreign domination and in the other system. The Constitution became the soul of public

⁵⁶⁵ Kertzer (1988: 44 & 63). The myth conveniently forgets that the Constitution was in force only between 1791-1793 and heralded a return to hereditary monarchical rule.

⁵⁶⁶ The 3rd of May was also, it will be recalled, the anniversary date when Polish Catholics commemorate the *Solemnity of Mary, Queen of Poland*, defender of the nation.

life, of national life, and through the decades, through the generations, it prepared our ancestors for the rebuilding of independence. Now, it is our historical destiny: that which in itself is already a programme for life must at times be put into practise in life at the cost of dying. And that is precisely how it was with the Constitution of 3 May. ...(Referring to ‘the events of the 1980s linked to the word ‘Solidarność,’ the Pope, continued) ‘We have not lost the conviction that these contents and also these events – as once the Constitution of 3 May – will shape the life of the nation. Since they come from her soul, and the nation – if it must live – must live with its own soul.’”⁵⁶⁷

The Pope in the above passage had not only combined the Madonna myth and 3 May myth, but also linked the latter with the now illegal *Solidarity*. He also indicated that, at certain times, resisting meant preparing to sacrifice one’s life.

A year later, in May 1983, in his *Prayers to Our Lady of Jasna Góra* the Pope said:

“‘The Constitution proclaimed on this day in the year 1791 was to restore the Republic at that moment when it was threatened by mortal danger. Even though the danger proved to be stronger, nevertheless the Constitution has survived as a proof of the Nation’s will for life and self-determination.’”⁵⁶⁸

In the above two quotations while evoking the 3 May myth, John Paul II had planted many key phrases for contemporary application: phrases that explicitly related to pre-1945 times but that implicitly carried political messages relating to Poland under communism. These included: ‘foreign domination’, ‘rebuilding of independence,’ ‘at the

⁵⁶⁷ As cited by *OR*, 24 May, 1982, p. 9.

⁵⁶⁸ *OR*, 16 May, 1983, p.2.

cost of dying’, ‘threatened by mortal danger’, and ‘self-determination.’

The Deployment of the Symbolism of Holy Geography

John Paul II, in the romantic tradition of Herder, exploited the political potential of the symbolism of *holy geography*. He did this, particularly during his 1987 pilgrimage, by associating Polish landscape features with political messages supporting a liberal nationalism of opposition.

During his 1987 pilgrimage, for example, speaking in the adjoining Baltic seaports of Gdynia and Gdańsk, the birthplace of *Solidarity*, the Pope developed the solidarity symbolism with the aid of some ‘holy geography’. In Gdynia, near where the River Vistula flows into the Baltic Sea, the Pope celebrated the Liturgy of the Word in Kościuszko Square, named after the leader of the 1794 National Uprising. The Pope managed to link the river, the sea and the city to Poland’s struggle for national independence. Also, in his reference to priests, he evoked the organic work myth.

“‘This river is a silent eyewitness of life in Poland through many generations... It is a witness to their struggles, sometimes for life and sometimes for death, in order to maintain and assure all that it is proper and native to us, all that which forms our common heritage and inheritance...

The sea...

Speaks to people in a special language. Above all it speaks to them in a language that *transcends all limitations*. ...

Here in this territory of the Kaszubs, during the Reformation and the Partitioning of Poland, the defence of *Catholicism* was indissolubly joined to the defence of our Polish identity. During the years preceding the First World War, the priests began an animated work of self-instruction and the co-operative work of Kaszub fishermen and farmers. Their purpose was to prevent Germanization. ...

I salute Gdynia ...because in a certain sense it has become for us the symbol of our second independence ... Gdynia therefore has become an expression of a new willpower to live as a nation.”⁵⁶⁹

The following day, the Pope celebrated Mass for an estimated one million Gdańsk workers, many of them from the shipyards. He invoked a thousand years of Christianity in Poland; offered vistas of freedom and liberation; alluded to *Solidarity*, and, most dramatically, in a highly politically charged way, implied the need for a new mobilisation of the workers.

“*I greet Gdańsk ... where in ... 977 ... ‘ ... the multitudes of the people received baptism!’ Gdańsk, which through the vicissitudes of history has always given an example of strength... Here, on the Baltic coast, she has opened up to us the prospects that the sea offers to men of ‘terra firma’...prospects of freedom! Man in the vastness of the sea, feels free, liberated from conditioning factors created by life on dry land, but at the same time subject to the demands of a new element. He feels mobilized for a new responsibility ...*

I salute Gdańsk. In her I salute all that she has been for us in the various chapters of the past, and what she has become in recent years.”⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁹ As cited by *OR*, 27 July, 1987, pp. 7-8. Gdynia was built in the 1920s to give the newly re-independent Poland a sea-port.

⁵⁷⁰ As cited by *OR*, 3 August, 1987, pp. 2-3.

The two examples above illustrate John Paul II's belief that by defending Polish Catholicism one is defending national identity. Again, one sees the allusion to Sovietisation via the device of evoking the German enemy myth in referring to 'Germanization.' Once more, there is the scattering of key phrases for contemporary reflection. Amongst the latter were: 'sometimes for death', 'transcends all limitations', 'our second independence', 'vistas of freedom and liberation', 'liberated from conditioning factors', and 'mobilized for a new responsibility'.

5.3.2 The Deployment of Myths Fostering Equality via Social Justice, Tolerance and Respect for the Individual

John Paul II and Personal Thomism

John Paul II's political Catholicism, in adopting an ethical personal Thomism influenced by such thinkers as Mounier, Maritain and Gilson, saw man not only as being concerned with the *Hereafter*, but also as being politically concerned with the *Herenow*. His modern *Thomism* combined faith with rationalism. His *personalism* - by perceiving man as both a spiritual person and an individual, combined communitarianism with individualism. Communitarianism and individualism were not seen as being in contradiction, but as being complementary. His commitment to communitarian values engendered a belief in greater political activity to help community members develop their communal, and thereby personal, lives. His commitment to individualism helped shape his attitudes towards

liberalism and away from communism. It led him, for example, to defend the individual from the excesses of the communist state and to attack Marxist determinism. During his 1987 pilgrimage, for example, John Paul II particularly stressed the importance of the subjectivity of man, implying that Polish communism's pervasive totalitarian state impeded that subjectivity. On his first day in Poland, he told Jaruzelski:

“In the name of proper dignity each and every one strives to be not only an object of the activity of the authorities, the institution of state life - but to be a subject.” ⁵⁷¹

Later during the 1987 pilgrimage he was to say:

“Above all man is a person, is the subject of his deeds. The subject of morality. The subject of history. Not only ‘the reflection of the prevailing socio-economic conditions.’ Not only the epiphenomenon of materialism, of the economy.” ⁵⁷²

The pope's ethical personal Thomism also helped shape his belief in the dignity of man and thereby in equality as expressed in the related liberal values of social justice for all, tolerance and respect for the individual.

⁵⁷¹ Pax (1989: 526).

⁵⁷² Pax (1989: 729). Interestingly, Jaruzelski in his 1987 farewell speech to the Pope appropriated both the *subjectivity* and *solidarity leitmotifs* of the Pope. Pax (1989: 734) and Michel (1995: 183-4).

5.3.2.1 The deployment of myths fostering social justice

Influenced by this ethical personal Thomism and by his pre-papal experiences in Rome while still Archbishop of Kraków ⁵⁷³ as well as by a Poland deprived in practice of many basic human rights, John Paul II believes strongly in human rights, that is to say, that people are entitled to rights by virtue of being human. In 1980, he wrote:

“‘It is on this conception of the dignity of the person that the various categories of human rights are founded: ‘civil and political’ rights as well as ‘economic, social, and cultural’ rights.’” ⁵⁷⁴

A few years later, he was to assert:

“‘The foundation and goal of the social order is the human person, as a subject of inalienable rights which are not conferred from outside but which arise from the person’s very nature. Nothing and nobody can destroy them, and no external constraint can annihilate them, for they are rooted in what is most profoundly human.’” ⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷³ As Archbishop Wojtyła he was directly involved with ‘the human rights revolution’ of Vatican II. He submitted a memorandum to the Council, urging that the Church should become a bulwark of human rights not just for its own adherents, but for all. (Kwitny 1998: 195). Appointed a Cardinal in 1967, Wojtyła was to be a frequent visitor to Rome and was greatly influenced by the liberal Cardinal Frantz König of Vienna. See Szulc (1995: 223).

⁵⁷⁴ As cited by *OR*, 28 January, 1980, p. 8. The quotation is part of a message given by John Paul II to the Presidents of European Court for Human Rights and of the European Commission for Human Rights on occasion of their respective 20th and 25th anniversaries.

⁵⁷⁵ As cited by *OR*, 21 December, 1987, p.1. From his 1988 annual *World Day of Peace Message*.

John Paul II was frequently to endorse publicly the UN's 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* that comprised not only civil, but also political and socio-economic rights. The Pope's belief in the full gamut of rights - be they so-called 'negative' civil rights that are exercised within civil society and serve to limit or check state power, or the positive political and socio-economic rights that provide individuals with the opportunity to participate in political life and guarantee them minimal socio-economic status - was a clear indication of his belief in a 20th century liberal sense of equality as defined by modern liberalism.

In the context of communist Poland, his advocacy of human rights was of immense political importance. It questioned the entire communist system and promoted the sovereignty of the individual and of the nation.

His defence of negative rights which entail the liberal value of limited government and that state 'interference' should be minimal, was implicitly and sometimes explicitly an attack on the role of the communist state. In his address to Jaruzelski and other Polish regime leaders during his 1987 pilgrimage, John Paul II urged the communist leadership to remember man's "right to religious freedom, his right to free association and to the expression of his own opinions."⁵⁷⁶ Furthermore in Lublin during the 1987 pilgrimage the Pope talked about the necessity to reflect on 'the very presuppositions of the

⁵⁷⁶ As cited by *OR*, 6 July, 1987, p. 10.

present organisation of the State' and of the 'need for academic freedom'.⁵⁷⁷

The Deployment of the German Enemy Myth

In fostering social justice for all, John Paul II was to enlist the mythology surrounding his three favourite sacred Polish historical figures, namely Saint Stanisław, Queen Jadwiga and Brother Albert, and used the German enemy myth to evoke human rights and criticise totalitarianism rather than engender an illiberal hatred of others. In his fostering of social justice, he defended *Solidarity* when its members were deprived of civil and political rights in December 1981.

The Nazi concentration camps, where millions, including some three million Polish Jews and substantial numbers of Polish Catholics, were massacred in WWII, were an immensely powerful symbol of the absolute disregard of human rights. Speaking at a Mass in the grounds of the most notorious of the camps, Auschwitz, during the 1979 pilgrimage, he linked the symbolism of the camp to himself, to Saint Peter, to the universal concepts of human dignity, human and national rights, and of anti-totalitarianism, by asking rhetorically:

“Can anyone ... be surprised that a pope who was born and raised here on this land, a pope who came to Peter's See from Kraków - the archdiocese in the territory of which the Oświęcim camp is located ... that he devoted (*Redemptor Hominis* his first) encyclical ... to the dignity of man, the threats facing man, and ... human rights, the inalienable rights of man, which can be so

⁵⁷⁷ OR, 13 July, 1987, pp. 4-5.

trampled on so easily and annihilated by ... man? To do so it is enough to dress him in another uniform, to equip the apparatus of violence with the means of destruction; it is enough to foist on him an ideology in which human rights are subordinated to the requirements of the system, subordinated in an arbitrary fashion, so that, in fact, they do not exist. ... One nation can never develop at the expense of another, at the expense of its subordination, conquest, oppression, at the expense of exploiting it, at the expense of its death.””^{578 579}

Again during his 1983 pilgrimage, in a Mass to commemorate Kolbe’s martyrdom to Nazism, John Paul II extracted universal messages from the particular. For the Pope, Kolbe’s death confirmed ‘the human drama of the 20th century’⁵⁸⁰ and good as the means to conquer evil. For his audience of several million, the subtext of the symbolism of the effects of an evil Nazism, had much resonance, living, as they felt, under the oppression of another evil totalitarian system.

With the Declaration of Martial Law on 13 December 1981, *Solidarity* leaders were arrested or driven underground. The following day, the Pope, in Rome, thanked the thousands who had come to pray for the Polish people. ““This solidarity with the Polish people serves also to confirm some values and some inalienable principles such as the rights of man.””⁵⁸¹ Some two weeks later, after his ritual weekly

⁵⁷⁸ Auschwitz is near both to where the Pope was born and grew up in Wadowice, and to Kraków, where he moved to on completing his secondary schooling just before the onset of WWII.

⁵⁷⁹ J. Weydenthal and K. Zamorski (eds.) *Pope In Poland*. Munich, *Radio Free Europe Research*, 1979, p. 66 & p.69 as cited by Kubik (1994: 143-144).

⁵⁸⁰ Pax (1989: 332).

⁵⁸¹ As cited by *OR*, 21 December, 1981, p. 20.

Angelus Prayer on 1 January 1982, the Catholic Holy Day of Mary, Mother of God, John Paul II said:

“I thank you warmly, for these expressions of solidarity with ‘Solidarność’. This word is the expression of a great effort which the workers in my country have made to ensure the real dignity of the working man. The workers ... have the right to set-up autonomous trade unions to protect ... their ... rights.””⁵⁸²

In his Angelus address on the 31 January 1982, effortlessly inter-linking the symbolism of solidarity/*Solidarity* with the nation, with morality, with the physical force tradition of WWII, and with current injustices, the Pope said:

“Solidarity with the Polish nation assures a still greater ethical eloquence if one considers that this nation in large measure (one could say, disproportionate) has borne on its shoulders the burden of the last war, and has faced terrible sacrifices for the cause of justice.””⁵⁸³

He then went on to support the Polish bishops in their call for the abolition of Martial Law and of all forms of limitation and violation of civil rights.

A significant proportion of the post-WWII Polish population still lived off the land,⁵⁸⁴ and many were still peasants, in the sense that they eked an existence from their small landholdings. Most of these

⁵⁸² As cited by *OR*, 11 January, 1982, p.14.

⁵⁸³ As cited by *OR*, 8 February, 1982, p. 2.

⁵⁸⁴ In 1985, this proportion was nearly 30% of the working population. GUS (1994: 227).

peasants were devout Catholics, and John Paul II was to make clear that they, too, were included in his concept of sovereignty and social justice. During his 1987 pilgrimage, for example, at a Mass for the beatification of the peasant girl Kózka in Tarnów attended by many rural workers, John Paul II quoted from the pre-WWII peasant leader Wincenty Witos (1874-1945), ‘a great leader of the Polish people’:

“Insofar as the sensible, independent, content Polish peasants are prepared to sacrifice their health for every piece of their native land, just imagine them in defence of their entire Homeland.”⁵⁸⁵

Immediately following his reference to Witos, John Paul II went on to say that the agreements reached in nearby Rzeszów⁵⁸⁶ between *Rural Solidarity* and the regime in early 1981:

“...should find their full realization. ... Many deformations of country life find their source in the second-class status of the farmer, as worker and as citizen.”⁵⁸⁷

The Deployment of the Saint Stanisław Myth

Szczepanowski, the Bishop of Kraków murdered by, or on the orders, of the Polish King, Bolesław II, symbolised to different political groupings several different things, which epitomised three powerful properties that make symbols, with their condensation of meaning,

⁵⁸⁵ W. Witos, *Moje wspomnienia*. Vol. I, Paris 1964, p. 35 as cited by Pax (1989: 574).

⁵⁸⁶ About forty miles from Tarnów in south east Poland.

⁵⁸⁷ As cited by *OR*, 20 July, 1987, p.4.

multivocality and ambiguity, as Kertzer points out, such powerful political devices.⁵⁸⁸

Many Polish Catholics regarded Saint Stanisław as a symbol of justified resistance against the excesses of (royal or other) state power.⁵⁸⁹ To others, Stanisław was a symbol that proved that physical force used by the regime was not an argument.⁵⁹⁰ In stark contrast to many within civil society for whom Saint Stanisław was a heroic martyr who gave his life for justice, the communist regime regarded Stanisław as a rebel against legitimate authority of the state and rarely mentioned him in the official media. When the Stanisław-Bolesław conflict was mentioned by the regime, the King was presented as a symbol of secularisation, being portrayed as one who:

“‘persistently pursued independence from ecclesiastical authority, ... and treated (Stanisław) as an intruder, when (the bishop) interfered with political affairs.’”⁵⁹¹

In 1966, during the state celebrations of the Millennium of the Polish State, slogans declaring *Bolesław the Bold – hero and patriot* were displayed in several Polish towns.⁵⁹²

⁵⁸⁸ Kertzer (1988: 11).

⁵⁸⁹ Kubik (1994: 130).

⁵⁹⁰ This ‘right not might’ interpretation was held by Hannelowa who described Stanisław as a ‘political saint’, and the commemorative celebrations for Stanisław under communism as being of immense political significance. Hannelowa (1998).

⁵⁹¹ Edward Ciupak, *Kult religijny i jego podłoże społeczne* (The religious cult and its social background), LSW:Warsaw, 1965, p. 59 as cited by Kubik (1994: 132).

⁵⁹² Kubik (1994: 132).

Polish political Catholicism led by Wyszyński also regarded the saint as a symbol of justice and of the unity of the nation, as the Primate indicated in his address at the 1978 commemoration to Stanisław's martyrdom:

“The conflict between Bolesław and Stanisław revolved around the issues of justice and human rights. It proves that already nine hundred years ago the Church struggled for human rights. The cult of Saint Stanisław is the symbol of unity of our nation; this is not only a religious, but also a national symbol.”⁵⁹³

In April 1979, the *KOR* underground monthly *Robotnik* wrote that the authorities were afraid of the pilgrimage taking place in May 1979 “because the cult of Saint Stanisław ... is identified with a dangerous world, *opposition*.”⁵⁹⁴

For John Paul II, Stanisław was a symbol of morality fighting an immoral communist regime. In a Holy Mass for Stanisław in Kraków during the 1979 pilgrimage, attended by a crowd of several million,⁵⁹⁵ probably the largest assembly in Polish history, John Paul II said:

“All of life assumes the aspect of ... a large number of tests of faith and character. ... Saint Stanisław has become in the spiritual history of the Polish people the patron of these tests ... From every victorious test the moral order is built up. From every failed test moral disorder grows. We know very well from our

⁵⁹³ *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 21 May, 1978 as cited by Kubik (1994: 133).

⁵⁹⁴ *Robotnik*, 1 April, 1979 as cited by Kubik (1994: 134).

⁵⁹⁵ *Osservatore Romano* estimated 3 million. *OR*, 16 July, 1979, p. 13.

entire history that we must not permit, absolutely and at whatever cost, this disorder.’”⁵⁹⁶

He then went on to instil fortitude in his audience and asked them not to forget their Christian heritage:

“*Never lose your trust*, do not be defeated, do not be discouraged, - do not on your own *cut* yourself off from the roots from which we had our origin.... I say these words on the 900th anniversary of the martyrdom of Saint Stanisław.’”⁵⁹⁷

When interviewed, the present Archbishop of Kraków and successor to Stanisław and Wojtyła, Cardinal Franciszek Macharski, in stressing the symbolism of Stanisław, emphasised that he had died by the *sword*, and implied a criticism of the Polish communist state’s use of violence to maintain power.⁵⁹⁸

With the introduction of Martial Law came, according to Halina Filipowicz, an ‘unprecedented pogrom’ of Polish culture.⁵⁹⁹ When Polish theatres were allowed to re-open, some staged plays that the state censors would find hard to ban but that still carried political messages of opposition. Such was the 1982 production of T. S. Eliot’s

⁵⁹⁶ As cited by Kwitny (1998: 329).

⁵⁹⁷ As cited by *OR*, 16 May, 1983, p. 2. In May 1983, the 904th anniversary of Saint Stanisław’s murder in 1079, in a Prayer to *Our Lady of Jasna Góra*, the Pope repeated some of these 1979 words on Stanisław.

⁵⁹⁸ Macharski (1998).

⁵⁹⁹ See Filipowicz (1982).

Murder in the Cathedral. ⁶⁰⁰ Based on the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket by King Henry II's soldiers in 1170, it was performed at two major national shrines: Saint John's Cathedral in Warsaw and the Wawel Cathedral in Kraków. ⁶⁰¹ The Polish audiences were well aware of the historical parallels between Becket's martyrdom and that of Stanisław's, described by the historian Norman Davies as 'the Polish Becket'.

The Deployment of the Jadwiga Myth

John Paul II's use of the Jadwiga myth in furthering the liberal concept of peaceful international justice was somewhat tenuous. Jadwiga was an 'adopted Pole,' who died aged just 25. She was raised in Budapest, before - still not in her teens - she became Queen of Poland and reigned for barely fifteen months. However, her significance for John Paul II was that she symbolised the extension of Catholicism to Lithuania and the genesis of the Jagiellonian/Commonwealth myth. Before becoming pope, Wojtyła demonstrated his veneration of Jadwiga in hundreds of sermons and homilies over

⁶⁰⁰ The director, Zbysław Jarocki, received one of underground *Solidarity's* 1981-1982 cultural prizes for the production. Biernacki (2000: 89).

⁶⁰¹ Saint John's Cathedral was where, for example, Wyszyński in December 1976 had criticised the police for their brutality against the workers arrested for their June 1976 protests over price rises. It was also where John Paul II was to deliver one of his Masses during his 1983 pilgrimage. Wawel Cathedral was where several of Poland's pre-1945 national heroes were buried. Wawel Cathedral is also closely associated with Wojtyła. During WWII, Wojtyła took part in Holy Mass services within Wawel Cathedral. On 2 November 1946, as a newly ordained priest, he celebrated his first Mass in the cathedral. In July 1967, he had his Cardinal's Installation Ceremony in Wawel and in 1969, he ordered the Cathedral's restoration.

decades, when he often linked her with Saint Stanisław as a great figure in the history of Poland and of the Church. During his second (1983) Polish pilgrimage, John Paul II gave a Mass dedicated to the ‘Blessed Jadwiga’ and told his one million audience that she was a ‘brave woman’ “who applied herself to the demands of the laws of the nation, international justice and peace.”⁶⁰² In his 1987 pilgrimage, John Paul II officially beatified Jadwiga in the Wawel Cathedral. He saw Jadwiga, like the Virgin Mary, as a Queen of Poland protecting the Polish nation. “God put you in the midst of the people, of the nation. He called upon you, to encompass with your heart their fate, their aspirations, their struggles. He called upon you to divine God’s wishes in relation to Poland, to Lithuania, to the Ruthenian lands.”⁶⁰³

The Deployment of the Brother Albert Myth

It will be recalled that Chmielowski, also known as Brother Albert, had taken part in the 1863-1864 National Uprising. Shortly after WWII, Cardinal Adam Sapieha, Archbishop of Kraków, bestowed upon him the title ‘servant of God’.⁶⁰⁴ At about the same period, Wojtyła, a protégé of Sapieha’s, wrote a play with Chmielowski as the protagonist. Entitled, *Brother of Our God*, the play has as one of its key themes ‘splendid human anger’. Another key theme emphasises social justice, including human rights that create human dignity. A character known as ‘the Speaker’ tells the homeless:

⁶⁰² Pax (1989: 426).

⁶⁰³ Pax (1989: 593).

⁶⁰⁴ Gach (1997: 231).

“‘You have the right to have human rights’. (The Speaker continues): I came here to awaken what sleeps inside you ... Why do you ... hold back your justified revolt? Why is your anger silent?’”⁶⁰⁵

The Speaker then goes on to exclaim: “‘DON’T BE AFRAID! ... Just provide the anger, and forces will emerge that will know how to shape it, use it and lead it!’”⁶⁰⁶ At the end of the play, Brother Albert says: “‘You know that anger must explode ... And it will last because it is just!’”⁶⁰⁷

In January 1977, Paul VI, who also took Wojtyła under his wing, published a decree on the heroism of Chmielowski’s virtue, thereby opening the beatification process.⁶⁰⁸ During his inaugural sermon as Pope in October 1978, John Paul II was to stress one of his Brother Albert play’s key phrases and themes:

“‘ Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors for Christ. To his saving power open the boundaries of states, economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, civilization and development. Do not be afraid!’”⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰⁵ As cited by Szulc (1995: 68).

⁶⁰⁶ As cited by Szulc (1995: 168).

⁶⁰⁷ As cited by Szulc (1995: 169).

⁶⁰⁸ Gach (1997: 231).

⁶⁰⁹ As cited by Kwitny (1998: 19).

Like Havel, John Paul II believed that if East European civil societies were offered hope and human dignity and lost their fear, they would cease to acquiesce to communism. The Pope considered this acquiescence to be a major factor in the ability of the communists to retain power in East Europe.⁶¹⁰ John Paul II beatified Chmielowski in Kraków during his second Polish pilgrimage in 1983 in the presence of some two million faithful.⁶¹¹ The Pope reminded his vast audience that, as a 17 year-old student, Chmielowski had been wounded in the 1863-1864 Uprising and then exiled to Siberia. He referred to him as one of the ‘children of the Nation’ whose faith, hope and love would bring a victory of ‘truth, freedom and justice’.⁶¹²

5.3.2.2 The deployment of myths fostering tolerance and respect for the individual

For John Paul II to appeal to the liberal-leaning Polish dissident intelligentsia, he had to show that he subscribed to the more open papal political Catholicism associated with Vatican II. This he was able to do by disowning the illiberal Jewish and communist enemy mythology and thereby exhibiting his tolerance with regard to

⁶¹⁰ Weigel (1992: 89).

⁶¹¹ In November 1989, as East European communism was collapsing, the Pope canonised Chmielowski with the words:

“‘He is witness to, and participant in, the Pole’s historic battle to gain independence ... He went to the insurrection, from which he returned maimed ... Brother Albert, ... an apostle of his times. And of ours as well?’”
As cited by *OR*, 4 December, 1989, p.10.

⁶¹² Pax (1989: 462 & 465).

Judaism, atheism⁶¹³ and communism. His views on Judaism showed he clearly belonged to a liberal nationalist position that was ethically sustainable, and did not define his Polish nationalism in Pole = Catholic terms. His views on atheism and communism, because they did not engender hatred, meant that he could engage in a dialogue with those of the secular left, including some of those associated with *KOR* and with the estimated million communist party members who had joined *Solidarity* and who in doing so had demonstrated their serious misgivings about the practice of Polish communism.

The Deployment of the Organic Work Myth

Another influence on John Paul II's liberal thinking was Norwid and in particular this poet's interpretation of tolerance, respect for the individual, and the organic work myth. It would be incautious to claim that there was a direct causal relation, but what one can claim is that

⁶¹³ Wojtyła was one of the drafters of Vatican II's 1965 *In Our Time* declaration on relations with non-Christian religions which affirmed that not all Jews could be blamed for Christ's death. During the Final Session of Vatican II, in September 1965, Wojtyła spoke on atheism. He was careful to distinguish between an atheism imposed from above and an atheism which was a personal conviction. He believed that atheism diminished the fullness of a person's humanity, but he was able to empathise with the problems that unbelievers might have in dialogue with believers in God, as much as believers in dialogue with atheists. Walsh (1994: 30).

As Pope, John Paul II retained his more tolerant approach to atheism and sought a dialogue based upon common humanism. In his January 1983 *World Day of Peace Message*, he said:

“every person, whether a believer or not ... can and must preserve enough confidence in man, in his capacity of being reasonable, in his sense of what is good, of justice, of fairness, in his possibility of brotherly love and hope, which are never totally averted, in order to aim at recourse to dialogue.” As cited by *OR*, 24 November, 1986, p. 21.

John Paul II was very greatly influenced by Norwid and in philosophical sentiment, held several similar views. Norwid, asserts Szulc, may have exercised the greatest single artistic, intellectual, and religious influence on the young Wojtyła.⁶¹⁴ Later, as Pope, John Paul II declared that Norwid “was very, very important to me, and I still read him.”⁶¹⁵ Amongst the more significant of the commonly held views are the following. One should be wary of the bold claims about the possibility of immediate independence from heaven-on-earth millennialists. National self-determination would come via evolutionary non-violent organic work means. Work should also be valued for itself, should not be alienating, and could lead to personal and national liberation/salvation. For the organism that is the nation to function effectively one should value the attributes of all components of the organism, not, for example, just the intellectual or industrial worker, but the peasant too; not just the Catholic, but the Jew also.

The Non-Deployment of the Jewish Enemy Myth

John Paul II is not anti-Semitic, although like many Catholic Poles he may well perceive of ‘Jewish Poles’ as Polish citizens of Jewish rather than Polish nationality.⁶¹⁶ His lack of anti-Semitism was

⁶¹⁴ Szulc (1995: 40).

⁶¹⁵ Szulc (1995: 32).

⁶¹⁶ In Poland in June 1987, John Paul II addressed representatives of the small Polish Jewish community and said, in a revealing comment on his concept of ‘nation’:

“Be sure, dear brothers, that the Poles, this Polish Church, is in a spirit of profound solidarity with you when she looks closely at the terrible reality of

perhaps shaped by his experiences in his youth and during World War II,⁶¹⁷ and reinforced by the ‘spirit of dialogue’ associated with papal Catholicism from the 1960s. Wojtyła’s refusal to succumb to prevailing populist anti-Semitic pro-Dmowski illiberal norms during the pre-1945 period showed his strength of character. Later in his role as Archbishop/Cardinal and in his criticism of the regime’s evoking of the Jewish enemy myth in 1968, he demonstrated to the Polish secular left opposition that in him, they had a man of integrity and liberal principle.⁶¹⁸

5.3.3 The Deployment of Myths Fostering Fraternity with Other Nations and with Fellow Nationals

In the context of his war of political legitimacy with the Polish communist regime, John Paul II used the symbolism of Christian solidarity in two key ways. One way was by invoking the concept of

the extermination - the unconditional extermination - of your nation.’ ” As cited by *OR*, 3 August, 1987, p. 10.

⁶¹⁷ Wojtyła’s youth coincided with the height of illiberalism in pre-WWII Poland; but he had Jewish friends and neighbours. He remembers his parish priest preaching that ‘anti-Semitism is anti-Christian’ and his secondary school Polish literature teacher quoting from Mickiewicz’s 1848 *Manifesto for a Future Slav State Constitution* that ‘all citizens are equal - Israelites, too.’ During World War II, Wojtyła helped Jews seek refuge, thereby risking his life. (Szulc 1995: 68-70). *Time*, 3 April, 2000, p. 58 reports Wojtyła’s saving of a 14-year old Jewish girl - just released from a Nazi work camp - from death by exhaustion.

⁶¹⁸ Wojtyła showed his opposition to the anti-Semitism of factions within the Gomułka-led regime by encouraging his students to care for neglected and abandoned Jewish cemeteries. (Nowak 1982: 11). In February 1969, Wojtyła visited the two Jewish synagogues, in the Kazimierz district of Kraków (named after Kazimierz the Great), which the Nazis had turned into a sixteen-square mile walled ghetto during the war. Hitherto, nobody in Poland had heard of a cardinal visiting a synagogue.

Christian solidarity/fraternity with other European nations. The other way was by invoking Christian solidarity with and amongst urban and rural workers and by associating Christian solidarity with the ideals of the *Solidarity* and *Rural Solidarity* movement.

5.3.3.1 Fostering fraternity with other nations

John Paul II's fraternity with other nations was expressed in his belief in the rights of all nations to enjoy self-determination, and was probably shaped by his awareness of the dangers of illiberal imperialistic nationalisms (for example, those that had resulted in Poland's partitioning and re-partitioning) and by his sense of a common Christian European culture that he equated with a respect for the liberal values of human dignity and human rights. This sense of a Christian European culture helps explain the Pope's allusion to election and *antemurale christianitatis* myths and his deployment of the mythology surrounding two patron saints of Europe.

His awareness of the dangers of illiberal imperial nationalisms helps explain his perception of post-WWII Soviet imperialism, particularly in its denial of Poland's right to national self-determination and its attempts to 'colonise' Poland's economy, politics, and culture. Thus, when speaking to the Polish communist leadership during his 1979 pilgrimage he said that:

“All forms of political, economic or cultural colonialism remain in contradiction to the exigencies of the international order, it is necessary to esteem all the alliances and pacts which are based on reciprocal respect and on the recognition of the good of every

nation and of every State in the system of reciprocal relations.”⁶¹⁹

The above citation is significant in that it demonstrates the John Paul II recognised the universal right of all nations, not just Christian ones, to self-determination.

A key component in John Paul II's belief in the solidarity of European nations is his perception of the role of Christianity on the continent. He believes that Europe, both East and West, shares a common spirit, shaped by a common Christian history and a culture that respects human dignity and human rights. Within the context of a post-Yalta, divided Europe and Soviet coercive hegemony, advocating pan-European unity was politically dangerous in Eastern Europe. Within the official discourse of communist-ruled Poland, the issue of the unity of Europe was taboo. The task of the official media and 'court' intellectuals, asserts Kubik:

“was to discount the specificity of Eastern European culture and construct a picture of Poland fraternally related to the Soviet Union. The idea that European unity should be founded on the common Christian background must have sounded even more sacrilegious to the official ear.”⁶²⁰

John Paul II was prepared to break that taboo. Addressing Polish bishops at Jasna Góra in June 1979, John Paul II said that:

⁶¹⁹ As cited by *OR*, 11 June, 1979, p.3.

⁶²⁰ Kubik (1994: 143).

“Europe, which despite ongoing divisions of regimes, ideologies, and economic-political systems, cannot cease to seek its fundamental unity, and must address itself to Christianity.”⁶²¹

In 1980, speaking in France and echoing De Gaulle’s pan-European vision, the Pope said:

“in a multitude of instances, Europe as a whole, from the Atlantic to the Urals, in the history of the individual nations as well as in the community as a whole, bears witness to the link between culture and Christianity.”⁶²²

Again in 1988, the Pope spoke of Europe’s ‘common identity’ and of Europe rediscovering in its roots a ‘common spirit.’⁶²³ He expressed the wish that “Europe ... might one day extend to the dimensions it has been given by geography and still more by history.”⁶²⁴

Alluding to the Myths of Election and of Antemurale Christianis

As a young man in Kraków during WWII, Wojtyła was clearly influenced by the 19th Polish romantic political messianism that believed Poles were a ‘chosen nation’ with a special mission of disinterested sacrifice to achieve independence for Poland and for

⁶²¹ J. Weydenthal and K. Zamorski (eds.) *Pope In Poland*. Munich, *Radio Free Europe Research*, 1979, p.70 as cited by Kubik (1994: 143).

⁶²² As cited by Walsh (1994: 82). In 1959, de Gaulle, in a speech to the people of Strasbourg, had said: “Yes, it is Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, it is Europe, it is the whole of Europe, that will decide the fate of the world.” (*Le Monde*, 24 November, 1959, p. 4).

⁶²³ As cited by *OR*, 14 November, 1988, pp. 7-9.

⁶²⁴ Speaking in Strasbourg, October 1988, before the Council of Europe and the European Court. As cited by Walsh (1994: 201).

other Christian nations. In November 1939, barely four weeks after the Nazis had occupied Kraków, Wojtyła wrote “‘Poland has been the greatest martyr, she whom He had raised as Christ’s bulwark for so many centuries.’”⁶²⁵ Wojtyła confessed bitterly that until then he had not seen Poland ‘in her real truth’, having been unable to detect:

“‘the atmosphere of ideas that should have surrounded in dignity the nation of Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Norwid and Wyspiański ... Today ... I understand ... that the idea of Poland lived in us, as a romantic generation, but in truth it did not exist because the peasant was killed and imprisoned for demanding his just rights from the government ... Our liberation must be the gateway of Christ ... (This) nation collapsed, like Israel, because it did not encounter the messianic ideal, its own ideal ... that was not fulfilled.’”⁶²⁶

Although Wojtyła’s above WWII writings indicate a belief in messianism and the myth of election, with Poland as a chosen nation, as Pope, John Paul II did not explicitly preach such beliefs. He did, however, allude to the antemurale myth as exemplified earlier in his references to King Sobieski’s 1683 victory over the Turks. He also preached a ‘solidarity of Christian nations’, that hinted at special contributions and disinterested sacrifice by Poland.

⁶²⁵ As cited by Walsh (1994: 9) in a letter to Mieczysław Kotlarczyk, a language and drama scholar, who opened the world of 19th Polish Literature and was a key formative mentor to the young Wojtyła. (Szulc 1995: 78).

⁶²⁶ As cited by Szulc (1995: 108) quoting from the same letter to Kotlarczyk. Wojtyła’s comparing of Poland with Israel indicates the influence of the Old Testament myth of election upon him.

The Deployment of The Symbolism of Saints Cyril and Methodius

Another way in which John Paul II emphasised the common Christianity of East and West Europe and solidarity with other European nations was through the symbolism provided by Saints Cyril and Methodius, whom he declared ‘the Apostles of the Slavs’ and ‘co-patrons of Europe’ ⁶²⁷ at the end of 1980. For John Paul II, Saints Cyril and Methodius not only signified the concept of a Europe which embraced both halves of Yalta’s divisions, but also emphasised the messianic role of pan-Slavism in deepening, evangelising and defending a Christian Europe. The work of these two ‘co-patrons of Europe’, John Paul II believed:

“is an outstanding contribution to the formation of the common Christian roots of Europe ... which no serious attempt to reconstruct in a new and relevant way the unity of the Continent can ignore.” ⁶²⁸

In 1985, in an encyclical that commemorated Saint Methodius’s evangelising work and his death eleven centuries before, the Pope, referring to his 1980 decision to designate the saints as co-patrons, stated that it “was dictated by the firm hope of a gradual overcoming

⁶²⁷ In an Apostolic Letter *Of Outstanding Virtue*. The brothers, Cyril (827-869) and Methodius (c. 826-884/5) were Slav evangelists, canonised by Leo XIII in 1881, and have Feast Days dedicated to them in both the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. Thus they also serve for John Paul II as symbols of reunification of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, a mission close to John Paul II’s heart.

⁶²⁸ John Paul II (1985: para. 25).

in Europe and the world of everything that divides the Churches, nations and peoples.”⁶²⁹ John Paul II argued:

“Cyril and Methodius are ... the ... spiritual bridge between the Eastern and Western traditions ... (they) made a decisive contribution to the building of Europe not only in Christian religious communion but also to its civil and cultural union ... (the only way of) overcoming tensions and repairing the divisions and antagonisms (in Europe).”⁶³⁰

5.3.3.2 Fostering fraternity with fellow nationals

Two important ways in which the Pope demonstrated his fraternity with his fellow nationals, thereby fostering national solidarity, was by showing his respect for workers and by associating the Madonna myth with the cause of the political movement *Solidarity*.

Wojtyła was attracted to Norwid’s idea that work was intimately bound up with the meaning and dignity of human experience and man could redeem himself through his work. This respect for work and workers, was an important factor in establishing his temporal as well as spiritual credentials with *Solidarity* and *Rural Solidarity* members

⁶²⁹ John Paul II (1985: para. 2). He also, in the Encyclical *Slavorum Apostoli*, drew a connection between Christian Poland and the two saints: “The beginnings of Christianity in Poland are in a way linked with the work of the Brothers.” (John Paul II 1985: para. 24). In 1985, Slovakia - where the majority are Catholics and where Methodius was believed to be buried - witnessed an expression of religious feeling of unexpected strength. The Czechoslovakian communist regime refused to allow John Paul II to attend the eleventh centenary commemorations there. (Crampton 1997: 384 & 414).

⁶³⁰ John Paul II (1985: para. 27).

and those on the left who believed the working class was the vehicle for liberal change.

Wojtyła's respect for workers was strengthened by his own formative experiences, experiences which help explain why he believes not only in the intrinsic value of work, but also in solidarity with workers, and in social justice, including workers' rights. During 1940-1942 in Nazi-occupied Kraków, he worked as a manual worker in a quarry and in a factory, and lobbied management for better working conditions. In the summer of 1947, Wojtyła had first-hand experience of the worker-priest movement in Western Europe and between July 1948 and August 1949 he was an Assistant Pastor in a poor rural parish near Kraków.⁶³¹

Throughout the 1980s, John Paul II strongly supported *Solidarity* in a multitude of direct and indirect behind-the-scene ways. This support did a great deal to continue the sense of national solidarity engendered

⁶³¹ According to Szulc:

“Wojtyła's encounter with the worker-priest movement was another major turning point in his life. His attitude toward not only the relations between the Church and Catholic workers, but, just as importantly, toward the social welfare of workers was vastly influenced by his experiences in France and Belgium - on top of his own Kraków worker years. They would define much of his social justice philosophy.” (Szulc 1995: 148-149).

In 1956, he wrote a poem, *The Quarry*, where he expresses the beauty of work, and shows his solidarity with workers by paying tribute to a dead ‘companion of labour’, and praises his fellow workers. Recalling what he gained from his wartime experience of work, John Paul II said in March 1982:

“I brought with me the irreplaceable experience of the world and the profound dignity of human friendship and vibrant solidarity with my fellow workmen.” As cited by *OR*, 5 April, 1982, p.10.

by the Pope's 1979 pilgrimage and by the trade union during 1980-1981. It also greatly helped keep *Solidarity's* liberal flame alive during its 1982-1988 underground years.

In a February 1982 *Prayers To Our Lady*, John Paul II pleaded that Mary protect the recently banned *Solidarity*:

““Lady of Jasna Góra! Take under your maternal protection this name ‘Solidarność’ and this profoundly difficult task which it implies for the Poles of the eighties.””⁶³²

In so pleading, John Paul II not only demonstrated his solidarity with the workers, but linked the potency of the Madonna myth to help create a new *Solidarity* myth.

In 1983, addressing Polish bishops at Jasna Góra during his pilgrimage, the Pope said:

““The Christian doctrine of work postulates both the solidarity of workers among themselves and the need for honest solidarity with workers. I spoke of this theme in ... June 1982 ... ‘... Within the same community of work, solidarity sets out to discover the unity inherent in the nature of the work rather than the forces making for division and opposition. It refuses to conceive of society in terms of a struggle ‘against’ and of social relationships in terms of uncompromising opposition between classes. Solidarity ... will create the machinery of dialogue and co-operation that is needed to resolve opposition without seeking to destroy the opponent.’””⁶³³

⁶³² As cited by *OR*, 1 March, 1982, p. 11.

⁶³³ As cited by *OR*, 4 July, 1983, p.8.

The above quotation, in rejecting the use of class struggle and in focusing upon ‘the unity inherent in the nature of work’, echoes the thinking of Norwid and Brzozowski and helps explain the liberal democratic perspective - as opposed to the Marxist perspective of the role of labour - adopted by *Solidarity*.

5.4 Conclusions: Fostering A Liberal Political Culture Of Opposition

In his use of history, in his use of a protest repertoire that highlighted the Madonna myth, and in his use of pastoral mobilisation during his pilgrimages to communist-ruled Poland, John Paul II kept alive, and extended key features of the *Novena* as used by Wyszyński. Moreover, John Paul II developed the repertoire of pre-1945 myths and their associated meanings to continue the liberalisation process started by Wyszyński.

Political Catholicism has, as shown in Chapter 2, traditionally treated liberalism with much suspicion. This suspicion remained during the 20th century. John Paul II himself, in 1979, said that the world faced a choice between three movements that were ‘in acute conflict.’ One was Marxism, another “‘rationalism, Enlightenment and scientism ... the so-called ... ‘liberalism’ of Western nations, which brought with it the radical negation of Christianity’”⁶³⁴ The third option, he asserted, was Christianity. Much of this chapter implicitly takes issue with the Pope’s stark options and has shown that, in practice, within the Polish

⁶³⁴ As cited by Kwitny (1998: 349).

political context, he combined Christianity with many of the key values of liberalism and in doing so helped create a liberal political culture of opposition. An analogy may be the Church's belief that it could offer a *third way* between capitalism and communism. In practice, as exemplified by Christian Democracy, it supported a Christian-influenced liberal democracy. For example, the chapter has shown that although the starting point of much of the Pope's political thinking was from a particular Catholic/Christian/Polish perspective, John Paul II developed his thinking to propagate universal liberal ideals. Thus, although his motivation with regards to freedom of conscience may have been determined by his desire for freedom of Catholic worship in communist Poland, he extended this to propagate a belief in freedom of conscience for all and a belief in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.⁶³⁵ To take another example, although his concern for the rights of nations may have been focused upon Poland and other Christian European nations, he recognised that all nations had the right to self-determination and respect. In (John Paul 1991: para. 45), the Pope clearly expresses his belief in the modernliberal democratic welfare state.⁶³⁶ Others have also questioned the extent to which the Catholic Church was truly liberal

⁶³⁵ The dissident Catholic intellectual Hannelowa told this author of her realisation that legal rights meant rights for all, even if that meant freedom for non-believers to choose different values. (Hannelowa 1998).

⁶³⁶

“The State must contribute to the achievement of these goals both directly and indirectly. Indirectly and according to the principle of subsidiarity, by creating favorable conditions for the free exercise of economic activity, which will lead to abundant opportunities for employment and sources of wealth. Directly and according to the principle of solidarity, by defending the weakest, by placing certain limits on the autonomy of the parties who determine working conditions, and by ensuring in every case the necessary minimum support for the unemployed worker.” (John Paul II 1991: para. 1).

or merely expedient.⁶³⁷ Also as other chapters argue that the liberalisation of the opposition was not merely transient and not merely a question of expediency, this debate will be revisited in the concluding chapter.

The present chapter demonstrated how John Paul II was able to exploit the attributes of pre-1945 myths, symbols and rituals to foster a potent liberal political culture of opposition that constituted a serious challenge to the regime's political culture. The Pope exploited the transmitting ability of myths and symbols that allowed him to link the legitimacy of past struggles to contemporary ones and thereby facilitate the process of 'adapted continuity'. He demonstrated the ability of rituals to create solidarity in the absence of complete political consensus and the ability of myths and symbols, given their inherent attributes of condensation of meaning, multivocality and ambiguity, to give different messages to different people. The ritual of annual commemoration, of Holy Mass, and of pilgrimages, afforded John Paul II the opportunity of combining numerous cognitive messages with high emotion. For, as Kertzer recognised, rituals do not simply excite, they also instruct with the potency of that instruction depending heavily on the power of ritual to place the individual in a receptive frame of mind.

The chapter has also shown how John Paul II was able, aided by his deployment of pre-1945 myths, to credibly and effectively synthesise strands of pre-1945 idealistic and realistic proto-liberal nationalism

⁶³⁷ See, for example Szacki (1995: 73).

and strands of Polish and papal liberal political Catholicism. The chapter has shown that the pre-1945 myths allowed him to continue the process of synthesis between nationalism and political Catholicism; a synthesis that contributed to the formation and fostering of a liberal political culture of opposition. The chapter has shown how, in his rejection of the meanings attached to the enemy myths associated with the illiberal Dmowski-influenced political culture of pre-WWII Poland, the Pope was able to use these myths to criticise illiberal systems and regimes rather than engender hatred.

Kubik (1994: 152) describes the religious ceremonies of the Pope's 1979 pilgrimage in terms of 'transformative ceremonies' that

"do not serve to settle social conflicts but to articulate and amplify them; they are staged by the oppressed in situations in which other forms of rebellion do not seem viable."

Kubik's point is highly significant in helping to explain the crucial role of political Catholicism and its pre-1945 myths, symbols and rituals. During the Stalinist era, the regime had tried to take on the Church frontally and had failed, as was symbolically expressed by Wyszyński's release from detention in 1956. Given this failure, the regime was very reluctant to take on the Church directly again. At the same time, the regime was prepared to attack the Church if it was explicitly political, and to ban other components of the opposition, particularly when they raised transparently contemporary political issues. The pre-1945 myths were the Church's way of manifesting an alternative political culture of opposition where other avenues were denied. Despite the regime seeing through this smokescreen, it was much harder for it to prevent the use of such ethereal, multivocal and

ambiguous mythology, particularly with the eyes of the world upon its chief propagator, the Pope.⁶³⁸

John Paul II's political exploitation of mythology, symbolism and ritual was so effective during his 1979 pilgrimage, and the resulting sense of national solidarity so strong, that it was this pilgrimage that proved to be the point of no return for Poland rather than the advent of the political movement *Solidarity*. As a result of his 1979 pilgrimage, John Paul II broke the hegemony of communist discourse that had hitherto prevailed.⁶³⁹ What is more, during this pilgrimage John Paul II imbued millions of Poles with a sense of national solidarity. John Paul II developed this sense of national solidarity not only through his unifying presence, but also through his use of the symbolism of Christian solidarity and of ritual, which possesses the power, as Kertzer recognised,⁶⁴⁰ to produce bonds of solidarity without requiring uniformity of belief. The chapter has shown how, as part of this 1979 national solidarity formation process, the Polish Pope helped to continue the process of uniting dissident liberal-leaning Catholic and secular left intelligentsia through his deployment of myths, symbols and rituals. The national solidarity engendered by the Pope helps explain the birth barely a year later of *Solidarity* and the liberal road that it was to take. John Paul II's post-1981 deployment of pre-1945 myths, symbols and rituals helps explain how *Solidarity's*

⁶³⁸ Nearly a thousand foreign correspondents covered the Pope's 1979 pilgrimage, (*Guardian*, 7 June, 1979, p.6) and there were even more for the second in 1983. One estimate for 1983, perhaps including Polish journalists too, said 'nearly 1,500' (*The Universe*, 24 June, 1983, p.14).

⁶³⁹ As Kubik (1994: 150) notes.

⁶⁴⁰ Kertzer (1988: 99 & 67).

liberal flame was kept alive during the years of the union's banishment. The following chapter explores the influence of pre-1945 myths of nationalism and political Catholicism, that John Paul II so successfully deployed, on *Solidarity*.

CHAPTER 6: THE INFLUENCE OF THE MYTHS, SYMBOLS AND RITUALS OF PRE-1945 POLISH NATIONALISM AND POLITICAL CATHOLICISM UPON *SOLIDARITY*

6.1 Introduction: The Symbiotic Relationship Between *Solidarity* And Polish Nationalism And Political Catholicism

The main aim of this chapter is to show the influence of myths, symbols and rituals of pre-1945 nationalism and political Catholicism on *Solidarity* and, in particular, to show how these myths, symbols and rituals acted as vehicles for the union's liberal political culture. Much of the empirical evidence within this chapter is related to outward manifestations of nationalism and political Catholicism that appeared during the formative period of the 14-31 August 1980 strike at the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard. This strike culminated in the historic Gdańsk Agreement and the emergence of the fledgling independent workers' movement, *Solidarity*. The *Solidarity* movement actually comprised two trade union/political wings: *Solidarity* and *Rural Solidarity*. During their first legal phases that ended with Martial Law in December 1981, the vast majority of Polish workers chose to be members of these unions, despite the continued presence of regime-sanctioned unions. There were some 10 million urban, mainly industrial, workers within *Solidarity* and some 3.5 million agricultural workers within *Rural Solidarity*.

One of the two key Western academic debates ⁶⁴¹ of the 1990s concerning *Solidarity* in its first legal 1980-1981 phase, was

⁶⁴¹ The other key debate concerned the role of the Soviets in the introduction of Martial Law to outlaw *Solidarity*. Garton Ash (1999: 364).

concerned with the extent to which *Solidarity* owed its genesis to the workers themselves ⁶⁴² or to the opposition intellectuals, especially those within *KOR*, who might have played a more, or equally, significant role. See, for example, Kubik (1994: 230-238) and Osa (1997: 339-343), or Garton Ash (1999: 364-365) who is a proponent of this latter ‘equally significant’ position. ⁶⁴³ Although the main purpose of this chapter is not to focus on the genesis of *Solidarity*, nevertheless this and other Part 2 chapters have a bearing on the ‘workers and/or intellectuals’ debate. Kubik (1994: 238) concludes that it was neither the workers nor the intellectuals that were responsible for *Solidarity*, but rather ‘a new cultural-political class’. The judgement reached by this author is that both workers and intellectuals were ‘necessary but not sufficient in themselves’ to create and sustain the liberal-leaning *Solidarity* political movement of the 1980s, and that liberal nationalism and liberal political Catholicism played a greater role in shaping *Solidarity*’s outlook than class politics. A more pertinent issue, given the concerns of this thesis, is the role of pre-1945 myths of nationalism and political Catholicism in the genesis and sustenance of *Solidarity*. Osa (1997: 339-340) asserts “the most dismissed and controversial bystander in the debate over *Solidarity*’s origins is the Catholic church.” Osa (1997: 364) concludes that “the Church was crucial in the emergence and

⁶⁴² See Roman Laba’s *Roots of Solidarity: A Political Sociology of Poland’s Working-Class Democratization*, Princeton University Press: Princeton: 1991 and Lawrence Goodwyn’s *Breaking the Barrier: The Rise of Solidarity in Poland*. Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1991. Laba and Goodwyn both argue that the workers were the prime force responsible for the genesis of *Solidarity*.

⁶⁴³ Garton Ash (1999: 365) concedes however that *KOR* secular left members Kuroń and Michnik thought that free trade unions were impossible in 1980, given the implications of the Brezhnev Doctrine.

activation of the movement across social boundaries.” This author concurs with Osa’s conclusion and in this chapter, systematically explores the Church’s influence, via Catholic myths, symbols and rituals, upon *Solidarity*. The chapter also systematically examines the influence of national myths on the genesis and sustenance of *Solidarity*. Only a few works have explored the influence of mythology/symbolism on *Solidarity*. Laun in her article (Laun 2000) does so indirectly, but her main focus is on the impact of idealism and realism within *Solidarity* during the 1980-1993 period. Kubik (1994 Chapter 7) devotes a chapter to the ‘Symbols and ceremonies of Solidarity’, but does so without an easily discernible theme.

The chapter will argue that Polish nationalism and political Catholicism, in providing their repertoires of pre-1945 myths, symbols and rituals, contributed a great deal to *Solidarity*.⁶⁴⁴ These myths, symbols and rituals, it will be argued, helped create a sense of solidarity, enhance morale and legitimise the union’s struggle for its very existence, for its survival, and for its tasks of bettering the conditions of workers and of striving for popular sovereignty and national self-determination.

As previous chapters have already shown, such is the closeness of the relationship between nationalism and political Catholicism that it is

⁶⁴⁴ This chapter focuses on the politically more significant urban *Solidarity*, but it should not be forgotten that the influence of nationalism and political Catholicism on *Rural Solidarity* was probably even greater. {See, for example, Garton Ash 1991 and *The Times*, 22 January, 1981 as cited by Szajkowski (1983: 148-149).

inherently difficult to portray their contributions separately. The empirical evidence provided within this chapter supports this contention of closeness and inextricable connections. Notwithstanding, insofar as it is possible, the chapter will reveal Polish nationalism's contribution to *Solidarity* by exploring the role of myths and symbols of pre-1945 idealistic nationalism and by examining *Solidarity*'s deployment of the symbolism of the national flag, anthem and emblem and its deployment of the ritual of protest singing. Similarly, the chapter will reveal political Catholicism's contribution to *Solidarity* by exploring the role of the ritual of Holy Mass, the role of the myths of sacred omnipotent saviours, and by examining the role of political Catholicism in influencing *Solidarity*'s leader, Lech Wałęsa.

Although it is not the immediate concern of this thesis, it should not be forgotten that political Catholicism also gave much more tangible aid to *Solidarity* during 1980-1989. Examples of this contribution include political Catholicism's support for the workers' civil rights, political Catholicism's negotiations with the regime on *Solidarity*'s behalf when the union was outlawed during the 1982-1988 period, and the practical support, including physical resources, afforded by the Church to *Solidarity* during the critical 1989 election campaign. It should also be noted that the relationship between *Solidarity* on the one hand, and Polish nationalism and political Catholicism on the other was a symbiotic one, with both sides contributing and gaining. Thus in 1989, Polish nationalism, in large part thanks to *Solidarity*, realised its twin key aims of popular sovereignty and national self-

determination. Political Catholicism also received a great deal from *Solidarity*, not least the right of access to the mass media, one of the original sixteen demands of the August 1980 Gdańsk strikers. These original demands were made on the 18 August. On 20 August 1980, the Inter-Factory Strike Committee had extended the original 16 demands to 21 and now, in an example of the nascent union's liberal nature, were asking for mass media access as a constitutional right, and not only for the Catholic Church, but "for representatives of all Faiths."⁶⁴⁵ The strikers' demands were conceded. The 31 August 1980 Gdańsk Agreement included the following point:

"The access to the mass media by religious organizations ... will be worked out through an agreement between the state institutions and the religious associations."⁶⁴⁶

6.2 The Role Of Myths And Symbols Of Pre-1945 Idealistic Nationalism

Many of the myths and symbols deployed by *Solidarity* were linked with the traditions of idealistic nationalism of pre-1945 Poland, such as the myths of military valour associated with the physical force tradition of the period of Partitions (1772-1918) and of WWII (1939-1945). Thus during the 1980s, *Solidarity* members and supporters commemorated the anniversaries of the 1830-1831 and 1863-1864 Uprisings, and the 1944 Warsaw Uprising.⁶⁴⁷ Like the Pope,

⁶⁴⁵ Part of their 3rd demand. As cited by Biernacki (2000: 18).

⁶⁴⁶ As cited by Stokes (1991a: 207).

⁶⁴⁷ Wenzel (1998: 142).

Solidarity deployed the myths of military valour not to signal its desire to use physical force, but to remind those in power that there were extreme circumstances, such as a Soviet invasion, where the use of force by the opposition was justified.

Solidarity's idealistic nationalism was sometimes expressed via the myths and symbols of romanticism and of neo-romanticism as epitomised by the works of the Romantic Bards, Mickiewicz and Słowacki, and by the mythology/symbolism surrounding Piłsudski and the Home Army (*AK*). On 28 August 1980, actors of the Theatre of the Coast performed to the striking Gdańsk shipyard workers. They recited from Poland's great romantic poets, greatly appreciated by the strikers.⁶⁴⁸ In *Tomes of the Polish Nation and the Polish Pilgrimage* (1832), written just after the 1830-1831 National Uprising, initially against the Russians, Mickiewicz, the most influential of the Bards, deploys the Christ of Nations' myth of election in his political messianism. He presents Poland as a nation that has been martyred to restore Christ to Europe, and the partitions as a divine crucifixion.⁶⁴⁹ The actors read for the Gdańsk shipyard workers from the 1832 work, including the line where Poland speaks and evokes the liberal values of liberty and equality: "Whoever comes to me will be free and equal, because I am FREEDOM."⁶⁵⁰ In response to the strikers' repeated requests, *The Confederate Song* from Słowacki's *Father Mark* (1843) was mass-duplicated. The Confederacy referred to in the song was the

⁶⁴⁸ Kubik (1994: 191).

⁶⁴⁹ Laun (2000).

⁶⁵⁰ As cited by Bądkowski (1982: 137).

Bar Confederacy, which, it will be recalled, was an anti-royalist group of Polish nobles that waged a war of national self-determination from 1768-1772 against the ever increasing Russian domination. The song evokes myths of omnipotent saviours in the cause of national self-determination and begins with the defiant words:

““Never shall we make alliance with kings,
Never shall we bow our necks to might;
It is from Christ we take our orders,
Each of us Mary’s knight!””

The poem ends with the declaration:

““Hunger nor misfortune shall not break us,
Nor the world’s flattery shall lead us astray:
For we are all the recruits of Christ,
Each of us in His pay!””⁶⁵¹

Piłsudski was known for his lack of anti-Semitism.⁶⁵² In embracing the symbolism of Piłsudski, who was seen not as a dictator nor a denier of popular sovereignty, but as a symbol of Poland’s restoration of national self-determination against Russian/Soviet coercive hegemony, *Solidarity* disavowed the symbolism of Dmowski and his illiberalism. The *Solidarity* press in 1981, for example, began to write about Polish national minorities, including the Jews, in a positive

⁶⁵¹ As cited by Bądkowski (1982: 131).

⁶⁵² For example, in 1926 Piłsudski granted some 600,000 Jews who had fled into Poland from the East due to fear of persecution full citizenship rights, saying that Poland could not afford to have second-class citizens. (www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Parliament/6764/1917-1938.html).

light.⁶⁵³ Several of *Solidarity*'s advisers - for example Bronisław Geremek, Kuroń and Michnik - were of Jewish origin. A hand-written inscription placed on the wooden cross that in August 1980 marked the memorial spot for the 1970 shipyard martyrs (see later) was a line associated with the Piłsudski's Legionnaires' 1917 song *March of the First Brigade*: "To want to is to be able to. Józef Piłsudski."⁶⁵⁴ During the 1980s, *Solidarity* members and supporters commemorated the 11 November Independence Day anniversaries. In doing so, they evoked a foundation myth closely associated with Piłsudski and the restoration of national self-determination.

Amongst the nationalist slogans daubed in the Lenin Shipyard in August 1980 was the Home Army's motto: *God, Honour, Fatherland*.⁶⁵⁵ Two sources that may have stirred the Home Army myths of military valour in the cause of national self-determination were memoirs by Jan Nowak-Jeziorański (1913-) and by Stefan Korboński (1901-1989) of their WWII underground resistance experience. Despite the regime's attempts to erase the exploits of the Home Army from Polish history, the two memoirs were disseminated in the underground press in the late 1970s and, according to Anna Cienciała, helped fuel the national revival embodied in the *Solidarity* movement.⁶⁵⁶ During the war, Nowak- Jeziorański had been a courier

⁶⁵³ Wróbel (1997: 566).

⁶⁵⁴ Kubik (1994: 187).

⁶⁵⁵ Bądkowski (1982: 132).

⁶⁵⁶ Cienciała (1983: 78).

between the Home Army and the Polish Government in exile in London. From 1952-1976, Nowak- Jeziorański was Director of the Polish Section of the CIA-funded Radio Free Europe. During WWII, Korboński had been a member of the Political Consultative Committee of Sikorski's London-based Polish Government. In 1945, Korboński became the Government in Exile's *Acting Delegate* to Poland. In 1947 he was briefly an MP for the Polish Peasants' Party (*PSL*), but in November 1947 Korboński emigrated to the US.⁶⁵⁷

6.3 *Solidarity's* Deployment Of The Symbolism Of The National Flag, Anthem And Emblem

When *Solidarity* deployed the national flag, anthem and emblem, it did so in a manner that made it clear that its deployment differed from that of the Party-state's deployment. The Party-state's deployment of these symbols of the nation attempted to convey that the Party-State best represented the nation. In contrast, *Solidarity's* deployment signalled that the trade union better represented the nation than the Party-state. It signalled this difference by altering the political meanings associated with these symbols of the nation and by challenging the Party-state's attempts to monopolise their use. In 1982, Maria Janion, a Professor of Polish Literature, poetically wrote about the August 1980 Gdańsk strikers' response to the state's 'institutionalisation' of the National Anthem, of the national colours, and of the national emblem - symbols which the regime allowed to be

⁶⁵⁷ Coutouvidis (1986: 30, 187, 188 & 224).

used in strictly defined circumstances, treating all other uses as a crime. Janion argued that the shipyard workers:

“hung out ... the national flags ‘without an order’, and gave the powers that be to understand that they would use the National Anthem and the national emblem and the national colours when it was absolutely necessary for them - to live.”⁶⁵⁸

The National Flag was prominently displayed within the Lenin Shipyard during the August 1980 strike. Several writers have commented upon the role of the national flag in defining national identity, and of its political potency. Kertzer, for example, argues that:

“a flag is not simply a decorated cloth, but the embodiment of a nation; indeed, the nation is defined as much by the flag as the flag is defined by the nation.”⁶⁵⁹

What is more, the founder of modern political Zionism and the designer of the Israeli state flag, Theodore Herzl, went even further: “‘with a flag one can do anything, even lead a people into the promised land.’”⁶⁶⁰

The National Anthem, as sung by the 1980 strikers, was a song of protest, for it expressed their sense of continuing to fight for national self-determination. The strikers, not least Wałęsa, frequently sang the Anthem. In his memoirs, Wałęsa wrote,

⁶⁵⁸ Janion (1982: 136).

⁶⁵⁹ Kertzer (1988: 7).

⁶⁶⁰ As cited by Kertzer (1988: 174).

“I sometimes feel as if I belong to a past age, the age which is evoked in our national anthem. ...The conditions in which this anthem saw the light of day are much the same as those we live under today, and the same can be said of the hopes and values it expresses: courage, defiance, pride.”⁶⁶¹

It will be recalled that the National Anthem was composed in 1797, shortly after the third partitioning of Poland, for General Dąbrowski who was organising Polish Legions to be incorporated into Napoleon’s army. Poles hoped that Napoleon, in his opposition to the three partitioning powers of Poland, would deliver to them national self-determination. Wałęsa in his above-mentioned comments was clearly stating the view held by most *Solidarity* members and supporters. This was that the post-1945 position in Poland was, as a result of foreign coercive hegemony, similar to that of the period of partitions, namely that Poland had been yet again deprived of her right to national self-determination.

In the afternoon of 24 August 1980, the final fragments of the address of First Secretary Gierek to the Party’s Central Committee were relayed to the Lenin Shipyard strikers. When Gierek started to intone the *Internationale*, all the strikers started to sing the National Anthem very loudly.⁶⁶² The incident graphically illustrated the strikers use of the National Anthem as a protest song and showed how songs could serve as symbols of the confrontation between international class politics and nationalism; a confrontation that was an important aspect

⁶⁶¹ Wałęsa (1988: 310-311).

⁶⁶² Bądkowski (1982: 77).

of the war of political legitimacy between the regime and the opposition.

In August 1980, the national emblem, a white eagle on a red background, was to be seen displayed around the Lenin Shipyard. Usually, the displayed eagles were crowned, in defiance of the communist regime that had removed the crown from the emblem shortly after coming to power. In an incident that illustrated both the political idealism and realism of the *Solidarity* strikers, the strikers' leadership ordered the crowns adorning the two eagles displayed on the shipyard fence to be removed, so as to avoid unnecessary confrontation with the authorities.^{663 664}

The political potency of the *Solidarity* emblem, created during the August 1980 strikes, can be better understood, if it is seen in terms of combining the symbolism of the national colours, the symbolism of the national flag and the symbolism of solidarity amongst fellow nationals. The colours used for the emblem are the national colours of white and red. Atop the letter *N* of the union's name *SOLIDARNOSĆ* there is a small Polish flag. The letters leaning one upon another within the word *SOLIDARNOSĆ* signified the union's belief in solidarity with fellow citizens. The letters cannot stand by themselves: each needs the support of its neighbours.⁶⁶⁵ Evidence of the political potency of the *Solidarity* emblem is provided by the fact that soon

⁶⁶³ In one case at least, the strikers had literally sawn the crown off. Bądkowski (1982: 183).

⁶⁶⁴ Kubik (1994: 195).

⁶⁶⁵ Kubik (1994: 7 & 195).

after the banning of the union in December 1981, the regime decreed the use of the *Solidarity* emblem as illegal.⁶⁶⁶ With the banning of the emblem, many Poles wore, in lieu of *Solidarity* badges, badges with the Black Madonna icon. This use of the icon was also a telling indication of the political potency of the Madonna myth, and of the myth's ability to adapt to new political circumstances and serve as a vehicle for political messages when other alternatives were prohibited.

6.4 *Solidarity's* Deployment Of The Ritual Of Protest Singing

Chapter 1 noted the role of the ritual of annual commemoration in constantly reviving the collective ideals of the community. As exemplified in this chapter and also Chapter 3, *Solidarity* also deployed anniversaries, and in so doing, not only revived ideals but legitimised its own struggle by association with past struggles. Chapter 1 also explored the theoretical role of rituals in morale enhancing, in legitimising and in solidarity creating, without requiring uniformity of belief. The practical roles of rituals of the singing of hymns/protest songs and rituals of Holy Masses supporting *Solidarity* were to validate this theory. The political significance of these rituals was felt particularly during times of crisis, such as the strikes of 1980 and 1988, during the autumn of 1981, and following the murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko (1947-1984).

During the 1980s, there were many times when *Solidarity* members and supporters must have despaired of victory over the regime.

⁶⁶⁶ Mach (1985: 34).

Kertzer notes that the singing of protest songs helps maintain the morale of protesters in the face of defeat by legitimating their own cause and by implication, de-legitimizing that of their adversaries. He adds:

“Such rites are also important in attaching participants to a longer tradition of protest, lending the legitimacy obtained by the earlier protest movement to the newer movement.”⁶⁶⁷

During the August 1980 Lenin Shipyard Strike many pre-1945 patriotic protest songs were sung. Many of them evoked the symbolism associated with the struggle for national self-determination. Apart from the use of the National Anthem composed in 1797, the strikers sang the 1816 *God Who Protects Poland* hymn; the 1908 *Rota* song; and the 1917 *March of the First Brigade*⁶⁶⁸ song of the Piłsudski’s legionnaires who fought against Czarist Russian troops in the fight for national self-determination.

Virtually every evening during the Lenin Shipyard Strike of August 1980, the strikers, led by Wałęsa, sang the National Anthem and *God Who Protects Poland*.⁶⁶⁹ Thus, on the evening before the signing of the Gdańsk Agreement, Wałęsa ended his address to some two to three thousand strikers with the words:

“tomorrow ... our Poland will have more citizens. And now, therefore, let us sing the National Anthem for this country of

⁶⁶⁷ Kertzer (1988: 122).

⁶⁶⁸ Laun (2000).

⁶⁶⁹ Wałęsa (1988: 162).

ours. Oh, and one more thing: Let us sing a religious song to God because now we can't go any further without God.”⁶⁷⁰

His juxtapositioning of sentences in the above address skilfully linked the vision of popular sovereignty with a nationalism legitimised by the National Anthem and with an evocation of the omnipotent saviour myth of God. The strikers, by defiantly singing ‘Restore, O Lord, our free country’ instead of the regime-preferred ‘Bless, O Lord, our free country’, were calling for national self-determination with the help of the God myth. It will be recalled that the striker’s version was the original last line from the 1816 patriotic hymn as sung during the Partitions.

The *Rota* song, it will also be recalled, was a song protesting the process of Germanisation within the German partition. By altering the lyrics of the *Rota* appropriately, for example the lines “We won’t be spat on by the Teutons, Nor let our children become German,” the strikers sometimes switched the focus away from hatred of the German enemy - one of the Party-state’s key illiberal enemy myths - to a criticism of the Soviet regime.

Even when the strikers sang more recent protest songs, such songs could deploy the myths and symbols associated with the struggles of the past to fight current battles. The prime example of such a song was the popular song with lyrics by Jan Pietrzak *That Poland may be Poland*. The song acquired the political legitimacy associated with the protest song-singing ritual. It did so by linking Poland’s current

⁶⁷⁰ Bądkowski (1982: 66).

struggle for national self-determination with pre-1945 traditions of protest against lack of national self-determination due to foreign domination.⁶⁷¹ Written in 1976, and influenced by the Radom and Ursus workers' protests⁶⁷² against regime-introduced price rises, *That Poland may be Poland* became the unofficial hymn of *Solidarity* during the 1980 August strikes. The song included references to patriotic insurrectionary, with descriptions of Poland's historic struggle against both Russian and German partitioning. It also had references to the poetry of Norwid and to the priest Piotr Ściegienny (1801-1890). In 1842, Father Ściegienny had written, under the guise of a Gregory XVI papal encyclical, a political tract that defended a Christian vision of socialism. Father Ściegienny organised a revolutionary conspiracy among peasants against Czarist rule and, on capture, Ściegienny was sentenced to a Siberian labour camp. As with most National Anthems, including the Polish, Pietrzak's song evoked sentimental imagery, in this case, of mothers and wives sewing the 'Honour and Fatherland' motto into flags.⁶⁷³ The motto *God, Honour, Fatherland* had a long heritage associated with the Uprisings during the Partitions, with the Second Republic and with the Home Army who appropriated the motto as their own. The references to Norwid and the use of the 'Honour and Fatherland' motto without the evocation of God may be indicative of Pietrzak's desire to evoke a liberal, inclusive nationalism that did not exclude non-Catholics. His reference to Father Ściegienny, and thereby to a Christian vision of

⁶⁷¹ Laun (2000).

⁶⁷² There were smaller protests elsewhere in Poland too.

⁶⁷³ Source for the lyrics: <http://www-personal.engin.umich.edu/~zbniew/Hymny/HPie.html>.

socialism, may be indicative of Pietrzak's wish to portray a liberal/progressive political Catholicism.

6.5 The Role Of The Ritual Of Holy Mass

In December 1970, Baltic-coast workers protested a regime-forced increase in prices. On 16 December 1970, with the police and army surrounding the Baltic shipyards, Gdańsk workers were shot dead by regime forces in front of the gates of the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard.⁶⁷⁴ For one shipyard worker in particular, a member of the 1970 strike committee, the duty to honour the martyrs' memory became a driving force, almost an obsession. His name was Lech Wałęsa.⁶⁷⁵ The day after the shooting, on Thursday 17 December 1970, workers on their way to work at the Gdynia shipyards were also shot dead on the orders of the authorities.⁶⁷⁶ Subsequently, the local parish priest to the Gdynia Paris Commune Shipyard, Father Hilary Jastak,⁶⁷⁷ celebrated,

⁶⁷⁴ Normally when reference was made by writers on *Solidarity* to the Gdańsk Shipyard during the 1980 and 1988 strikes, it meant the Lenin Shipyard. However, there were another two, less well-known shipyards in Gdańsk; the Repair Shipyard and the Northern Shipyard.

⁶⁷⁵ Garton Ash (1991a: 14).

⁶⁷⁶ On the same day, 17 December 1970, striking shipyard workers in Szczecin demonstrating outside the local Party headquarters were fired at and tanks were deployed. Kuroń (1996: 305).

⁶⁷⁷ Father Jastak was a priest to the Church of the Sacred Heart, the local church to the Gdynia Paris Commune Shipyard. In the late 1970s, *Free Trade Union (WZZ)* activists used his Presbytery and flat as 'safe houses'. *WZZ* was to be the precursor of *Solidarity*, with many of the *WZZ* activists involved in the formation and leadership of *Solidarity*.

first daily, later annually,⁶⁷⁸ a Holy Mass for ‘the killed, the wounded and the imprisoned’ following the ‘Black Thursday’ attacks.⁶⁷⁹

In retrospect, Wałęsa and Father Jastak’s responses to the 1970 killings can be seen as having significant political repercussions. Wałęsa’s 1970 response helps explain his involvement in the 1980 formation of *Solidarity*. Similarly Jastak’s 1970s’ deployment of Holy Mass to show solidarity with the dissident workers helps explain the critical 1980s’ role of Holy Mass in supporting *Solidarity* and the moral and political legitimacy enjoyed by political Catholicism in its support of dissident workers and subsequently of *Solidarity*.

Shortly after the 14 August 1980 commencement of the Lenin Shipyard strike, a *ROPCiO* activist suggested that the local priest to the Lenin Shipyard, Father Henryk Jankowski,⁶⁸⁰ dedicate a wooden

⁶⁷⁸ Wałęsa (1988: 72).

⁶⁷⁹ On 27 January 1971, Jastak wrote to Wyszynski with a detailed account of the true events of ‘Black Thursday’. It was, he said, necessary to multiply the official figure of 21 deaths, ‘several times’. “In one hospital alone 15 people died.” Wójcicki (1999: 171).

⁶⁸⁰ Father Jankowski, (1937-), is rector of Saint Brigid’s, the local church to the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard. From August 1980, he was also Chaplain to *Solidarity*. Jankowski is a friend of Wałęsa. After Martial Law, Jankowski organised aid for repressed *Solidarity* members and their families. Atypically for priests that supported *Solidarity* during the 1980s, Jankowski is known for his illiberal nationalism, including anti-Semitism. His views are reminiscent of the inter-war integral nationalism of followers of Dmowski and of certain Church figures and also of certain 1945-1989 ‘national non-communists’. In 1995, for example, Jankowski likened the Star of David to the hammer-and-sickle and swastika, and

cross to the memory of the December 1970 martyrs. On 16 August 1980, a delegation of striking workers in the Gdynia Paris Commune Shipyard requested that Holy Mass be celebrated in their shipyard also. Hence the following day, Sunday 17 August 1980, the same day as Father Jankowski was celebrating Mass in the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard, Father Jastak celebrated Holy Mass in the neighbouring Gdynia Paris Commune Shipyard.⁶⁸¹

Garton Ash wrote an eyewitness account of the first Holy Mass at the Lenin Shipyard:

“So at nine o’clock on the morning of Sunday 17 August, Father Jankowski celebrated Mass at a makeshift altar on a platform inside Gate No. 2 (the Main Gate of the Lenin Shipyard). The blue-grey gates were adorned with flowers and a large, framed colour photograph of the Pope. ... After Mass, Jankowski blessed the crude wooden cross ... Later a sheet of paper, decorated with a ribbon in the national colours and a small image of the Madonna, was pinned to the cross. It bore some lines from Byron’s *Giaour*:⁶⁸²

*For Freedom’s battle once begun
Bequeath’d by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won.”*⁶⁸³

said the Poles should not allow those who owed ‘secret allegiance’ to Israel or Russia to remain in the government. ([http://www. axt.org .uk/antidem/ archive/ archive2/poland/poland.htm#Religious](http://www.axt.org.uk/antidem/archive/archive2/poland/poland.htm#Religious) and [http://www. warsawvoice.pl/v407/ News01.html](http://www.warsawvoice.pl/v407/News01.html)).

⁶⁸¹ Wójcicki (1999: 181).

⁶⁸² Byron’s *Giaour* was fairly well known in Poland thanks to a translation by Mickiewicz.

⁶⁸³ Garton Ash (1991a: 48-49).

However, as noted by Garton Ash, and an indication of the worker's disavowal of the physical force tradition, the dedication omitted the word 'bleeding'. Some 4,000 strikers took part in the Mass; an additional 2,000 were outside the gates.⁶⁸⁴ From 18 August 1980, three priests could be seen inside the Lenin Shipyard saying Mass.⁶⁸⁵ The Holy Mass now became a daily part of the strikers' life.

On Sunday 24 August 1980 several thousand took part in a morning Holy Mass celebrated by Father Jankowski on both sides of the Main Lenin Shipyard Gate. Confession and communion followed the Mass.⁶⁸⁶

A young priest, Father Małkowski, wrote an account of his visit on 27 and 28 August 1980, first to the Gdańsk Lenin and then the Gdynia Paris Commune Shipyards. It seemed that the proletarian symbolism of Lenin and of the Paris Commune had been replaced by the symbolism of a more liberal political Catholicism.

“My cassock enabled me to gain entry to the Shipyard. The enemy was nowhere to be seen; the police kept their distance and behaved fairly discreetly. It was the first time for several decades that power had been in the hands of the people, and these people turned out to be God's people - not a mob thirsting for anarchy or

⁶⁸⁴ Szajkowski (1983: 91).

⁶⁸⁵ From Keston File PO/11/1(1980) 'Church Involvement in Workers' Unrest: The Episcopate, the Pope', quoting *Catholic Herald*, 22 August, 1980; 'Polish strikers rally to Church.'

⁶⁸⁶ Biernacki (2000: 22) and Bądkowski (1982: 77).

revenge, but people capable of self-government, aware that public order is founded on moral law, the law of the heart. The cross in the main conference hall symbolized the real presence of Christ in the hearts of the strikers, those celebrating the festival of truth and justice. Lenin looked towards the window as if wanting to escape. ... The presence of the Church among the workers was even more evident at Gdynia than at Gdansk. In the Gdynia Shipyard the priests were celebrating a solemn Mass twice a day.”⁶⁸⁷

The *Gdańsk Agreement* between the workers and the regime was signed on Sunday 31 August 1980, the last day of the strike, when Father Jankowski again celebrated Holy Mass inside the Lenin Shipyard. The Agreement stipulated that “the government will ensure the transmission by radio of the Sunday Mass through a specific agreement with the church hierarchy.”⁶⁸⁸ As a result, on Sunday 21 September 1980, the first regular Holy Mass service since September 1949 was broadcast on Poland’s national radio. During the Mass, Bishop Jerzy Modzelewski called on his congregation to pray for church access to all mass media, not only radio.⁶⁸⁹

In the months that followed the Gdańsk Agreement, the regime created obstacles to recognising the union’s right to legally exist. Lay Catholic advisers and the Church fully supported *Solidarity*’s effort to achieve legal status as a trade union independent of the Party-State. On Sunday 19 October 1980, Holy Mass services were held in support

⁶⁸⁷ *The Festival of Freedom on the Baltic Coast*. 23 September 1980. From Keston File PO/12/11.1PR ‘Church and *Solidarity*’ citing Keston News Service, No. 118, 26 February, 1981; Document B.

⁶⁸⁸ As cited by Stokes (1991a: 207).

⁶⁸⁹ *International Herald Tribune*, 22 September, 1980, p.2.

of *Solidarity* at Opolski Cathedral, Przemyśl Cathedral and Krakow's Wawel Cathedral and also in churches in the towns of Rzeszów, Jarosław and Przeworsk. The Holy Mass given at Opolski Cathedral by Bishop Adamiuk was attended by *Solidarity* trade unionists from about 500 workplaces in the region.⁶⁹⁰ Bishop Tokarczuk celebrated the Mass at Przemyśl and Rzeszów with a reported 10,000 and 20,000 respectively, attending.⁶⁹¹ The Mass at Wawel Cathedral was particularly symbolic as the Wawel evoked so many myths and symbols of national self-determination.⁶⁹² Some 5,000 attended, in what was reported as 'a bizarre cross between a Church service and a political rally', with Lech Wałęsa, his supporters and *Solidarity* banners all featuring prominently.

In November 1980, *Solidarity* was finally recognised by the regime as a legal trade union. It was, with its sister trade union *Rural Solidarity* which gained its legal status in May 1981, the first and only such trade union that functioned, albeit briefly, legally and independently of a ruling communist Party. The subsequent months were ones of constant crisis and confrontation between *Solidarity* and the regime. The permanent atmosphere of crisis was considerably heightened by the Soviet Communist Party's clear disapproval of the emergence in *Solidarity* as a political force that, in its liberal demands, seriously

⁶⁹⁰ From Keston File PO/11/1(1980) 'Church Involvement in Workers' Unrest: The Episcopate, the Pope', quoting *Gość Niedzielny*, 16 November, 1980.

⁶⁹¹ From Keston File PO/11/1(1980) 'Church Involvement in Workers' Unrest: The Episcopate, the Pope', quoting Vatican in Polish; 22 December, 1980: 1515 GMT.

⁶⁹² From Keston File PO/11/1(1980) 'Church Involvement in Workers' Unrest: The Episcopate, the Pope' quoting *Le Monde*, 21 October, 1980, p.3.

challenged the communist system and its monopoly of power. As the *Solidarity* delegates began to arrive on 5 September 1981 for their first national congress, the Soviet Union began a nine-day massive naval and military exercise in the Baltic. The exercise was part of the incessant pressure that the CPSU was exerting on the Polish regime to crush *Solidarity*. The *Solidarity* congress proceedings were inaugurated by a Holy Mass concelebrated by the new Primate Glemp,⁶⁹³ and two Gdańsk bishops. Garton Ash described the scene that was resplendent with religious and national symbols:

“Predictably, the symbolic politics ... were superb. From the moment when the electronic scoreboard lit up with the sign of the cross and the words ‘*Polonia semper fidelis*’, while Wałęsa rose to intone yet again ‘Poland is not yet lost’ and ‘God who protects Poland ...’, the usually soulless Olivia sports hall was filled with the spirits of national martyrs. No chance was lost to demonstrate that here were the true heirs of the great tradition of Polish ideals.”^{694 695}

Within weeks of the start of the congress, General Jaruzelski replaced Kania as the First Secretary of the Polish Party. Jaruzelski, the Soviets hoped, might succeed in the task at which Kania had failed, namely the removing of *Solidarity* from the political scene.

It should be remembered that not all members and supporters of *Solidarity* were Catholics, and the political beliefs of these members and supporters ranged across a broad spectrum of liberal-leaning

⁶⁹³ Wyszyński had died in May 1981.

⁶⁹⁴ Some English translations give ‘Poland has not perished yet’ rather than ‘Poland is not yet lost’ for the first line of the National Anthem.

⁶⁹⁵ Garton Ash (1999: 217).

perspectives of democracy. Yet, despite this, and despite *Solidarity*'s strong identification with political Catholicism, *Solidarity*'s members and supporters broadly stayed united during the 1980s. Just as the Holy Mass services of John Paul II's pilgrimages had contributed to uniting differing strands of belief, so too did the Holy Masses supporting *Solidarity*.

From the very first days of Martial Law in December 1981, Popiełuszko's Holy *Masses for the Homeland* attracted thousands from all over Poland, including non-believers. Miłosz, commenting in 1982 about the participation of non-believers in religious ceremonies, observed:

“It would be a mistake to attribute this to political motives alone. ‘Religion’ ... fulfils the function of being the only infallible referential system in a situation where mistrust is absolute and without exception.”⁶⁹⁶

Some half million Poles, believers and non-believers and practically all the leaders of the Polish opposition, attended Popiełuszko's funeral and commemorative Mass. Primate Glemp and Wałęsa addressed the crowds.

Popiełuszko had been a chaplain to the Saint Stanisław Kostka Church, the local church to the major Warsaw Steelworks. An extremely popular priest, Popiełuszko was well known for his support of *Solidarity* and for his deeply moving humanitarian homilies during his *Masses for the Homeland*. Popiełuszko, and other pro-*Solidarity*

⁶⁹⁶ Miłosz (1982: 196).

priests, often with congregations from nearby large state enterprises known for their militancy and support for *Solidarity*, paid a high price for their support of *Solidarity* during its 1982-1988 period of illegality and for their patriotic *Masses for the Homeland*. In September 1984, Father Stanisław Orzechowski who had also been celebrating *Masses for the Homeland* and devoting Holy Masses to political prisoners in Wrocław, was interrogated and threatened.⁶⁹⁷ A month later, in October 1984, Popiełuszko was murdered by secret police. In the mid-1980s, another priest, Father Tadeusz Zalewski, the local priest to the Nowa Huta Steelworks, was interrogated by the police on numerous occasions and assaulted several times by ‘unknown perpetrators’, almost certainly the secret police.⁶⁹⁸

Just as they had during the strikes of 1980, Holy Mass services also played a key morale-enhancing and legitimising role in the spring and late-summer of 1988, when two waves of nation-wide strikes again erupted in Poland. Despite the strikes being nation-wide, again the greatest focus of media attention in 1988 was the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard. The first spring 1988 strike was towards the end of April 1988, with the Lenin Shipyard striking from 2 to 10 May 1988. Alongside the usual regime-sponsored May Day celebrations, on 1 May 1988 there were unofficial May Day counter-celebrations under the slogan of solidarity with the strikers of the Nowa Huta Lenin

⁶⁹⁷ Helsinki Watch (1986b: 57).

⁶⁹⁸ Helsinki Watch (1986b: 59).

Steelworks.⁶⁹⁹ While Wałęsa spoke after the 1 May Holy Mass at Saint Brigid's Church, the local church to the Lenin Shipyard, renowned for its support of *Solidarity* and popularly referred to as the 'Solidarity church', attacking *ZOMO* troops⁷⁰⁰ charged the church.⁷⁰¹ On 4 May 1988, Father Tadeusz Zalewski held a Holy Mass at the striking Nowa Huta Steelworks. The following day, on 5 May 1988, *ZOMO* troops brutally crushed the Nowa Huta strike and also demolished Father Zalewski's altar.⁷⁰² When Father Zalewski informed foreign press correspondents of the pacification of the strike, the official Polish regime-controlled press responded with a slanderous campaign against the priest who, not for the first time, had experienced the unwelcome attention of the authorities. On 10 May 1988, without a written agreement being reached, the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard strike ended. About one thousand strikers, with Wałęsa to the fore, silently left the shipyard and headed for Saint Brigid's Church, where they took part in a service.⁷⁰³ The spring 1988 strikes resulted in defeat for the workers, their mainly economic demands not granted. This first wave of strikes was led in the main by a new

⁶⁹⁹ The Nowa Huta steelworkers were amongst the first to strike that spring and had been striking since 26 April 1988. The May Day counter-celebrations were held within eleven cities, with an estimated total of some 30,000 participating. (John Reed *The May Day Demonstrations. Radio Free Europe/RL* Vol. 13, No. 18, 6 May, 1988, pp 17-19) as cited by Laun (2000).

⁷⁰⁰ *ZOMO* troops were paramilitary riot troops, reserved for the most repressive actions. *ZOMO* is the Polish abbreviation for 'Motorised Detachments of the Citizens' Militia.'

⁷⁰¹ Biernacki (2000: 157).

⁷⁰² *Radio Free Europe Press Review*/5, 4 July, 1988, p. 19 citing *Wola*, No. 9(246), 9 May, 1988.

⁷⁰³ Biernacki (2000: 160) and Jankowski (1996: 134).

generation of dissidents, many too young to have been involved in the *Solidarity* movement of 1980-1981.⁷⁰⁴

The first of the late summer second wave of 1988 strikes was on the 15 August, the Lenin Shipyard striking from 22 to 31 August 1988. This second wave of strikes was more influenced by *Solidarity* members active from 1980. The strikes were more politically motivated than the first wave and, included in the strikers' demands, was a call for the re-legalisation of *Solidarity*. On Sunday 28 August 1988, hundreds of riot police stood by without intervening as several thousand *Solidarity* supporters rallied outside the Saint Brigid's Church.⁷⁰⁵ On 1 September 1988, the Gdańsk Shipyard strikes ended with the workers from the Northern Shipyard joining their Lenin Shipyard work-mates and together they headed for Saint Brigid's Church.⁷⁰⁶ This second wave of strikes was more successful than the first and eventually led to the spring 1989 *round table talks* originally scheduled for October 1988.

6.6 The Role Of Myths Of Sacred Omnipotent Saviours

As previous chapters have shown, myths portraying God, Christ and the Black Madonna as sacred omnipotent saviours of Poland figured

⁷⁰⁴ According to *Solidarity* activist Bogusław Gołąb who helped organise the May 1988 Gdańsk Northern Shipyard strike about 90% of the strikers were youngsters who had had no direct experience of the 1980-1981 *Solidarity*-led strikes.. Gołąb (1996).

⁷⁰⁵ *The Times*, 29 August, 1988, p.6.

⁷⁰⁶ Biernacki (2000: 162).

significantly in Poland's pre-1918 and post-1939 struggle for national self-determination. These myths and associated symbols were to be deployed again by *Solidarity* in its struggle for popular sovereignty and national self-determination. The myth of God was mainly evoked via the singing of the *God Who Protects Poland* hymn. How the myths and symbols of Christ and the Black Madonna were evoked is now explored.

Amongst the religious slogans daubed in the Lenin Shipyard in August 1980 were 'Jesus I trust you', and 'Suffering Queen of Poland,' ⁷⁰⁷ a reference to the Black Madonna. ⁷⁰⁸ A large painting of Jesus Christ and of the Black Madonna was displayed on one of the roofs of a Lenin Shipyard building during the August 1980 strike. Poems composed in the Lenin Shipyard during the August 1980 strike were memorised and recited or sung together with the poems of the nation's greatest poets. Thirty-eight of the strike poems were subsequently published. Six of these poems sought the ultimate justification for their struggle in religion and prayed for divine protection. Two of them praised the Black Madonna, 'the mother of the wretched.' ⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰⁷ Kubik (1994: 279-280).

⁷⁰⁸ The slogan 'God with us' was also to be seen.

⁷⁰⁹ Kubik (1994: 190).

6.6.1 The Role of the Myth of Christ and of the Symbolism of His Cross

The cross of Jesus, according to Kubik, was one of the most conspicuous symbols of the 1980 strike.⁷¹⁰ Within Christianity, the cross stands for Christ's sacrifice and symbolises the faith. In Poland, it acquired additional significance. From the early 19th century, the cross was a metaphor of national martyrdom and a symbol of Poland as a messiah of nations. Post-1945, the cross became a sign of defiance towards the communist regime and, to the 1980 striking shipyard workers, something even more meaningful.⁷¹¹ One striking worker explained the significance of the symbolism of the cross thus:

“For the onlookers the cross was merely a relic two thousand years old and nothing more. For us, strikers, it was something much more because of our (unconscious) identification with Christ. We were ready to take the cross upon our own shoulders, the cross in the form of the caterpillar tracks of tanks, if it came to an assault on us.”⁷¹²

After the Sunday 17 August 1980 Holy Mass in the Lenin Shipyard, Wałęsa carried a wooden cross out of the Main Gate to the spot where a monument to the workers that had died in 1970 was later to be erected.⁷¹³ In December 1980, there were commemorative ceremonies in Gdańsk, Gdynia and Szczecin for the workers attacked

⁷¹⁰ Kubik (1994: 189).

⁷¹¹ Kubik (1994: 189).

⁷¹² As cited by Kubik (1994: 189).

⁷¹³ Wałęsa (1988: 58).

and killed ten years before to the day, in 1970. At the 16 December 1980 Gdańsk memorial several hundred thousand, including State, Party and Church dignitaries, assembled for a Holy Mass, at which a telegram from the Pope was read, and at which Wałęsa, now *Solidarity*'s official leader, spoke. Outside the Lenin Shipyard main gates, where the December 1980 Mass was held, now stood a new permanent memorial to the fallen workers at the spot where the wooden cross had been temporarily erected by Wałęsa and the August 1980 strikers. The new memorial comprised three very tall crosses, each bearing an anchor, a religious symbol of hope that originates from the time of the Partitions. Inscribed on the new memorial are words from Miłosz: "You who harmed a simple man ...Do not feel secure, for a poet remembers." There are also lines from Psalm 29 from the Old Testament bible: "The Lord will give strength unto His people/The Lord will bless His people with peace." These lines evoke the Old Testament myth of election which Miłosz, through his translation from the Hebrew into Polish of the Old Testament *Book of Job* and the *Book of Psalms*, had done much to keep alive.⁷¹⁴

6.6.2 The Role of the Black Madonna Myth

On the 20 August 1980, John Paul II sent an open letter to Wyszyński. In it, he evoked the Black Madonna myth and linked this myth with the cause of the strikers and with liberal aspirations for social justice and human rights.

⁷¹⁴ It will be recalled that Miłosz was the revered anti-communist émigré Polish writer and poet, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in October 1980.

“I pray with my heart that the Polish Episcopate led by its Primate (and supported by the trust in Her who is the defender of our country) may now again be able to help this people in its difficult task it is fulfilling for its daily bread, for social justice, and for the protection of the inviolable rights to its own life and development.”⁷¹⁵

On 24 August 1980, the *Solidarity* Strike News Sheet prominently displayed John Paul II's 20 August 1980 open letter to Wyszyński on its front page.⁷¹⁶

6.6.3 Towards the Creation of New Myths of Sacred Omnipotent Saviours

The August 1980 strikes, and the events leading to and following them, contributed in the following decades to a process of creating new myths. For example, the Lenin Shipyard strike of August 1980 and the opposition roles of John Paul II and Wałęsa now constitute part of post-1989 Polish political mythology. The new myth-making process illustrates the process of simplification and of convenient forgetting, so typical of all myth-making.

During 1980-1981, there were already many manifestations of John Paul II and Wałęsa becoming cult figures. The Lenin Shipyard strike was of great political significance, but the August 1980 strikes were

⁷¹⁵ As cited by *OR*, 1 September, 1980, p.2. The part of the quote placed in brackets is from another source, viz. Keston File PO/12/11.1PR 'Church and Solidarity' quoting *Solidarity Strike News Sheet*, 24 August, 1980, p.1.

⁷¹⁶ Keston File PO/12/11.1PR 'Church and Solidarity' quoting *Solidarity Strike News Sheet*, 24 August, 1980, p.1.

not confined to one shipyard and were but a continuation of the numerous strikes that had erupted in July 1980 all over Poland following regime price increases introduced on the 1 July. The focus of world media attention and of the subsequent myth-making, however, was the strike in the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard, headed by Lech Wałęsa, that lasted from 14 to 31 August 1980. The world-famous Gdańsk Agreement of 31 August 1980 had, in fact, been preceded by a similar Szczecin Agreement of 30 August.

Many Poles saw the opposition roles of John Paul II and Wałęsa in terms of hero-saviour mythology. In the Lenin Shipyard during the August 1980 strike, for example, pictures of John Paul II, surrounded by garlands, hung on the wire fencing of the Main gate next to the Polish flag. Adjacent to his image was a picture of the Black Madonna. During the August 1980 strikes, Father Jastak was inundated by thousands of people day and night around his Presbytery. The crowds were asking him for religious pictures, and for crosses and medals with the picture of the Black Madonna and/or of the Pope.⁷¹⁷ The Pope's face was to adorn *Solidarity* badges.⁷¹⁸ Alongside the traditional omnipotent saviours, God, Christ and the Virgin Mary, depicted in the 'strike poems' written in the Lenin Shipyard during the August 1980 strike, was a new saviour: John Paul II. On 31 August 1980, Wałęsa used an outsized pen adorned with a portrait of the Pope to sign the historic *Gdańsk Agreement*.

⁷¹⁷ Wójcicki (1999: 178).

⁷¹⁸ From Keston File PO/11/1(1980) 'Church Involvement in Workers' Unrest: The Episcopate, the Pope' quoting *Catholic Herald*, 22 August, 1980; 'Polish strikers rally to Church.'

Wałęsa's leadership and Catholic faith inspired others to hero-worship him, as exemplified in a verse of an anonymous 1980 strike poet referring to the 1970 Gdańsk strikers murdered by the regime:

“But their blood was not shed in vain
Although we had to wait ten years
Now we are led to the struggle
We are led by Lech Wałęsa””⁷¹⁹

Amongst the letters sent during the 1980-1981 period to a Gdańsk newspaper to praise Wałęsa, one could read of the *Solidarity* leader:

“I am quite sure that the man who fights under the banner of the Cross and who approaches the Lord's Table often, that the man who carries the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa on his breast will triumph. He will triumph because history has been teaching us for twenty centuries that those who fought against the laws of God were vanquished.””⁷²⁰

During the 1980-1981 period, many likened Wałęsa to Pan Wołodyjowski,⁷²¹ also known as the *Little Knight*. The *Little Knight*, which became Wałęsa's nick-name, was the fictitious protagonist in Sienkiewicz's novel *Pan Wołodyjowski* (1888) in which, in portraying his protagonist's heroism and sufferings, Sienkiewicz implies a strong sense of Christian mission.

⁷¹⁹ As cited by Laun (2000).

⁷²⁰ As cited by Bądkowski (1982: 156).

⁷²¹ For example, the Polish film director, Andrzej Wajda. See Bądkowski (1982: 132 & 181). Both Pan Wołodyjowski and Wałęsa sported moustaches and were considered impetuous, courageous and melancholy, but with a sense of humour.

6.7 The Role Of Political Catholicism In Influencing *Solidarity*'s Leader

During the 1980s, Wałęsa dominated the *Solidarity* movement. Consequently, his own beliefs had a great impact on *Solidarity* members and supporters. The charismatic leader of the *Solidarity* movement clearly believed in the Church as a prime defender of the nation. Of the 1980 struggle to establish *Solidarity*, Wałęsa said: “Many people understood then that what the Church has been saying for two thousand years is the same thing as we are fighting for.”⁷²² In the Autumn 1981, a time of grave national crisis, Wałęsa, when addressing about 12,000 striking textile workers on the day before a one-hour nation-wide warning strike called by *Solidarity*, said:

“The Church should not get totally involved in our affairs, because if we lose, and we could, we must leave something behind ... The Church must always be with our nation.”⁷²³

Of the 1984 murder of Popiełuszko, Wałęsa said:

“This tragedy has already borne fruit, for there were many ... who finally understood that Christian morality and Polish traditions were so deeply imbedded in our national identity that it was impossible to imagine a future without them.”⁷²⁴

⁷²² As cited by Bądkowski (1982: 103).

⁷²³ From Keston File PO/11/1(1980) (*sic*) ‘Church Involvement in Workers’ Unrest: The Episcopate, the Pope’ quoting *The Tablet*, 7 November, 1981.

⁷²⁴ Wałęsa (1988: 305-306).

As a result of the failure of the 1830-1831 National Uprising, many Poles were exiled in the West. In *Tomes of the Polish Nation and the Polish Pilgrimage* (1832), Mickiewicz told his fellow émigrés to regard themselves as “‘apostles among the idolaters’, pilgrims of freedom, precursors of a new era of Christian politics in Europe.”⁷²⁵ Wałęsa was to write of his 1980-1981 trips to the West in a way that harked back to the Bard’s 1832 message:

“There are some roads that Poles have used for centuries, on journeys or pilgrimages. I followed these same roads but not as a pauper seeking prosperity. ... I was coming to bear witness to our movement before the whole world.”⁷²⁶

Wałęsa was often to publicly acknowledge the critical role that his Catholic faith and values played in his political life, for example, in sustaining him at difficult times, in giving him hope and in adopting a non-violent approach to political change. Shortly after the August 1980 strikes he said:

“‘I derive strength from faith, it’s the motor of my life. ... During the strike, many people ... reminded themselves of the basic moral and ethical values with which they had been brought up. And that morality is sustained by the Church, which also spreads the truth. We lacked that truth at the time. Thus we sought it in God’s word as proclaimed by the Church.’”⁷²⁷

⁷²⁵ Gomulka (1990: 46).

⁷²⁶ Wałęsa (1988: 164).

⁷²⁷ *WTK*, 5 October, 1980 as cited by Bądkowski (1982: 103). *WTK* was a Catholic weekly, published by *Pax* from 1953-1981.

In mid-November 1980, Wałęsa told a journalist: “‘If I did not believe in God I would not be where I am today.’”⁷²⁸ Speaking from the pulpit of Saint Brigid’s Church a few days after Popiełuszko’s murder in 1984, Wałęsa said:

“We’ve chosen non-violence. ... We disarm them by showing our strength in our places of work, and to show that we are strong when we are on our knees at prayer. ... We must find a Christian solution that avoids violence.”⁷²⁹

Compared with other 20th century Polish primates, Wyszyński was held in particularly high esteem. The Primate had gained significant moral and political legitimacy for refusing to accede to the demands of the Polish regime and swear a loyalty oath of allegiance to the communist state, for which act of defiance he was interned from 1953-1956. Wyszyński was referred to popularly as ‘the Primate of one thousand years’. From Wałęsa’s memoirs, it is clear that Wałęsa also held Wyszyński in high esteem and was influenced by his teachings. On Sunday, 7 September 1980, the newly constituted *Solidarity Founding Committee* leadership, some sixteen members led by Wałęsa travelled to Warsaw for a private but well publicised meeting with Primate Wyszyński. Wałęsa wrote of the meeting:

“‘At last I was to meet, face-to-face, the man who personified the Polish church and who, as a prisoner of conscience for three years, had represented the principal link with the best of our living national traditions.’”⁷³⁰

⁷²⁸ Keston File PO/11/1(1980) ‘Church Involvement in Workers’ Unrest: The Episcopate, the Pope’ quoting *The Universe*, 28 November, 1980.

⁷²⁹ Wałęsa (1988: 303).

⁷³⁰ Wałęsa (1988: 143).

In private conversation during their 7 September 1980 meeting, the Primate spoke to Wałęsa about the Party leadership:

“‘It’s not a question of wanting to change the leaders, it’s they who must change. We must make sure ... that one gang of robbers doesn’t steal the keys of the state treasury from another similar gang. What is at stake is the rebirth of man himself.’”⁷³¹

With this conversation in mind, Wałęsa recalled in 1988 that during the August 1980 strikes

“we were showing such optimism, such faith in man by our openness and by the fact that everyone was being urged to ‘change themselves’ - rather than ‘be changed’ by our actions. I felt close to the Primate on all these concerns.”⁷³²

As regards his 1980-1981 journeys to the West, Wałęsa wrote: “throughout I kept in mind the view shared by Cardinal Wyszyński that the key to these Polish problems lay in our own hands.”⁷³³

As with many other *Solidarity* members and supporters, Wałęsa often evoked the omnipotent saviour myths, not least the Black Madonna myth, in connection with *Solidarity*’s struggle. During the August 1980 strike, Wałęsa was to be seen scattering little coloured cards of

⁷³¹ As cited by Wałęsa (1988: 143-144).

⁷³² Wałęsa (1988: 144).

⁷³³ Wałęsa (1988: 172).

the Black Madonna around the shipyard.⁷³⁴ At moments of stress during the strike, Wałęsa would momentarily escape from the pressures: “‘I commended myself to the Virgin Mary. I commended to Her our destinies. This gave me courage and strength.’”⁷³⁵ On 31 August 1980, Wałęsa was wearing a Black Madonna badge⁷³⁶ when signing the historic *Gdańsk Agreement*. The badge was later to be replaced by a cotton patch stitched to the left lapel of his jacket that bore the face of the Black Madonna. After the August 1980 strike, Wałęsa was to make a pilgrimage to the Black Madonna shrine at Jasna Góra, where he slept in the monastery.⁷³⁷ There, at the monastery, he writes: “I made my profession of faith to the Holy Mother.”⁷³⁸ Explaining why the pilgrimage to Jasna Góra was ‘so important’, Wałęsa wrote:

“The Primate himself has said: ‘The heart of Poland beats there.’ So, if that was the heart of Poland, I had to go to it, to become one with that heart; I wanted the whole country to beat in time to its heartbeat.”⁷³⁹

After the August 1980 strikes, Wałęsa put up a crucifix in his new *Solidarity* office. In his 1988 memoirs, his juxtaposition of sentences links a belief in God with the fight for popular sovereignty and

⁷³⁴ Bądkowski (1982: 7-8).

⁷³⁵ As cited by Bądkowski (1982: 66).

⁷³⁶ Szajkowski (1983: 98).

⁷³⁷ Wałęsa (1988: 5).

⁷³⁸ Wałęsa (1988: 173).

⁷³⁹ Wałęsa (1988: 173).

national self-determination by approvingly quoting the words of Popiełuszko: ““I see before me all of Poland. The true Poland that believes in God. A Poland that aspires to freedom and sovereignty.””⁷⁴⁰

6.8 Conclusion: *Solidarity*’s Deployment Of A Liberal Political Culture

The chapter has shown how the myths, symbols and rituals of pre-1945 nationalism and political Catholicism played a key role in creating a sense of solidarity, in enhancing the morale of *Solidarity* members and supporters, and in legitimising *Solidarity*’s cause. The chapter has also indicated how these myths, symbols and rituals acted as vehicles of certain liberal values and in doing so helped foster the union’s liberal outlook. Additional confirmation of this liberal outlook can be found in *Solidarity*’s policies and actions during the 1980s.⁷⁴¹

The chapter has also shown how the process of synthesis of nationalism and political Catholicism, initiated in the 19th century and considerably furthered post-1945 by the preachings of Wyszyński and John Paul II, found practical expression within *Solidarity*.

In evoking the myths and symbols associated with pre-1945 nationalism and political Catholicism, *Solidarity* often took its lead

⁷⁴⁰ Wałęsa (1988: 305).

⁷⁴¹ For example, in *Solidarity*’s Programme produced in October 1981, the trade union called for fundamental reforms leading to a “permanent introduction of the principles of self-government, democracy, and pluralism.” As cited by Stokes

from the liberal-leaning preachings of Wyszyński and of John Paul II. Thus the Madonna myth was evoked in the cause of popular sovereignty and national-self determination. Thus, for example, the German and Russian/Soviet enemy myths were, on the whole, not used illiberally to engender hatred, but to signify that Poles once again wanted their national self-determination, freed of Russian/Soviet coercive hegemony. Thus, in the manner of John Paul II, the meanings associated with the German enemy myth were adapted to convey criticism of current Soviet domination of Poland. Moreover, the myths of military valour were used to remind the regime that, although *Solidarity* sought a peaceful path to popular sovereignty and national self-determination, there were extreme situations when the physical force tradition was justified.

Demonstrating the influence of political Catholicism upon the thinking, emotions and motivation of the workers who were to constitute the *Solidarity* movement is an inherently difficult task. Inevitably, one relies on outward manifestations such as actions taken, words spoken, symbols and rituals deployed, rather than inner manifestations of any such influence. From such outer manifestations it seems clear, however, that the political culture of members of *Solidarity*, not least its leader Wałęsa, was greatly influenced by the pre-1945 myths, symbols and rituals of political Catholicism. These myths, symbols and rituals gave the workers a moral legitimacy. They also gave *Solidarity* members hope when situations seemed hopeless, and lent sufficient courage and sustenance to *Solidarity* members that

(1991a: 212). The issue of liberalism within the democratic opposition is returned to in Chapter 7.

they could stand up to, and oppose, the communist regime, a seemingly far more powerful adversary that could, in its monopoly of physical violence, call upon a vast array of repressive forces. Political Catholicism's teachings also helped shape the non-violent strategy that *Solidarity* adopted in its struggle with the regime.

The liberal nationalism and liberal political Catholicism that *Solidarity* displayed during the 1980s were important constituents of its liberal political culture. The very name of the trade union was a declaration of *Solidarity*'s liberal values, for the word *Solidarity* evokes the liberal ideal of solidarity/fraternity amongst fellow nationals. This ideal has also been identified by others as necessary for the building a true nation. For Renan (1996: 58), the nation is "the expression of a great solidarity," while for Anderson (1991: 7), "the nation is conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship."

Several observers of *Solidarity*'s nationalism and political Catholicism alluded to their liberal nature. Thus, for example, Wenzel wrote of *Solidarity*'s patriotism:

"On the whole, this was 'positive, rather than 'negative' patriotism. It was a revival of traditions and symbols pushed aside earlier, and not a rebirth of aggressive nationalism."⁷⁴²

The Polish critic and essayist Jeleński (1922-1987) declared of *Solidarity*:

"There is nothing more Polish nor more Catholic than *Solidarity*'s revolt: but it seems to me to be purified of the

⁷⁴² Wenzel (1998: 142).

detestable elements present in the 'Pole equals catholic' syndrome."⁷⁴³

This current chapter marks the end of Parts 1 and 2 of the thesis. Parts 1 and 2 have, as heralded in Chapter 1, sought to achieve a better understanding of the role of the myths, symbols and rituals of pre-1945 Polish nationalism and political Catholicism in synthesising these belief systems and in transforming an illiberal political culture into a liberal political culture of opposition. It now remains in the following and final chapter to draw together the conclusions of the preceding chapters and to explore issues not raised or fully developed before.

⁷⁴³ Jeleński (1982: 183).

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

The main aim of this final chapter is to draw together the conclusions of the preceding chapters and make other conclusions of a broader nature. Two secondary aims are, briefly to explore the post-communist period in Poland in the light of two key related concerns of the thesis - namely the political role of myths and the liberalisation process - and to discuss the implications of this current research in terms of its achievements and limitations that would call for possible new research.

7.2 The Role Of Pre-1945 Myths, Symbols And Rituals

In essence, the thesis has argued that Polish nationalism and political Catholicism, despite their illiberal pasts, were synthesised into a post-1945 liberal political culture of opposition supportive of democratisation, in large part thanks to the role of their pre-1945 myths and their accompanying symbols and rituals.

Chapter 2 argued that the pre-1945 genesis of the process of synthesis of Polish nationalism and Polish political Catholicism was aided by the sharing of common myths. These common myths, and in particular the Madonna myth, served both the aims of nationalism and of Catholicism and, in so doing, brought the two belief systems closer together. Chapter 2 also contended that the prevailing political culture of the Polish Second Republic was increasingly illiberal and that this

culture was significantly influenced by an illiberal Polish nationalism and an illiberal political Catholicism. Chapter 2 argued that the illiberal nationalism expressed itself partly in terms of a conspiratorial enemy mythology, deployed mainly against Jews and communists. The chapter also argued that the Polish Church hierarchy adopted the same mythology during the 1918-1939 period. Finally, Chapter 2 identified certain pre-1945 myths associated with the proto-liberal strands within Polish nationalism and political Catholicism, and suggested that these might be the seeds of a post-1945 liberal political culture of opposition.

Chapter 1 identified some of the key, often shared, characteristics and functions of myths, symbols and rituals and made the *theoretical* case that these characteristics and functions enabled myths, symbols and rituals to serve as vehicles for nationalist and political religious beliefs, values, and emotions, and thereby for political culture and for the political actions it induced.

Chapters 3, 5 and 6 presented empirical Polish evidence to make the *practical* case. In particular, these three chapters showed how the characteristics and functions had been politically exploited to serve as vehicles for a liberal political culture of opposition. The transcendental characteristic of myths, particularly Catholic ones, answered the moral, spiritual, psychological, and emotional needs of millions of Poles and gave Poles a sense of destiny by giving meaning to the past, present and future. The multivocal characteristic of myths and symbols enabled Poles to understand them in different ways, thus allowing Poles with differing approaches to liberal democracy to be united. The capability of the meanings attached to myths and symbols

to be altered enabled more modern liberal values to be attached to pre-1945 myths and symbols. More than that, it facilitated the changing of illiberal values to liberal ones and allowed a communist regime to foster non-communist values. The adaptive abilities related to the transmitting function of myths and symbols enabled pre-1945 myths and symbols to re-emerge post-1945 and carry new modern liberal interpretations of contemporary events. Their function of condensing meaning made it possible for pre-1945 myths and symbols to bring together diverse aspects of liberal democracy and embody them in a simplified form. The morale-enhancing function of myths, symbols and rituals gave confidence to the opposition under communism, helped them through periods of adversity and gave them hope in seemingly hopeless situations. The ability of myths, symbols, and particularly rituals to create a sense of solidarity within the opposition was a vital ingredient in the formation and sustenance of *Solidarity*. Moreover, because ritual is about common participation and emotional argument, rituals deployed by the opposition served to produce bonds of solidarity amongst Poles with differing approaches to liberal democracy, by transcending their ideological contexts. The effects of the motivating and mobilising functions of myths helped explain the scale and fortitude of the Polish opposition. The legitimising and explaining functions of myths and symbols served to strengthen the opposition's liberal democratic beliefs, and gave them a sense that right was on their side. The legitimising function of ritual and its ability to create solidarity encouraged the opposition to foster such rituals as pilgrimages, Holy Mass, annual commemorations, and protest- and hymn-singing, and thereby to utilise the legitimacy attached to such traditional forms and redirect this legitimacy to the struggle for modern liberal democracy.

Chapters 3, 5 and 6 showed how - thanks to the characteristics and functions of myths and symbols - the associated pre-1945 political values were reinforced, extended and/or significantly changed. These chapters showed, for example, how the opposition transformed the communist and Soviet enemy myths into myths indicating an opposition to a political system rather than a hatred of others.

Chapter 3, in showing how pre-1945 myths were deployed in 1945-1989 Poland, illustrated the relationship of myths with the dynamics of political culture and democratisation. Chapter 3 showed how myths were able to further the synthesis of nationalism and religion. It further showed how political culture could be transmitted over time and how political culture could be adapted to take on different values and yet retain the legitimacy of past tradition. Chapter 3 argued that the changing political culture of the opposition and the regime during the post-1945 period was reflected in their different uses of pre-1945 myths. Both the opposition and the regime exploited the attributes of myths that engender political legitimacy and political potency and allow myths to extend and/or change their meanings. However, the opposition increasingly deployed the pre-1945 myths as vehicles of liberalism, while the regime, in its national non-communism, used them as vehicles of illiberalism. It was argued that changing attitudes to the Soviets, Germans and the Jews - as reflected by the ways in which the three associated enemy myths were adapted - shaped much of the development of 1945-1989 Polish nationalism and significantly impacted upon the course and outcome of the war of political legitimacy between the regime and the opposition. As the opposition discarded in part, or significantly changed, the meaning of these myths, so the regime maintained the illiberal values associated with

them. The result, Chapter 3 contended, was that the political culture of opposition became more liberal, while that of the regime, in fostering hatred of others, became more illiberal.

Although the role of myths was not directly explored within Chapter 4, the significance of the chapter to the overall concerns of the thesis is that it shed light on the ‘how and why’ of the emergence of a liberal political culture of opposition. It was left to the other Part 2 chapters to show how certain of the pre-1945 myths identified in Chapter 2 fostered this liberal culture. Chapter 5 demonstrated how John Paul II in large measure achieved his goal of fostering a liberal political culture of opposition by his deployment of the myths and accompanying symbols and rituals of pre-1945 Polish nationalism and political Catholicism. Chapter 5 also showed how the process of synthesising Polish nationalism and political Catholicism reached a high point with the Pope’s political preaching. It was argued that this synthesis was in large part due to his deployment of myths that served both the aims of liberal nationalism and liberal political Catholicism, and that this synthesis thereby contributed to the formation and fostering of a liberal political culture of opposition. Chapter 5 argued that, in his use of the past, in his use of a protest repertoire that highlighted the Madonna myth, and in his use of pastoral mobilisation, John Paul II kept alive key features of the *Novena* as used by Primate Wyszyński. Furthermore, Chapter 5 contended that John Paul II developed the repertoire of pre-1945 myths and their associated meanings to continue the liberalisation process started by Wyszyński. Chapter 5 demonstrated how John Paul II was able to exploit the attributes of pre-1945 myths, symbols and rituals to foster a potent liberal political culture of opposition that constituted a serious

challenge to the regime's political culture. Chapter 5 contended that John Paul II's political exploitation of mythology, symbolism and ritual was so effective during his 1979 pilgrimage, and the resulting sense of national solidarity so strong, that it was this pilgrimage rather than the advent of the political movement *Solidarity*, that proved to be the point of no return for Poland. Chapter 5 showed how the Polish Pope, through his 1979 deployment of myths, symbols and rituals, aided the continuing process of uniting dissident liberal-leaning Catholic and secular left intelligentsia. The national solidarity and liberal values engendered by the Pope, it was claimed, helped understand the emergence of *Solidarity* and the liberal road that it was to take. Finally, Chapter 5 argued that John Paul II's post-1981 deployment of pre-1945 myths, symbols and rituals helped explain how *Solidarity*'s liberal flame was kept alive during the 1982-1988 years of illegality. Chapter 6 showed how these myths and their associated symbols and rituals were to influence the non-intelligentsia component of the Polish opposition, that is to say, the workers of *Solidarity*, the main pillar of not only the opposition but also of Catholicism. Chapter 6 argued that the myths, symbols and rituals of pre-1945 nationalism and political Catholicism played a key role in creating a sense of solidarity and in enhancing the morale of *Solidarity* members and supporters, and in legitimising *Solidarity*'s cause. The chapter also indicated how these myths, symbols and rituals acted as vehicles of *Solidarity*'s liberalism and in so doing helped foster the union's liberal outlook. Furthermore, Chapter 6 showed how the process of synthesis of nationalism and political Catholicism found practical expression within *Solidarity*. Finally Chapter 6 contended that, in interpreting the myths and symbols associated with pre-1945

nationalism and political Catholicism, *Solidarity* often took its lead from the liberal-leaning preachings of Wyszyński and of John Paul II.

The thesis has focused on the role of pre-1945 national and Catholic myths primarily because such myths help explain the emergence of a liberal political culture of opposition from illiberal starting points. The thesis has shown how these myths, given their characteristics and functions, proved a potent political force for the opposition in its struggle to achieve liberal democracy. Part of the political struggle within 1945-1989 Poland was a struggle over the competing communist and liberal democratic symbolic paradigms. The opposition's deployment of pre-1945 myths contributed to breaking the communist hegemony, to winning the war of political legitimacy and, in helping to change the prevailing political culture, to inducing millions of Poles to engage in political actions of opposition supportive of liberal democracy.

7.3 Revisiting Some Of The Broader Issues

Some of the broader issues initially raised in Chapter 1 can now be re-addressed in the light of the research undertaken.

As one of the main contentions of the thesis is that pre-1945 myths acted as a vehicle for a liberal political culture within the post-1945 democratic opposition, the issue of whether this opposition was indeed liberal is an important one. The thesis argues that sufficient evidence of its liberal political culture - including evidence relating to a belief in social justice, national solidarity, liberty, toleration, pluralistic democracy and respect for the individual - has been furnished. In so

arguing, the thesis disagrees with the contentions of Szacki and Ost as presented in Chapter 1 as to the extent of the limitations of liberalism within the pre-1989 opposition under communism. Specifically, this thesis disagrees with the implications of mere expediency contained in their contentions. Szacki and Ost's observations underestimate the influence of John XXIII, Vatican II, Paul VI and John Paul II upon the Roman and Polish Catholic Church in their transformation of traditional socio-political teachings of Catholicism. Szacki and Ost also underestimate the influence of the *Znak* intelligentsia upon the Polish Church and its adherents.⁷⁴⁴ *Znak's* propagation of the transformed papal Catholicism reflected many, but not all of the values of modern liberal democracy.⁷⁴⁵ Chapter 4 argued that authentic and enduring attitudinal shifts occurred on both sides of the dialogue between dissident Catholic and secular left intelligentsia, and that the shifts went beyond mere expediency of fighting a common enemy. The dissident Polish Catholic and secular left intelligentsia who were engaged in the 1970s' dialogue honoured the liberal principles they espoused, as their subsequent post-communism actions have indicated.⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴⁴ This influence was exerted, for example, through the *Znak* MPs and the actions of individual *Znak* members, via the Catholic Clubs of Intelligentsia and the *Znak* publishing media, and via Wojtyła who had close ties with the Kraków-based *Znak* intellectuals and who, as Pope, maintained these ties.

⁷⁴⁵ Szacki and Ost's underestimation may be in part due to the ambiguous signals emanating from post-Vatican II Catholicism which became more liberal in the socio-political domain but retained many of its illiberal stances in the socio-religious field. This later illiberalism, is reflected, for example, in the intolerance still shown over gender and sexual politics.

⁷⁴⁶ Although the opposition alliance between the workers and the intelligentsia collapsed post-1989, the collapse reflected a dispute essentially about personalities (Burdelski 1996); symbolised by the 1990 presidential conflict between the Catholic worker Wałęsa and the Catholic intellectual Mazowiecki.

The opposition, as manifested in the early and late 1980s by the *Solidarity*-led movement, clearly comprised a wide coalition of political views. Socialist, nationalist and political Catholic views were constituent parts. Nevertheless, pro-trade union, nationalist and political Catholic collectivist views can also be consistent with liberal values, and socialist views that went beyond modern social democracy were in a minority.⁷⁴⁷ There can be little doubt, however, that the predominant tendency within the *Solidarity*-led movement was a liberal democratic one. As Garton Ash rightly asserts (1999: 239)

“Solidarity looked to existing liberal democracies and to Poland’s own liberal and democratic traditions, rather than to any socialist utopia, for the blueprint of their own new political system.”

What is more, even Szacki concurs with Ken Jowitt’s view that “‘Solidarity’ is the most powerful and consequential liberal democratic revolution since the French Revolution.”⁷⁴⁸

rather than about class or ideology. The collapse did not detract from the change of heart and mind on the part of both dissident liberal Catholic and secular left intelligentsia. The bonds formed between people such as Kuroń, Michnik, Kisielewski Józefa Hannelowa and Mazowiecki, endured after 1989. Although devoid of a unifying common enemy, many liberal secular left and liberal Catholic intelligentsia are still to be found politically united within the Freedom Union (*UW*) Party. All the aforementioned, bar Kisielewski, who died in 1991, had been *UW* MPs prior to the 2001 parliamentary elections.

⁷⁴⁷ *Solidarity*’s famous June 1989 electoral *High Noon* poster - see Biernacki (2000: 178) - depicting a US sheriff sporting a *Solidarity* badge and striding in front of the *Solidarity* emblem is hardly the symbolism of socialism.

⁷⁴⁸ Ken Jowitt. *The Leninist Extinction in The Crisis of Leninism and the Decline of the Left: The Revolutions of 1989*. Daniel Chirot (ed.) Seattle University of Washington Press, 1991, p. 77 as cited by Szacki (1995: 117).

The research has shown that neither Polish nationalism nor papal or Polish political Catholicism are inherently illiberal and that their associated myths may serve both the causes of liberalism and illiberalism. The research has highlighted, via an exploration of myths, symbols and rituals the role of nationalism and of 'political religion' and their relationship to the transformation of political culture. An underestimation by some observers identified in the review of literature in Chapter 1 of the part played by myths, symbols and rituals may well account for the underestimation of the roles of nationalism, of religion and of long-term factors within the democratisation process. The durability and political potency of the national and Catholic myths - attributes highlighted in the thesis - contributes to the relevance of long-term factors within the democratisation process. The research has shown how certain of these myths emerged in Poland during the period of state-building, how they were adapted to the cause of nation-building and of national-self determination during the period of partitions and then how they served the opposition and the cause of liberal democratisation under communism. The Madonna myth, for example, underwent such a transformation, as is highlighted later in this chapter.

7.4 Post-1989: A Return To History?

Political developments in post-communist Poland support two contentions of the thesis, namely that there was a successful liberalisation of the political culture of opposition, and that pre-1945 myths and symbols serve as vehicles for both liberal and illiberal political cultures and hence, that long term 'myth factors' play a key part in contemporary politics.

Many different and sometimes conflicting forces have influenced Poland's post-1989 political culture. One is the Western liberal democratic influence, particularly as currently brought into focus in the form of coming to terms with the *acquis communautaire* ⁷⁴⁹ necessary for Poland's European Union (EU) membership. Another is the influence of the *condition of post-communism* in the sense of a distinct society or mentality shaped by 1945-1989 communist legacies, ⁷⁵⁰ and there are also the *rebirth/return to history* influences of pre-1945 proto-liberal and illiberal legacies. ⁷⁵¹

In July 1989, diplomatic relations between Poland and the Vatican which were cut off in 1945, were restored. The same month also witnessed the inaugural sitting of the re-established upper house of parliament, the Senate, which had been abolished by the communists shortly after they came to power. Other symbolic signs of Poland's return to its pre-1945 history were quick to emerge after the collapse of Polish communism in 1989. In December 1989 the name of the Polish state was changed from the *Polish Peoples' Republic* to the *Republic of Poland*, a symbolic disassociation with proletarian dictatorship. In February 1990, the then state emblem, an uncrowned eagle, regained its crown. A month later, in April 1990, the date commemorating the liberal constitution of 1791, the 3rd May, was declared a national holiday, in place of the 22nd July, which

⁷⁴⁹ *Acquis communautaire* is the body of EU rules and regulations that aspiring EU members need to meet in order to accede to the Union.

⁷⁵⁰ See Schöpflin (1994 Chapter 10).

⁷⁵¹ See Glenny (1993) and Michnik (1999).

commemorated the 1944 Manifesto of the communist-controlled Polish Committee for National Independence. The Senate, the Republic of Poland, the crowned eagle, and the 3rd May national holiday, had all been well known and recognisable features of inter-war independent Poland.

In the ensuing post-communist period, these restored symbolic signs were to have both liberal and illiberal values attached to them. On the whole, *return to history* tendencies have signified a respect for liberal values and the free market, rather than support for the prevailing illiberalism of the inter-war years. It is also contended that, despite difficulties, post-1989 Poland is essentially succeeding in the liberal democracy consolidation process. In this it has been helped by good economic growth in the 1990s,⁷⁵² membership of NATO, and a favourable response to its desire to join the EU. However, that is not to say that there have not been and there do not remain considerable consolidating problems. Recently, for example, there have been signs of a renaissance of an illiberal political culture. This illiberal political culture is significantly shaped by illiberal nationalism and illiberal political Catholicism. Although it is still only a marginal force, it is a growing one, and its fortunes seem related to the recent weakening of the Polish economy. It is associated mainly with two right-wing socio-political groupings, the *Self-Defence of the Polish Republic* (*Samoobrona*) and the *League of Polish Families* (*LPR*), and with *LPR*'s newspaper *Nasz Dziennik* and the influential *Radio Maryja* that actively supports the *LPR*.⁷⁵³ In a recent opinion poll of the

⁷⁵² *The Observer*, 31 October, 1999.

strength of the parties, ⁷⁵⁴ *Samoobrona* commanded 10% and *LPR* some 8% of the votes. ⁷⁵⁵ These two groupings and the media that support them have evoked the pre-1945 myths mainly associated with the illiberalism of Dmowski. Chief amongst the enemy myths that have been evoked are the ones already encountered in this thesis: namely the German, ⁷⁵⁶ communist and Jewish enemy myths, as well as another conspiratorial enemy myth of the 1930s - the (Free) Mason enemy myth - a myth that was also sustained by numerous papal condemnations over the centuries. ⁷⁵⁷ ⁷⁵⁸ Furthermore, leading *LPR*

⁷⁵³ Unsurprisingly, *Samoobrona*, *LPR* and *Nasz Dziennik* all incorporate national symbolism in the form of the Polish flag within their emblems. The *LPR* also deploys a second emblem namely the Polish emblem of the crowned eagle with the national colours in the background. The *Electoral Action Solidarity* (*AWS*) success in the 1997 parliamentary elections is partly attributed to the backing of *Radio Maryja* that has an estimated 4 million listeners. (*Economist* 2001a: 53). *Radio Maryja* resurrected the communist enemy myth which it directed at the Democratic Left Alliance (*SLD*) during the 1997 and 2001 parliamentary and 2000 presidential election campaigns. Befitting this illiberal deployment of the Madonna myth, *Radio Maryja* uses the 'Black' Madonna icon in its emblem with the Madonna's face now white.

⁷⁵⁴ The opinion poll was published in March 2002. See Mazur (2002: 30).

⁷⁵⁵ In contrast the two political groupings that may be seen as representing the interests of the *Solidarity* workers, *AWS* and the Catholic and secular left intelligentsia, *UW*, received, respectively, a mere 3% and 2% of the votes.

⁷⁵⁶ See for example Hooper (2001: 1.13).

⁷⁵⁷ Examples are the Pontifical Constitutions of Clement II, *In Eminenti* (1738) and of Benedict XIV, *Providas* (1751); the Encyclicals of Pius VII, *Ecclesiam a Jesu-Cristo* (1821), Leo XII's *Quo Graviores* (1825), Pius VIII's *Traditi*, and Leo XIII's *Humanum Genus* (1884). In the 20th century Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI, and Pius XII have all specifically condemned Freemasonry. John Paul II's 1983 Code of Canon Law in revising the 1917 Code does not explicitly refer to Freemasonry, although the 1983 *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* insisted that the Church was still opposed to Freemasonry.

⁷⁵⁸ See for example the web pages of the journal *Opoki w Kraju* (*Bedrocks in the Country*) (<http://www.ciemnogrod.net/owk/>) edited by Maciej Giertych, the leader of the *National Party* (*Stronnictwo Narodowe*) which is a component part of the

MP Macierewicz evokes the communist enemy myth by portraying the EU as a communist plot in which “the way to Moscow is through Brussels.”⁷⁵⁹ The individual targets for attack when the enemy myths are evoked post-1989 are often the same or similar people as those targeted pre-1989 by national non-communism, that is to say, the Catholic and secular left advisers to *Solidarity*, particularly those that belonged to *KOR*.

7.5 Concluding Remarks: Implications Of The Research

In this final section, the perceived strengths of the research are explored and the limitations of the research that call for further research are also discussed.

7.5.1 What the Research Achieved

At the outset of this research, the thesis stated its goal of seeking a better understanding of how and why Polish nationalism and political Catholicism, despite their illiberal pasts, were synthesised into a post-1945 political culture of opposition which was supportive of democratisation. It is contended that the thesis has achieved this goal.

LPR. The Mason enemy myth in post-1989 Poland is often linked to attacks upon the EU, capitalism and international finance. Just as other enemy myths have been merged together to give hybrid dual-enemy myths (for example the Jew-communist myth), post-1989 the Mason myth has been merged to give the Jew-Mason myth. See for example the *Polish Defence League*'s web pages at <http://www.maloca.com/pdl.htm>.

⁷⁵⁹ *Economist* (2002b: 55). It should be noted that this is the same Macierewicz that co-founded *KOR*.

None of the four works discussed in Chapter 1 ⁷⁶⁰ that explored the role of myths and/or symbols within Polish 1945-1989 politics approached the historic scope and depth of empirical evidence used in this thesis. More importantly, none of these works, looked at the role of pre-1945 myths as part of a dynamic process of the liberalisation of political culture.

Thus, to take but one of the many myths analysed, the current research in exploring the political deployment of the Madonna myth, argued, in Chapter 2, that that during the 15th-18th century, the myth was evoked to portray the Black Madonna as Defender of the State and thereby developed political Catholicism's close ties with the state. Chapter 2 went on to argue that increasingly during the 19th century the myth was deployed not only as a symbolism of state, but as a Defender of the Nation against the partitioning powers, thus beginning to develop political Catholicism's close ties with Polish nationalism and the struggle for national self-determination. In Chapter 3, one saw during the post-1956 period, particularly during the Battle of the Second Millennium, how the Polish Church sought, via the deployment of the Madonna mythology, to strengthen political Catholicism's ties with nationalism and to highlight political Catholicism's role in saving and protecting the nation from the onslaughts of communism. Chapter 5 demonstrated how John Paul II deployed the Madonna myth as a key symbol of an independent Poland, thereby highlighting the role of political Catholicism as a defender of Poland's national self-determination against Soviet coercive hegemony. It was also shown that John Paul II, in following the example of Wyszyński, was able

⁷⁶⁰ Mach (1985), Plewa (1992), Kubik (1994) and Davies (2001b).

to successfully link the Madonna myth with the 3 May myth, thus emphasising political Catholicism's role in supporting the causes of popular sovereignty and of liberal reform. Chapter 6 presented arguments as to the political potency of the Madonna myth, and of the myth's ability to adapt to new political circumstances such as Martial Law, and serve as a vehicle for political messages when other alternatives were prohibited. The chapter explored how, for example, the Madonna myth was associated with the cause of the democratic opposition and used to attack the communist regime, how the myth was linked with the cause of *Solidarity*, with the concept of liberty and with a vision of a non-divided Europe. It was further contended that the myth gave hope and sustenance to many *Solidarity* members and supporters, not least *Solidarity*'s leader, Wałęsa. Finally, Chapter 6 showed how the Madonna myth was evoked by *Solidarity* in the liberal cause of popular sovereignty and national-self determination.

The thesis also made a number of other claims which, it is suggested, have been justified. Chapter 3, identified a distinct non-communist strand of nationalism deployed systematically by the regime. This identification necessitates a reinterpretation of Polish regime nationalism as depicted solely by national communism. Chapter 4 claimed to be a systematic examination of the 1970-1976 process of dialogue, and an exploration as to why the predominant pre-*Solidarity* opposition was a liberal-leaning one in Poland, rather than a more conservative national Catholic or populist one as in some other East European countries. Chapter 5 claimed to provide a systematic analysis of John Paul II's deployment of pre-1945 national and Catholic myths, symbols and rituals during the 1978-1989 period in order to create and foster a liberal political culture of opposition

within Poland. Finally Chapter 6 claimed to explore systematically the Church's liberal influence upon *Solidarity* and the role of (liberal) nationalism upon the genesis and sustenance of *Solidarity*.

7.5.2 Possible Areas of Further Research

Although this research may have its achievements, like all research, it also has its limitations that call for possible new areas of research.

The research made an assumption that a change in the Polish opposition political culture led to a change in political actions. This assumption and other Polish case issues relating to the current research, some mentioned below, could be the focus of useful future research.

Chapter 1 made a special-case argument for Poland and yet, at the same time, suggested that the role that universal myths played within the Polish democratisation process may have a bearing upon other CEE countries. Further comparative research may shed light onto this and onto the apparent contradiction that, if Poland was a special case why did democratisation occur at more or less the same time throughout Central and East Europe?

If a key contention of this thesis - namely that nationalism and political Catholicism played an important role, in part thanks to pre-1945 myths, in the liberalisation of Polish opposition - is accepted, other related areas of new research suggest themselves. One such area relates to the issue as to why, in post-communist Poland, Christian Democracy is not a major political force and why the *SLD*, now the

home of choice of former communists, appears to have so successfully embraced a liberal political culture, albeit in a modern social democratic form.

Other possible research areas relate to the pre-1989 period. Chapter 1 argued the case for a mono-country rather than comparative approach. It is recognised, however, that there are disadvantages of such an approach. Chapter 1 also argued that the thesis may contribute important insights into how the nationalisms and religions of other Central East European countries, despite also having illiberal pasts, were synthesised into post-1945 liberal political cultures of opposition supportive of democratisation. Using insights gained from this research into the role of national and Catholic myths within the democratisation process, it might well be useful to compare the Polish case with that of Hungary and Slovakia where political Catholicism is also relevant. In turn, the lessons learnt from the three Catholic countries could be compared with those of the Eastern part of Germany, where political Protestantism may well have been a factor in the pre-1989 democratisation process. Chapter 3's identification of national non-communism suggests research into the nationalisms of other communist regimes to establish if the usual national communism designation is sufficient. Chapter 5 acknowledged that more research was needed to establish any causal relationship between John Paul II's papal political Catholicism and the downfall of Polish and other East European communisms.⁷⁶¹ From a broader perspective, that acknowledgement indicates that future research into the relationship between Polish nationalism and political Catholicism and

⁷⁶¹ Lecomte (1997), written in 1991, represents an initial start within this area.

the demise of Polish communism would also be useful. Another related area of possible research would be the relationship between the collapse of Polish communism and of other East European communisms. Other related and even broader areas of possible research would be the relationship of other East European nationalisms and the role of their religions to the downfall of their communisms. Finally, one more area of possible research concerns the complex issue of whether the failure to predict the fall of CEE communism may partly be attributable to paradigms, influenced by Cold War perspectives, that over-estimated *realpolitik* forces and the international hegemony of two superpowers and underestimated seemingly non-*realpolitik* forces such as national and religious myths, symbols and rituals.

As Davies (2001: 67) observed, “all myths serve a purpose.” As the purposes change, the myths are usually modified or sometimes new myths are created. Davies ponders whether in post-communist Poland the traditional myths can be revived or modified to match the new political circumstances. For example, Davies wonders if the *antemurale myth* might rise again as a result of Poland becoming a frontier zone of NATO or as a result of Russia renewing its ambitions to dominate Central Europe. He believes that the Catholic = True Pole myth and the Piast myth have little point in a mono-ethnic country whose frontiers are no longer under threat. However, as was shown in Part 2 chapters that covered 1945-1989 Poland, and as is being observed in post-communist Poland in the 21st century, mono-ethnicity did and does not prevent the deployment of the Catholic = True Pole myth or other related myths such as the Jewish enemy myth. An important aspect of myths is that people want to believe in

them, irrespective of whether they are rational or based on validated truths. One is forced to agree with Cassirer (1979: 246) when he argues that myth is a necessary factor, a fundamental element in the development of human culture, and that “man is not exclusively a rational animal. ... Myth is part and parcel of human nature” and that “in the critical moments of man’s political and social life myth regains its old strength.”

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