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POLITICAL CATHOLICISM AND EUROSCEPTICISM

**The deviant case of Poland in a comparative
perspective**

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University of Sussex

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
August, 2015

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be submitted in whole or in part to another university for the award of any degree. However, the thesis incorporates, to the extent indicated below, material already submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in European Politics, Business and Law, which was awarded by the University of Surrey.

Parts of section 1.2.2 on the definition and causality of Euroscepticism (pages 9-13 and 15-16), as well as paragraphs on pages: 99, 113-114 and 129.

Signature:

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List of Abbreviations

AP - <i>Acción Popular</i> , Popular Action
AP - <i>Alianza Popular</i> , People's Alliance
AWS - <i>Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność</i> , Solidarity Electoral Action
BBWR - <i>Bezpartyjny Blok Wspierania Reform</i> , Nonpartisan Bloc for Support of Reforms
BVP - <i>Bayerische Volkspartei</i> , Bavarian People's Party
CBOS - <i>Centrum Badania Opinii Publicznej</i> , the Centre for Public Opinion Research
CCD - <i>Centro Cristiano Democratico</i> , Christian Democratic Centre
CD&V - <i>Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams</i> , Christian Democrat and Flemish
CDA - <i>Christen-Democratisch Appèl</i> , Christian Democratic Appeal
CDH - <i>Centre démocrate humaniste</i> , Humanist Democratic Centre
CDS - <i>Centre des démocrates sociaux</i> , Centre of Social Democrats
CDS - <i>Centro Democrático e Social</i> , Democratic and Social Centre
CDU - <i>Christlich Demokratische Union</i> , Christian Democratic Union
CEDA - <i>Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas</i> , Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right-wing Groups
CEE - Central and Eastern Europe
CFSP - Common Foreign and Security Policy
CL - <i>Comunione e Liberazione</i> , Communion and Liberation
CNCA - <i>Confederación Nacional-Católica Agraria</i> , National Catholic Agrarian Confederation
COMECE - Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community
CPÖ - <i>Christliche Partei Österreichs</i> , Christian Party of Austria
CS - <i>Christlichsoziale Partei</i> , Christian Social Party
CSC - <i>Confédération des syndicats chrétiens</i> , Confederation of Christian Trade Unions
CSP - <i>Christlich-Soziale Partei</i> , Christian Social Party
CSU - <i>Christlich-Soziale Union</i> , Christian Social Union
CVP - <i>Christlichdemokratische Volkspartei der Schweiz</i> , Christian Democratic People's Party of Switzerland
CWG - <i>Christliche Wählergemeinschaft</i> , the Christian Electoral Alliance
DC - <i>Democrazia Cristiana</i> , Christian Democratic Party
DU - <i>Demokratická únia</i> , Democratic Union
EAJ - <i>Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea</i> , Basque Nationalist Party

ECHR - European Court of Human Rights
 EEA - European Economic Area
 EEC - European Economic Community
 EMU - Economic and Monetary Union
 Endecja - *Narodowa Demokracja*, National Democracy
 EP - European Parliament
 EPP - European People's Party
 EU - European Union
 FDP - *Freie Demokratische Partei*, Free Democratic Party
 FF - Fianna Fáil
 FG - Fine Gael
 FPÖ - *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, Freedom Party of Austria
 HDS - *Hrvatska demokratska stranka*, Croatian Democratic Party
 HDZ - *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*, Croatian Democratic Union
 HKDS - *Hrvatska kršćanska demokratska stranka*, Croatian Christian Democratic Party
 HKDU - *Hrvatska kršćanska demokratska unija*, Croatian Christian Democratic Union
 HSLS - *Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana*, Hlinka's Slovak People's Party
 JOC - *Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne*, Young Christian Workers
 KDH - *Krest'anskodemokratické hnutie*, Christian Democratic Movement
 KDS - *Krikščionių demokratų sąjunga*, Christian Democratic Union
 KP - *Krikščionių partija*, Christian Party
 KPN - *Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej*, Confederation of Independent Poland
 KVP - *Katholieke Volkspartij*, Catholic People's Party
 LKD - *Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai*, Lithuanian Christian Democrats
 LKDP - *Lietuvių krikščionių demokratų partija*, Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party
 LKDS - *Lietuvių krikščionių demokratų sąjunga*, Lithuanian Christian Democratic Union
 LPR - *Liga Polskich Rodzin*, the League of Polish Families
 MEP - Member of the European Parliament
 MP - Member of parliament
 MRP - *Mouvement Républicain Populaire*, Popular Republican Movement
 NAFTA - North American Free Trade Agreement
 NATO - North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
 N-VA - *Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie*, New Flemish Alliance
 ODS - *Občanská demokratická strana*, Czech Civic Democratic Party
 ÖVP - *Österreichische Volkspartei*, Austrian People's Party
 PAP - *Polska Agencja Prasowa*, Polish Press Agency
 PCD - *Parti chrétien-démocrate*, Christian Democratic Party
 PDP - *Parti démocrate populaire*, Popular Democratic Party
 PDP - *Partido Demócrata Popular*, People's Democratic Party
 PiS - *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, Law and Justice
 PJN - *Polska Jest Najważniejsza*, Poland is Most Important
 PL - *Partit Laburista*, Labour Party
 PN - *Partit Nazzjonalista*, Nationalist Party
 PO - *Platforma Obywatelska*, Civic Platform
 PP - *Partido Popular*, People's Party
 PPI-DC - *Partito Popolare Italiano*, Italian People's Party
 PPS - *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna*, Polish Socialist Party
 PSC/CVP - fr: *Parti social-chrétien*, nl: *Christelijke Volkspartij*, Christian Social Party
 PSChD - *Polskie Stronnictwo Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji*, Polish Christian Democratic Party
 PSL - *Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*, Polish Peasants' Party
 PSP - *Partido Socialista Popular*, People's Social Party

REKOS - *Die Reformkonservativen*, Reform Conservatives
 RPO - *Ruch Odbudowy Polski*, Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland
 SDKÚ - *Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia*, Slovak Democratic and Christian Union
 SKD - *Slovenski krščanski demokrati*, Slovene Christian Democrats
 SKVP - *Schweizerische Konservative Volkspartei*, Swiss Conservative People's Party
 SLD - *Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*, Democratic Left Alliance
 SLS - *Slovenska ljudska stranka*, Slovene People's Party
 SLS - *Slovenská ľudová strana*, Slovak People's Party
 SMK-MKP - sl: *Strana maďarskej komunity*, hu: *Magyar Közösség Pártja*, Party of Hungarian Community
 SNS - *Slovenska Nacionalna Stranka*, Slovenian National Party
 SNS - *Slovenská národná strana*, Slovak National Party
 SPÖ - *Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs*, Social Democratic Party
 SVP - *Schweizerische Volkspartei*, Swiss People's Party
 TS - *Tėvynės sąjunga*, Homeland Union
 TS-LKD - *Tėvynės sąjunga - Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai*, Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats
 UCD - *Unión de Centro Democrático*, Union of the Democratic Centre
 UDC - *Unió Democràtica de Catalunya*, Democratic Union of Catalonia
 UDC - *Unione dei Democratici Cristiani e Democratici di Centro*, Union of Christian and Centre Democrats
 UDF - *Union pour la Démocratie Française*, Union for French Democracy
 UK - United Kingdom
 UKIP - UK Independence Party
 UMF - *Union pour un mouvement populaire*, Union for a Popular Movement
 UPR - *Unia Polityki Realnej*, Union of Real Politics
 USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
 VLD - *Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten*, Flemish Liberals and Democrats
 ZChN - *Zjednoczenie Chrześcijańsko Narodowe*, Christian National Union
 ZSL - *Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe*, United People's Party

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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**POLITICAL CATHOLICISM AND EUROSCEPTICISM – THE DEVIANT
CASE OF POLAND IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

SUMMARY

The main aim of this thesis is to add to the understanding of how religion interacts with politics in modern Europe. It discusses the largely under-researched relationship between Euroscepticism and religion and argues that despite the theory of secularisation, which assumes an ever-increasing marginalisation of the role of religion in the public sphere, religious beliefs still play an important role in the world of politics.

This study firstly analyses the phenomenon of political Catholicism, providing a concise definition and identifying the primary and secondary features of this movement. Secondly, it discusses how, under certain circumstances, political Catholicism, which in general is a movement that strongly supported European integration, can adopt a Eurosceptic stance.

Empirically, this study focuses on the case of Poland, but places the results in the context of 15 other European countries. It analyses primary data gathered through documentary research (party manifestos, public statements, Church documents) and a number of interviews with party members. Additional information was collected from interviews with journalists, an expert survey and secondary literature in the field of EU studies and religion and politics.

The key argument of this thesis is that Polish political Catholicism is a distinct phenomenon in Europe because of its markedly visible Euroscepticism. Its opposition to Europe stems from an intrinsic feature of the movement, namely its Catholic-nationalist nature. This attribute developed as a result of Polish history, characterised by long periods of struggle for independence from alien forces, whereby belonging to Catholicism gradually became an essential element of belonging to the Polish nation, helping to define the ‘Us’ vs. the ‘Other’. Consequently, Polish political Catholicism started perceiving the EU as an organisation based on ‘alien’, secular values, which could endanger Polish national identity, Polish society and ultimately the state.

In broader terms, this study contributes to the general discussion on the causality of party-based Euroscepticism. It also provides a comparative outlook on political Catholicism in Europe, arguing that there is a gap between Western and Central and Eastern European strands of this movement, resulting mainly from different historical circumstances in which the movement developed in both regions.

1 Introduction: aims and scope of the study

1.1 Field of research, knowledge gaps and objectives

The relationship between religion and politics has been strong throughout the history of most countries in Europe and other parts of the world. Religion and religious beliefs used to play an important role in the functioning of societies, both in private and public spheres. The situation changed dramatically in the 20th century, when as a result of industrialisation and modernisation the societies and states of the 'Western world' experienced what seemed then a rapid process of secularisation, which led to the separation of the state from religious institutions, the decline of religious beliefs and practices, and the marginalisation of religion to the private sphere. This process was encapsulated in the theory of secularisation, which until the late 1980s was widely accepted across social sciences (Gorski and Altinordu 2008). It predicted that the more modernised and industrialised a state and society become, the more secular they will be and the less important a role religion will play in the public sphere. In this context, it is not surprising that the relationship between religion and politics, particularly in the case of Western democracies, gradually started attracting less and less scholarly attention.

However, while the separation of religion from state institutions has been a modern structural trend, two other important elements of secularisation theory, the predicted decline of religious beliefs and the marginalisation of religion to the private sphere are questionable. In fact, there are many cases where the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation have not triggered the decline of religious beliefs and practices, but quite the contrary have led to the emergence of strong public religions, which started playing an increasingly important role in different parts of the polity (Casanova 1994).

The significance of the gap in the understanding of how religion interplays with politics in modern Europe becomes even more apparent when one touches upon a political process that had a major influence on politics and policymaking on the continent, that is European integration. In fact, it was political Catholicism (in the form of Christian democratic parties) that strongly influenced the process of unifying Europe, particularly in its early stages.

Political Catholicism is defined in this study as a broad social and political movement which draws on Catholic social teaching and moral values, and whose key purpose is to influence the decision-making process in order to enshrine these values in law. The pivotal role of this movement in driving European integration could be best observed in the way that the close links between Christian democrats and the Catholic Church, and the latter's universalistic claims, coupled with a strong Christian democratic belief in mutual understanding and reciprocity, translated into a striving for a supranational identity that would ensure transnational reconciliation. Christian democratic parties have supported European integration and perceived it as a way of ensuring that the important attachment of individuals to the 'nation' would not transform into raw nationalism fuelled by feelings of pride and chauvinism (Bale and Szczerbiak 2006). In other words, the process of European integration became strongly rooted in ideological principles whose sources can be traced back to the Catholic religion and political Catholicism.

The limited knowledge of how religion, and in particular political Catholicism, influenced party politics in Europe is directly linked to another gap in the scholarly research of European politics – the lack of understanding of the relationship between political Catholicism and Euroscepticism. In recent years, a significant body of research has been devoted to the analysis of popular and party-based Euroscepticism. This discussion has led to the creation of a literature on the conceptualisation and causality of Euroscepticism, including a significant number of country case studies that aimed at exploring this phenomenon. As a result, a broad agreement emerged among scholars that the causality of Euroscepticism can be explained either by ideological-programmatic or strategic/tactical factors (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008). Even though research into this issue (e.g. Marks, Wilson and Ray 2002) suggested that adherence to a specific party family, which is based on ideology (including a religion-rooted one), could explain almost two-thirds of the variance in the positions of individual political parties on European integration, the role of religion in cueing Euroscepticism was analysed only to a very limited extent (e.g. Minkenberg 2009, Guerra 2010).

In the context of the discussion about the role of religion in European integration and the emergence of Euroscepticism, Poland is a particularly interesting case. Firstly, it is not only the largest of the new post-communist EU member states, but also the one that has had some of the most prominent and electorally successful Eurosceptic parties [the League of Polish Families (*Liga Polskich Rodzin*, LPR), Self-Defence (*Samoobrona*), and Law and Justice

(*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS)] which, between 2005-2007, participated in government. One of them (Law and Justice) still enjoyed substantial support as the largest opposition party in the Polish parliament at the time of writing. Secondly, it is a country where, as a result of historical developments, Catholicism has played a significant role in political, social and cultural life, ultimately becoming a core component of Polish national identity (Szczurbiak 2001, 2004b). Thirdly, political Catholicism, a key player in Polish politics, adopted a markedly Eurosceptic stance, which is highly unusual for a political movement traditionally supportive of the integration process.

This is why the aim of this study is to shed more light on the relationship between party politics and religion in contemporary Europe. It attempts, firstly, to explore the largely under-researched phenomenon of political Catholicism in Europe, providing a more robust definition of the movement than the one used so far in the literature. Secondly, this thesis tries to understand how, under certain circumstances, political Catholicism can assume a Eurosceptic position. To do this, the study offers the first systematic empirical examination of political Catholicism in Poland, one of the most prominent cases where opposition to Europe has been evident in the party system and where the intrinsic features of Polish political Catholicism seem to have led to its adopting a Eurosceptic stance. This thesis will also discuss to what extent Polish political Catholicism is the main driver of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. Finally, in order to place the work in a comparative framework, and to examine to what extent this distinct relationship between political Catholicism and Euroscepticism differentiates Poland from other cases, this thesis will also examine a number of secondary cases where political Catholicism was an important actor.

It is the key argument of this study that there is a specific example of political Catholicism in Poland that adopted a Eurosceptic stance. This contrasts starkly with West European cases of political Catholicism (most notably Christian democratic ones), which predominantly stayed firmly in favour of European integration. The main reason for Eurosceptic political Catholicism in Poland seems to lie in the intertwined relations between Catholicism and Polish national identity, whereby the Catholic religion provided, for more than two centuries, a framework for the functioning of Polish society. Consequently, Polish political Catholicism acquired a Catholic-nationalist trait, making it particularly focused on protecting national sovereignty and traditional Catholic values, which it perceived as the foundation of social life in the country. At the same time, the EU

started to be identified as a promoter of liberal secular values that may not only endanger Polish national identity, but also hinder the future development of the country.

1.2 Setting the scene

Secularisation and the concept of public religion

Since the end of the Second World War, the issue of the relationship between religion and politics has been attracting less and less attention from political scientists, particularly in Europe. This was a direct result of the perceived diminishing of the role of religion in public life and the establishment of the secularisation paradigm in social sciences, which became the theoretical and analytical framework through which many scholars perceived the relationship of religion and a modern society. What Wallace (1966) stated about religion almost 50 years ago, that ‘the evolutionary future of religion is extinction Belief in supernatural powers is doomed to die out, all over the world, as the result of the increasing adequacy and diffusion of scientific knowledge’ (Wallace 1966: 264-265), became widely accepted until the mid-1980s when Stark and his collaborators (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, Stark and Finke 2000, Stark and Iannaccone 1994) heavily criticised the theory of secularisation in a series of articles (for details, see a recap on the history and challenges faced by the theory of secularisation in Gorski and Altinordu [2008]). The reality of growing religiosity in the world – the spread of Pentecostalism in the Southern hemisphere, the collapse of secular Communism, the Iranian Revolution, the strong position of Christians in the USA, the re-birth of the Orthodox Church in Russia, and continued religious conflicts – meant that those predicting the end of religion were soon proven wrong.

In this context, some scholars began arguing that the role of religion in public life was not diminishing, but rather changing. One of the most influential works in this genre was Casanova’s (1994) case study analysis of four countries (Spain, Poland, Brazil and the United States), which led to the establishment of the concept of public religions in the modern world – religions which assume, or try to assume, a ‘public’ character, function, or role. According to Casanova (2012), one can distinguish three types of public religions at different levels of the polity – the state, political society and civil society. At the state level one can distinguish mainly established state churches. At the level of political society – religions which mobilise institutional resources for political competition through political

parties, social movements, or lobbying agencies. Finally, public religions at the civil society level can be exemplified by religions which enter the public sphere in order to participate in open public debates about public issues, public affairs and public policy choices.

Casanova's point of departure was a deep investigation of the theory of secularisation, which he described as being made up of three different propositions: secularisation as differentiation of the secular spheres from religious institutions and norms; secularisation as decline of religious beliefs and practices; and secularisation as marginalisation of religion to a privatised sphere. Casanova's critique of these three propositions led him to the conclusion that insofar as the differentiation of religion from secular spheres and institutions was a modern structural trend, the second and third meanings of secularisation were questionable as theoretical and empirical propositions. In fact, there were many cases where the process of industrialisation and urbanisation did not lead to a decline of religious beliefs and practices (including in Poland, the US and Brazil) but, quite to the contrary, caused a process of 'de-privatisation' of religion and an emergence of strong public religions which started playing an increasingly important role in the public sphere, influencing politics and policymaking.

This study adopts a similar view, i.e. that secularisation is not a ubiquitous phenomenon. In fact, it may be quite limited, mostly to Western Europe. Even there, however, the role of religion in public life has not been rendered completely redundant. For decades after the Second World War, political Catholicism shaped European politics. More recently, the role of Christian values in European societies' cultural development and identity building surfaced in public debates, e.g. the discussion about the EU Constitutional Treaty and the inclusion of the Judeo-Christian roots of Europe in its preamble (Heyward 2005). Religious arguments also featured in debates surrounding the issue of the EU enlargement to Turkey (Casanova 2006) or immigration, particularly in the context of an alleged cultural clash between Islam and European values, based on Christianity (Marranci 2006).

1.2.1 Political Catholicism as a movement

A detailed discussion about the nature of political Catholicism will be presented in chapter 2 of this thesis. However, as a way of introducing the concept, it is necessary to provide some basic information.

The scholarly debate on political Catholicism has been very limited. Nevertheless, one can identify attempts to provide a definition and typology of the movement, coupled with

some research trying to explain the electoral performance of parties associated with this phenomenon. The body of literature on political Catholicism can be divided into two groups. The first comprises studies focused on the historical development and role of the movement in European politics until the Second World War (e.g. Buchanan and Conway 1996, Conway 1997, Kaiser and Wahnout 2004). The other group, which analysed political Catholicism in post-war Europe, was almost exclusively devoted to the phenomenon of Christian democracy (e.g. Fogarty 1957, Hanley 1994, Van Kersbergen 1995, Kalyvas 1996, Gehler and Kaiser 2004, Van Hecke and Gerard 2004 and Kaiser 2007). Christian democracy, which until the 1960s dominated much of the West European political scene, became the best known embodiment of the political Catholic movement. Indeed, the success of Christian democracy was so great that it overshadowed the whole family of political Catholic movements, and the term ‘political Catholicism’ started to be used interchangeably with ‘Christian democracy’.

Because Christian democracy was relatively well defined and described, political Catholicism as such never saw the development of a robust definition that clearly stated its nature and listed the main features of the movement. Naturally, scholars describing the history of the movement provided descriptions, listing features, ideological beliefs, characteristic elements of manifestos; but these elements were rarely brought together to form a holistic definition of the movement. The common ground in the existing literature seems to be the assertion that political Catholicism finds particularly strong inspiration in Catholic social teaching, which is a body of Catholic doctrine concerning social issues such as poverty, wealth, economics, social organisation and the role of the state. In terms of its reach, political Catholicism is a multi-faceted movement that may include political parties as well as social movements and organisations. It also does not restrict itself to movements and organisations that were created by or had some authorisation from the Church’s hierarchy; quite the contrary, many political Catholic movements sought to assert their autonomy from the Church. At the same time, political Catholicism does not simply mean a group of Catholics who are active in politics, but rather refers to political action with Catholic inspiration (Conway 1996b).

Political Catholicism as a movement is not homogeneous, and its characteristic feature is the fact that it finds different expressions. That is why it is wrong to reduce it to a single one of its manifestations in public life, albeit the best known one, that is the Christian democratic movement. Political Catholicism as a movement is much broader than a single

party family and, in fact, internal divisions have always been intrinsic to the Catholic politics of Europe, with the main lines of division running across social classes (e.g. Catholic *bourgeoisie* vs. Catholic workers), regions (e.g. the Ruhr and parts of France and Belgium with a strong Catholic working-class tradition vs. rural regions), or generations (e.g. those advocating that Catholicism should oppose the ‘evils’ of modern era and those trying to find a place within the new industrial, pluralist society) (Conway 1996b).

In the context of political Catholicism, Poland is a particularly interesting case. Polish society is a deeply religious one – more than 90% of Poles identify as Catholics (see Table 4 for details), with 40% of them attending the Sunday mass every week (ISKK 2014). It is not surprising then that political Catholicism in Poland played a significant role, although its activity came to an abrupt end after the Second World War when the communists took power, gradually eliminating other parties. The movement reappeared after the 1989 fall of Communism, assuming an important place on the Polish political scene. However, to the surprise of many scholars Polish political Catholicism never took the form of Christian democracy, which has always been inherently weak and marginalised. Instead, it was replaced by a Catholic-nationalistic movement, focused on safeguarding Polish sovereignty as a way of protecting the traditional Catholic moral set-up of Polish society.

It should be noted that this study uses the term ‘political Catholicism’ in two ways, either to denominate the set of ideas associated with the movement (‘political Catholic ideology’) or to refer to a group of organisations or movements that form political Catholicism in a given country. This approach may be compared to the use of the term ‘Christian democracy’, which also can mean either a Christian democratic ideology or a group of Christian democratic parties. The context of each use should be clear enough so as to allow the reader to distinguish between the two applications of the term.

In the context of research on political Catholicism, Poland drew some attention from scholars, albeit mostly limited in scope to Polish Christian democratic parties. As noted earlier, Poland in this respect is a distinct case where despite a predominantly Catholic society no successful Christian democratic party has emerged. Bale and Szczerbiak (2008) in their analysis of the Polish case, based on the post-war history of West European Christian democratic parties, enumerated seven factors associated with Christian democratic party success: (i) a substantial Roman Catholic population, (ii) a fear of victory by anticlerical and potentially totalitarian left, (iii) support from newly-enfranchised female voters, agricultural and middle-class sectors, (iv) potential competitors from the right being

delegitimised by participation in totalitarian regimes, (v) a Church hierarchy that provided resources to its chosen Christian democratic party, (vi) support for Christian democratic parties from civil society organisations, and finally (vii) the ability of a Christian democratic party to maintain autonomy from the Church hierarchy. After having analysed the Polish political scene, Bale and Szczerbiak observed that only one factor (a substantial Roman Catholic population) appeared to have been present in post-1989 Poland, making the development of Christian democratic parties unlikely in a longer term. The authors concluded that success of Christian democratic parties depended on the interplay between social realities, sponsors (i.e. institutions that linked party and society and often provided material and other resources) and the institutional and ideological crafting of politicians.

Building on Bale and Szczerbiak's research, Grzymala-Busse (2013) tried to understand why only a couple of Christian democratic parties in the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) were electorally successful. A general pattern that emerged from her analysis was that in the case of CEE countries, the electoral success was not correlated with religious belief or Church attendance. Post-communist Christian democracy was most successful where it had positive historical (interwar) legacies. Without them, Christian democratic parties did not enjoy initial electoral support and found efforts to attract new voters handicapped either by a lack of historical capital or by their alliances with the Church. As a result, Christian democracy either failed to arise or, where it did, it lost both electoral and parliamentary relevance (and presence). This can also potentially explain why there was no successful Christian democracy in Poland and why parties which seemed ideologically closest to Christian democracy, like Civic Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska*, PO) or Law and Justice, carefully avoided that label.

However, the fact that no successful Christian democracy developed in Poland, did not mean that, in general, the political Catholic movement did not manage to become an important player. In reality, the scholarly focus on Christian democracy often meant that other forms of political Catholicism were often overlooked. This study will show that a different form of political Catholicism formed in Poland, dominating much of the right wing and exerting significant influence on Polish politics.

1.2.2 Euroscepticism – definition and causality

The process of European integration has had a significant influence on the party politics in Europe, giving rise to support for and, even more so, passionate opposition to the process.

As a result, academic research devoted to political parties' stances on Europe has surged over the past twenty years. In particular, the emergence of party-based Euroscepticism in Europe as quite a new phenomenon in European party politics attracted widespread attention both amongst academic scholars and commentators of European political life. This resulted in a number of detailed case studies of particular countries (Evans 2000, Henderson 2001, Lees 2002, Riishøj 2007, Spiering 2004 or a number of case studies in Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008c), as well as comparative and theoretical contributions, predominantly concerning questions such as how to define party-based Euroscepticism and what reasons make political parties accept a Eurosceptic position.

Defining Euroscepticism

One of the first attempts to provide a comprehensive definition of party-based Euroscepticism was Taggart's conceptualisation of Euroscepticism as an 'idea of contingent or qualified ..., as well as outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration' (Taggart 1998: 366). This definition was broad and incorporated a wide range of varying positions, thus it was subsequently refined by Szczerbiak and Taggart (2004), whereby the term was broken down into two distinctive types: principled opposition to European integration ('hard' Euroscepticism) and contingent opposition to this process ('soft' Euroscepticism).

Szczerbiak and Taggart defined 'hard' Euroscepticism as 'an outright rejection of the entire project of European political and economic integration and opposition to one's country joining or remaining a member of the EU'. Party-based 'soft' Euroscepticism, on the other hand, was described as the situation 'where there is NOT a principled objection to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of policy areas leads to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU, or where there is a sense that "national interest" is currently at odds with the EU trajectory' (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2004: 3). In this context, attitudes to a country's membership in the EU were used by the authors as the ultimate test of whether a party should fall within the 'hard' Eurosceptic group.

Szczerbiak and Taggart's conceptualisation became a model successfully applied in many analyses concerning both relatively 'young democracies' of Central and Eastern Europe (e.g. Henderson 2001, Bielasiak 2004) or more mature Western European ones (Lees 2002, Spiering 2004). It also stimulated a broad academic debate that led to other alternative

conceptualisations being developed. One of the most comprehensive ones was the definition elaborated by Kopecky and Mudde (2002). These scholars criticised the soft-hard Euroscepticism approach on two grounds: firstly, together with other scholars they pointed out that ‘soft’ Euroscepticism seemed to have been too all-encompassing, and secondly, they stated that the key criterion used to separate the two forms of Euroscepticism – i.e. support for or opposition to EU membership – was not the right measure to differentiate among critics of European integration. Kopecky and Mudde argued that there should be a distinction between principled support for/opposition to the idea of European integration on the one hand, and attitudes to the European Union (EU) as the current embodiment of this idea and its current trajectory on the other hand. On the basis of this argument, the two scholars proposed a new classification of party-based Euroscepticism.

Table 1: The fourfold model of party-based Euroscepticism

		Support for the idea of European integration	
		<i>Europhile</i>	<i>Europhobe</i>
Support for the EU and its current trajectory	<i>EU-optimist</i>	Euroenthusiasts (pro-integration and pro-EU and its trajectory)	Europragmatists (anti-integration, pro-EU and its trajectory)
	<i>EU-pessimist</i>	Eurosceptics (pro-integration, anti-current trajectory)	Eurorejects (anti-integration and anti-current trajectory)

Source: Kopecky and Mudde (2002)

As shown in Table 1, Kopecky and Mudde’s model was based on two dimensions of Euroscepticism. Firstly, the ideological dimension, dealing with the question of European integration, wherein the authors distinguished between Europhiles (accepting in principle the idea of European integration) and Europhobes (outright rejecting integration, for example because of isolationism or liberalism). The second dimension was a strategic one, dealing with acceptance of the EU itself, wherein EU-optimists endorsed both the EU itself as well as the way it was developing, while EU-pessimists did not support the current state of the EU or were critical of the way it was evolving. This led to a fourfold division of parties into separate categories in accordance with their stance on European integration: Euroenthusiasts (pro-integration and pro-EU), Europragmatists (anti-integration and pro-

EU), Eurosceptics (pro-integration, anti-EU) and Eurorejects (anti-integration and anti-EU).

As a response to this, Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008b) recognised the validity of the main arguments put forward by Kopecky and Mudde and agreed that the key variables in determining party attitudes to Europe should be: firstly, underlying support for or opposition to the European project, rather than a party's support for or oppositions to their country's membership in the EU, and secondly, attitudes to the current trajectory of the EU, including its further actual or planned extension of competencies. As such, the authors decided to move away from viewing attitudes to EU membership as the ultimate test for whether a party was a case of 'hard' or 'soft' Euroscepticism, because party attitudes to EU membership could be more of an opportunistic choice resulting from short-term tactical and medium-term strategic domestic considerations.

However, while agreeing in general with Kopecky and Mudde's argument, Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008b) stressed the inconsistent usage of terminology by the two authors. Firstly, they pointed out that Kopecky and Mudde departed from the existing common usage of the term Euroscepticism. They found particularly confusing the description of the principled opponents to European integration as 'Europhobes' or 'Eurorejects'. This problem was clearly visible in the case of the UK Independence Party, which according to Kopecky and Mudde's model would not have been classified as Eurosceptic.

Secondly, Szczerbiak and Taggart noted that the Europragmatist category seemed to have been internally incoherent, as it combined rejection of European integration in principle on the one hand with support for the EU on the other, which, regardless of whether it was a successful organisation or not, was an embodiment of integrationist ideas in Europe. The problem here might be the fact that Kopecky and Mudde failed to develop a coherent definition of what a Europragmatic position was. In fact, it seemed that the category was created as a label that could be attached to parties which in reality were hard to classify because of their unclear and changeable positions (e.g.: the two parties classified as Europragmatist – the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) and the Independent Smallholders' Party (FKGP) – had very mixed and at times unspecified attitudes to European integration and the EU).

Finally, Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008b) stated that the Euroenthusiast category seemed to have been overly inclusive, and therefore, it faced the same problem as the original

definition of 'soft' Euroscepticism. In other words, Kopecky and Mudde's classification failed to distinguish between different levels of support for integration, which, as in the case of opposition to the process, could be both principled and contingent.

One classification tried to address all the above mentioned issues and distinguish between different shades of 'Eurooptimism' and 'Euroscepticism'. In his typology, Flood (2002) deliberately refrained from using terminology such as 'Euroscepticism' or 'pro-European', resorting instead to terms conventionally applied in political science. Flood's classification comprised six categories:

- a) Maximalist – position in favour of pushing integration as far and as fast as it is possible (including progress of overall structures or specific policies);
- b) Reformist – position accepting the advancement of integration, combined with constructive criticism. Support for integration is subject to remedying the deficiencies of what has already been achieved;
- c) Gradualist – position accepting the advancement of integration, as long as it is slow and gradual;
- d) Minimalist – position accepting the status quo but rejecting any further advances in integration;
- e) Revisionist – position in favour of returning to an earlier state, usually before a major treaty revision;
- f) Rejectionist – position of outright opposition to both EU membership and to integration as such.

One obvious advantage of Flood's classification was its distinction between different degrees of support for the EU and opposition to it. What is also interesting about Flood's attempt at classifying party attitudes to Europe is the lack of ideological presumptions in the categorisation itself. Flood and Usherwood argued (2005) that both models discussed earlier (i.e. Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004) and Kopecky and Mudde (2002)) took too reductive and too restrictive an approach to the issue of ideology and its influence on party alignment on the European issue. As they pointed out, positions of parties were multidimensional, broader than simple binary distinctions between ideological acceptance or rejection of European integration.

However, the use of Flood's model faced significant challenges. Firstly, its categories seem not to be mutually exclusive and some parties could be classified in more than one of them. Secondly and more importantly, the operationalisation of Flood's model appears to be very

difficult, because the more sophisticated and fine-grained the typology, the more difficult it is to apply. Flood rightly pointed out that there were many factors influencing party position that until then had been overlooked in research. However, taking into account all or most of the factors indicated by Flood would require a substantial amount of data that is often not available. This is because parties rarely elaborated their positions in enough detail to allow for their classification. As Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008b) noted, it was possible to circumvent this by deducing party positions on Europe from statements on other policy areas or broader ideological positioning, but this in turn led to a higher degree of imprecision and second-guessing what party positions really were. In fact, in most countries the EU was viewed through the prism of domestic politics, which meant that party positions on Europe were elaborated in little detail, even in countries where parties had several decades to develop their views on the future trajectory of the EU (see: Lees' (2008) analysis of German party programmes, Henderson 2008, Szczerbiak 2008).

It seems that out of the discussed typologies, the binary 'soft'/'hard' conceptualisation is most accepted and used in studies of party-based Euroscepticism. It became particularly valuable since its revision following Kopecky and Mudde's critique and additional analyses carried out by the authors. The strengths of this typology become particularly obvious in attempts by other scholars to provide alternative conceptualisations, which in many aspects use the same categories under different names, particularly if categories used to define pro-EU opinions are discarded. Indeed, the newly proposed categories of opposition to European integration often turned out to be superfluous or created as labels for those parties that may be difficult to classify. For example, Kopecky and Mudde's Eurosceptic and Euroreject categories are in essence equivalent to 'soft' and 'hard' Euroscepticism. The additional category of Europragmatists, as pointed out by Szczerbiak and Taggart themselves (2008b), is internally illogical as it is hard to find parties that would be in principle opposed to the idea of European integration but supportive of the EU's current trajectory (the two parties classified by Kopecky and Mudde as Europragmatic simply had positions on Europe that made them difficult to classify). In Flood's typology, the three positions opposed to Europe were rejectionists, revisionists and minimalists. Rejectionists overlapped with 'hard' Euroscepticism, revisionists fell either within 'hard' or 'soft' Euroscepticism, depending on the scale of their attempts to revise treaties (entire configuration of the EU or some policy areas), while minimalists were in other words 'soft' Eurosceptics. A similar situation can be observed when it comes to Zuba's (2006) threefold typology of Euroenthusiasts, Eurorealists and Eurosceptics in Poland, which will be

outlined in more detail in the following chapters. Here, Eurorealists again were either parties that were difficult to classify because of the changeability of their positions or did not develop their European policy in sufficient detail to allow for their classification, while Zuba's Eurosceptics were simply 'hard' Eurosceptics. Consequently, Szczerbiak and Taggart's binary classification of Euroscepticism seems to offer the most efficient tool for studies of party-based Euroscepticism. On the one hand, it is clear and straightforward enough to allow for its operationalisation, even in cases where parties do not elaborate their European policies in sufficient manner, and on the other hand, it escapes over-simplicity and the creation of artificial groups that include parties that may be difficult to categorise otherwise.

Naturally, no categorisation is perfect and so it is the case with Szczerbiak and Taggart's proposition, where the biggest challenge has always been narrowing down the category of 'soft' Euroscepticism so that it does not encompass too many organisations. However, with the gradual refinement of the 'hard' and 'soft' Euroscepticism definitions, they became clearer and more unambiguous in use.

Keeping all these explanations in mind, this thesis will use the binary definition of Euroscepticism proposed by Szczerbiak and Taggart. The term 'hard' Euroscepticism denotes a party position with 'a principled opposition to the EU and European integration', while 'soft' Euroscepticism can be found 'where there is NOT a principled objection to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on policy areas lead to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU, or where there is a sense that "national interest" is currently at odds with the EU trajectory' (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008b: 241). This thesis focuses on understanding the relation between political Catholicism and any of the two types of Euroscepticism, and whenever the term 'Euroscepticism' is used it refers to an overall grouping of 'soft' and 'hard' Eurosceptic parties, unless specified differently.

The causes of party-based Euroscepticism

Apart from trying to define and categorise party-based Euroscepticism, another major challenge facing researchers is the issue of causality. This discussion is important in the framework of this study as it outlines key influencers on party attitudes to Europe.

Many analyses of the causality of party-based Euroscepticism focused on institutional aspects of politics that may cue Euroscepticism (Batory and Sitter 2004, Deschouwer and Van Assche 2002, Baker et al. 2002). Others pointed to institutional features such as the

electoral system, types of legislature and the distribution of power within a polity as elements strongly motivating the emergence of Eurosceptic movements (Usherwood 2002, Lees 2002). There were also scholars who concentrated on issues of culture, values and ideology in the context of party positions on Europe, e.g. Hooghe et al. (2002), who analysed the role of ideology on party stances on Europe and argued that parties located toward the right and left poles of the political spectrum were significantly more Eurosceptic than parties located in the centre.

In spite of this breadth of research on the causality of Euroscepticism, it seems that one can boil it down to the key question of whether party alignment on Europe is a strategy- or an ideology-driven issue. In other words, can a party stance on integration be changed whenever it is deemed strategically or tactically convenient, or is it based on a more profound issue of ideology and as such is less vulnerable to short-term political considerations?

One group of scholars (for example, Batory and Sitter 2004, Deschouwer and Van Assche 2002, Baker et al 2002) saw party-based Euroscepticism as a question of strategic positioning and linked it to the so-called 'politics of opposition'. This opinion flowed from the conviction that political parties were 'organisations that seek to propel candidates to elected office in pursuit of policy goals' (Sitter 2002: 5). The stress here was on the 'quest for office' and as this remained the main aim of a political party, the patterns of competition shaped the translation of the European issue into party politics. Another set of theories pointed to the importance of such features as the electoral system, types of legislature and distribution of power within a polity (for example, Lees 2002, Usherwood 2002, Spiering 2004).

However, another strand of theories explaining the rise of Euroscepticism focused on ideological-programmatic factors (Marks and Wilson 2000; Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002; Kopecky and Mudde 2002). In this context, it is useful to mention a study by Marks, Wilson and Ray (2002), who empirically tested four hypotheses explaining party positions on European integration. The authors sought to verify the following theories:

- a) *Cleavage theory* – which assumes that parties reflect divisions in the social structure. From this standpoint, parties are organisations with strongly embedded ideologies and have long-standing agendas that do not change significantly with each electoral cycle.

- b) *National localisation* – which stipulates that parties' alignment on Europe is an effect of national interests of a member state in which a party functions.
- c) *Median supporter* – which assumes that parties position themselves in such a way as to maximise their electoral support. In doing so, they try to locate their policies near the position of the median voter.
- d) *Strategic competition* – which argues that a political party may take a position on a new issue to manipulate its salience, with the ultimate goal to differentiate itself from the mainstream and to 'shake-up' the system by taking extreme positions.

As a result of a statistical data analysis, the authors concluded that the *cleavage theory* bore the strongest potential for predicting party attitudes to the EU. In fact, adherence to a specific party family (which was based on ideological-programmatic positions resulting from historical or contemporary cleavages) explained almost two-thirds of the variance in the positions assumed by political parties on European integrations. At the same time, more strategic considerations – such as left/right extremism, whereby parties at the fringes of the left/right dimension were more likely to be Eurosceptic, and the connection between the position of a party and that of its median voter – were also very closely associated with party attitudes on Europe.

One of the most influential arguments in discussions on the causes for Euroscepticism was Kopecky and Mudde's typology (2002). As mentioned in the previous section, in their categorisation of party-based Euroscepticism, the authors tried to take into account the issue of the influence of ideology on party stances on Europe. In their conclusions, they stressed that ideology determined broad attitudes to European integration in principle, which was a relatively constant factor, while strategy determined whether or not a party supported the current trajectory of the EU.

Finally, there were also attempts to merge the two approaches and suggest that although values and ideologies remained an important element in predicting party stances on European integration, short-term electoral strategies and coalition-building tactics must also be taken into account (Batory and Sitter 2004).

When summarising this discussion, Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008b) observed that Euroscepticism as a broad party position on Europe needed to be differentiated from whether and how parties used the issue of Europe in inter-party competition, as these two phenomena were driven by different causes. According to the two authors, broad underlying party positions on Europe are determined by two factors: the party's wider ideological profile and the perceived interests of its supporters. In this context, more

ideological, value-based and goal-seeking parties would be more likely to prioritise the first factor, while more pragmatic, office-seeking parties may choose to follow opinions of its supporters. What is crucial, however, is the fact that broad underlying positions are, according to Szczerbiak and Taggart, quite firmly rooted and relatively fixed, in contrast with rhetorical shifts, which may happen more easily.

To sum up Szczerbiak and Taggart's argument, a broad, underlying party position on Europe are determined by the party's ideology and the interests of its members. This is a relatively constant factor, as ideologies are firmly rooted and cannot be easily changed (though this is possible). On the other hand, the issue of party competition, driven by electoral strategy and 'government-opposition dynamic' (Sitter 2002), determined the role and prominence of Euroscepticism attributed by parties in their rhetoric. In this context, it is worth mentioning the issue of problematising Europe, i.e. the use of rhetoric that is highly critical of the EU for strategic or tactical reasons, while retaining broad support for EU integration.

In essence, the scholarly discussion on the causality of party-based Euroscepticism focused on the 'ideology vs. strategy' issue (for a recap of the discussion on the causality of party-based Euroscepticism see Mudde 2012). To what extent are party opinions on Europe shaped by its ideological underpinnings, and hence are more stable, unchangeable with some party families being more prone to adopt a Eurosceptic stance? Do parties use their European policies as an element of inter-party competition, and what is the role of short-term (electoral) strategic and (coalition) tactical considerations? It seem that what Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008b) proposed – a distinction between a broad underlying party position on Europe, which is determined by the ideological profile, and whether or not a party chooses to use its European policy in inter-party competition, determined by strategic-tactical factors, is the most rational approach. There are numerous empirical examples of the influence of both ideology and strategy on a party's position on Europe. Parties are subject to both types of factors: their strongly embedded ideological profiles as well as day-to-day challenges of domestic politics with competition for electoral support and institutional or legal frameworks that impact their activities. The importance that parties attribute to these factors depends on their character, i.e. on whether they are more value-based, ideology-driven parties or office-seeking entities. This research aims to contribute to this discussion by assessing the relative importance of the 'ideology versus strategy' dichotomy in the case of Polish party-based Euroscepticism. It will present the

Polish case, which is an example of how the deep-running, underlying positions of parties on Europe are driven by ideology, while the use of this position in party rhetoric and inter-party competition is influenced by electoral tactics and the government-participation strategy.

In fact, Poland seems to be a particularly interesting case in the context of Euroscepticism. It was the biggest country in the cohort that joined the EU in 2004, having the clear potential to become a significant player on the European political scene. In addition, Poles were overwhelmingly pro-EU throughout the 1990s, with political elites almost universally sharing the opinion that Polish EU membership should be a key policy objective. Nonetheless, criticism of the EU slowly began to surface and, by 2001, 18% of the votes in national elections were won by ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parties, which openly opposed or were highly critical of the Polish accession to the EU. Although the size of the ‘hard’ Eurosceptic camp significantly decreased in the following years, Euroscepticism remained an important element of Polish party politics (Szczurbiak 2008).

What is, however, most interesting about Polish party-based Euroscepticism is the fact that it seems to have been dominated by political Catholic organisations such as the League of Polish Families, the Christian National Union (*Zjednoczenie Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe*, ZChN), the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland (*Ruch Odbudowy Polski* – RPO), the Polish Agreement (*Porozumienie Polskie*) or Law and Justice, which is a surprising phenomenon and largely a new aspect of party-based Euroscepticism.

1.2.3 Religion and European integration – the deviant case of Poland

Just as the general issue of the relationship between religion and politics did not attract significant scholarly attention in recent years, the role of religion in European politics and its influence on parties’ attitudes to European integration also remained a largely under-researched topic. So far, the limited scholarly discussion in this area mainly focused on the role of Christian democracy in driving forward the process of European integration.

Kalyvas and van Kersbergen (2010) provided a comprehensive review of the scholarly research on Christian democracy in Europe, discussing its origins, proving that it is a distinctive political movement, and tracing its impact on the process of European integration. Their analysis showed a striking relationship between Christian democracy and the process of European integration – periods of power or crisis in the Christian democratic movement correlated directly with advancements or a decline in European

integration. The establishment and rapid growth of European institutions in the 1950s was connected with the post-war dominance of Christian democracy in European politics, while the European sclerosis of the 1960s and 1970s occurred exactly at the same time as the first crisis of Christian democratic parties. The same could be observed in the mid-1980s, when a rebirth of Christian democracy correlated with the signing of the Single European Act and the creation of the EU in the early 1990s. This observation was confirmed by Hanley (2008) in his analysis of European transnational parties. When describing the Christian democratic transnational party, the European People's Party (EPP), Hanley demonstrated its pivotal role in driving European integration, especially at the outset of the process.

In recent years, there have been some preliminary attempts to analyse the correlation of religion and politics in Europe, trying to explain how religion may have impacted upon the emergence of Eurosceptic ideas and opinion.

Boomgaarden and Freire (2009) investigated the influence of religion (religious divides and religiosity) on popular attitudes towards the EU. The authors discussed both the direct relationships between religion and Euroscepticism, by testing the impact of religiosity and faith, and indirect relationships by analysing the influence on Euroscepticism of the two mediating factors, attitudes towards immigration and value orientation (the libertarian-authoritarian dimension).

Using the European Social Survey 2008 data, Boomgaarden and Freire concluded that none of the religion variables (denomination and religiosity) had any significance for popular Euroscepticism, but that anti-immigration attitudes and evaluations of the government and the economy were the most important predictors of Euroscepticism. People who thought negatively about immigration, or were critical of their national governments and had a pessimistic economic outlook, were considerably more likely to oppose European integration. Furthermore, the authors' analysis showed that people living in Catholic, Orthodox and multi-faith countries were significantly less Eurosceptic than citizens of predominantly Protestant countries.

Boomgaarden and Freire's study stands in contrast to other analyses (Nelsen et al. 2001, Nelsen and Guth 2003, Hagevi 2002), which found a strong influence of religion on attitudes towards Europe. One reason for this may be the timespan of almost 10 years between the data used in Boomgaarden and Freire's analysis and previous studies.

However, it seems that the fact that Boomgaarden and Freire included mediating variables in the analysis might have blurred the extent to which religion influenced opposition to European integration in their study.

In the framework of the limited research on religion and European integration, Poland attracted some attention of scholars as a distinct case in Europe. For example, Minkenberg (2009) attempted to analyse to what extent religious, in particular Christian, actors such as religious parties and Churches contributed to Euroscepticism. His second question was whether a confessional pattern of Euroscepticism could be identified.

His comparative analysis of different Christian Democratic parties as well as Catholic and Protestant Churches across the EU concluded that the core of Christian Democratic parties and Churches were overwhelmingly supportive of European integration. There were only two exceptions to this rule: firstly, 'fundamentalist, fringe' parties in the Netherlands and Poland (namely the League of Polish Families), and secondly, the Polish Catholic Church, which he described as being decidedly sceptical towards the Polish accession to the EU. The author argued that the Polish Church toned down its criticism over the years, but then pointed to other Catholic actors in Poland, like the radio station *Radio Maryja*, that remained hostile to the EU, with concerns of moral-cultural shifts and threats to national sovereignty being at the core of its opposition to the EU.

Minkenberg's analysis showed that where political Catholicism saw European 'alien, cosmopolitan, secular' values as a threat to national identity, it was likely to assume a Eurosceptic position. The study also demonstrated that the Polish Catholic Church and political Catholicism deviated from its Western European counterparts in terms of attitudes to European integration.

The interplay between religion and Euroscepticism was also analysed by Guerra (2010), who examined the role of Catholicism in opposition to and support for European integration in Poland before and after accession to the EU.

Guerra's key conclusion was that 'when the Church meets a radical-right wing party and the EU is perceived as a threat in the run-up to accession, the alliance between the two can be supported by a convergence of common interests – [protection of] national identity and sovereignty' (2010: 27). She also pointed out that (Catholic) religion as a variable

determining support for or opposition to European integration had a positive correlation after accession, while before accession it correlated with Eurosceptic attitudes.

The author developed her argument by noting that the Church or its fundamentalist branches could politicise Europe in a Eurosceptic light, but only when it found a useful ally in a political party. Such a reliable ally could be a party that posited itself on the fringes of the party system (a radical right-wing party) and that protected national identity, values and sovereignty threatened by European integration. As an example, Guerra evoked the exploitation of the ‘Catholicism against secular Europe’ discourse employed by the League of Polish Families, strongly supported by the Catholic broadcaster Radio Maryja.

What Guerra described as a ‘beneficial alliance’ between the Church and political parties is, in effect, a characteristic feature of political Catholicism. This study will show that the fact that parts of the Church could find a Eurosceptic party as an ally stems from underlying intrinsic features of Polish political Catholicism, which perceived Europe as based on liberal, secular values that could threaten Polish national identity.

Guerra concluded her analysis by stating that ‘religion impacts on Eurosceptic attitudes without significance. On the contrary, after accession, Catholicism is likely to become a determinant of support’ (2010: 27). However, this thesis will show the importance of religiously inspired political Catholicism in driving party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. It will also reveal that fifteen years after Polish EU accession, Polish political Catholicism remained as Eurosceptic as it was before the accession. Finally, this thesis will demonstrate that the Church’s and Polish political Catholicism’s stance on Europe is rather a matter of long-term underlying ideological beliefs and not something that could be easily adjusted.

To sum up, this study contributes to the existing body of research in at least three ways. Firstly, it explores the largely under-researched phenomenon of political Catholicism, providing a more robust conceptualisation of the phenomenon than the ones developed so far by scholars. Secondly, this study enhances our understanding of the important concept of Euroscepticism in a large, comparatively new EU member state by shedding more light on the relatively new aspect of party-based Euroscepticism, namely its relations with religion. This thesis contains the first systematic empirical examination of Eurosceptic political Catholicism, which draws on primary sources. Thus, it significantly develops our understanding of how religion and politics interact in contemporary Europe and expands the knowledge on the causality of party-based Euroscepticism. Thirdly, this study compares

the unique manifestation of the movement in Poland, where political Catholicism that elsewhere is supportive of the EU turned Eurosceptic, to other Central and East European and Western European cases. As a result, it further contributes to our knowledge on the development of party systems in Europe, particularly in post-communist states, explaining different roles political Catholicism played in European politics.

1.3 Political Catholicism and Euroscepticism – main hypothesis and additional explanatory factors

As mentioned earlier, the main aim of this research on political Catholicism and Euroscepticism is to enhance our knowledge of the relationship between party politics and religion in contemporary Europe and to understand how, under certain circumstances, political Catholicism can adopt a Eurosceptic stance. This aim is translated into the following research questions:

Q1: What is **the nature of political Catholicism** as a political movement and how does the Polish manifestation differ from the Western European one?

Q2: Under which circumstances can **political Catholicism adopt a Eurosceptic stance**?

Q3: To what extent is Polish **political Catholicism the main driver of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland**?

The hypothesis to be tested in this enquiry is:

Political Catholicism is a distinct political movement whose Polish manifestation differs significantly from the West European variant because of its Euroscepticism and the role it plays as the main driver of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. The Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism results from the intrinsic ideological feature(s) of the movement, which lead to the perception of the EU as an entity based on the concepts of ‘secularism’, ‘individualism’ and ‘materialism’; which, in turn, endanger the core values of Polish national identity.

The hypothesis assumes that the Euroscepticism of political Catholicism in Poland is not merely a result of short-term, strategic considerations. In fact, parties’ decisions to adopt a critical stance on the European integration project are not simply the product of a desire to

expand their electoral base or to distinguish themselves on the political stage. From this perspective, the hypothesis is embedded in cleavage theory, which argues that parties are not empty vessels into which issue positions are poured in response to electoral or constituency pressures, but are organisations with entrenched ideologies. As Hix (1999: 133) explained, ‘political preferences often derive from deep historical or cultural identities such as nationality, religion or language’. In other words, Euroscepticism as a party stance stems from ideological underpinnings, shared political values and culture. In the Polish context, these ideological and political values are strongly rooted in historical circumstances, which led to Catholicism becoming entwined with the notion of Polish national identity and culture. Essentially, the hypothesis follows the reasoning of Hooghe et al. (2002), Marks and Wilson (2000), and Marks, Wilson and Ray (2002) which claims that historically grounded paradigms constitute ‘prisms’ through which political parties respond to the issue of European integration.

It would be flawed to maintain that only ideology can drive the Eurosceptic stance of parties and movements. In fact, the existing body of research on party-based Euroscepticism and its causality outlined above, clearly shows that there is a number of strategic/tactical factors that may also drive party-based Euroscepticism. That is why, this study will also verify, whether additional factors could explain the adoption of a Eurosceptic stance by Polish political Catholicism. These additional explanatory factors (AEF) encapsulate non-ideological influences that can lead to a party becoming Eurosceptic, although they do not constitute an exhaustive list.

AEF1: A political party adopts a Eurosceptic stance as a preferred **way of making itself distinct** from other parties and movements on the political scene or as part of **government-opposition dynamics**.

AEF2: A political party adopts a Eurosceptic stance in order to **expand its support base** by attracting voters that cannot find representation of their Eurosceptic views among other parties.

AEF3: A political party adopts a Eurosceptic stance as a way of **limiting political space for the emergence of other competitive parties**.

Naturally, almost always there is more than a single factor that influences the development of a specific phenomenon – in this case Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism.

This is why, this research is located within the framework proposed by Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008b), which specified that a broad underlying party position on Europe is determined by the ideological profile, while the fact of whether or not a party chooses to use its European policy in inter-party competition is determined by strategic-tactical factors.

In order to provide answers to the research questions and test the hypothesis, this study will require a two-stage approach. Firstly, an explanation of the general nature of political Catholicism needs to be developed, coupled with a broad perspective on the specificity of the Polish case, including the history of the Church-state relations and the relation between nationalism and Catholicism in Poland. This will be followed by a cross-country comparative analysis of fifteen European countries, identifying key similarities and differences between political Catholicism in Poland and its other manifestations in Europe. Consequently, this stage of the analysis will provide an answer to the first research question, namely: what is the nature of political Catholicism as a political movement and how does the Polish manifestation differ from the Western European one? The second stage of the study will then focus on analysing party-based Euroscepticism in Poland, assessing the role of political Catholic parties in driving this phenomenon. It will also identify the reasons behind the Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism, including the search for intrinsic ideological factors cueing its Euroscepticism but also detection of other non-political Catholic ideologies or strategic/tactical factors that could impact on the movement's position on Europe. Thus, this part of the study will provide answers to the second and third questions, namely: under which circumstances can political Catholicism adopt a Eurosceptic stance, and to what extent is Polish political Catholicism the main driver of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland?

One of the aims of this research project is to examine the nature of political Catholicism in Poland and discuss its relationship with Euroscepticism. Thus, this study includes in-depth analyses of both Polish political Catholic and Polish Eurosceptic parties (with many parties falling into both categories). I focus on parties which were represented in the lower house of the Polish parliament, the *Sejm* (e.g. the League of Polish Families, Self-Defence, the Polish Peasants' Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*, PSL), Solidaristic Poland of Zbigniew Ziobro (*Solidarna Polska Zbigniewa Ziobro*), Law and Justice). However, the study also discusses those organisations that are outside of the mainstream politics, but are nonetheless important for the analysis of Euroscepticism in Poland (e.g. Union of Real

Politics [*Unia Polityki Realnej*, UPR]). The chosen parties represent a wide variety of ideologies and fall into three groups. Firstly, parties that are assumed to have adopted a Eurosceptic stance because of the intrinsic ideological features of political Catholicism (the League of Polish Families, Solidaristic Poland of Zbigniew Ziobro, Law and Justice). Secondly, parties that are assumed to have adopted a Eurosceptic stance because of other ideological influences (Union of the Real Politics). Thirdly, parties that may have adopted a Eurosceptic opinion based on short-term tactical considerations (potentially all cases). Such a wide range of parties belonging to different political families will allow for tracing the development of political Catholic Euroscepticism and its role in driving opposition to the EU in Poland.

In order to draw a complete picture of political Catholicism in Poland, this study will also take a closer look at anti-EU Catholic social movements, with particular attention paid to the Eurosceptic national radio broadcaster *Radio Maryja* and its charismatic leader Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, whose support has proven crucial for electoral success in Poland (Szczerbiak 2004b, 2001).

1.4 Methodology

This section focuses on explaining the methodological framework of the present research project. Firstly, it discusses the concept of a single case study as a research tool, outlining the key strengths and limitations of the approach. Next, it moves on to describe the methods used to gather data necessary to test the main hypothesis and additional explanatory factors: documentary research, semi-structured interviews and an expert survey. Finally, the section concludes with a short discussion on available strategies for executing a cross-country comparative analysis.

1.4.1 Case study as a research approach

This research project is an in-depth analysis of a single case – Poland. Yin (2009) provided a definition of a case study, describing it as ‘an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’ (Yin: 13). In other words, the case study is used as a research methodology to understand a real-life

phenomenon in depth, but in a situation where the context is highly pertinent to the phenomenon in question.

This definition clearly explains the advantages of using the case study approach as the methodological framework for this project. The relation between religion and politics in general, and the role of political Catholicism in Poland in particular, is a multi-layered phenomenon, deeply entrenched in the cultural and historical context. The key appeal of case studies is that thanks to the focus and depth of analyses, they allow for collecting data on a wide range of variables, making it feasible to properly explore even the most complicated phenomena (Somekh and Levin 2005).

What is more, most of the other main research methodologies fall short of being able to pay enough attention to the context of the analysed objects or situations: experiments, for example, entirely disassociate a phenomenon from its context, analysing only a few variables. Historiography, on the other hand, deals with the interplay between a phenomenon and context, but it does not examine contemporary events, while a survey's ability is limited to investigating the context because it needs to restrict the number of variables to be analysed for the sake of operationalisation (Yin 2009).

A single-case study – advantages and challenges

Lijphart (1971) identified six categories of single cases: atheoretical, interpretative, hypothesis-generating, theory-confirming, theory-infirming, and deviant case studies. This study is mainly a deviant case analysis. It investigates a single case – Poland, which is known to have deviated from an established generalisation that political Catholicism in Europe is supportive of European integration. The aim of this research is to enhance our understanding of both the nature of political Catholicism and the relationship between religion and Euroscepticism; hence, the case was selected in order to reveal factors not previously considered that could lead to the development of Eurosceptic political Catholicism.

The greatest advantage of a single-case study is that it allows for an intensive examination of a phenomenon, even when the research resources at disposal are quite limited. It is also a crucial tool in an attempt to refute initial hypotheses. As explained by Flyvbjerg (2004): 'Falsification is one of the most rigorous tests to which a scientific proposition can be subjected; if just one observation does not fit with the proposition it is considered not valid generally'. The single-case study is well-suited for falsifying hypotheses because of its in-

depth approach, which helps to uncover variables and factors that often may escape the attention of researchers in less detailed analyses.

At the same time, the single-case study approach has a considerable weakness – the inability to generate generalisations based on its findings. On the whole, it is not possible to generalise from one or a small number of cases or to disprove an established generalisation, as a single-case study is unique and does not constitute a representative sample (Foreman in David 2006). However, Lijphart (1971) pointed out that, of the six types of case studies he identified, the deviant case study (and the hypothesis-generating one) ‘have the greatest value in terms of their contribution to theory’ (1971: 692). Not only may it be used to refine existing theories, it is also implicitly a comparative analysis, with the analysed case forming the ‘experimental group’ (i.e. the group exposed to a stimulus) and the other cases constituting the ‘control group’ (i.e. not exposed to a stimulus, constant). In this study, Poland is the case exposed to a ‘stimulus’ leading to the development of Eurosceptic political Catholicism, while other cases of Western European countries are the ‘control group’, in which political Catholicism remained pro-EU and reflects the characteristic, traditional features of the movement.

This study also includes a cross-country analysis of fifteen cases, investigating differences between the manifestations of political Catholicism in Poland, other Central and Eastern European countries, and Western Europe. Consequently, a single-case study of Poland is likely to have a wider theoretical impact than would a mere detailed account of a unique case.

1.4.2 Methods

The choice of the case study implies the use of certain research methods, the most commonly applied of which are interviews and documentary analysis (Somekh and Levin 2005).

Documentary research

One of the key methods used in qualitative case study research is documentary analysis, which focuses on two elements, the historiography approach and discourse analysis. Historiography can be understood as the ‘writing of history based on the selective, critical reading of sources that synthesises particular bits of information into a narrative description or analysis of a subject’ (Thies 2002: 351). The historiography approach is particularly useful when a researcher wants to place the explanation of political events in

context and is less interested in making predictions, but still committed to explaining the causality of processes (Steinmo 2008:134).

This study investigates the interplay between religion and politics in Europe, and particularly in Poland, which is a complicated, multi-layered phenomenon that needs to be analysed in the correct context. Hence, it applies, to a limited extent, a simplified historical analysis of primary materials to build a narrative description of the relations between Catholicism, Polish society, state and party politics in order to investigate and explain why Polish political Catholicism has adopted a Eurosceptic stance.

Another, more sophisticated form of document analysis is discourse analysis. It is defined as a ‘qualitative method of uncovering some of the ways in which people or groups seek to represent their actions in texts and languages’ (Jacobs, 2006: 138). This method is particularly useful for tracing the spread of ideologies, since people acquire, express and reproduce their ideologies largely by text or talk (Van Dijk 2006). This study will apply a method of critical analysis of discourse, which sees documents as vehicles for the circulation and transmission of ideologies and focuses on their ideological dimensions (Pole and Lampard 2002).

This thesis will use discourse analysis in at least three instances. Firstly, this study will identify political Catholic parties in Poland. In doing so, it will analyse party documents in search of elements inspired by Catholic social teachings such as: adherence to the principle of protection of human life, a strong attachment to the role of the family and protection of its rights, cooperation and solidarity, subsidiarity, acceptance of personalism, and a commitment to the capitalist market economy coupled with a readiness to correct its social and cultural deficiencies through social policy. Secondly, this study will also analyse a range of documents and statements gathered from semi-structured interviews (see details below), in search of ideological beliefs that could explain the adoption of a Eurosceptic stance by Polish political Catholicism. One of these beliefs, mentioned in the hypothesis, is the conviction that European integration endangers traditional Christian values, which form an essential part of Polish national identity. The presence or absence of this opinion will help to verify the hypothesis. Thirdly, in the cross-country comparison section, discourse analysis will be applied in order to identify the position of Polish political Catholic parties and organisations in Europe on European integration and the EU. This will be done by analysing party manifestos and statements by party leaders.

Data sources for documentary analysis

Vromen (2010) states that the choice of primary materials for documentary analysis must be made very carefully in order to avoid selection bias. She named four crucial tasks for every researcher to perform when utilizing a document: authenticity – clarify whether a document is genuine and has a recognised authorship; credibility – clarify whether a document is accurate and reliable; representativeness – clarify whether a document is typical of its genre or, if untypical, understand how it relates to other documents; meaning – what is the meaning of the document in the social and political context within which it was produced.

This research uses three different types of texts and documents: party materials, official Catholic Church documents and existing electoral surveys, the selection of which takes into account their authenticity, credibility, representativeness and the context in which they were produced:

- a) In terms of party materials, the research is based on a set of key documents that allow for an in-depth analysis and understanding of reasons for the Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholic parties, i.e. party manifestos, policy statements, leaders' commentaries and media statements, and public statements by key party members.
- b) The Church documents include those that can be regarded as official statements of the Church as an institution, i.e. Episcopate documents, pastoral letters, and statements by bishops and archbishops.
- c) The existing opinion polls by the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS – *Centrum Badania Opinii Publicznej*) and the European Commission (Eurobarometer) together with election results are used to build a comprehensive picture of the supporters of Polish Eurosceptic parties and Polish political Catholicism (particularly *Radio Maryja*).

Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are essential sources of case study information. They are targeted, focused directly on the case study topic and insightful – providing perceived causal explanations (Yin 2009). Thanks to interviews 'we can learn more about the inner workings of the political process, and the machinations between influential actors' (Lilleker 2003: 208). This study applies the semi-structured interview method, where interviewers do not make use of a rigid schedule of questions, but rather have explored issues as they arise. This method often leads to deep insider accounts of phenomena as it involves open-ended questions that allow the interviewees to freely express their opinions. As a result, a researcher can

gather a variety of detailed information and identify underlying meanings, processes and contexts of events (Pole and Lampard 2002, Tansey 2007).

Interviewees

Vromen (2010: 258) identified elite interviewing as interviews with individuals prominent in politics, public service, business, or who are active commentators in the public sphere. Among groups mentioned in her definition, the following ones were interviewed in the framework of this study (a detailed list of interviewees can be found in the bibliography):

- a) Party leaders: it is clear that access to the top party leadership is extremely restricted. However, there is a range of (ex) party members who were actively involved in or observing the decision-making process, and who are usually much more open to being interviewed. For this study, the following (ex) party members were interviewed: (a) From Law and Justice: Ryszard Czarnecki MEP, Ryszard Legutko MEP, Marek Migalski, Krystyna Pawłowicz MP, Krzysztof Szczerski MP, Konrad Szymański, Janusz Wojciechowski MEP; (b) from the League of Polish Families: Maciej Giertych and Daniel Pawłowiec; (c) from the Christian National Union, Solidarity Electoral Action, Law and Justice and the National Movement: Artur Zawisza.
- b) The Church hierarchy: here the situation is similar to the case of party leaders – the bishops and archbishops of the Polish Catholic Church are quite difficult to meet for interviews because of their busy schedules. This is why two senior clergymen who were interviewed for this study were already retired, and hence were more available for an interview. At the same time, they were, and still are, important figures of the Polish Church. Archbishop Henryk Muszyński is the Primate Emeritus of Poland and former Archbishop of Gniezno. Even more important for this study is that he was Delegate of the Polish Bishops' Conference to the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE) from 1999 until 2005. Tadeusz Pieronek is bishop emeritus, who served as secretary general of the Polish Bishops' Conference between 1993 and 1998, and as rector of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Kraków from 1998 to 2004. He has been closely following the development of Polish-EU relations and is chairman of the organizing committee of a yearly conference held in Kraków called 'The role of the Catholic Church in the process of European integration'.
- c) Another important group of interviewees for this study were a number of observers of the Polish political scene, such as leading Polish journalists: Tomasz Bielecki and Katarzyna Wiśniewska – *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Inga Czerny – *Polish Press Agency* (PAP), Anna Słojewska – *Rzeczpospolita*, Tomasz Terlikowski – *fronda.pl*, *Telewizja Republika* and Piotr Maciej Kaczyński – independent analyst. These observers of Polish politics provided assistance in gaining new insights into the nature of political Catholicism in Poland and proved to be good first critical reviewers of preliminary findings.

At the same time, it is important to keep in mind the limitations of semi-structured interviews. Firstly, they are verbal reports and as such are prone to subjectivity and bias of interviewees, poor recollection of facts or inaccurate articulation (Yin 2009). In fact, it is normal for individuals to have divergent opinions about events; it is also normal for people to distance themselves from unfortunate or entirely wrong decisions. Davies (2001: 77–79) offered one solution that could safeguard researchers against such pitfalls: triangulation. This meant cross-referencing data that has been collected from interviews, firstly with data obtained from published first-hand accounts or other documentary sources; and, secondly, with published secondary source material. That is why interviews were conducted at a later stage, after the analysis of documents and secondary sources had been completed in order to build a deeper knowledge of the facts. Consequently, the reliability of the data gathered through interviews was increased by being corroborated with information from other sources.

1.4.3 Comparison – the ‘most similar’ design

The key drawback of a single case study, the fact that it cannot confirm a generalised theory potentially applicable to many cases, can also in fact be turned into an advantage. As pointed out by Sartori (1991), heuristic case studies are ideal as hypothesis-generating inquiries that then can be generalised, at least partially, using a comparative method. That is why this study includes a cross-country comparative analysis with a limited scope that explains the phenomenon of political Catholicism in the broader context of Central-Eastern and Western European politics. As explained by Przeworski (1987: 35), ‘comparative research consists not of comparing but of explaining. The general purpose of cross-national research is to understand better.’

In general, comparativists apply either the ‘most similar’ or the ‘most different’ research method. In the ‘most similar’ strategy, the research brings together systems that are as similar as possible in as many features (properties) as possible, with the exception of the phenomenon to be investigated. An alternative method is to choose the ‘most different’ approach, whereby cases chosen for comparison differ as much as possible in all variables, except for the phenomenon under investigation (Przeworski and Teune 1970).

This research project analyses the deviant case of Poland, which assumes that there are no other countries where political Catholicism has had a similar influence on party-based Euroscepticism. Consequently, only the ‘most similar’ method can be applied in an attempt

to generalise key findings of the enquiry into the Polish case. Therefore, this study will include a selection of short case studies of 15 different European countries which met the following conditions: firstly, a high percentage (above 60%) of Catholics among the population in 2010, and secondly, a vital role played by political Catholicism, as identified in the academic literature. The case selection also includes those countries where the level of religious practice and membership in the Catholic Church significantly declined, but where political Catholicism was or still is an important part of politics. The comparative cases are Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland.

The cross-country comparative research was primarily based on secondary data, mainly because of time constraints and for feasibility reasons. It used the already existing secondary literature, which provided accounts and analyses of the chosen comparative cases. However, the key findings of the cross-country comparative analysis, as well as the main conclusions of the research, were consulted with national experts by means of an expert survey.

Expert survey

A number of national experts were thus also contacted in order to verify key findings concerning the 15 case studies that formed part of the cross-country comparative analysis in this thesis. Their expertise was essential in identifying key similarities and differences between the Polish case and the other countries. In particular, the experts were asked if they could identify any links between political Catholicism and Euroscepticism in a given country and comment on the country analysis. The national experts consulted were: Prof Clive Church (Switzerland), Dr Nicolo Conti (Italy), Prof Kris Deschouwer (Belgium), Prof Franz Fallend (Austria), Dr John FitzGibbon (Ireland), Dr Simona Guerra (Italy, Croatia, Poland), Prof David Hanley (Belgium), Prof Karen Henderson (Slovakia), Dr Michael Holmes (Ireland), Dr Alenka Krasovec (Slovenia), Dr Stijn van Kessel (the Netherlands), Dr Emanuele Massetti (Italy), Dr Kai Oppermann (Germany), Dr Luiz Ramiro (Spain), Dr Maria Meyer Resende (Portugal), Dr Nick Startin (France) and Dr Ingrida Unikaitė-Jakuntavičienė (Lithuania).

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The structure of this thesis centres around two key issues: firstly, the nature of political Catholicism in general, and secondly, its specific relationship with Euroscepticism in Poland.

Chapter two describes the general nature of political Catholicism as a political movement. It shows that political Catholicism was an important phenomenon, also outside of Europe, but has remained largely under-researched. The chapter also presents a concise definition of political Catholicism and identifies characteristic primary and secondary features of this movement – an element that so far was not developed in detail by other scholars. Thus, it provides an original contribution to the theory of political Catholicism. This chapter proves that political Catholicism is, in fact, a distinct political phenomenon that should not be confused with other political ideologies.

Chapter three discusses the specific case of political Catholicism in Poland, which grew into a sizeable political force that differs from more traditional manifestations of the movement in Western Europe. It focuses on presenting two elements that had a crucial influence on the development of Polish political Catholicism: firstly, the unique role of Catholicism as a socio-cultural system in Poland, strongly guiding the cultural, political and societal life of the country and, secondly, the formation of a close link between Catholicism and Polish national identity. It will show how Polish political Catholicism developed a distinct feature – a strong Catholic-nationalistic trait – and how it became successful, replacing Christian democracy, which in Western Europe dominated much of the political scene and became synonymous with political Catholicism.

Chapter four discusses the issue of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. It presents an overview of research on this phenomenon and outlines three central themes characteristic for Polish party-based Euroscepticism: firstly, the fact that Polish political Catholicism with its Catholic-nationalist trait is the driving force of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland; secondly, the fluid nature of Euroscepticism in Poland; and finally, the important lesson not to mistake temporary changes of rhetoric resulting from short-term electoral tactics for a fundamental change of political positions on Europe.

Having discussed both the general aspects of political Catholicism and Euroscepticism, chapter five focuses on the key issue of the interaction between the two elements. It explains how political Catholicism in Poland adopted a Eurosceptic stance, which stems

from two primary factors: firstly, the aspiration to protect Polish sovereignty; and secondly, the perceived cultural struggle between the 'liberal West' and 'Catholic Poland'. This chapter argues that the Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism is not a simple matter of short- or mid-term electoral tactics, but it is, in fact, deeply entrenched in the movement's ideological predispositions.

Finally, chapter six provides a cross-country comparative analysis of 15 case studies of European countries with high levels of Catholicism where political Catholicism played an important role. Using secondary literature and the results of the expert survey, this chapter argues that there are five main differences between manifestations of political Catholicism in Western and Central and Eastern Europe: (i) in Western Europe political Catholicism played a much more prominent role in shaping political, economic and social systems than in Central and Eastern Europe; (ii) the apparent lack of successful Christian democracy in most Central and Eastern European countries; (iii) differences between the development of political Catholic movements across Europe, whereby in Western Europe it developed mainly as a response to the secularisation attempts of public authorities, while in Central Europe the movement grew out of the fusion of religion and national identity in countries which struggled for independence in the 19th and 20th century; (iv) the growing gap between political Catholicism in Western and Central and Eastern Europe, with the gradual departure of West European political Catholic parties from direct references to Christian values, and, finally, (v) the fact that the majority of political Catholic groupings support the process of European integration, while only in two cases – Poland and Slovakia – political Catholicism acquired a clearly Eurosceptic trait.

2 The nature of political Catholicism

2.1 Introduction

A strong relationship between politics and religion has been a fact for centuries in many parts of the world. In Europe, it was Christianity and particularly Catholicism that played an important role in the public sphere, albeit in different forms, ranging from being an object of persecution to close alliances of the throne and the altar, to caesaropapism – the idea of combining secular government with religious power. This relation between Catholicism and politics is not only a thing of the past. On the contrary, with the development of modern democracy, Catholicism as a political actor did not disappear but rather flourished in many parts of Europe, transforming itself into a popular movement of political Catholicism. Political Catholic parties became a solid feature of politics in Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries, culminating in the post-war dominance of Christian democracy in Europe, which became the most successful political Catholic movement.

In this context, it is surprising that political Catholicism as an important phenomenon that profoundly influenced European politics in the last century has not been researched to great depths so far. This lack of scholarly attention perhaps follows the widespread acceptance of the theory of secularisation, which predicated the continuous decline of religious beliefs and the marginalisation of religion to the private sphere. Key concepts of this theory were since then undermined (see: Casanova 1994) and the political implication of religion became clear (Grzymala-Busse 2012, Sahliyeh 1990, Appleby 2000, Burleigh 2007), but our knowledge gap has not been bridged yet.

The limited understanding of political Catholicism becomes even more apparent when we consider a political process that has been of paramount importance for continental politics and policymaking, i.e. European integration. In fact, it was political Catholicism (in the form of Christian democracy) that shaped the process of Europe's unification and it is thanks to the religious dimension of the Christian democratic movement that European integration developed into the system we know today (Kaiser 2007, Kalyvas and van Kersbergen 2010). Key concepts underlying the process of integration, like the ideas of reconciliation, solidarity, subsidiarity and the fundamental principle of supranationalism,

were at the same time at the centre of political Catholicism, firmly inscribed in its ideas and programme (for more on the relations between Christianity and European integration see Gierycz 2008).

This chapter aims to describe the nature of political Catholicism. It will argue that political Catholicism was an important political movement, inside as well as outside of Europe, but remained largely under-researched. In doing so, it will discuss the historical development of political Catholicism by drawing on the insightful work of Conway (1996b, 1997). The main contribution of this chapter to the existing knowledge in the field is a more robust definition of political Catholicism, identifying characteristic primary and secondary features of this movement – an element on which political scientists have so far not satisfactorily elaborated. Finally, I will show that political Catholicism was a distinct political phenomenon that often contrasted other political ideologies. At the same time, it was a divergent movement, internally divided, that cannot be qualified as a fully-fledged ideology.

2.2 The evolution of political Catholicism

The origins – defence of Catholic interests

Initially, in the first half of the 19th century, political Catholic action in Europe was limited. The religious cleavage did not play a major role in most Western European countries, and even the traditional ideological enemies, the liberals, did not pursue anti-Catholic policies. Indeed, Catholics and liberals co-operated in many cases (e.g. Belgium, the Netherlands), as the liberal principle of freedom of religion was more attractive to them than co-operation with Protestants, who, although sympathetic to the general aim of maintaining the role of religion in society and politics, had a history of conflicts with Catholics (Kalyvas 1996).

The situation changed drastically in the 1860s with the first attacks on the role and position of the Catholic religion and the Church. The attempts of liberals aimed at modernisation, centralisation and national unification entailed elimination of those who could object to states' sovereignty and authority, including the Church. In addition, the new anticlericalism was expected to benefit liberals by increasing popular support and reducing their internal differences (Kalyvas 1996). Thus, the 'politicisation of Catholicism' originated from the late 19th century state-directed discriminatory policies instituted against Catholics in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany, coupled with anticlerical campaigns by liberal

political groups in France, Italy and Spain. Especially the Bismarckian *Kulturkampf* (a series of policies introduced by the Prussian government in the 1870s aimed at reducing the role and power of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany) made many Catholics aware of their collective identity, helping to forge the first Catholic movements.

Nonetheless, it was not only ‘external’ factors but also Church-internal developments that contributed to the emergence of political Catholicism. Specifically, increased levels of education, also religious, led to the emergence of Catholic, communal identity, which made many believers perceive themselves as a separate community bound by shared values. This was particularly visible in countries where Catholics formed a minority, such as the Netherlands, Switzerland or Germany. This led to the creation of a dense network of Catholic lay associations and movements (women’s groups, youth and educational movements, sports associations, co-operatives, trade unions, guilds). Consequently, many Catholic groups developed their own ways of living and became increasingly isolated from other parts of society, leading to ‘ghettoisation’ or ‘pillarisation’ in which a Catholic network of social organisation and religious institutions provided an all-encompassing environment for its members (Kaiser and Wahnout 2004).

In this context, the establishment of confessional parties was a natural step for Catholics in Western Europe, starting with the German Centre Party and the Catholic Party in Belgium, which aimed at protecting the faithful from discrimination and acted as the guardians of Catholic interests in national parliaments. Catholic parties rapidly spread throughout Western Europe, becoming key elements of politics in countries like Germany, Austria and Belgium. Portugal and Spain were among the few Catholic countries in Western Europe that lacked well developed Catholic political organisations (for more on the development of political Catholicism in specific countries see chapter 6).

The role of the Church and papacy in the emergence of political Catholicism

It is important here to consider the role of the Church and papacy in the development of political Catholic action. Contrary to some popular beliefs, Catholic parties in almost all cases were not entities controlled by the Church (‘puppets in clergy’s hands’ as Belgian liberals typically described confessional parties). In fact, ‘confessional parties were formed in spite of and not, as it is often assumed, because of the Church’s intentions and actions. They emerged as an unplanned, unpatented and ultimately detrimental by-product of the strategic choice the Church made under constraints’ (Kalyvas 1996: 18). Thus, the

institutional Church rarely was a driving force behind the establishment of Catholic parties, though individual clergymen did participate actively in the movement. Instead, Catholic laity played the key role in the creation of those parties, while national Church hierarchy and the papacy often looked on them with suspicion.

Initially, the Church was very mistrustful of independent Catholic political action, as it was afraid of losing control over its members and personnel in an era when it actually tried to increase centralisation of the Church at the expense of the independence of national hierarchies. Consequently, the Church instituted a series of measures aimed at ensuring its control over new organisations. Firstly, it was vigorously blocking any attempts at independent, autonomous or uncontrolled political Catholic activism. The Church either tried to destroy independent organisations, including imposing religious sanctions on their leaders, or, later on, applied the strategy of obstruction by attempting to block the emergence of such movements. It was not until the late 19th century, when the growing attacks on the Church significantly reduced its direct influence, that the Vatican finally came to terms with political Catholicism, although it never really encouraged its growth and focused on reclaiming its members from the new parties (Kalyvas 1996).

The main influence that the papacy had on political Catholic movements was in the field of doctrine. From the late 1870s, popes devoted increasingly more attention to declarations concerning not only faith, but also a wide range of social, political and cultural issues. Between 1878 and 1958, there were 185 papal encyclicals issued that slowly established the body of Catholic social teaching. Although papal pronouncements were far from being a unified and coherent opinion on social matters (in fact, some of them were contradictory, while others very vague and open for interpretation), a key message that ran across them was the belief that Catholicism offered solutions to problems of the modern world. 'Central to this papal message was a commitment to a social order of communities in which the anomie and self-interest of liberal individualism as well as the statist collectivism of socialism and fascism would give way to a new spirit of personal fulfilment and mutual assistance' (Conway 1996b: 14). Papal declarations also increasingly condemned material and social deprivation of the working classes. However, socialist and communist ideas for the organisation of societies were rejected. The Church tried to articulate a 'third way' which could reduce the abuses by the capitalist system while retaining the concept of personal ownership of property, which the papacy regarded as essential to a just society.

Perhaps the best elaboration of this idea was Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*¹, in which he strongly supported a corporatist organisation of society, with employers and employees resolving conflicts in a network of socio-economic corporations (Conway 1996b).

Temptations of authoritarianism – the interwar period

In the first phase of its development, political Catholicism was focused on the protection of Catholic interests with anti-liberalism being a defining element of its programme, while its growth owed much to clerical leadership. However, the interwar period brought about some significant changes. The 1920s saw the establishment of a number of new parliamentary democracies, which led to a rapid expansion of mass politics and political Catholic parties across Europe wanting to advance their opinions. Catholic politics became less dependent on clerical guidance and the rapid development of the movement originated in the energy and militancy of well-educated, urbanised Catholic laity. This was a time of swift growth of the Catholic Action – a movement of laity under the leadership of clergy to re-catholicise 'modern life', Catholic trade unionism, Catholic farmers' leagues, middle-class interest groups and Catholic press (Conway 1997). Last but not least, this was the time of Pius XI's encyclical *Ubi Arcano Dei*, in which the pope proclaimed that the Catholic faith must assert its dominance over the values and structures of state and society.

However, the expansion and democratisation of Catholic politics gave way in the 1930s to a new phenomenon – political Catholic support for authoritarianism. Several of the new parliamentary democracies created after the First World War were undermined by ethnic or nationalist conflicts and deep economic crisis. In this context, many Central and Eastern European states turned to authoritarianism with the support of political Catholic movements which sought non-democratic solutions in form of corporatist or strong states. The new militant and anti-democratic face of political Catholicism was very much an effect of economic depression that struck Europe, which led rural and middle classes to perceive parliamentary democracy as largely unresponsive to their hardships (Kaiser and Wohnout 2004). The movement's sponsorship of dictatorships in Portugal and Austria was a distinctive feature of the 1930s, while the beginning of the Second World War saw new alliances between Catholic movements and the far-right exemplified by strong and durable

¹ *Quadragesimo anno* – encyclical issued by Pope Pius XI in 1931, discussing the implications of the social and economic order. It declared private property to be essential for the development and freedom of the individual, called for social order based on solidarity and subsidiarity, condemned communism and, finally, described in detail a corporatist social structure in which the government, employers and workers cooperate to solve key issues.

Catholic influence on the Nazi puppet-regimes of Slovakia and Croatia (the Slovak dictator was in fact a Catholic priest).

During the Second World War, political Catholicism, as throughout most of its history, remained a divided movement. In Slovakia and Croatia, new states were established, driven by Catholic authoritarian ideas and with prominent figures of the Church and political Catholicism occupying important positions in regimes that collaborated with Nazi Germany. In France, much of the Catholic laity and the Church supported the Vichy regime led by Pétain. However, for most Catholics atrocities committed by German authorities and repressive policies introduced by the occupying forces caused them to discard authoritarian ideas popular in some parts of political Catholicism in the 1930s. In addition, Catholic Resistance became active in many occupied countries, trying to counteract the actions and values of the Third Reich (Kaiser and Wohnout 2004). Therefore, towards the end of the war instances of Catholic support for the Nazi regimes were isolated and greatly outweighed by Catholics who gradually were drawn into active opposition to Nazism.

Post-war years – Christian democratic success and European integration

Political Catholicism in Europe had a substantial influence on the shape of continental politics. In particular, Christian democracy has had a lasting impact during the second half of the last century thanks to its prominent role in the post-war politics of Western Europe and remarkable ability to form trans-national networks of cooperation, which greatly contributed to the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and its expansion into the European Economic Community (EEC).

Immediately after the war, it seemed quite unlikely that Christian democracy would re-emerge as a strong movement. For many, political Catholicism was discredited after some of its interwar economic policies were blamed for having aggravated the effects of the economic crisis and because of its involvement with clerical dictatorships or fascism. In addition, the Catholic Church itself came out of the war morally compromised following its support for dictatorships out of fear of communist revolution and, in the opinion of some analysts and commentators, failing to take a strong stance against the extermination of Jews.

However, the war significantly altered opinions of many political Catholic activists. Discredited nationalist right and totalitarian dictatorships, coupled with Cold War tensions

and the effort to reconstruct the European economy meant that ideas and beliefs like support for authoritarian political reforms characteristic of the interwar period or the notion of truly Catholic states like those of Austria or Portugal, were largely compromised. Thus, after the Second World War, political Catholicism experienced a significant evolution of its purpose, from being devoted to the protection of specific Catholic interests in public life to a new openness and willingness to work with non-Catholic organisations in a pluralistic society, paving the way for the remarkable success of Christian democracy in the post-war decades. In this context, what were previously minority views, like support for a corporatist system under control of parliamentary democracy and the idea of closer European cooperation, could only become the main trend of political Catholicism in this specific post-war context (Kaiser and Wahnout 2004).

The rapid post-war growth of political Catholicism in Western Europe in the form of Christian democracy was also made possible by the fact that the alternative in the form of socialist, communist, liberal or nationalist parties was not appealing to many voters. Socialist parties' support base was largely confined to the working class, influenced by Marxism, and thus failing to attract middle-class and rural voters. The liberal electoral base had been heavily eroded during the interwar crisis, while its policies based on individual freedom and economic liberalism did not resonate well with the post-war feeling of collective reconstruction after 1945. Finally, the polarising effect of communism on European politics after the war was another element leading to the post-war rise to power of Christian democracy in many Western European states, which – in the absence of electoral competition from discredited nationalists, clerical and fascist right – became the only viable option for anti-communist voters of the middle and rural class, as well as religiously oriented voters. This post-war environment, coupled with the ability of Christian democracy to go beyond traditional voters from the Catholic milieu by creating a more secular and inter-confessional party image, was crucial for the Christian democratic success (Kaiser 2007).

The post-war Christian democratic movements in Germany, Italy, Belgium and France were new political organisations set up by younger generations of Catholic politicians whose experiences were shaped by the events of the war. They decided to break with the old tradition of defensiveness, protection of Catholic 'ghettos' and groups, and authoritarian sentiments shared by a majority of political Catholicism in the interwar period. Instead, the new parties fully embraced parliamentary democracy and a market

economy coupled with state intervention and high levels of welfare provisions (the so-called 'social market economy') (Conway 1996b).

One of the most important aspects of the Christian democratic success in the post-war years was its role in shaping the process of European integration. Firstly, it was part of the Christian democratic conviction that economic integration was instrumental in solving political issues, which meant a general common market was the main objective for the Christian democratic movement. Secondly, the supranational concept was a natural approach for Christian democracy, as it resembled the strong, transnational authority of the Pope and the Church hierarchy. Thirdly, Christian democracy had a general preference for combining robust supranational institutions run by experts with a parliamentary dimension secured by a chamber of directly elected representatives. Fourthly, Franco-German reconciliation, which was strongly rooted in the Christian ideas of forgiveness, drove the close cooperation of the two countries. In this context, it was no surprise that the constitutional elements of the Treaty of Rome negotiated mostly by Christian democratic governments included a federationist objective of an 'ever closer union', the introduction of majority voting in the Council of Ministers, the sole right of legislative initiative for the European Commission and the provision for future direct elections to the European Parliament (Kaiser 2007).

Second Vatican Council

The post-war process of opening up and political Catholicism's cooperation with other movements was fostered by the Second Vatican Council, which in fact became an event that defined the Catholic political movement in the post-1960s world, creating a discontinuation and a clear division between the pre- and post-Vatican II era. Pope John XXIII decided to summon the Second Vatican Council in 1962 to deal with post-war social and economic change, which had prompted a continuous decline in levels of religious practice in European countries. The Council led to far-reaching theological and ecclesiastical changes that had considerable consequences for the nature of political Catholicism. The most visible difference that originated from the Second Vatican Council was a change of the attitudes of the Church hierarchy to political parties and representative democracy in general (Witte 1993). The Church decided to endorse the democratic principles of human rights and liberty. In particular, it emphasised the rights of people to life and an adequate standard of living, the rights of free assembly and association, free conscience and free will. As a result, in the post-Vatican II environment it was a dominant

trend for the clergy to abandon efforts to control and direct the political action of the faithful and to instead advocate disestablishment of religion and the separation of church and state.

This new approach led to significant changes for almost all West European parties that were forming the political Catholic movement. For example, the national churches had to accept the modern principle of separation of church and state and the end to the official sponsorship by the Catholic Church of any Catholic party or movement. As a result bishops stopped instructing Catholics to vote for 'official' Catholic parties, while the Spanish and Portuguese clergy began to loosen their relations with the authorities (Casanova 1994). At the same time, the withdrawal of the Church from attempts to control the political activities of Catholics led to the flowering of political Catholic action. In particular, trade unions formed their own political allegiances, while Christian democratic parties were forced to define their new identities that would help them survive without direct support from the Church hierarchy. As a result, the previously Catholic-inspired parties gradually evolved to become more centrist groupings, endorsing capitalist economics, welfare provisions and European integration (Whyte 1981).

The Second Vatican Council, coupled with the socio-economic change of the 1950s and 1960s, brought on the demise of the earlier model of political Catholicism and fostered the establishment of the new one. The idea of political Catholicism devoted to the defence of particular interests and values of one group (Catholics) was replaced by a new vision of Catholics working in cooperation with other non-Catholic parties and movements to actively shape the socio-economic set-up of societies (Conway 1996b). At the same time, the faithful no longer saw a major connection between their faith and electoral behaviour or party allegiance.

The Second Vatican Council's influence went beyond Europe and significantly impacted Latin America, where it was one of the elements fostering the creation and development of liberation theology.

Political Catholicism and liberation theology

Lowy (1996) described liberation theology as an expression of a vast socio-religious movement that emerged in Latin America at the beginning of the 1960s and reached its full potential in the 1970s. The movement involved significant sectors of the Church, lay religious movements, ecclesiastic base communities and other popular organisations

(women's clubs, peasants or workers' unions, etc.). The liberation theology movement focused on the notion of a 'preferential option for the poor', for solidarity and collective commitment, for a Church in which 'the people of God' held power rather than the bishops and for the pursuit of God's Kingdom on earth and in society, rather than in heaven. In short, the movement amounted to a 'popular Church', where the hierarchy was only as important as the mass of ordinary members (Haynes 1998).

In 1968, during a conference convened to discuss the implementation of the Second Vatican Council guidelines, Latin American bishops articulated strong criticism of contemporary attitudes to social problems, which were described as 'traditionalist', and 'developmentalist' (the notion that the performance of a nation's economy is the central source of legitimacy that a regime may claim). The bishops specifically criticised the international system of economic dependence in which Latin American nations were 'frequently neither owners of their goods nor masters of their economic decisions'. It was in this context that the bishops spoke of the need to offer men 'the possibilities of a full liberation' (Sigmund 1993: 195).

The Medellin declarations gave theoretical legitimisation to the radicalising tendencies among groups of Latin American societies, most notably labour and students, and those who worked with them – missionaries and priests. As a result, the 1970s saw a rapid development of liberation theology as a religious and socio-political movement.

One of the most widely criticised elements of the new movement was its heavy use of Marxist tools of social analysis to argue that only through the overthrow of capitalism the poor could be liberated. The discourse of violence and revolution, glorification of the poor and vilification of the rich, as well as calls for a 'strategic alliance' with the Marxist left led to strong criticism of the movement from the mainstream Church (Sigmund 1993). The criticism was reinforced by actions designed to contain the movement during the pontificate of John Paul II who, although sympathetic to the general aim of social justice and improving the situation of the poor, forcefully opposed any allegiance of the Church with Marxism or revolutionary socialism (Haynes 1998).

As a result of the collapse of communism in the late 1980s and the Vatican's policy, liberation theology declined and stopped playing a major role in Latin American politics, economy and religion. However, liberation theology, together with Christian democracy, can be described as one of the most influential manifestations of political Catholicism. It

was based on a radical programme of social justice, drawing inspiration from the Church's reforms of the 1960s and directly from the Bible. It was deeply Catholic at its roots, but at the same time, it distanced itself from the hierarchical Church and developed into an independent movement. Liberation theology left a significant legacy in the political, ideological and religious spheres of Latin America.

In terms of political influence, the most prominent effect of liberation theology was a network of base Christian communities (*comunidades eclesiales de base* or CEBs), which formed an important force for institutional activism (Haynes 1998). Although many of the four million participants of the CEBs directed their attention to devotional ends (prayers, baptism, reading of the Bible, etc.), some also had political goals in mind, such as participatory democracy, workers' strikes and organising mass rallies. Many CEBs protected groups and individuals suffering from state-organised persecution and produced leaders for mass movements, such as trade union and party leaders.

In ideological terms, the influence of liberation theology could be most clearly observed in its ability to affect discourse by creating and stimulating topics of debate in society, politics or the Church. In particular, the salience of three issues – human rights, popular participation and authority – was greatly enhanced in Latin America by liberation theology. Moreover, the members of the movement were actively engaged in political-ideological dialogue and articulated a broad critique of injustice and abuses of state power (Levine 1988).

Finally, in the religious sphere, liberationist arguments helped to shift the mainstream Catholic Church more toward public concern and support for human rights. As a result, the discourse of justice and equality rooted in biblical and religious themes became very widespread, even among the conservative wings of the Church hierarchy (Levine 1990).

The case of liberation theology shows that political Catholicism is not an exclusively European phenomenon, but can, in fact, thrive in other cultural and political environments. In addition, it clearly depicts the flexibility of political Catholicism, which may find links not only to right-wing or centrist ideologies, but also can be inspired by the radical left or even communism. What is crucial, however, is that political Catholicism, regardless of an intellectual approach or specific interpretations it adopts, remains faithful to its two primary objectives: to follow Catholic social teaching and to try to ensure that the

principles of Catholic social doctrine are embedded in national law, making them a framework for social order and the functioning of societies.

2.3 Political Catholicism – distinct political movement or ideology?

When looking at the existing literature on political Catholicism, including the abovementioned studies of its development, the lack of a comprehensive definition of this phenomenon becomes evident. This seems to result from several factors: firstly, heterogeneity and changeability of political Catholicism throughout the 19th and 20th century, particularly before and after the Second World War, making it difficult to grasp its nature. Secondly, the fact that the scholarly debate on political Catholicism, compared to other major ideologies like socialism, liberalism or communism, has been very limited. This may partially result from the perception of the political force of Catholicism by historians and political scientists in Great Britain and the USA as ‘no more than the dwindling manifestations of a Catholic religion which itself was destined to disappear with the gradual development of a secular society’ (Conway 1996b: 3). Thirdly, much of European history was dominated by grand conflicts between secular ideologies of the right and left – communism and fascism/Nazism. This meant that Catholic political action was sometimes overlooked or was difficult to categorise within the world of secular politics. Finally, it is also true that for many scholars ‘religion’ (in this case ‘Catholicism’) and ‘politics’ are two separate realms, which is an idea stemming essentially from a liberal interpretation of religion as a matter of the private sphere. However, this view is not shared by the Catholic Church nor by many members of the Catholic laity for whom their religious beliefs and values form an essential framework for actions in the public sphere (Conway 1996b).

Nonetheless, one can identify some attempts to provide a definition and typology of the movement and to explain the electoral performance of parties associated with political Catholicism. Building on the descriptions of political Catholicism in the works of Buchanan and Conway (1996) and Liedhegener (2010), I developed a more robust definition of political Catholicism:

Political Catholicism can be defined as a broad social and political movement which draws on Catholic teaching and moral values and whose key purpose is to influence the decision-making process in order

to enshrine these value in a legal system, making them binding for all members of a society.

Naturally, political Catholicism has been a diverse movement, both historically, but also geographically. It functioned in different national contexts with divergent cultural, socio-economic and political factors that influenced its development. This meant that internal divisions have always been intrinsic to the Catholic politics of Europe, and thus, political Catholicism had different manifestations. In the interwar period, many conservative political Catholic leaders were opposed to various aspects of the rapid modernisation of the 19th century, like industrialisation, the secular state, the parliamentary system and democracy, while others focused more on social policy as described in the encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* (Kaiser and Wahnout 2004). The main division lines of the movement were running across social classes (e.g. Catholic *bourgeoisie* vs. Catholic workers), regions, generations, or those who opposed the modern era and those who were closer to industrialisation and urban society. Consequently, parts of the Italian political Catholic movement chose to ally themselves with Mussolini, while others stayed loyal to the liberal parliamentary system. As a result of this heterogeneity, political Catholicism was rarely analysed as a single movement, being instead divided into almost independent, self-contained groups, for example:

- a) '*Christian democracy*' – by far the most conspicuous, mainstream embodiment of political Catholicism that came to dominate politics in post-1945 Western Europe;
- b) '*Clerico-fascism*' – popular especially in Spain and Italy during the Franco and Mussolini eras, characterised by explicit support for dictatorships;
- c) '*Ultramontane Catholicism*' – tried to act as a counterbalance to growing powers of the state in Europe, emphasising the prerogatives of the Pope and looking for direct guidance on socio-economic and moral issues from the Vatican;
- d) '*Catholic-nationalism*' – present in countries where the Church and the Roman Catholic religion became strongly intertwined with notions of national identity (e.g. Poland and Ireland);
- e) '*Catholic trade unionism*' – could be characterised as a Catholic working-class movement demanding a reorientation of Catholic political priorities towards a concern for the working class.

These categories were not always clear, and at times superfluous. More importantly, they led some analysts to prioritise Christian democracy as a separate political tradition, often overlooking other expressions of political Catholicism. However, it is wrong to associate political Catholicism exclusively with its Christian democratic manifestation, even though it

was the one that dominated post-war European politics. In fact, it is not uncommon for some commentators to use the term ‘political Catholicism’ as a synonym for Christian democracy, which is restrictive and may be misleading. Political Catholicism as a movement is much broader than a single party family.

Despite this complexity and variety, political Catholicism has had a distinct identity and enough common elements to render it a coherent political movement. This powerful identity emerged as a result of two key factors: firstly, transformation and rapid growth in popular piety and devotion in the 19th century, and secondly, a new, centralised Church order. Catholicism of the 19th century was heavily influenced by new mass forms of piety, such as pilgrimages, missions, relics, indulgences, the devotion to Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus, shrines, visions, apparition and miracle cures, coupled with frequent communion and intensified religious training. Together with increased piety came growing solidarity and political-cultural interaction, particularly in response to state-introduced discriminatory policies. The Church itself also underwent significant administrative changes. From the end of the 19th century there were growing efforts directed at strengthening the formal organisational structures of the Church, together with the efforts of the papacy to limit autonomy of national Church hierarchies in favour of the central Vatican authority (Kaiser and Wohnout 2004).

This common and distinct identity of political Catholicism manifested itself first and foremost in a commitment to the defence of Catholic values, religion and the Church in public life, which became a shared element among all political Catholic movements, particularly until 1945. The vision of a new social order, a ‘third’ way between capitalism and socialism – based on communitarian principles, whereby individualism and free market economy would be offset by enhanced social bonds and welfare systems – was another characteristic element of the political Catholic movement. The movement could also be defined through two additional elements: firstly, it defined itself in opposition to all other major ideologies, like socialism, liberalism, communism or more right-wing politics. Secondly, it was an explicit awareness of a distinctive body of Catholic thinking, social principles and political ideas that formed the basis of the movement (Conway 1996b). After the Second World War, and particularly following the social changes of the 1960s and the Second Vatican Council, political Catholicism in Western Europe reformulated itself, moving away from being an agent of Catholic self-defence towards more centrist politics and a ‘catch-all’ formula, but it still remained a distinctive movement.

A discussion on how to define political Catholicism would not be complete without considering the case of single-issue movements. There is a whole plethora of robust organisations based on Catholic values and teachings which are committed to issues of abortion, euthanasia or in-vitro fertilisation, lobbying for legislation supporting a particular point of view. It is true that they can often be very influential actors, especially in the US. However, they do not approach the idea of enshrining Catholic values in legal systems in a comprehensive manner, cannot be described as a holistic political action, and thus, only partially meet the definition criteria of political Catholicism. As such, single-issue organisations should not be considered part of political Catholicism, although they certainly contribute to the overall vitality of the movement.

The analysis of the material presented above enables me to identify the primary features of political Catholicism as a social movement:

- a) strong inspiration drawn from the Catholic social teaching, which is a body of Catholic doctrines based on communitarian values and concerning social issues such as poverty, wealth, economics, social organisation and the role of the state;
- b) activity in the public sphere to ensure that Catholic moral values are not only protected but also enshrined in law, making them legally binding for the whole society;

The secondary features characteristic of post-1945 political Catholicism were:

- a) a multi-faceted character, including political parties as well as social movements and organisations;
- b) independence from the Church, despite close cooperation;
- c) strong anchoring in local and regional politics, while maintaining the ability to develop effective transnational networks of cooperation with movements in other states or regions;
- d) acceptance of the Catholic idea of universalism (the idea of seeing humanity as a whole, rather than in terms of different groups, nations, races) and thus approval of supranationalism and a centralised authority outside of the nation state; in Europe therefore supportive of European integration;
- e) in Western Europe most successful in the form of Christian democracy;
- f) political action with Catholic inspiration and not simply a group of individual Catholics who are active in politics.

Political Catholicism as an ideology?

Conway (1996b) pointed out that the dominant interpretation of history showed European politics as an arena of conflicts between secular ideologies of right and left, which offered alternative models of economic, political and social organisation of states and societies. However, political Catholicism did not fit comfortably within this scheme and as a result

was often subsumed awkwardly into the conventional political categories. Hence, before concluding the discussion on the phenomenon of political Catholicism, it is worth addressing the question: is it really a distinct political movement or is it in essence a form of conservatism? Christian democracy, the most successful part of the political Catholic movement, often faced this issue, with scholars stating that ‘in many cases it is difficult to distinguish conservative parties from Christian Democratic parties’ (Lane and Ersson 1991: 108) or that ‘support for the Church is so important among conservatives that in some countries they include the term *Christian* in their name’ (Steiner 1986: 30, cited in van Kersbergen 1994). The issue of distinctiveness is even more pertinent in the case of political Catholicism, as this phenomenon is even less known and analysed than Christian democracy.

To reiterate, political Catholicism draws inspiration from Catholic social teaching, which contain opinions and guidelines regarding the major fields of human activity. There is no unified set of principles of Catholic social teaching. However, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2005) identified the following seven themes of Catholic social teaching:

- a) Life and dignity of human beings – this is the founding principle of Catholic social teaching, proclaiming that human life, from natural conception until death, is sacred. Hence the objection to abortion, euthanasia and the death penalty.
- b) Family, community and participation – this principle considers each person as a part of different communities. Marriage and the family are considered the central social institutions that need to be protected. People also have a right and duty to participate actively in society, working for the common good.
- c) Rights and responsibilities – human rights need to be protected, while responsibilities need to be met. Every person has a right to life and a right to those things required by human decency. However, rights carry with them also responsibilities – for one another, for families and society.
- d) Consideration of the poor and vulnerable – divisions between rich and poor should be bridged and the needs of the poor and vulnerable should be put first.
- e) Dignity at work and the rights of workers – the key aspect here is the belief that economy must serve the people, not the other way round. The basic rights of workers, including the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organisation and joining of unions, to private property and to economic initiative need to be protected.

- f) Solidarity – human beings cannot exist completely independently of each other, but instead are interdependent. At the core of this theme is the pursuit of worldwide justice, peace and reconciliation.
- g) Care for God's creation – including care for the Earth, protection of people and the planet.

These themes were often translated by post-war political Catholicism, particularly by Christian democracy, into a doctrine of personalism, which is perhaps the easiest way to show the distinctiveness of political Catholicism as a set of ideas. In opposition to liberalism, personalism sees society composed not of individuals, but persons. The person is a sociable being who is not focused on competition (as in liberalism) but on existence and cooperation in different types of communities: the family, church, work place or nation. The intrinsic features of this thinking are solidarity and potentially anti-capitalism, which translated into pro-welfare policies so well associated with Christian democracy (Hanley 1994).

Another good way to show the distinctiveness of political Catholicism is its attitude to the main social changes which have been underway since the 19th century and were described as a shift from *Gemeinschaft* ('community') to *Gesellschaft* ('society'). Dierickx (1994) showed how these traditional concepts reflected the differences between main political ideologies and their approach to the evolution of societies towards a large, impersonal *Gesellschaft*. Both liberalism and socialism are at the *Gesellschaft* end of the spectrum, striving to emancipate individuals from traditional and allegedly oppressive communities like the Church, village or family. Nationalism and ecologism are at the *Gemeinschaft* end, questioning the creation of societies consisting of highly independent individuals focused on their own aims and objectives. Political Catholicism, as a result of the societal changes of the 1960s, suffered a split, with more progressive Catholics, particularly in Western Europe, seeing the new *Gesellschaft* as an opportunity for a renewed effort to grow, while others, like the Polish manifestation of the movement, remained firmly in favour of the *Gemeinschaft*. This may also be a result of the distinct intertwined relations between national sovereignty, nationalism, national identity and Catholicism, leading to the preference for the communitarian approach.

Dierickx (1994) also provided a useful description of how the division between *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft* worked in practice in four crucial policy areas: the family, education, work relations and social systems. Although his works specifically focused on Christian democracy, most of his conclusions can be applied to political Catholicism overall. Family

policy is salient for political Catholicism; attempts to strengthen and protect the family are perhaps the clearest example of the distinctiveness of its ideological principles, as liberals and socialists tend to privatise this issue. What is more, other *Gemeinschaft* ideologies tend to focus on other types of communities than the family. In the area of education, liberals focus on caring for procedures and the quality, and are willing to leave the content of education to its consumers. Socialists see the educational system as an instrument to combat social injustices and inequality. Political Catholicism is more inclined to impose on schools the task of communicating specific philosophical and religious meaning. This is particularly true of Catholic schools, which can also be required to uphold cultural and national identities. When it comes to work relations, the positions of most ideologies are well-known. Socialists prefer self-management by workers, liberals believe that entrepreneurs should have full authority to manage their companies, while political Catholicism is in-between, following Catholic social teaching and its focus on corporatism and favouring cooperation between workers and entrepreneurs who should meet in institutionalised negotiations, both at central and local levels. Finally, in social policy, liberals believe in the principle of equality of opportunity, while socialists stick to the principle of equality of results. In this context, political Catholicism emphasises the principle of solidarity, which makes them sensitive to economic disparities. This directs attention to one of the most characteristic political Catholic policies, advocated mostly by Christian democracy, namely the social market economy. This idea brings together a commitment to the capitalist market economy and a readiness to correct its social and cultural deficiencies through a social policy intended as a safety net, designed to protect those threatened by market forces (van Kersbergen 1994).

It is clear that political Catholicism is a political movement distinct from other major ideologies. The question remains whether it could be called an ideology. Political Catholicism has rarely been described as an ideology; instead, it was rather referred to as a 'political movement' (Buchanan and Conway 1996), as a precursor to post-war Christian democracy or 'a coalition of different social groups under the umbrella of the joint defence of Catholic religious, social and political interests' (Kaiser and Wahnout 2004: 3). The reason may be that the concept of ideology itself has not been fully determined, with numerous definitions appearing over the years. Hamilton (1987) consulted as many as eighty-five formal definitions and general discussions of the concept of ideology, identifying as a result no less than 27 different definitional criteria of the concept. After close analysis, he proposed the following definition of an ideology: 'a system of collectively

held normative and reputedly factual ideas and beliefs and attitudes advocating a particular pattern of social relationships and arrangements, and/or aimed at justifying a particular pattern of conduct, which its proponents seek to promote, realise, pursue or maintain' (1987: 38). What is essential is that a fully developed ideology should have a holistic opinion on all aspects of policy-making in all major spheres, such as the organisation of society, economics or international relations, and should be able to identify problems, set objectives, and define the issue of power and conflict (Dierickx 1994).

Initially, it may seem that political Catholicism fulfils the key criteria identified by Hamilton. It possesses a set of ideas on what social relationships should look like and a pattern of conduct that it promotes. What is more, these ideas and opinions are distinctive when compared with other major ideologies. However, political Catholicism is divergent and can be translated into different programmes, which can sometimes fundamentally differ on key issues. The best examples of the divergent nature of political Catholicism here would be Polish political Catholicism and its Western European counterparts with differing approaches to European integration and the role of the state in economy and society, or the use of Marxist tools of social analysis by liberation theology, to name just a few of the most apparent disagreements. In fact, the split of political Catholicism between those who embraced the new *Gesellschaft* and those who prefer more traditional 'communities' means Catholic social teaching does not provide a coherent enough framework to ensure consistency of political Catholic ideas and programmes. The Catholic social teachings are prone to interpretation and have to be expanded on in areas where they do not take a strong position. Therefore, it seems that it is difficult to classify political Catholicism as a holistic ideology, but it does possess enough distinctiveness and coherence to be seen as a fully independent political movement in its own right.

2.4 Conclusions – the changing face of political Catholicism

This chapter argued that political Catholicism, despite being an important political movement that profoundly impacted the social and political life of Europe, remains a relatively under-researched area. Therefore, I aimed to bridge this knowledge gap by presenting a more robust definition of political Catholicism that so far has not been sufficiently developed. In order to further explore the nature of political Catholicism, this chapter discussed historical developments and the role of political Catholicism.

This chapter also showed how political Catholicism was a distinct political phenomenon that could be clearly contrasted with other political ideologies. However, despite offering a wide ideological framework for political activism, it fell short of being qualified as a full-fledged ideology, mainly because it was not specific enough and prone to differing interpretations leading into divergent political programmes with different outlooks on such fundamental issues as the role of an individual in society, the role of the state in regulating the life of society or the state-Church relations.

As the chapter tracked the historical development of political Catholicism in Western Europe, the movement's apparent transformation became obvious. The grand social and cultural changes of the post-war years, which rapidly gained momentum in the 1960s, meant that political Catholicism in Western Europe could never be the same again. The Church stopped issuing guidance to the faithful to vote for Catholic parties, while a newly strengthened uniform Catholic identity and an idea of shared interests gave way to religious and political pluralism. The decreasing level of religious practice meant that traditional electoral bases of the movement started eroding. This forced political Catholic parties to stop relying on confessional loyalty and develop new ways of attracting electorate (Conway 1997). In many cases, it led to the crisis of traditional Christian democracy, which lost much of its support in the 1960s and 1970s.

In response to this new trend, Western European political Catholicism and particularly Christian democracy began a process of moving away from the Church and deemphasising religion, with voters becoming the parties' only source of support and legitimisation. After some success in the 1980s, the 1990s brought once more significant declines of electoral support for Christian democracy, prompting quite a few political commentators to declare 'the end of Christian democracy'. This statement was not entirely ill-founded, as the Christian democratic movement indeed suffered one of its greatest failures in the 1990s. In the Netherlands, the Christian Democratic Appeal (*Christen-Democratisch Appèl*, CDA) and its predecessor had been part of ruling coalitions since 1917, only to be pushed out of government in 1994. Belgian Christian democrats were sent into opposition for the first time in 40 years, while the coalition of the German Christian Democratic Union (*Christlich Demokratische Union*, CDU) and its Bavarian sister party Christian Social Union (*Christlich Soziale Union*, CSU) lost the elections in 1998 after 16 years in power. Last but not least, Christian Democracy (*Democrazia Cristiana*, DC) – the largest Italian party between 1948 and 1992 – disintegrated in a rather spectacular fashion in the early 1990s. However, the

death of Christian democracy was announced too early. In 2002, the German CDU/CSU returned to power, the Austrian People's Party (*Österreichische Volkspartei*, ÖVP) became the largest party in Austria for the first time since 1966, the Christian Democratic Appeal returned to power in the Netherlands providing the prime-minister, and the European People's Party gained the relative majority as a result of the 1999 European Parliament elections for the first time since 1979, when direct elections to the European Parliament were introduced. Despite the successful revival of Christian democracy in many countries in the 2000s, the distance between the parties and the Church grew stronger and the policy of deemphasising religion continued. For example, since the 1990s, the CDU/CSU refrained from publicly referring to God or Christian values with similar trends in Belgium, where francophone Christian democrats abandoned references to Catholicism in order to attract non-Catholic voters (Van Hecke and Gerard 2004).

Consequently, contemporary political Catholicism in the form of Western European Christian democracy retained certain religious labels and sometimes awkward links to the Church, but otherwise it became an entirely secular movement, functioning in a secular environment, remaining, however, a separate, distinctive political group that did not evolve into typical conservatism. It became centrist and 'catch-all', characterised by a unique political perspective that included moderation, subsidiarity, appeal across cleavages, support for mediation, social market economy and the welfare state. This strategy proved effective, as despite declining Church attendance in Western Europe, many Christian democratic parties remained successful (e.g. Germany, Austria, Belgium) (Kalyvas 1996).

The changing face of Western European political Catholicism prompts the question as to what extent it still is political Catholic, i.e. whether it bases its policies on the principles of Catholic social teaching and still is ready to entrench these principles in binding legislation, despite a clear detachment from religious values in its rhetoric. This analysis falls outside the scope of this research, but is an important issue to be examined in order to deepen our understanding of the relationship between religion and politics in the modern world. What is essential to note, however, is that Western European Christian democracy is not the only face of modern political Catholicism. In fact, Polish political Catholicism and its apparent and growing difference from Western European manifestations of this movement stand out. Both phenomena were always different because of divergent national environments in which they developed. With the changing face of Western European political Catholicism, characterised by the growing detachment from religion, however, Polish political

Catholicism with its strong focus on Christian values, its close relations with the Church and its goal to protect the role of Catholicism in public life, becomes increasingly divergent. This phenomenon will be described in more detail in the following chapters.

3 Political Catholicism in Poland

3.1 Introduction

In the context of political Catholicism, Poland is a particularly interesting case. It is not only the largest of the ten post-communist states that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, but also a country where as a result of historical developments Catholicism has been playing a significant role in political, social and cultural life, ultimately becoming a core component of Polish national identity (for more on the distinct role of Catholicism in Poland see: Davies 2005, Eberts 1998, Kosela 2003, de Lange and Guerra 2009, Mach 2000, Majka 1980, Morawska 1984, Osa 1989, Szajkowski 1983, Zuba 2006). The vital role of Catholicism in Poland has already been well established and described by scholars. The nature of Polish political Catholicism, however, did not attract so much scholarly attention, despite its distinctiveness. As this chapter shows, political Catholicism in Poland bears many distinctive features that differentiate it significantly from its Western European counterparts, making it an especially interesting case to study, not only adding to our understanding of how religion and politics interact in modern Europe but also contributing to scholarly knowledge of political Catholicism as a whole.

This chapter will focus on presenting two elements that had a crucial effect on the development of Polish political Catholicism: firstly, the unique role of Catholicism as a socio-cultural system in Poland which strongly influenced the cultural, political and societal life of the country; and, secondly, the formation of intertwined relations between Catholicism and Polish national identity. These two elements led to Polish political Catholicism growing into a sizeable political force that differed from more traditional representatives of this movement by displaying a strong Catholic-nationalistic trait and by the fact that it became successful in a form other than Christian democracy, which dominated political Catholicism in post-war Europe.

The first section of this chapter will briefly present a history of relations between Catholicism, the Catholic Church, Polish society and the state in order to describe how religion and national identity were gradually combined together in a unique socio-cultural system. Then the chapter will move on to describe the development of political Catholicism in Poland, with special attention given to the role of a Catholic broadcaster – *Radio Maryja* – and the influence of the Catholic Church on Polish politics. It will conclude

by answering the question of how different political Catholicism in Poland is from Western European manifestations of the movement.

3.2 The unique role of Catholicism in Poland

Polish Catholicism is quite broadly regarded as a distinct phenomenon in Europe, especially in the context of its influential role in public life (e.g. Mach 2000, Eberts 1998, de Lange and Guerra 2009, Zuba 2006, Kosela 2003, Szajkowski 1983, Osa 1989). This uniqueness stems from the historic, cultural and political environments that influenced its development.

The relation between the Catholic Church, Polish society and the Polish state was well captured by British historian Davies (2005: 152):

‘The Roman Catholic Church has always been part of the world of Polish politics. Not only in its corporate existence as a wealthy, ancient, and respected institution, but also through the actions and attitudes of its priests and people, it has exerted a powerful political influence on all political developments. What is more, the history of the Roman Catholic Church provides one of the very few threads of continuity in Poland’s past. Kingdoms, dynasties, republics, parties and regimes have come and gone; but the Church seems to go on forever.’

In other words, it is impossible to understand political and social dynamics in Poland without taking into account the power and role of the Church in Polish society. It is, of course, a complex network of unique circumstances and intertwined events which cannot all be extracted and analysed in this study. Some crucial elements, however, are outlined below. I start by providing a brief historical account of Church-state relations in Poland and explain how the notion of Polish national identity and Polish statehood became strongly entangled with Catholicism.

3.2.1 Catholicism, the Polish state and Polish national identity – a historical perspective

Catholicism in Poland – 966 until the 18th century partition of Poland

It was at the outset of Polish statehood when Catholicism started playing an important role in political and social life. In order to protect his lands from the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, Prince Mieszko I converted to Christianity in 966, knocking out the

Empire's main argument for its expansion to the east, which was to convert pagans to Christianity, if need be by force. From then until the partition of Poland at the end of the 18th century, the attitude of state authorities to the Church was fundamentally positive and directed at its strengthening. As a result, the Church hierarchy played an active part in the development of Polish statehood (Jusiak 2009).

The deep connection between the sense of 'Polishness' and Catholicism, which exists to this day, would not have been possible if it had been based solely on close co-operation between the Church and the state and its authorities. The Catholic Church in Poland was integrated strongly with Polish society as a result of its role in preserving Polish culture and tradition during difficult historical times. One of the first instances of the Church being perceived as a defender of the Polish nation was the disastrous Swedish invasion of the 1650s, marked by a heroic defence of the Jasna Góra sanctuary, which was one of the few strongholds in Poland that the Swedish army failed to capture. Although historians disagree on the importance of the defence of Jasna Góra for the course of war, it became a symbol of Polish resistance (Jusiak 2009).

In 1791, the Polish Constitution of May 3rd, which was an attempt to reform the failing state, declared in its first article Catholicism to be the national and state religion, while at the same time guaranteeing tolerance for other non-Catholic faiths. Following the intervention of the Russian Empire, efforts for constitutional reforms that might have ensured Poland's survival were abandoned and, as a result, Poland disappeared from the map of Europe in 1795.

The partition period (1795–1918)

The partition of Poland between Prussia, Austria and Russia marked a period when the Church became the only Polish institution common to all the partitioned parts of the country that could support Polish culture, language and tradition. The new authorities quickly realised the important role of the Church and instituted a range of policies directed at weakening it. For example, the Russian authorities prohibited any contact between Polish bishops and the Vatican in an effort to subordinate the Church to the new rulers. At the same time, churches across the country became places of patriotic demonstrations, which were often combined with Masses and other religious events. As a result, the Russian imperial army raided and desecrated many places of worship in an attempt to suppress growing patriotic sentiments. The role of the Catholic Church was further

strengthened by the fact that the conflict with two of the invaders also had a strong religious dimension, with the Tsar being the head of the Russian Orthodox Church and Prussia being dominated by Protestantism (Zarycki 2007).

The Church not only provided a haven for those trying to restore Polish independence, but many priests and monks took an active part in the armed resistance and uprisings. The results of this activity were quite severe, as the Russian authorities increased their pressure on the Church by sending many priests into exile in Siberia, dissolving dioceses, banning public displays of religious activities and ordering that the liturgy be celebrated in Russian (Jusiak 2009).

The fact that the Catholic Church was the main institution preserving Polish culture and traditions during the partition period – and, as a result, suffered persecution – led to the amalgamation of Catholicism with Polish national identity. For national elites, but even more strongly for ordinary Poles, the Catholic faith became a form of statement used to underline the difference between what was Polish and what came from the Prussian and Russian authorities. It was at this time that the well-known stereotype of a ‘Pole-Catholic’ emerged and became widely accepted among Poles. The role of the Church in 19th century Poland was so important that the archbishop of Warsaw, Aleksander Krakowski, was nominated as one of three members of the Regency Council formed in 1917 by Germany and Austria-Hungary in the occupied Polish territories. The Council took over the administration of the judicial system together with education, and in 1918, after 123 years of the non-existence of the Polish state, declared Polish independence.

The interwar period and the Second World War (1918–1945)

The role of the Catholic Church during the partition period translated in the interwar period into its very strong position not only among Poles, but also in the legal framework of the newly recreated Polish state. The constitution of 1921, although establishing complete freedom of religion, mentioned only one religion directly, Catholicism, and Article 114 guaranteed the Catholic Church a supreme position among all faiths (*Primus inter pares*) (Krukowski 2002). In addition, in 1925 the Polish state concluded a concordat with the Holy See, which regulated the legal framework of the Church’s activities in Poland. It guaranteed the Church complete independence in the management of its properties and internal affairs (including the organisation and nomination of priests and bishops) and granted it a number of financial privileges (Kuk 2004). After the 1926 coup,

when Józef Pilsudski and the *Sanacja* movement took power, the situation of the Church did not change significantly, even though Pilsudski supported the separation of state and Church, had a history of personal conflicts with senior Catholic clergymen and, for a brief period of time, converted to Protestantism (Rogalska 2014). Pilsudski, however, maintained formally good relations with the Church in public life – the Polish left in general was conciliatory towards the Church and soon both institutions reached a certain level of compromise (Kuk 2004).

In general, the interwar period further cemented the influential position of the Catholic Church in Poland. The Church, being fully aware of its pivotal role during the partition period, demanded explicit recognition of its rights in the state's legislation and put forward postulates that would base the organisation of society on Catholic moral values and teaching. The fact that about 75% of the Polish population at the time belonged to the Catholic Church provided only an additional argument for strengthening the Church's position (Jusiak 2009).

In 1939, the brief period of Polish independence came to an abrupt end with the beginning of the Second World War. It was obvious to the German and Soviet invaders that the Church was an essential element upholding the existence of the Polish nation and, thus, they implemented a range of actions aimed at neutralising and, in long-term, destroying it. In the Polish territories that were incorporated into the Third Reich, the structures of the Polish Church were dissolved and German clergy replaced Polish priests. In the occupied part of Poland (the General Government), the Nazis instituted a complex system of persecution aimed at significantly reducing the influence of the Church on society. In eastern Poland, the USSR imposed its already well-developed policies of forced secularisation and started an open fight with religion. Any religious activities were rooted out through arrests, deportations to the Siberian labour camps of the GULAG, or death penalties (Jusiak 2009).

The devastation of the Second World War touched all aspects of Polish statehood: the economy, culture and society, including the Catholic Church. However, the end of the war did not markedly improve the situation of the Church. As a result of the Yalta Conference, Poland, together with other Central and Eastern European countries, fell into the Soviet sphere of influence, and soon a totalitarian communist government was established in the country. The underlying Marxist philosophy of the new government was based on strong opposition not only to the Church, but also to any religious beliefs in general, and any form

of unauthorised public activity. Consequently, the Provisional Government of National Unity (*Tymczasowy Rząd Jedności Narodowej*) declared the pre-war concordat null and void as early as 1945. The following Stalinist period (until 1956) was a time of full frontal attack on the Church with an intense use of the state's security apparatus and propaganda.

Struggle against the communist regime (1945–1989)

The period of the communist regime in Poland was marked by a dualistic relationship between the Church and the state. On the one hand, the ruling party accepted Marxist ideology with its opposition to any form of religious beliefs, but on the other hand, it was aware of the special role of Catholicism in Poland and the Church's influence in Polish society. The 1952 constitution guaranteed the freedom of religion, but the state's authorities used administrative means to weaken the Church. Religious lessons in state schools were gradually limited until their full elimination in 1961. Schools, hospitals, caring facilities and charities run by the Church were taken over by the state. The Church's right to worship, which was formally granted by the constitution, was significantly limited, confining it to churches and sanctuaries only (Krukowski 2002). The situation of the Catholic Church in Poland during the communist regime was marked by periods of high repression: the Stalinist period 1946–1956, the last years under First Secretary W. Gomułka (the end of the 1960s) and during the martial law period (1981–1982). However, these attempts to contain and weaken the Church had the opposite effect, rallying popular support for the Church as the symbol of resistance and thereby solidifying its authority among Poles (Jusiak 2009).

From the mid-1970s, the struggle against the communist authorities was gaining strength and churches around the country were used as a refuge for opposition leaders. They also became forums for open discussions, where people could freely express their political opinions and criticise the authorities. Public masses and the presence of priests among protesters during the 'Festival of Solidarity' in the summer of 1981 were unambiguous proof of the Church's role in the struggle against communism. Indeed, a picture of Holy Mary pinned to Lech Wałęsa's lapel became a clear exemplification of Catholicism's position during those days.

The beginnings of the 1980s showed how the Church began to function as a repository of the legitimacy granted by Polish society which, by that time, communists were almost completely deprived of. The Church's authority spanned beyond the spiritual and moral

domains and entered directly into the sphere of politics and socio-cultural life (Walaszek 1986). Many Poles perceived the Church and religion as a political category rather than a spiritual one, emphasising the Church's association with survival, culture and continuity. The Church was elevated to a symbol of Polishness and of resistance to a political system that was imposed by foreign and historically hostile forces (Szajkowski 1985). As a Polish student described it at the time: 'For us the Church signifies patriotism, tradition, continuity and stability' (Weschler 1982: 20).

In this context, Morawska (1984) described the Church as the main public spokesperson for Polish society and pointed out that the Church's persistent support for sovereignty and the self-governance of the Polish nation was the backbone of its political role in the years leading up to the fall of communism.

From democratic breakthrough until EU membership (1989–2004)

In 1989, with the collapse of the communist regime, the Church found itself in a completely new environment. The rapid political and socio-economic transformation of Poland on the one hand created new opportunities for the Church to normalise its relations with the state or even assert certain privileges. On the other hand, the Church was faced with new challenges and had to reinvent its position vis-à-vis the key elements of the political, social and economic life of Poland.

In the 1990s, during the first decade of the transformation, the Church was able to capitalise on its widespread popular support and the important role in the struggle against communism – it not only maintained the national culture and the national community, but it actively participated in the process of democratisation in the 1980s (Borowik 2002). The new constitution adopted in April 1997 did not mention 'the separation of the state and churches' but rather talked about autonomy and 'cooperation for the individual and common good.' The constitution also specifically mentioned the Catholic Church, declaring that its relations with the state would be established and governed by a separate international agreement – the Concordat (Article 25.4 of the Constitution of Poland (DU 1997)).

The Concordat between the Holy See and the Republic of Poland was signed in 1993 and ratified in 1998. It reconfirmed the autonomy of the Church and conferred upon it many rights, such as the freedom of the Church to maintain relations with the Holy See and other churches (Article 3), the liberty to exercise its mission publicly, the right to govern its

internal affairs in line with the canon law (Article 5), the recognition of canonical marriages by civil authorities, the introduction of religious education in kindergartens and public schools with the right of the Church to nominate teachers and develop the curriculum (Article 12), the right to establish and manage educational institutions and research institutes (Article 15), and last but not least, the right to broadcast religious programmes on public radio and television (Article 20).

After 1989 and the fall of the communist regime, the universally accepted social prestige of the Church started to diminish. Some perceived it as one of the main beneficiaries of the democratic transformation because of its growing official standing, the rights conferred upon it by the state and the partial restitution of properties previously confiscated by the communists (Zdaniewicz and Zaręba 2004). Daniel (1995) pointed to the historical background of Church-state-society relations in Poland and described a more general tendency that indicated the dependence of the Church's legitimacy and standing in society on the condition of the state. Whenever the Polish state went through a serious political crisis, the significance of the Church rose and society gathered around it. The reverse was also true: the growing legitimacy of the democratic state after 1989 contributed to the decrease of the Church's image in society.

However, Polish Catholicism was not subject to a major secularisation process and the fact that it was widely regarded by large parts of Polish society as an important, if not the most important, social actor could be attributed to its amalgamation with Polish culture.

The Church and its influence on contemporary Polish politics (2004 – present)

Since 1989, the Church has found it difficult to adjust its role in a new sovereign and independent state. Smolar (1998) noticed that the Church tried directly influencing the political choices of its faithful by unambiguously supporting Catholic parties. The hierarchy also tried to influence appointments to high government posts and intervened in the process of granting radio and television licences. Following the failure of these attempts to directly influence the public sphere, weary of the political world, the Church withdrew from direct intervention in politics. Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek, former secretary general of the Polish Episcopate, explained this as follows: 'I think the influence [of the Church on Polish politics] remains, in spite of all, significant. Not because of the Church's direct participation in political life ... because it tries to remain non-political ... but thanks to its authority' (Interview with T. Pieronek 2013). Thus, the Catholic Church maintained its

influential role after the 1989 fall of communism in Poland, but gradually moved away from a direct participation in politics and expressing open support for chosen politicians toward a more nuanced, indirect approach. Nonetheless, occasionally the Church returned to its more direct relation with the Polish public sphere (e.g. the presidential and parliamentary campaign in 2005), which showed that it still had not fully decided on its role in a sovereign and democratic Poland. As Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek summarised the situation in 1997: ‘Among the personnel of the Church there is still a great temptation to enter areas that do not belong to them. And this discussion is still going on’ (Gazeta Wyborcza 1997).

At the same time, the Church and Catholicism remained in the background and a point of reference for many aspects of political life. Analyst Piotr Kaczyński noted that the Church is an important element not only for political Catholic parties, but also for those whose identity is built on opposition to the Church’s role in Polish life, such as Palikot’s movement (*Ruch Palikota*) ‘[The Church exerts influence] on all political parties. Without the Church there would be no Palikot[’s movement], without the Church Law and Justice would find it difficult’ (Interview with P.M. Kaczyński 2013). Tomasz Terlikowski, a Catholic journalist, underlined that ‘[the Church] co-defines, to a certain extent and not as the only institution, the overall framework for Polish politics. In this sense its influence is not marginal However, its impact on everyday politics is small The reality in Poland is that the Church defines certain civilisational frameworks,[as well as] the people’s world-view and mind-sets’ (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). Anna Słojewska, a Brussels-based correspondent of the daily *Rzeczpospolita*, also noted that the Polish Catholic Church and Christian values provided general guidelines for Polish parties in the moral-cultural sphere and became a frame of reference: ‘The influence of the Polish Church on EU policies [of Polish parties] comes down to the ideological-moral sphere All parties in Poland care about the Church’s opinion. Not only Law and Justice, but also Civic Platform’ (Interview with A. Słojewska 2012).

The fact that the Church did not directly influence Polish politics, but rather played a role in establishing a broad value framework of party positions was not only confirmed by the Polish hierarchy and commentators of the public life whom I interviewed, but also by politicians representing the political Catholic milieu. It is striking that whenever asked about the role of the Church in contemporary Polish politics, and in particular its bearing on their own parties, most politicians gave the same type of answer, which was well

summarised by Janusz Wojciechowski, MEP of the largest political Catholic party in Poland – Law and Justice: ‘[Law and Justice] listens to the voice of the Church ... but we don't go actively to the Church asking how we should behave in specific situations. It's more about our attachment to Christian values and not about consultations [with the Church] on regular basis. You definitely can't say that we are under political influence of the Church’ (Interview with J. Wojciechowski 2012).

It is clear that the impact of the Catholic Church on contemporary Polish politics is indirect and, if at all, can be observed in the background of public life, providing a framework of reference and ideological guidance. As Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek explained: ‘I think that generally the accusations that the Church meddles in politics are ill-founded Politics ... is [defined as] a prudent concern for common good, and in this sphere the Church has the right and duty to speak out The Church has [also] the right and duty to preach the gospel, and if there is something that contradicts it in the political sphere, the critical voice of the Church is justified. It's not a direct intervention in politics’ (Interview with T. Pieronek 2013).

3.2.2 Polish Catholicism – a distinct socio-cultural system

The short historical account of the Church-state-society relations provided above clearly shows that the Church in Poland was a key national institution for centuries. It represented not only a system of religious beliefs but also the embodiment of Polish culture and tradition. The long historical association of Polish Catholicism and Polish ethnicity has resulted in a deep integration of the Church and nationalism. Consequently, many Poles perceived any threat to the Church as a threat to their national identity (Szajkowski 1985).

Although Poland accepted Christianity in the 10th century mainly for political reasons, the religion soon started to fight for its independence from the state. In popular perception, the Church often played the role of the moral opposition and the defender of the oppressed, by reprimanding rulers’ misconduct. The separation of the state’s authority from that of the Church (limited by today’s standards but quite unusual at the time) is best exemplified by the so-called ‘preaching’ activity of the clergy during the 17th and 18th century, which was almost entirely critical of social and political abuses by the King and the nobles, siding with the oppressed people. The disjunction between the state and the Church became entirely obvious during the period of partition of Poland when, on the one hand, the invading countries identified themselves with Christian beliefs other than

Catholicism and, on the other hand, the Church provided refuge and a place to nurture Polish culture and identity.

Catholicism in Poland entered the public sphere not only to protect its own freedom, but also to protect the freedoms and rights of a democratic society in resisting the authoritarian state. It strengthened its role when state power that lacked legitimacy, be it the Russian and Prussian authorities during the 19th century or the communist regime after 1945, tried to enforce a split of the Church from the state and national identity. This had the opposite effect, one of popular resistance as a form of social opposition to illegitimate state power, in effect, strengthening the Church even more.

The specific role of the Catholic Church in the relations between society and the state authorities was described by Morawska (1984), who argued that the amalgamation of Polish Catholicism and nationalism created a distinct 'Polish civil religion'. According to Morawska, a civil religion is 'a set of religiopolitical symbols and rituals regarding a nation's history and destiny' (Morawska 1984: 29). The emergence of civil religion in Poland in the 19th century and its persistence until 1989 was the nation's response to the fundamental crises resulting from the loss of political sovereignty. As Morawska explained, 'its major function was not to legitimate, but to delegitimize the state of affairs by rallying Polish society around a counterview of a past and future free, independent Poland' (Morawska 1984: 29). In other words, the civil religion ideology in Poland helped to maintain the polarisation between state and society, reinforcing the alienation of society from the state.

Following the severe curtailing of freedom of organisation, education and publication by foreign rulers and communist authorities, religious practices were the only occasion for Poles to publicly display and reaffirm their national community and identity in a non-violent way. In addition, the romantic ideals representing the Polish nation as a sufferer together with Christ, which became dominant in Poland during the partition period, facilitated the merging of religious ceremonies with civil national traditions. As Morawska (1984: 19) explained,

'Every Easter, the traditional celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ provided an occasion for the commemoration of Poland's "crucifixion" and her "descent into the tomb," and for public prayers for her redemption. Every Christmas, around the country, churches displayed the main themes of the national romantic faith: the Polish eagle (the ancient national symbol) wearing a crown of thorns; [...] the insurrectionists from

successive uprisings; blood, chains, and patriotic duty; heroic death; and trust in God.’

In order to be able to mobilise support and protect freedoms and rights, the Polish Church had to free itself from involvement with state authorities, and turned toward citizens and their striving for freedom and truth. The Polish Catholic Church had undergone such a transformation, firstly, in the partition period, and secondly, during the communist regime when it became one of the main pillars of anti-communist resistance. This meant that the phenomenon of religiously (Catholic) inspired struggle against communism in Poland was not a simple repetition of the pattern of religious mobilisation that had been at work in Poland for centuries. It was not a residue of a traditional, backward society, but rather it resulted from new processes that transformed the Polish Catholic Church and opened it up to the democratic struggle of Poles (Rogaczewska 2006).

At the same time, it is clear that the separation of religion and state in Poland after the Second World War was not a result of the Catholic Church’s active policy, but rather was forced upon it by the communist regime. What is more, there is a range of counter-arguments, according to which the religiously inspired resistance to communism in Poland can be characterised as a mass, collective and ritualised movement, without space for pluralism or differing interpretations. This may explain why, after 1989, the Catholic Church – until then open to peoples’ desire for freedom and democracy, maintaining a distance to the authorities and inspiring a plethora of activities within civil society – and the state grew closer together. Political parties, with the acceptance of many bishops, started to place it in the centre of political debates and to use public power to assert its privileged position (e.g. the introduction of the Catholic religion courses in state schools without public consultations in 1990). As the Church’s role of people’s representative in relations with the oppressive state ceased, it started co-operating more closely with authorities. It gained an important place in the public sphere, which prompted some analysts to call it an ‘unfulfilled state church’, wishing to mobilise society with the same means as the state (Rogaczewska 2006: 71).

While describing the Catholic Church in Poland as an ‘unofficial state Church’ may not be entirely justified, the fact that Catholicism in Poland was much more than a religion is certain. The Catholic religion and the notion of national identity became intertwined at the time when the Church existed as the only authentically indigenous institution in Polish society that was present across the Prussian, Russian and Austrian partitions of Poland

(Byrnes 2002). This amalgamation progressed even further when the 19th century romantic nationalism and messianism found support in the core Christian belief of redemption through suffering (and death) for the sins of others (Casanova 1994).

To sum up, there were two most important historical factors that shaped Polish Catholicism: its role in consolidating Polish culture and national identity during the partition of the country and the Second World War, and the role of the Church in the struggle against the communist regime (Darczewska 1989). As a consequence of these circumstances, for generations, it was counter-intuitive to think about Poles who did not belong to the Catholic Church. Membership in the Church was, and often still is, perceived as one of the most important features of belonging to the Polish nation. In fact, the stereotypical expression 'Pole-Catholic' seems to be deeply embedded in history and the national consciousness. A 1994 survey showed that for 55% of Poles, membership in the Catholic Church was perceived as an important criterion for belonging to the Polish nation (Daniel 1995). As a result of particular historical circumstances and the actions it took, Polish Catholicism has fused with Polish culture to create a uniform socio-cultural system (Majka 1980).

3.3 Political Catholicism in Poland – development and composition

3.3.1 The historical development of political Catholicism in Poland

The history of the modern Polish party system began in the last quarter of the 19th century, taking a fuller shape in the inter-war period. Several of today's political organisations make references to the inter-war period of Polish politics and the divisions between the socialist movement led by Józef Pilsudski and National Democracy of Roman Dmowski, using them as a source of legitimisation of their political aspirations (Kubiak 1999). Consequently, before describing contemporary Polish political Catholicism, it is important to provide a brief history of the development of political Catholicism in Poland.

Catholic-nationalism vs. Christian democracy

At the end of the 19th century, a number of Polish parties that made references to Christian values and Catholic social teaching appeared. However, at this time, there was a fairly clear

political division emerging in the Polish territories across all three partitions that would shape Polish politics until 1939 and was not without repercussions for the contemporary Polish political scene. The division between the political right, represented by the National Democracy (*Narodowa Demokracja, Endecja*) led by Roman Dmowski, and the political left, embodied by the Polish Socialist Party (*Polska Partia Socjalistyczna, PPS*) under the leadership of Józef Piłsudski. One of the main differences between the two political camps was their attitude towards religion and the Catholic Church. Dmowski wanted to build an ethnically and culturally homogeneous Polish nation state based on Catholicism and the Church. He expressed his ideas in the seminal 1927 book 'The Church, Nation, and State': 'Catholicism is not an addition to Polish culture ... but to a large extent it is its essence. To attempt to separate ... Catholicism from Polish culture ... is to destroy the very essence of the nation' (Dmowski 2002: 21). Contrary to Dmowski's views, Piłsudski made references to a multicultural Polish republic and supported a clear separation of state and religion (Zarycki 2007). Consequently, the Polish political scene after 1918 became dominated by the nationalist movement (*Endecja*), the agrarian parties and the socialist movement. This also meant that Christian democracy as a distinct political movement never enjoyed widespread support, nor were Christian democratic parties particularly influential during the interwar period (Bender 1985).

The largest of the fairly unsuccessful Christian democratic parties in Poland was the Polish Christian Democratic Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji, PSChD* or *chadeja*; between 1920 and 1925 called *Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe Stronnictwo Pracy*). It was initially established in 1919 in Cracow and slowly merged with similar groups from other parts of the country. The party was most active during the first half of the 1920s (in the 1922 elections, it won 44 seats out of 444 in the lower chamber and 7 out of 111 in the Senate), when the major split in public opinion and fragmentation of the Parliament meant that the party was more influential than could have been expected. Following the 1926 coup d'état by Józef Piłsudski, the party went into decline, resulting in splits and defections in the 1930s and it ultimately becoming a Silesian regional party. One of the reasons for the failure of Christian democracy in Poland in the interwar period was the lack of support from the Church, which did not want to tie itself to one (minor) party when there was a number of groups seeking its acceptance and ready to support its points of view. In addition, during the Second Polish Republic, almost all political groupings, apart from the marginal communist movement, either declared respect for religion and the Church, claiming Catholicism and Christian values as an important source of inspiration for their

programmes – like *Endecja* – or maintained good relations with the Church (the Left) (Kuk 2004). Thus, Polish political Catholicism in the interwar period became dominated by the nationalist movement *Endecja*, which underlined its strong attachment to Catholicism and its readiness to defend the rights and interests of the Church, and pursued a programme for the creation of a Polish Catholic nation state. In an environment where the Catholic Church was perceived by Poles as one of the main pillars of the state, social order and Polish national identity, it was no surprise that Catholic-nationalist *Endecja* gathered most support and grew to become the strongest element of Polish political Catholicism in the interwar period.

Key actors of post-war political Catholicism in Poland until the 2000s

The Second World War and the establishment of the communist regime completely reshaped the Polish political scene. Most of the pre-war political divisions became obsolete and only a fraction of interwar political thinking reappeared after the war. In terms of political Catholicism, there were a few pockets of Catholic activists, grouped mostly around the '*Znak*' ('Sign') movement and '*Tygodnik Powszechny*' ('Universal Weekly'), which were only partially independent and tightly controlled by authorities (Bale and Szczerbiak 2008). However, during the climax of the anti-communist struggle under the Solidarity movement, activists inspired by Catholic social teaching and Christian values became a more important element, exemplified by such figures as Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the first non-communist Polish prime minister after 1945, or Wiesław Chrzanowski, the Marshal of the first post-communist democratically elected *Sejm*. There was also the pro-communist PAX association, which was a lay Catholic organisation created in 1947 with the intention to win over Polish Catholics to communism and break their links with the Vatican (Davies 2005). However, this can hardly be regarded as independent political action and thus was not part of political Catholicism.

After the collapse of the communist system in Poland in 1989, the Polish political and party system underwent a complete makeover. The 1989 elections were not fully democratic, as at least 65% of seats in the *Sejm* were guaranteed for representatives of the communist parties. This changed in 1991, when, in the first fully democratic elections, almost 111 parties competed and 29 won seats. These elections also marked the end of the unified anti-communist bloc, which split into many parties and organisations. The high fragmentation of the 1991 parliament made the political situation quite unstable, with a number of attempts to create governing coalitions. The next elections were held in 1993,

and following the introduction of the 5% electoral threshold, only 6 electoral committees secured seats in the *Sejm*, with the communist successor Democratic Left Alliance (*Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*, SLD) forming a government coalition with the Polish Peoples' Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*, PSL). The 1997 elections saw the emergence of a large coalition of post-Solidarity parties – Solidarity Electoral Action (*Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność*, AWS) – which won the elections and created a government for the next four years.

After the 1989 fall of communism, a whole plethora of parties and movements which wanted to enshrine Christian values and Catholic social teaching in the Polish legal system emerged. What was most characteristic of them was their strong focus on national-patriotic themes and a perception of Catholicism and Christian values as the basis for the functioning of state and society.

Clearly, one of the most important and electorally successful political Catholic parties of the 1990s was the Christian National Union. Following the 1991 parliamentary elections, it led the third-largest parliamentary grouping, named Catholic Electoral Action (*Wyborcza Akcja Katolicka*). The party's manifesto and policy proposals were based on Christian values, with family rights placed on top of the agenda. The party also did not hide its close links with the Catholic Church. In fact, in the October 1991 parliamentary elections, the hierarchy gave a strong impression that it was supporting the party (Bale and Szczerbiak 2008).

The Christian National Union's manifesto did not only draw from Catholic social teaching but also provided for the strengthening of the Church's influence on public life in Poland so that the state would have an explicitly Catholic character. It believed that capitalist economy in Poland should be based on subsidiarity, social justice, solidarity and common good (Paszkievicz 2004). The party's ideology was also characterised by a strong emphasis on national-patriotic themes (Bale and Szczerbiak 2008) and a certain degree of Euroscepticism, mitigated by the fact that Europe was not a salient issue in the beginning of the 1990s. This was in stark contrast to political Catholicism in Western European democracies, which was traditionally pro-European and more universalistic than nationalistic.

In the context of Polish political Catholicism, Solidarity Electoral Action and the Social Movement for Solidarity Electoral Action (*Ruch Społeczny AWS*, RS AWS) need to be mentioned. The Solidarity Electoral Action was a coalition of centre-right and right-wing

parties established in 1996, and contained a large group of political Catholic actors. It won the parliamentary election in 1997 with 33.4% of votes, establishing a government that stayed in power from 1997 until 2001 under the leadership of Jerzy Buzek. Solidarity Electoral Action proved to be a very heterogeneous alliance of trade unionists, Catholic nationalists and conservatives, although it was largely dominated by Christian democratic views (Kowalczyk 2014). Insofar as the Solidarity Electoral Action included various political entities and its classification as fully political Catholic may be difficult, the classification of the Social Movement for Solidarity Electoral Action is less problematic. This party was set up in 1997 as the political wing of the *Solidarność* trade union to allow unionists to be active in politics. It also included a number of politicians who did not belong to any of the AWS coalition members. Its programme was in line with the Solidarity Electoral Action, but it put much stronger emphasis on the role of Christian values in society. In fact, the aim of the movement was to promote Christian values in education, economy and public life. In its manifesto, the state was described as a common good of all citizens, based on Christian values and Catholic social teaching. The party believed that the functioning of society and economy should be founded on subsidiarity, co-responsibility and social solidarity (Paszkiewicz 2004). Despite its initial success, the coalition disintegrated before the 2001 elections mainly as a result of diverging political interests of its component parties, while the Social Movement for Solidarity Electoral Action failed to re-enter parliament.

The Centre Agreement (*Porozumienie Centrum*) was a political Catholic party established in 1990 by Jarosław Kaczyński. Initially, the party was rather eclectic, combining liberal, agrarian and Christian democratic views. After a period of consolidation, its main aim was to become a modern Christian democratic party, similar to the German CDU. It was one of the more important political organisations in the early 1990s. The party declared that its activities would be based on Christian ethics and the natural law, with a strong attachment to Christian values and Catholic social teaching. It also wanted to ensure that the transformation of Polish economy would be accompanied by social protection programmes, protecting the most vulnerable members of society, particularly families. The party opted for an economic system, which would give equal chances for affluent life to all members of society (Paszkiewicz 2004). The party supported the unique role and high authority of the Catholic Church in Poland, although it was eager to maintain the state's independence from the Church. It suffered numerous splits, but also became a member of the Solidarity Electoral Action coalition. In 2001, Jarosław Kaczyński set up a new political

organisation – Law and Justice – in order to capitalise on the growing popularity of his twin brother Lech, who became minister of justice in the Solidarity Electoral Action government. As a result, most Centre Agreement members moved to the new party.

The Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland was a political Catholic party created in 1995 to capitalise on Jan Olszewski's relatively good result in the presidential elections (6.86%). Its main aim was to 'shape political life of the nation based on Catholic social teaching' (Paszkievicz 2004: 132-133), with Christian ethics regarded as the basis for the functioning of the state. The party decided to stay out of Solidarity Electoral Action coalition, mainly as a result of its relatively high popular support (16% in June 1996) (Paszkievicz 2004). However, following the formation of Solidarity Electoral Action, the party's support started dwindling and consequently, it won only 6.56% of votes in the 1997 parliamentary elections. In 2001, the party started co-operating with the League of Polish Families, but a year later the two MPs of the movement that entered the *Sejm* as candidates of the League of Polish Families left the party. In 2005, the Movement failed to win any seats in parliament and became marginalised.

Naturally, no description of Polish political Catholicism can go without mentioning one of the best-known Polish political Catholic parties – the League of Polish Families. The party was established shortly before the 2001 elections and is an excellent example of the importance of political Catholicism in Poland, and its ability to mobilise significant electoral support (8% in the 2001 and 2005 parliamentary elections respectively and 16% in the 2004 European elections) and to realise its agenda through legislation and public policies. The history of the party also introduces two more important actors in the circle of Polish political Catholicism – Radio Maryja and Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, a charismatic leader of an influential Catholic media conglomerate, which is described in section 3.3.3. The party was created under the auspices of Father Rydzyk and Radio Maryja. As noted by Daniel Pawłowicz, an ex-member of the League of Polish Families: 'Radio Maryja was an important political component of the League of Polish Families. It supported the League for many years' (Interview with D. Pawłowicz 2013). The League grouped around 20 organisations, which declared their strong attachment to Catholic, national, and patriotic values – an approach sometimes defined as Catholic-nationalism. The party leadership believed that the family deserved the particular protection of the state. They opposed abortion, euthanasia, and promoted policies aimed at financially helping large families (Paszkievicz 2004). Before the 2001 elections, the party started co-operating with other

political Catholic movements like the Polish Agreement, the Catholic-National Movement, and the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland. The party's electoral lists were supported by 7.87% of the electorate, but soon after the elections, many MPs started leaving the party, setting up separate parliamentary groups. In the 2005 elections, the party maintained its share of the votes and in May 2006 joined Law and Justice in a coalition government. Following the growing tensions inside the party, and the conflict with Father Rydzyk who transferred his support to Law and Justice, the party suffered a number of splits and eventually did not pass the 5% electoral threshold in the 2007 elections.

Other political Catholic parties of the 1990s

Similarly to other post-communist parties, the Polish party system of the 1990s was characterised by high fluidity, with many political organisation being created, divided, combined or abandoned altogether. Most of them did not manage to make a lasting mark in the politics of Poland, exerting only minimal influence on public policies. Below, I briefly outline a number of smaller and less impactful political Catholic parties that existed in Poland in the first decade after the fall of communism.

The Movement for the Republic (*Ruch dla Rzeczypospolitej*) was created in 1992 as a platform for cooperation between Christian democratic, Catholic-nationalist, agrarian, and conservative parties. It was founded by members of the Centre Agreement, who left the party over a disagreement about its co-operation with the opponents of Jan Olszewski's government (1991-1992). The party aimed at building 'a democratic Polish state, based on the strong family, social solidarity, local and professional self-governance' (Paszkiewicz 2004: 121-122). The party was rather ephemeral and underwent a number of splits and conflicts over its leadership, remaining for most of the 1990s outside of parliament.

The Conservative People's Party (*Stronnictwo Konserwatywno-Ludowe*, SKL) was a party set up in 1997 with an aim to represent a 'modern Right' in the political centre. It combined conservatives, liberals and agrarian politicians, so it is hard to classify it unequivocally as political Catholic. However, its manifesto declared the party's willingness to combine 'a thousand-year old Christian and national heritage' with a 'modern, effective and wealthy Poland.' It placed the family, religion and the state at the top of its list of values, and declared respect for Christian ethics in public life. It also wished to maintain the national, religious and cultural identity of Poles, particularly in the context of Polish EU membership. The party was a member of the Solidarity Electoral Action and in 2001 began

cooperating with Civic Platform, with the party's candidates placed on Civic Platform electoral lists. In 2002, it suffered a split and a large number of its members joined Civic Platform (Paszkievicz 2004).

The Catholic-National Movement (*Ruch Katolicko-Narodowy*) was a rather small party established in 1997 as a result of a split within the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland. It was formed by politicians centred around Antoni Macierewicz. Paszkiewicz (2004: 127) described the party as national-independent, strongly stressing its good relations with the Catholic Church. Its main aim was to introduce 'a Catholic social-economic project' that is a state rooted in the national and Christian traditions of Poland. The movement was a member of the Solidarity Electoral Action, before it formed an alliance with the League of Polish Families, and finally, started cooperating with Law and Justice in 2007.

The Polish Agreement was established in 1999 by former politicians of the Catholic National Union, who left the party (or were expelled), and a number of smaller organisations. Jan Łopuszański, an ex-member of the Catholic National Union, became the leader of the new organisation. The key element of the party's manifesto was its disapproval of Polish EU membership and the party positioned itself in opposition to the Solidarity Electoral Action, which supported Polish accession to the EU. In the 2000 manifesto 'Programme for independent Poland', it demanded that the Polish constitution should include in its preamble an invocation to God, which would give the state 'stable foundations for the system of law ... and for the ethical system of [the state's] public service' (PP 2000). In 2001, the party started cooperating with the League of Polish Families, but in 2002 two Polish Agreement MPs chosen from the League's electoral list left its parliamentary club. In the 2005 election the party did not enter the Parliament.

Apart from the already mentioned parties of the political Catholic movement, the 1990s saw an abundance of other small parties that belonged to the family. They included the Christian Democracy of the Third Republic of Poland (*Chrześcijańska Demokracja III Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*), Christian Democracy – the Labour Party (*Chrześcijańska Demokracja – Stronnictwo Pracy*), Polish Christian Democratic Forum (*Polskie Forum Chrześcijańsko-Demokratyczne*), the Christian Labour Party (*Chrześcijańska Partia Pracy*), the Agreement of Polish Christian Democrats (*Porozumienie Polskich Chrześcijańskich Demokratów*) and the Party of Christian Democrats (*Partia Chrześcijańskich Demokratów*). None of them, however, was

able to secure any significant electoral support and they quickly faded into obscurity (for more details on the development of Christian democracy in Poland see Sozańska 2011).

3.3.2 Contemporary political Catholicism in Poland

Contemporary Polish political Catholicism is a varied and very dynamic movement. It consists naturally of political parties but also includes other social movements. It is impossible to identify and describe all its component parts, but using the definition and key features of political Catholicism described in chapter 2, one can easily detect the most important political Catholic actors in contemporary Poland.

Before describing the key actors of contemporary political Catholicism, it is useful to outline the political context of the 2000s. First of all, it is important to note the progressing consolidation of the Polish political scene, which can be clearly contrasted with the first half of the 1990s. Secondly, the 2001 elections marked a significant change on the Polish political stage with the collapse of the Solidarity Electoral Action and the emergence of Law and Justice and Civic Platform, which slowly dominated much of Polish politics in the following years. The 2001 elections were won by the communist successor Democratic Left Alliance with a large majority of votes (41%), but also saw two ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parties – the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence – enter parliament. Following the significant decline of the Democratic Left Alliance, Law and Justice won the 2005 elections, forming a government coalition with the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence in May 2006. The coalition broke up within two years, and in the 2007 early elections, Civic Platform took power, forming a coalition with the Polish Peasants’ Party. Civic Platform went on to win the 2011 elections, the first time in modern Polish history that any party won two elections in a row, and continued to govern with its junior partner, the Polish Peasants’ Party.

Law and Justice – driving political Catholicism in Poland

Among the major political parties present in the *Sejm*, Law and Justice was definitely at the centre of political Catholic activity in Poland. Law and Justice was formed in 2001 by Jarosław Kaczyński, largely in order to capitalise on the popularity of his twin brother Lech, gained during his brief term as minister of justice (June 2000–July 2001 in the Solidarity Electoral Action-led government), during which he became known for his tough policy on crime and his focus on reforming the penal code by increasing penalties for criminal offences. As the name suggests, the party chose to focus on law and order issues

and built an image as an opponent of crime and corruption, which, at the time, resonated well with the electorate. The party gained 9.5% of votes in 2001, followed by 27% in 2005, 32.1% in 2007 and 29.9% in the 2011 elections.

Between 2006 and 2007, the party formed a governing coalition together with the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence of Andrzej Lepper. This was often considered a turning point in the party's ideological and programmatic approach. While in coalition, Law and Justice significantly strengthened its links with Radio Maryja and was able to replace the League of Polish Families as the political party that received the station's support. Following the end of the coalition, Law and Justice took over large parts of the League's electoral base during the 2007 electoral campaign, pushing its old coalition party out of the Polish parliament. This, however, meant that in order to maintain influence over its newly acquired voters, Law and Justice had to move closer to more radical Catholic-nationalist positions and became careful not to lose the endorsement of Father Rydzyk.

Without a doubt, the party can be classified as political Catholic. Its 2014 European elections manifesto clearly showed that it met both primary conditions of political Catholic action, i.e. strong inspiration from Catholic social teaching and activity in the public sphere to introduce principles of Catholic social teaching in national law. The 2014 Law and Justice manifesto was based in many aspects on Catholic social teaching, often using the same language and terms. The first six pages of the document listed some of the party's key values, which were closely related to the key principles of Catholic social teaching mentioned in section 2.3, e.g. the right to life, freedom, solidarity, equality, justice and community. The party declared its opposition to abortion and euthanasia, underlined that each individual could only reach its full potential by belonging to different communities (the family, local communities, society and the nation) and strongly endorsed the principles of solidarity. In the sphere of economy, Law and Justice declared its opposition to social exclusion and economic disparities. The party believed that 'social advancement and wealth creation should be in accordance with moral rules and respect for every human' (PiS 2014: 8). The 2014 manifesto also made direct references to Catholic social teaching by quoting papal encyclicals (PiS 2014: 7-9). The party furthermore stressed the role of Catholicism and the Church in the struggle against the communist regime and the fact that 'the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Polish tradition and Polish patriotism join strongly together, creating the political identity of the nation' (PiS 2014: 10). Finally, the manifesto supported the important position of the Church in Polish society and the state, declaring

that in Poland the only alternative to Catholic moral teaching was nihilism, while ‘attempts to destroy and unfairly attack the Church are dangerous for the shape of social life’ (PiS 2014: 11).

Civic Platform – not so politically Catholic

Civic Platform is another party that has to be taken into consideration when describing Polish political Catholicism. Similarly to Law and Justice, the party was established in 2001, following the disintegration of the Solidarity Electoral Action. It was formed as a liberal conservative party, initially under the leadership of three politicians – Andrzej Olechowski, Maciej Płażyński and Donald Tusk. However, it later became entirely dominated by Donald Tusk, who turned into its unquestioned leader. The party narrowly lost the 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections and remained in opposition until 2007, when it formed a coalition government with the Polish Peasants’ Party (Szczerbiak 2012).

Originally, the party had a core liberal electorate, but in an effort to broaden its appeal it embraced more conservative and Christian democratic views, which meant that the party developed a more religiously informed dimension of its ideology and programme (Bale and Szczerbiak 2008). As a result, Civic Platform became a rather broad gathering of politicians, ranging from conservatives, to Christian democrats to liberal and centrist politicians, which made it difficult to be classified as a part of Polish political Catholicism. At most, a faction within the party could be deemed part of the political Catholic movement, e.g. the so-called ‘conservative wing’ of the party centred around Jarosław Gowin and Jacek Żalek.

In its 2011 electoral manifesto, the party defined itself as the ‘New Centre’, declaring that it was in favour of a citizen’s state which ‘did not impose beliefs on citizens, did not instruct, and did not exclude anyone’ (PO 2011: 11). Although the manifesto made references to such values as co-operation, social dialogue and solidarity, in most part it was not inspired by Catholic social teaching, which further justifies its exclusion from Polish political Catholicism.

The fringes of Polish political Catholicism – Solidaristic Poland, Poland is Most Important, Poland Together and The Right-Wing of the Republic

There were also a number of smaller parties – splinter groups from Law and Justice like Solidaristic Poland of Zbigniew Ziobro, founded in 2012, and Poland is the Most Important (*Polska Jest Najważniejszą*), created in 2010 – or a group that separated from Civic Platform – Poland Together of Jarosław Gowin (*Polska Razem Jarosława Gowina*),

established in 2013. Their main political strategy was to develop an electoral base in-between Law and Justice and Civic Platform, trying to build on the sentiment of ‘PO-PiS’ (a word play using the Polish acronyms of the parties’ names that means ‘a show’ or ‘a display’), a grand coalition between the two main parties that was widely expected after the 2005 elections. The programmes of the first two parties were rather difficult to distinguish from that of Law and Justice, as their main reason for defecting from Kaczynski’s movement, apart from personal ambitions of their leaders, was to tone down the conflict around the causes of the Smolensk air crash in Russia, in which President Lech Kaczynski and many other prominent Polish politicians died while travelling to the commemorations of the Katyn massacre.² Both splinter parties remained socially conservative, with a strong attachment to Catholic values and pursuing policies based on them. In its ‘Ideological Declaration’, Solidaristic Poland stated that ‘the moral bases of the Polish national community were shaped by Catholicism’ and that in accordance with the teachings of Pope John Paul II, solidarity should always take precedence over divisions and should include all members of the community, also those most vulnerable and defenceless. The party furthermore declared its opposition to abortion and euthanasia (Solidarna Polska 2014).

When it comes to Jarosław Gowin’s party, it in fact tried to build its programme on economic liberalism, which it claimed Civic Platform lost, and social conservatism. The party stated its strong support for the family and declared that the Ten Commandments were the foundation of European civilisation (Polska Razem 2014). Following an unsuccessful attempt to secure electoral support in the 2014 European elections, Solidaristic Poland (3.98% in the 2014 European elections) and Poland Together (3.16%) created a common parliamentary group called Just Poland (*Sprawiedliwa Polska*) in 2014 and entered in an electoral coalition with Law and Justice.

The Right Wing of the Republic (*Prawica Rzeczypospolitej*) was a party created in 2007, after a split in Law and Justice following a conflict over a constitutional amendment introducing the protection of pre-natal life. Its manifesto titled ‘A strong Poland for the civilisation of life’ declared that the Christian life of Polish nation was the most important element of its well-being. The party’s main aim was to reintroduce Christian conservative politics in Poland, which it claimed was the only ideology capable of finding a solution to key problems of the country, like the demographic crisis, a ‘counterculture of death’, the

² The Katyn massacre (Polish: zbrodnia katyńska) was a mass execution of Polish citizens, including army officers, carried out by the Soviet secret police, NKVD, in April and May 1940. The number of victims is estimated at 22,000.

economic crisis, and build a real European policy (Prawica Rzeczypospolitej 2014). Following a fiasco in the 2011 parliamentary elections, when a coalition centred on the party won 0.24% of votes, the Right Wing of the Republic entered in an electoral coalition with Law and Justice in 2014.

Other political Catholic movements

Political Catholicism in Poland was, of course, much broader than the parties briefly described above. There were a number of groups and associations which drew from Catholic social teaching and attempted to influence the decision-making process in order to enshrine Christian values in the Polish legal system. One should mention here: firstly, Radio Maryja, which is described in detail below, and Fronda, a quarterly which attracted a number of Catholic activists forming a visible community, the Catholic Association ‘Civitas Christiana’, whose aim was to ‘prepare lay Catholics for the service to the Church and the nation’; or Catholic Action in Poland (*Akcja Katolicka*). There were also a number of single-issue movements, which as such did not form part of political Catholicism. They do, however, deserve to be mentioned here as they exemplify the vitality of Catholic movements in Poland. Among the many organisations, some of the most important were the Polish Federation of Movements for the Protection of Life (*Polska Federacja Ruchów Obrony Życia*), the Polish Association of the Human Life Defenders (*Polskie Stowarzyszenie obrońców Życia Człowieka*), or ‘Contra In Vitro’. These single-issue groups focused usually on the issue of abortion and in-vitro fertility treatments and had a rather limited ability to influence lawmakers not associated with political Catholicism.

3.3.3 Radio Maryja – the *éminence grise* of Polish political Catholicism?

Radio Maryja and Father Rydzyk have already been mentioned several times in this chapter, showing their important role for political Catholicism in Poland. Hence, it is necessary to analyse this phenomenon in detail.

Father Rydzyk is the head of several Catholic media outlets, of which Radio Maryja is the best-known and the biggest Catholic radio station in Poland. Other media outlets include a TV channel called *Telewizja Trwam* (TV I persist), a national daily called *Nasz Dziennik* (Our Daily) and other smaller media and publishing enterprises.

Radio Maryja's importance does not just lie in its success as a media outlet but rather in its remarkable ability to build a highly loyal, engaged and devoted group of supporters (the Radio Maryja Family – *Rodzina Radia Maryja*). The ability of this media conglomerate to influence public Catholic opinion and the political scene has become apparent not only in this research, but has also been acknowledged by other scholars (Grabowska 2008, Guerra 2010, Krzemiński 2009, Szczerbiak 2001b, 2004, Wysocka 2008).

Before presenting a detailed account of Radio Maryja and its role in Polish political Catholicism, it should be noted that, first and foremost, Radio Maryja is a Catholic broadcaster and that a large majority of its programming is devoted to religious content. Regular elements of the radio station's schedule include daily transmissions of masses, the breviary, the Angelus or recitations of prayers. The programme also contains catechesis, transmitting the news service of the Vatican Radio and playing substantial amounts of religious music. However, this section focuses on the social and political influence of the radio station; hence, it will not relate to the religious programming of the radio, though there is no intention to dismiss or limit its spiritual role. It should also be mentioned that Father Rydzyk and his radio are regarded as controversial (Eaglin 2008) and have been accused of anti-Semitism, xenophobia and extreme nationalism (De Lange and Guerra 2009).

Radio Maryja – development and organisation

Radio Maryja was created in 1991 by Father Tadeusz Rydzyk who, building on experience gathered during his stay in West Germany, decided to set up a Catholic radio station. Three years later Radio Maryja gained a countrywide broadcasting licence and by the second half of the 1990s developed into one of the most successful Catholic media outlets in Poland. Slowly, the broadcaster became a centre for a conglomerate of activities, associations and other media outlets. This included loosely formalised associations like the local bureaus of the radio station and circles of Radio Maryja friends (*Koła Przyjaciół Radia Maryja*), a grassroots movement created in many parishes focused on supporting the radio and distributing publications, or the Family of Radio Maryja (*Rodzina Radia Maryja*) with more than 135,000 members in 31 countries (data from 2007 in Burdziej 2008). There are also organisations formally and financially connected with the station, like the foundations *Servire Veritati* (National Institute of Education, *Instytut Edukacji Narodowej*) or *Lux Veritatis*, the owner of Radio Maryja's higher education institution, the College of Social and Media Culture (*Wyższa Szkoła Kultury Społecznej i Medialnej*). In 1998, Father Rydzyk

founded the national daily 'Our Daily' (*Nasze Dziennik*) and in 2003 a TV station called 'TV I persist' (*Telewizja Trwam*), which complemented his media group, ensuring a presence on all key communication channels. Together, they all formed a Radio Maryja milieu – a group of institutions and organisations closely joined together by a formal and informal network of relations with Tadeusz Rydzyk as the leader, followed by a loyal group of supporters. Although this section mostly focuses on Radio Maryja, the analysis of this phenomenon and the conclusions presented below apply also to other institutional entities of this milieu.

A highlight of Radio Maryja's activities is the yearly pilgrimage to the sanctuary in Jasna Góra, Częstochowa which can attract as many as 200,000 people, as it did in 2008 when the invited guests included the leader of Law and Justice Jarosław Kaczyński. In addition, the radio station organises annual meetings in December at its headquarters in Toruń to celebrate the anniversaries of its creation (Grabowska 2008).

In 2014, Radio Maryja was the fifth largest radio station in Poland with about 700,000 listeners (RadioTrack by MillwardBrown SMG/KRC 2014) and was closely aligned with the *Nasze Dziennik* newspaper, whose circulation is difficult to assess but has been estimated to reach around 150,000 copies (Uniwersytet Zielonogórski 2007). The role of Radio Maryja was sometimes described as that of a catalyst of 'a non-liberal civil society' (Burdziej 2008: 18), which gave a voice to those parts of Polish society that were largely under-represented in public discourse, i.e. the elderly, those with only a primary education or vocational training, those living in the countryside and regular church-goers. They form a separate social group, which shares a similar worldview and common activities, and for whom the radio acted as their perception filter, allowing certain messages to reach the audience while discarding others. This is confirmed by Ireneusz Krzemiński, a Polish sociologist, who, in 2009, published a monograph devoted to the analysis of Radio Maryja (Krzemiński 2009) and pointed out that Father Rydzyk managed to create a separate identity of Radio Maryja listeners. According to Krzemiński, Radio Maryja listeners were no ordinary audience, but rather an organised community – a group characterised by following all three media outlets of Father Rydzyk (Radio Maryja, *TV Trwam*, the daily '*Nasze Dziennik*') and a strong feeling of identification with the station and Father Rydzyk. Events like meetings of local radio support groups in parishes or pilgrimages strengthened the group identity, giving it the features of a real social movement with its own activities, values, rules and political opinions. At the same time, Krzemiński (2009) described a sect-

like approach, with Father Rydzyk becoming a revered leader and symbol of ‘appropriate’ Catholic-national values.

‘Information – formation – organisation – action’: Radio Maryja’s political and social activism

The characteristic features of Father Rydzyk’s media operations are: their interactivity, close connections with their audience, and an ability to mobilise their supporters. The radio station and the affiliated media work according to a coherent formula, described by Father Rydzyk himself in four words: ‘information – formation – organisation – action’ (Gendźwill and Stasik 2008). Radio Maryja was one of the first radio stations to allow phone calls from listeners to be broadcasted on air, which gave its audience an opportunity to share opinions and views. An interesting phenomenon here is a daily programme called ‘I can, I want to help’ (*Mogę, chcę pomóc*), where followers can call and offer to give away used items like furniture, clothes or baby prams, making the radio a place to exchange information – a role which for younger people is now fulfilled by the internet (Burdziej 2008). Consequently, the radio informed, provided patterns for self-organisation and served as a place to exchange information on how to get involved with its activities.

The ability to mobilise its supporters is at the very core of Radio Maryja’s activity. Mobilisation – be it religious, social or political – is often contrasted with the indifference of non-engaged people, as explained by Father Rydzyk: ‘The worst thing is indifference (...) Evil grows thanks to supposedly-good being asleep’ (in Gendźwill and Stasik 2008: 34). The social role of the radio was well summarised by Jarosław Gowin who said in an interview conducted in 2005, ‘Christian civil society, like any other civil society, needs to be created bottom-up. Here, the Family of Radio Maryja, like the radio station itself, is a role model when it comes to its ability for self-organisation’ (Michalski 2005).

What has always caused the greatest controversy is the radio’s political involvement, which can be seen from the very outset of its activity. In the 1990s, the radio supported right-wing parties in presidential and parliamentary elections. In 1997, around 30 politicians recommended and supported by Radio Maryja entered the Polish *Sejm* (Pokorna-Ignatowicz 2003). In 2001, the radio facilitated the creation of the League of Polish Families and provided strong support for the party in the parliamentary elections, resulting in the League winning 38 seats in the *Sejm* after only four months since its creation. The next party to receive Radio Maryja’s support was Law and Justice in 2005, with the shift of

the station's sympathies contributing to the demise of the League of Polish Families in 2007.

Radio Maryja's political activism could be compared to the American religious right, which had the ambition to represent and organise conservative Christians in the public sphere. Radio Maryja gave voice to those groups of Polish Catholics who could not find support elsewhere for their opposition to the moral-cultural changes that had been taking place in Poland since 1989. Similarly to the religious right in the US, the station had the ambition to represent its listeners in the public sphere via its channel, and sometimes in politics through selected politicians and political parties (the League of Polish Families, Law and Justice) (Grabowska 2008).

All in all, the strength of Radio Maryja's influence on Polish politics seems to result from at least three elements. Firstly, although the radio is Catholic and is owned by the religious order of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (known as Redemptorists), it has always been independent from the Polish Church hierarchy. Despite some attempts to curb its political involvement in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when a special commission of the Polish Episcopate was set up to monitor its activities, the broadcaster was able to benefit from the strong support of some of the Polish bishops and a lack of the Episcopate's unanimity regarding the assessment of its actions. In 2007, Jarosław Gowin (2007: 11) described the relationship between Radio Maryja and the Church hierarchy as follows: 'Among bishops of dioceses it may be a few people, among their deputies many more. I assume that in total one-fourth of the [Polish] Episcopate supports Father Rydzyk.' The patronage of some bishops, coupled with the radio's financial independence and ability to rely on a loyal support base, consolidated its autonomous position.

Secondly, although the direct reach of Father Rydzyk's media is fairly limited and estimated at only 2.3% for Radio Maryja (700,000 listeners) (RadioTrack by MillwardBrown SMG/KRC 2014), the potential for the political mobilisation of this group seems much larger. According to a survey conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS – *Centrum Badań Opinii Publicznej*) on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Radio Maryja (CBOS 2011), 17% of the channel's listeners declared their interests in politics to be significant, while 47% identified them to be average. This is more than the average for the rest of the Polish population (12% for significant interest in politics, 43% for average, 45% not interested). This increased interest in politics leads to a greater participation in elections, an important element for political parties which try to secure Father Rydzyk's

support. According to the same study by CBOS, 71% of the radio station's listeners said they had voted in the second round of the 2010 presidential elections in Poland (compared to 66% among the non-listeners), while 72% of those who listened to the programme said they had voted in the 2011 parliamentary elections, compared to 58% of those who did not listen to Father Rydzyk's radio station.

Mobilisation is different from shaping electoral preferences. Here, the broadcaster's influence should not be over-estimated, although its impact has been steadily growing over the years (see Table 2 below). In 2001, 42% of the channel's listeners followed Father Rydzyk's advice and supported the newly created League of Polish Families, but almost 60% voted for other parties, e.g. 14% for Self-Defence, with Law and Justice and the Freedom Union (*Unia Wolności*, UW) each receiving 8% of 'Radio Maryja votes'. In 2005, when the station supported Law and Justice, 40% of its audience followed its preference, but again 60% voted differently (for example 16% for the strongly criticised Civic Platform, 12% for the League of Polish Families, 7% for the Polish Peasants' Party or even 5% for the communist successor Democratic Left Alliance). In both the elections of 2001 and 2005, in which the radio had a clear favourite (the League of Polish Families and Law and Justice respectively) and a clear enemy (the Democratic Left Alliance and Civic Platform respectively), the majority of listeners deviated from Radio Maryja's recommendations. At the same time, the ability of the channel to shape the electoral choices of its listeners is proven by the switch of support from the League of Polish Families to Law and Justice in 2005, when 40% of its audience decided to vote for Law and Justice (compared to 8% in 2001).

Sociological data showed that listening to the broadcaster significantly increased the chances of voting for Law and Justice, while it reduced chances of supporting Civic Platform. This was confirmed by the 2007 parliamentary election results, when 62% of radio station's listeners supported Law and Justice, following the broadcaster's recommendation (Grabowska 2008). All in all, it is clear that Father Rydzyk and his media outlets did not only have the clear ability to mobilise their supporters to vote, transforming political preferences into political action, but could also convince a certain part of its listeners (in 2001 and 2004 around 40%, in 2007 60%) to vote for its preferred parties like the League of Polish Families in 2001 and Law and Justice since 2005. This phenomenon was also noted by Polish politicians like Daniel Pawłowicz, an ex-member of the League of Polish Families, who stated that '[the strength of Radio Maryja comes] from the loyalty of

its listeners. You need to remember that for the listeners of Radio Maryja and readers of ‘Our Daily’, these two media outlets are the only media [that they follow]. They are directly linked with Father [Rydzek] and he has complete control over them’ (Interview with D. Pawłowicz 2013).

Table 2: Radio Maryja listeners and their electoral behaviour

	Declared listenership of Radio Maryja	Participation in elections of Radio Maryja listeners	Electoral support from Radio Maryja’s listeners
2001	6%	70%	42% - League of Polish Families 14% - Self-Defence 10% - Electoral Action Solidarity of the Right 8% - Freedom Union 8% - Law and Justice
2005	16%	65%	40% - Law and Justice 16% - Civic Platform 12% - League of Polish Families 11% - Self-Defence 7% - Polish Peasants’ Party 5% - Democratic Left Alliance
2007	12%	67%	62% - Law and Justice 20% - Civic Platform 8% - Polish Peasants’ Party 3% - League of Polish Families 3% - Self-Defence

Source of opinion poll data: Grabowska (2008)

The third reason for Radio Maryja’s noteworthy influence on Polish politics is the significant role of political programming in Father Rydzek’s media. According to 2003 media monitoring conducted by the Polish National Council of Radio and TV (*Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji*), 19% of the total programming of Radio Maryja was devoted to ‘current affairs’ programmes (*programy publicystyczne*), with 8% being the required minimum specified in the station’s broadcasting license (KRRiT 2003). The words of Jarosław Kaczyński can serve as a very good summary of the channel’s political role: ‘You can’t win elections without Radio Maryja. Once I wanted to do it differently. *Porozumienie Centrum* [Centre Agreement] ... was an attempt to rely on the centre electorate. This failed’ (Karnowski and Zaremba 2006). The high attention Radio Maryja paid to political affairs meant that its ability to influence the political behaviour of listeners was above average. This relatively high politicisation translated into an important role played by Radio Maryja in the political mobilisation of Catholics in Poland.

Radio Maryja's role in Polish political Catholicism

The significant involvement of the radio station and associated media in Polish politics may be attributed to a specific type of 'Catholicism' that it subscribes to, which combined passion for the Catholic faith, the Church and Poland. This phenomenon was noted already in 1981 by Touraine, who conducted sociological research concerning the Solidarity movement in the 1980s and discovered a group driven by strong feelings of nationalism and affirmation of national identity, mixed with religious values and motivations (Grabowska 2008). In his analysis, Krzemiński (2009) noticed that, in the broadcaster's discourse, (Catholic) religion and faith were inextricably linked with Polish national identity, whereby care for religion was synonymous with care for Poland. Radio Maryja tried to promote a form of an 'alternative culture' that stood in opposition to (neo-)liberal values allegedly supported by most other media and political elites. Radio Maryja attempted to create and maintain 'a truly Polish culture, rooted in the best features of the national tradition' (Gendźwill and Stasik 2008). According to this approach, the social order was entirely embedded in the moral order, which meant that a necessary requirement to solve problems was to impose one value system on the whole of society. Borkowska (2008) identified this as 'tribalism' – an attempt to bring back a situation in which social life was considered constant and independent from human choices and rules.

Since the mid-2000s the influence of Radio Maryja's milieu has started to decline somewhat. Nevertheless, it is still regarded as an important actor. According to Marek Migalski of Poland is the Most Important (previously Law and Justice), 'Father Rydzyk is an important element in the right-wing electoral competition [between Solidaristic Poland and Law and Justice] ... and this may influence the election results. He is not a decisive broadcaster, but he can add or remove some thousands of votes' (Interview with M. Migalski 2012). The view of Radio Maryja as the source of a loyal, active voter base is broadly shared among commentators. Inga Czerny, the Polish Press Agency (*Polska Agencja Prasowa* – PAP) correspondent in Brussels, noticed that '[Radio Maryja] is very important, because ... it [offers] a stable electorate' (Interview with I. Czerny 2012). Tomasz Terlikowski said that 'the right needs [Radio Maryja] in order to be able to take over eventually; however, [the station] is a burden sometimes It can secure 3% to 5% of votes in elections, which can tip the scale' (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). Politicians appreciated the potential voters that Radio Maryja can ensure, but also saw Father Rydzyk's media conglomerate as a very useful communication tool. Ryszard Czarnecki MEP, a prominent Law and Justice politician, declared that 'Radio Maryja is a very important media

channel ... because, in the light of a very low turnout, their calls for participation in elections have a significant importance' (Interview with R. Czarnecki 2013). A similar view was shared by Janusz Wojciechowski MEP, who particularly appreciated Radio Maryja as a forum open to Law and Justice politicians, which was willing to make its broadcasting studios available for discussions of topics suggested by the party (Interview with J. Wojciechowski 2012). In addition, some of the Polish Catholic Church hierarchy, like the quoted Archbishop Muszyński, agreed that '[Radio Maryja] has a significant influence [on politics] It is unambiguously associated with one of the Polish parties [i.e. Law and Justice]' (Interview with H. Muszyński 2013).

While there seems to be a broad agreement on the existence of Radio Maryja's impact on the Polish political scene, the assessment of the strength of this phenomenon is a much more contentious issue. Piotr Kaczyński, a political analyst, noted that 'Radio Maryja is a group that spreads [its views] to Law and Justice and the Church. The Church without Radio Maryja would be different; there would be more internal discussions [about Europe]' (Interview with P.M. Kaczyński 2013). However, people associated with the political Catholic milieu are more prone to describing the station's influence as limited or even minimal. For example, Tomasz Terlikowski pointed out that 'naturally, [Radio Maryja] is a pressure group that ... can exert significant pressure ... but only on their "own" parties such as Law and Justice or the Polish Peasants' Party' (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). The same could be said about political Catholic parties, which were eager to assert their ideological independence from Radio Maryja. For example, when the League of Polish Families started losing Father Rydzyk's support, its leaders decided not to bow to pressure by the radio station and instead maintained their political line, despite the transfer of the channel's support to Law and Justice (Interview with D. Pawłowiec 2013). Naturally, this did not preclude minor compromises and tactical movements designed to bring parties and Radio Maryja closer³. Overall, the channel's influence was clear, but it should not be overestimated in terms of its magnitude.

³ E.g. Law and Justice's support for the efforts by 'TV I persist' to secure a digital TV bandwidth that would allow it to broadcast nationwide or the decision of the Law and Justice controlled National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management to grant Father Rydzyk's foundation Lux Veritatis financial subsidies for the exploration of geothermal waters.

3.4 How different is political Catholicism in Poland?

The distinct role of Catholicism in Polish history and culture, the amalgamation of the Catholic religion and Polish national identity and the lack of significant secularisation processes have made political Catholicism in Poland a strong movement with significant influence in the political arena. At the same time, it is one of the main hypotheses of this research that Polish political Catholicism differs significantly from its Western European counterparts, making it a deviant case.

Chapter 2 explained the definition of political Catholicism as a movement, presenting its primary features:

- a) strong inspiration drawn from Catholic social teaching;
- b) activity in the public sphere to ensure that Catholic moral values are not only protected but also enshrined in law, making them legally binding for the whole of society;

and secondary features of post-1945 political Catholicism:

- a) a multi-faceted character;
- b) independence from the Church, despite (close) co-operation;
- c) strong anchoring in local and regional politics, while maintaining the ability to develop effective transnational networks of cooperation;
- d) in Western Europe, most successful in the form of Christian democracy and supportive of European integration;
- e) not simply a group of individual Catholics who are active in politics, but rather political action with a Catholic inspiration.

Polish political Catholicism naturally meets the key criteria that make it a part of the political Catholic movement. Above all, it is deeply concerned with protecting Christian moral values in the public sphere and tries to ensure that legislation is either based on them or at least is not contradictory to them. The position of political Catholic parties in Poland on issues such as abortion, euthanasia, family rights and family policy, the introduction of civil partnerships or the Church's public image serve here as the best examples. 'My responsibility is to ensure that Poland remains on its [Christian] foundations, which, at the same time, will ensure that the Polish state continues to exist. There is no [Poland] without the cross. You may think this is bigotry, but this is history' (Interview with K. Pawłowicz 2013) – this statement by Krystyna Pawłowicz, one of the Law and Justice MPs, epitomises the strong attachment of Polish political Catholicism to Christian values and its belief that Catholicism provides the basis for the proper functioning of Polish society. Given the close relationship between Polish national identity and Catholicism, as well as the strong position

of the Church as one of the institutions upholding Polish traditions and nurturing the feeling of national identity, it is not surprising that Polish political Catholicism regards the Church and Christian values as the foundations for state and social order to a much higher degree than its contemporary Western European counterpart. As Tomasz Terlikowski, Catholic publicist and commentator of Polish politics, poignantly observed, ‘the language of Christianity [the Christian narrative] is the only one available in Poland This language was used by both secular and religious opposition during communism Everything in Poland revolves around this language and [the Christian values] system’ (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). Some of the Polish political Catholic politicians went as far as to define the protection of ‘conservative values’ as being in Poland’s best interest ‘because strengthening values like the family,[and] freedom of religion ... is a European and Polish matter. It is definitely in the Polish national interest that these values are not ousted. Poland is largely built on these values If we lose them in Europe, it will be more difficult to maintain them in Poland – one thing is closely related to the other’ (Interview with J. Wojciechowski 2012). They also perceived the protection of conservative and Christian values as a ‘fundamental dimension for [their party’s] policy’ (Interview with K. Szymański 2013). Indeed, the role of Christian values in Polish politics seems to be regarded by some commentators as a strong focus of Polish parties, particularly Polish political Catholicism. For example, when talking about the EU policy of Law and Justice, Tomasz Bielecki, a *Gazeta Wyborcza* correspondent in Brussels, noticed that Polish politicians pay particular attention to issues connected to morality, marriage, and gay rights (Interview with T. Bielecki 2012).

In terms of economic policies, parties like Law and Justice, Centre Agreement or the Christian National Union advocated the need for social justice and social protection programmes that would shield the most vulnerable in society from adverse effects of transformation to capitalist economy. They stressed that economic growth should be based on social solidarity and justice that would help to avoid social exclusion.

Similar to West European political Catholicism, the Polish version of the movement was also eager to assert its independence from the institutional Church, despite having often closely co-operated with it. The best illustration of this feature seems to be the League of Polish Families, whose creation was greatly facilitated by Radio Maryja, but which ensured its independence and opposed direct influence by Father Rydzyk on the party’s

functioning. This ultimately proved to be one of the elements that contributed to the transfer of Radio Maryja's support to Law and Justice.

Here, however, similarities between Polish political Catholicism and its West European counterparts end. The first, although not the most important, differentiating factor is a lack of strong sub-national, regional anchoring of Polish political Catholicism. Quite the contrary, political Catholic groups in Poland were fervently concerned with national unity at the state level and supported a unitary, centralised Polish state without significant devolution of power to regional authorities. What was more, it often perceived regional identities and culture as a threat to Polish national identity and saw it as a way of weakening the state. For example, Jarosław Kaczyński, leader of Law and Justice, referred to a regional Silesian party, the Silesian Autonomy Movement (*Ruch Autonomii Śląska*), which advocated autonomy for this region, as a 'secretly pro-German', suggesting that it wished to separate Silesia from Poland and incorporate it into Germany (Krzyk 2011).

Nonetheless, the most striking feature of Polish political Catholicism is the fact that since the inter-war years, it was strongly dominated by a Catholic-nationalistic trait. As a result of the entangled ideas of Catholicism and Polish national identity, most Polish citizens, including national elites, regarded the unique role of the Church and the fact that the actions of the Church and the state were closely tied together as axiomatic (Kuk 2004). This meant that political Catholicism, which combined in its ideology and programme Catholicism with nationalism, attracted much more support than Christian democracy focused on solidarity, reconciliation and co-operation.

This led to another remarkable feature of Polish political Catholicism – the non-existence or failure of Christian democracy in Poland, at least in its archetypical manifestation. Bale and Szczerbiak (2008) identified seven factors necessary for the successful development of Christian democratic parties. They concluded that only one of them – a substantial share of practicing Roman Catholics in the population – was present in Poland, with other factors being either absent or very limited. The authors attributed the fact that no self-declared Christian democratic party had been successful in Poland to a mixture of agency, contingency and structural factors. Although my research does not contradict Bale and Szczerbiak's findings, it shows that the failure of Christian democracy in Poland stems rather from the fact that its traditional characteristics (focus on transnational cooperation and reconciliation) did not resonate with Polish society, where a deep connection between

Catholicism and Polish national identity created a space for political Catholicism with a strong Catholic-nationalist trait.

The Catholic-nationalist trait is best exemplified by Radio Maryja and the type of religiosity that it promotes, whereby religion and faith are inextricably linked with Polish national identity and where care for religion is synonymous with care for Poland. Throughout the past 20 years, Radio Maryja and its supporters were active political actors, fostering the formation of political parties or contributing to their demise, as was the case with the League of Polish Families. The radio station also created a separate social group, the Family of Radio Maryja, with a distinct identity, based on shared values and a combination of concerns for religion and concerns for Poland – a form of national-religious patriotism. A good example of how Catholic-nationalism affected the electoral success of political Catholic parties in Poland is the Centre Agreement, which in the 1990s attempted to position itself closer to Christian democratic ideals and ultimately failed.

This Catholic-nationalist characteristic and Euroscepticism also means that Polish political Catholicism finds it difficult to co-operate transnationally with other political Catholic parties. The Law and Justice's history in the European Parliament exemplifies this situation best. The party initially had an observer status with the European People's Party, but as a result of the EPP's federalist stance and the disputed role of Erika Steinbach, leader of the German Federation of Expellees and a member of the German Christian Democratic Union (*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands*, CDU), Law and Justice joined the now defunct 'Union for a Europe of Nations' group and since 2009 was a member of the European Conservatives and Reformists group which comprises of Eurosceptic British Conservatives and the Czech Civic Democratic Party (*Občanská demokratická strana*, ODS).

Political Catholicism in Poland as described above emerged as a strong actor on the Polish political scene and had a significant influence on decision-making and legislation. It either spearheaded or was an essential part of governing coalitions from 1991 to 93, 1997 to 2001, and 2005 to 2007. Since then, political Catholic parties have formed the largest opposition group. However, the important role of political Catholicism has sometimes been overlooked, mainly because of its unique nature in Poland, the fact that it did not develop strong Christian democratic parties and its markedly Eurosceptic character, which stand in contrast to political Catholicism typical elsewhere in Europe.

The widespread criticism of European integration processes is the final element that needs to be mentioned when discussing Polish political Catholicism. As shown in the previous chapter, historically Catholics have not only been in favour of the integration process, but Christian democracy was a driving force behind it. This observation, however, seems not to apply to Polish political Catholicism, which is markedly Eurosceptic. The European Union and the integration process is often criticised by Polish political Catholicism, which positions itself as the defender of Christian values against the perceived threat that the laicised EU allegedly poses for Polish national identity. This issue will be analysed in detail in the following chapters.

Western European Christian democracy as an empty vessel – the perception of Polish political Catholicism

It is not only that external observers and analysts, including the author of this study, described Polish political Catholicism as different from other manifestations of this movement. Polish political Catholicism also clearly defined itself as fundamentally separate and distinct from Western European movements of this type.

Representatives of Polish political Catholicism across the spectrum saw West European political Catholicism in its best-known form of Christian democracy as an ideologically empty vessel. Krzysztof Szczerski, Law and Justice MP, explained that ‘Christian democracy is an empty slogan nowadays... [The European People’s Party (EPP)] is a pragmatic party of the centre There came a moment of verification – the call of John Paul II [to include] Christianity in the [European] constitution, and a significant part of Christian democrats in the EP rejected that in a vote. There was [also the case of a Commissioner candidate Rocco] Buttiglione, who was not defended Schuman would not find a place in today’s EPP There is nothing left from his vision’ (Interview with K. Szczerski 2013). Ryszard Legutko, MEP of the same party, agreed: ‘[Now] you don’t know what Christian democracy is. If you call the EPP a Christian democratic party, it [sounds] funny’ (Interview with R. Legutko 2013). The self-perception of Polish political Catholicism as fundamentally different from its Western European counterpart is so strong that, according to Ryszard Czarnecki MEP, ‘comparing [Law and Justice] to Western European Christian democracy could be regarded as offensive, because nowadays, they often do not differ very much from socialist parties’ (Interview with R. Czarnecki 2013). Others followed suit. Daniel Pawłowicz, ex-member of the League of Polish Families, declared that ‘the adjective “Christian” does not suit them [Western European Christian

democratic parties] – it's an empty slogan In this respect Central and Eastern European parties are different, they look differently at Christian values' (Interview with D. Pawłowiec 2013). Maciej Giertych of the same party also said that European Christian democracy is an ideologically empty shell that has departed from Christian roots (Interview with M. Giertych 2013). Even in the more toned-down statements of Konrad Szymański MEP, one can find similar sentiments: 'Today, truly Christian democratic thinking does not exist [Christian democracy] has been tainted with different ideologies that are currently fashionable We can find different inclinations there: liberal, ecologic, or social-democratic. [Today] Christian democracy is able to accept anything. Some say it's a great advantage that it can adapt to different needs. In my opinion it's a weakness. The ideological backbone of this movement has been broken' (Interview with K. Szymański 2013). A similar view was shared by a non-political protagonist. Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek noted that the 'opinions and beliefs of many people [in the EPP], who declare themselves to be Christian, seem odd. [The EPP] has become a conglomerate without deep [Christian] values [Christian democrats in Europe] no longer fight for [Christian] values, but they fight for power' (Interview with T. Pieronek 2013).

Naturally, the perceived lack of the EPP's focus on protecting Christian values is not the only argument for Polish political Catholicism to perceive itself as different. The diverging approaches to national sovereignty surfaced as another important element in how Polish political Catholicism distinguished itself from Western Europe. As Konrad Szymański MP emphasised, 'I don't know what this term [Christian democracy] means today According to its traditional definition, [Law and Justice] is not [a Christian democratic party] ... because the traditional model included a relaxed approach to national sovereignty ... while we [Law and Justice] do not want to relativise [the role of national sovereignty], even in the context of Christian universalism The party believes that Christian universalism does not entail neglecting the role of the state. On the contrary, states can support the growth of Christianity in societies that accept this. The state is not an enemy of Christian universalism' (Interview with K. Szymański 2013). Janusz Wojciechowski MEP shared this view, saying that, 'What makes us different from the EPP ... is [our stance on] the issues of national interest, sovereignty, [and] opposition to federalism' (Interview with J. Wojciechowski 2012). One of the very few concessions Polish political Catholicism was prepared to make when comparing itself to Western European Christian democracy was admitting that, in the words of Ryszard Legutko MEP, it could only be described as Christian democratic in the sense of 'classic post-war Christian democracy [of the 1950s

and 1960s]’ (Interview with R. Legutko 2013), when the movement was still strongly attached to Christian values.

The self-perception of Polish political Catholicism as something fundamentally different from its Western European counterparts is the final element that completes the picture of Polish political Catholicism. It is not only features identified clearly through external analyses that make Polish political Catholicism different; it is also its self-awareness and self-identification which underline the distinctiveness of Polish political Catholicism from West European manifestations of this movement.

3.5 Conclusions

This chapter aimed to describe the nature of Polish political Catholicism by identifying its key features and comparing them with the already established definition of the phenomenon.

The departure point of the analysis was defining the archetype of political Catholicism as a broad movement, based on Catholic teaching and moral values, whose key aim was to base the societal set-up on these values and enshrine them in a legal system. The previous chapter had already identified some essential elements of traditional political Catholicism in Western Europe, like: the dominant position of Christian democracy as the most successful manifestation of the movement, an eagerness to assert independence from the hierarchical Church, a strong anchoring in sub-national, regional and local politics, and, last but definitely not least, acceptance of the concept of supranationalism and playing a pivotal role in driving European integration.

In order to describe the nature of political Catholicism in Poland, it was necessary to explain the unique role of Catholicism in Poland and its amalgamation with a feeling of national identity. As described above, the unique role of Catholicism in Poland resulted from the particular historical circumstances of its development. Because it had been an opposition to state authorities in most recent history and had not relied on a caesaro-papist relationship, Catholicism in Poland has never been used as a justification for political and social oppression or military conquests. On the contrary, it played an important role in the defence of national and religious values, which have integrated so much that a betrayal of one of them was treated as a betrayal of both.

As explained by Tomasz Terlikowski and Krzysztof Szczerski in interviews cited earlier in this chapter, Polish Catholicism has close ties not only with the culture of the nation at the societal level, but it also provided a framework for the lives of ordinary people, whereby many of the key events in lives of individuals were marked by religious ceremonies (e.g. baptism, the first communion, marriage, funeral) and helped to ensure national identification and cultivate traditions. Catholicism provided a reference point in life, defining what is right and wrong, and most importantly offered consolation to people as well as to the nation as a whole during difficult times.

Thus, the feeling of Polishness slowly integrated with Catholicism, following the Church's role in preserving Polish national identity during the partition period and protecting those persecuted under communist rule. In particular, during the second half of the 20th century, the Church acquired great moral and social power, being at times at the centre of political activity (Majka 1980). At that time, Polish Catholicism developed its broad view of religion as encompassing not only pastoral activity but also areas outside of the religious sphere. This was clearly expressed in the 1980s, when attending a mass became a form of political rebellion and it was not unusual for atheists or religiously indifferent people to connect with the Church as a place of shelter and protection (Borowik 2002).

It is not surprising that the strong presence of Catholicism in Polish history and culture has produced an influential political Catholic movement in Poland. Parties and groups associated with the movement were important actors in the early 1990s, were part of the coalition government from 1997 to 2001, formed the government from 2005 to 2007 and since then have spearheaded the opposition in Poland. Even though Civic Platform, which has been in power since 2007, could not be qualified as political Catholic, there was a markedly strong attachment to Catholicism within some of the factions of the party as well.

The fact that political Catholicism has been an important actor in Polish politics may have been often overlooked because of one of its features – the lack of successful Christian democratic parties. This is in stark contrast to Western Europe, where Christian democracy became almost a synonym for political Catholicism, also among scholars.

The non-existence of Christian democracy in Poland is connected to a characteristic feature of Polish political Catholicism, that is its Catholic-nationalistic character, which stems from the close connection between Catholicism, Polish national identity and struggles for Polish sovereignty, in which the Church played an important role. Thus, Polish political

Catholicism is not rooted in the concepts of reconciliation and supranationalism characteristic for Western European Christian democracy. Instead, it is markedly 'Gaullist', if not nationalist at times, with a strong focus on the protection of Polish sovereignty and national interests.

A good example of this Catholic-nationalist trait is Radio Maryja with its characteristic fusion of care for the Catholic religion, the Church and Poland, all inexorably linked together. This 'specific type of Catholicism' combined nationalism and affirmation of national identity with religious values and motivations, which led to the creation of a paradigm according to which being Catholic was a crucial and necessary element of being Polish.

The distinctiveness of Polish political Catholicism can be confirmed not only by means of an external analysis. The striking self-separation of Polish political Catholicism from its Western European counterparts powerfully shows why political Catholicism in Poland is a deviant case. It is not only the intrinsic features of Polish political Catholicism, like its Catholic-nationalist trait, but also its self-identification based on the rejection of traditional West European political Catholicism (in the form of Christian democracy), which it sees as an ideologically empty vessel, that underline its distinctiveness.

Finally, the most unusual feature of Polish political Catholicism has surfaced in this chapter: its Euroscepticism. In this context, the close relations between Polish national identity and Catholicism are crucial. The Polish debate on Europe has often been based on the dichotomy between those who believed that 'the EU was the embodiment of the Enlightenment, human rights, liberalism and individualistic values' versus those who thought that 'Europe only made sense when it was Catholic, or at least Christian' (Góra and Mach 2010: 240).

The next chapters will take a closer look at the issue of Euroscepticism within Polish political Catholicism and will analyse how under certain circumstances political Catholicism can develop a Eurosceptic position.

4 Party-based Euroscepticism in Poland and the role of political Catholicism

4.1 Introduction

With the EU enlargement to ten Central and East European countries, together with Malta and Cyprus in 2004 and 2007, new cases for extended research on the impact of European integration on national party systems emerged. Eight out of ten new member states that joined the EU in 2004 were at the time undergoing deep economic, social and legal transformations from centrally commanded communist economies to free-market liberal democracies. One of the most important, if not central, actors in these processes was the EU which, through its pre-accession recommendations and requirements, provided many states with a general sense of direction. At the same time, this very role of the EU and concerns about the general trajectory of European integration gave rise to a wave of contestation and opposition.

Among the new member states, Poland seems to be a particularly interesting case. It was the biggest in the cohort that joined the EU in 2004, clearly having the potential to become a significant player on the European political scene. In addition, Poles were overwhelmingly pro-Europe throughout the 1990s, with political elites almost universally supporting Polish EU membership. Nonetheless, by the end of the 1990s opposition to Europe started growing, which allowed 'hard' Eurosceptic parties to win 18% of votes in the 2001 national elections. Although, the size of the 'hard' Eurosceptic camp significantly decreased in the following years, Euroscepticism remained an important element of Polish party politics (Szczerbiak 2008).

This chapter will discuss party-based Euroscepticism in Poland and will focus on presenting three key themes characteristic to Polish party-based Euroscepticism. Firstly, the fact that Polish political Catholicism with its Catholic-nationalist trait is the driving force of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. Secondly, this chapter will outline the fluid nature of Euroscepticism, where some Polish parties have changed their attitudes towards European integration quite decisively. Finally, it will focus on the important lesson that emerges from the Polish case not to mistake temporary changes of rhetoric resulting from short-term electoral tactics for a fundamental change of political positions on Europe.

In order to set the scene for the following analysis, the chapter will start with a brief outline of the history of Polish-EU relations in the context of domestic politics. Section three will then describe attitudes to European integration held by the key Eurosceptic parties: Law and Justice, the League of Polish Families, the Polish Peasants' Party, Self-Defence and the Union of Real Politics. Naturally, the Polish party system encompassed more Eurosceptic parties. However, for the sake of clarity, this chapter will mainly focus on those that either won the most votes in the 2001, 2005, 2007 and 2011 parliamentary elections (the first four), or represented a unique strand in Polish party-based Euroscepticism (the Union of Real Politics) and, as such, need to be included in this analysis. To provide a comprehensive picture of party-based opposition to and critics of European integration in Poland and its historical background, the chapter will also briefly discuss three Eurosceptic parties that were active in the 1990s: the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland, the Polish Agreement, and the Christian National Union. Section four will present an analysis and conceptualisation of Polish party-based Euroscepticism based on the gathered material.

4.2 Poland-EU relations in the context of domestic politics

As a result of the 1989-1991 fall of communism, Polish foreign policy was entirely reoriented from close relations with the Soviet Union toward stronger economic and military co-operation with the West. Immediately after the Polish 1989 partially democratic elections, there was no space for real debate about future objectives in terms of European integration, but once the fully democratic system was established in 1991, the European issue entered political discourse and began featuring in party programmes (Zuba 2006). In fact, EU (and NATO) membership became a top priority of Polish foreign policy, largely dominating any other objectives in foreign relations.

During the 1990s, Poland had one of the highest levels of popular support for EU membership among the post-communist candidate states, which was matched by a political consensus in favour of the EU (Szczerbiak 2004). Initially, the discussion about the Polish role in European integration was framed as a historical opportunity to 'return to Europe', whereby European integration was seen as a way to anchor Poland within the Western democratic world, to ensure economic modernisation of the country and increase political stability. Opposing views were marginal and did not have significant influence either on the public debate or on public opinion.

The first formal step on the way to Poland's EU membership was the signing of the association agreement between Poland and the EU in 1994, known as the Europe Agreement. Following the 1993 Copenhagen European Council summit, where the political-economic criteria for the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the EU were defined, the government of the Democratic Left Alliance and the Polish Peasants' Party filed an official Polish application for EU membership in 1994. The accession negotiations commenced in March 1998 under the government of Solidarity Electoral Action and the Freedom Union. Although Poland was usually in the middle of the table of states that opened negotiations with the EU in 1998 in terms of 'closed' negotiation chapters, in the beginning of the 2000s, the impression arose that Poland was lagging behind other countries. On the one hand, Poland was the biggest of the 10 candidate countries and from the beginning, it was clear that it was going to be difficult for the EU to accommodate a 38-million people state. On the other hand, the Solidarity Electoral Action government of 1997-2001, during which much of accession negotiations took place, was caught up in internal struggles, caused by the ideological and programmatic heterogeneity of the government. An important part of Solidarity Electoral Action was a political Catholic party, the Christian National Union, on which the government relied for its parliamentary majority. The Christian National Union was a Eurosceptic party, which forced the government to maintain a 'tough' negotiating stance on some particularly sensitive issues like the transition periods for the right of foreigners to buy land in Poland (Szczurbiak 2002).

During the 1990s, there was very little serious debate about the potential costs and benefits of Polish EU membership. With progressing accession negotiations, however, it became clear that adjusting the Polish economy to EU norms would be costly and that Poland would need to make concessions in the negotiations. This portrayed the European issue in a rather negative light, causing a gradual decline of public support for membership from 80% in June 1994 to 55-60% in the middle of the 1990s and the growth of opponents to 20-25% of Poles (CBOS 2014).

Although the importance of the European issue grew steadily in Polish politics with the progress of the negotiations, it was not until 1999, when the parliamentary group Our Circle (*Nasze Koło*) and later the Polish Agreement party were created, that the question of Polish EU membership became a more important aspect of party activity. The Polish Agreement believed that support for or opposition to Polish EU membership should be a

central cleavage in Polish politics, even more important than the traditional left-right dimension (Zuba 2006). But the party quickly faded into obscurity, failing to make a mark on Polish politics and public opinion.

Nonetheless, during the 2001 parliamentary elections the new Eurosceptic bloc of voters that emerged at the end of the 1990s fed into the emergence of 'hard' Eurosceptic groupings, with two parties openly hostile to Polish EU membership: the Catholic-nationalist League of Polish Families, which won 7.9%, and the agrarian-populist Self-Defence with 10.2% of votes (Szczerbiak 2004).

After the 2001 elections, the pro-EU Democratic Left Alliance and the agrarian Polish Peoples' Party formed a governing coalition. The new government was committed to adopting a more flexible negotiating stance, particularly when it came to the lower level of direct farm subsidies that would be paid to Polish farmers and the right of foreigners to purchase land. As a result, negotiations progressed faster and in April 2003, Poland and the EU signed the Accession Treaty.

To complete the accession process, Poles were to vote on Polish EU membership in a referendum, which was scheduled for June 2003. The initial referendum campaign started by the government in 2002 (officially an 'EU information campaign') met with criticism and did not provoke much of a debate on the issue. The campaign only gathered some momentum after the signing of the Accession Treaty. The Yes camp ran several parallel campaigns, out of which the most visible was the campaign organised by the then SLD-backed Polish President, Aleksander Kwaśniewski. In addition, there was an official campaign by the Polish government and separate campaigns by some Polish parties and civil society organisations. While almost all of the Polish political establishment supported the Yes camp, the No campaign was run by the League of Polish Families. The No camp made a rational decision to focus its rhetoric on the possible negative economic impact of Poland's EU membership, but in the end, it failed to make a significant impact as it often resorted to emotional and ideological issues, which, at the time, could mobilise only a fraction of the electorate. In addition, the No camp was crippled by the fact that it had significantly fewer resources at its disposal and limited access to the publicly owned media. The only mass medium that provided strong backing to the No campaign was the radical Catholic-nationalist broadcaster, Radio Maryja, which, however, came under strong pressure from the Polish Church hierarchy to tone down its Euroscepticism. Once Pope John Paul II apparently spoke out in favour of Poland's EU membership in May 2003, the

Catholic-nationalist critique of the EU became even more difficult. Consequently, the real issue for the Yes campaign was not convincing Polish citizens to vote for accession, as public support for the EU was already quite high, but to ensure a turnout of above 50% of the electorate. Poles had quite a poor record of electoral participation (less than 50% voting in the three preceding parliamentary elections and even lower turnout in national referendums), while a turnout above 50% was a legal condition for the referendum to be declared valid (Szczerbiak 2004). Finally, the EU referendum on Polish EU membership was held on 7 and 8 June 2003. With turnout at 58.85%, 77.45% of voters favoured and 22.55% opposed Polish accession to the EU.

Soon after accession, the coalition of Law and Justice, Self-Defence and the Eurosceptic League of Polish Families formed a new government after the 2005 national elections, adopting more Eurosceptic rhetoric than previous governments, with Law and Justice assuming an explicitly anti-federalist position and accentuating its support for the 'Europe of Nations' idea. One of the signs of this approach was Law and Justice's opposition to the Constitutional Treaty, coupled with demands for the introduction of references to Christian values in its preamble and the continuation of the Nice system of Council voting, thought to be more favourable to Poland. After the 2007 elections, both the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence were marginalised and did not enter the Polish *Sejm*, while Civic Platform formed a new government coalition with its junior partner, the Polish Peasants' Party. The new government withdrew from the Eurosceptic rhetoric of its predecessor and tried to move the country more to the centre of European politics by aligning itself closely with Germany and adopting a strongly pro-EU stance.

4.3 Polish Eurosceptic parties – an overview

The very first unambiguously 'hard' Eurosceptic party in Poland, the Union of Real Politics, gained 2.26% of votes in the first fully democratic parliamentary election in 1991, winning 3 seats in the Polish *Sejm*. In the following elections of 1993, the combined result of 'hard' Eurosceptic parties grew to 6%,⁴ although none of them secured any seats in the parliament following the introduction of the electoral threshold of 5%. It was not until 1998 that 'hard' Eurosceptic MPs appeared again in the Polish parliament, followed by the 2001 elections, when 'hard' Eurosceptic parties won 18%. In fact, 2001 represented for

⁴ Union of Real Politics 3.2%, Self-Defence 2.8%

some commentators (e.g. Reed 2001) a ‘Euro sceptic backlash’ in the overwhelmingly pro-EU Polish political arena (Szczerbiak 2008). ‘Hard’ Euro sceptics were now represented by two parties: the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence together won 18% of votes and 91 seats in the *Sejm*. The 2005 elections marked a highpoint of ‘hard’ party-based Euro scepticism in Poland – the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence gathered 19% of votes and won 90 seats (data based on Zuba 2006). What followed this success was a significant remodelling of the Polish political scene, which resulted in the ultimate disappearance of ‘hard’ Euro sceptics from the Polish parliament in 2007, with Law and Justice becoming the leading (‘soft’) Euro sceptic party in Polish politics.

The following section will focus on presenting the European policies of the most important Euro sceptic parties in Poland, that is: Law and Justice, the League of Polish Families, Self-Defence, the Polish Peasants’ Party and the Union of Real Politics. As a historical background, this section will briefly present three Euro sceptic parties that were active in the 1990s, namely the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland, the Polish Agreement and the Christian National Union.

Beginnings of party-based Euro scepticism in Poland – the Christian National Union, Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland and Polish Agreement

The presentation of Polish Euro sceptic parties starts with some information on three groupings that were active in the 1990s and formed part of the early stages of party-based Euro scepticism in Poland.

The Christian National Union, founded in 1989, was the first party of the political Catholic category that played an important role in the development of Polish party-based Euro scepticism. The party was Catholic-nationalist in its nature and closely followed the Catholic Church’s position on such issues as abortion, the family and the role of religion in public life. It participated successfully in the 1991 and 1993 parliamentary elections by spearheading two electoral coalitions: Catholic Electoral Action in 1991 with 8.7% of votes and the Catholic Electoral Committee ‘Fatherland’ (*Katolicki Komitet Wyborczy ‘Ojczyzna’*) in 1993, which won 6.4% of votes. In 1997, the Christian National Union joined the grand coalition of right-wing parties called Solidarity Electoral Action. After 2001, the party did not manage to enter the Polish *Sejm* and gradually ceased to function.

In general, the party’s European policy could be classified as ‘soft’ Euro sceptic, but it is also an example of the fluidity of party-based Euro scepticism in Poland. One can clearly

distinguish two periods – before 1999, when the party was more radical (e.g. voting against the ratification of the Europe Agreement between Poland and the EU in 1992), and after 1999, when the more extremist politicians left the party and it joined the coalition of Solidarity Electoral Action, where it had to adjust its policy to the more pro-EU programme of the coalition. Zuba (2006) pointed out that much of the party's Euroscepticism stemmed from its perception of the EU as a culturally alien organisation, which threatened Polish national identity based on Christian values. As a former member of the party Artur Zawisza explained, 'the Christian National Union's position [on Europe] was set out already in its 1989 programme. In short, it was: "For European integration, but against a European federation" For the party, the most important moments in the European debate were the discussions about religious, Christian, and moral aspects. The opinion that Christian inspiration should be [a part of] European integration was more dominant in the party than [were demands to] isolate [Poland] from the EU' (Interview with A. Zawisza 2013).

Following the breakup of the Christian National Union in 1999, radically anti-EU politicians centred around Jan Łopuszański formed a new party – the Polish Agreement. This organisation was the only Polish party that was close to being classified as a single-issue anti-EU party (Szczzerbiak and Taggart 2004). Its programme was based on the belief that the left/right division of the Polish political scene was obsolete in face of the progression of European integration (Zuba 2006). Indeed, opposition to Poland's membership of the EU and NATO formed the main element of the party's activity. In 2001, the party joined the newly created League of Polish Families. This co-operation ended in 2003. In the 2005 parliamentary elections, the party did not enter the legislature.

The Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland was established by Jan Olszewski in 1995 as a conservative party advocating high levels of social protection with a programme based on Christian values. It is yet another example of a political Catholic party of a Eurosceptic nature in Poland. It gained 5.5% of votes in the 1997 parliamentary elections and entered the *Sejm* with six MPs. Initially, its stance on the EU and Polish EU membership was ambiguous. The party tended to remain silent about the matter. During the 1997-2001 parliamentary term, the party was described as 'Euro-realist' and a supporter of a 'Europe of Nations'. However, gradually, the movement's policy evolved into a more radical anti-EU position. Before the 2001 elections, it joined the League of Polish Families. In subsequent years it heavily criticised the accession negotiations conducted by the

Democratic Left Alliance government, and finally stated its 'boundary conditions' of Polish EU membership in 2002. They included: declaring Polish sovereignty as inviolable, banning land acquisition by foreigners – at least until prices in the EU and Poland would equalise – and ensuring full direct subsidies for Polish farmers. In reality, these conditions meant the rejection of the European integration process by the party (Zuba 2006). In 2002, two of the Movement's MPs that entered the *Sejm* as candidates of the League of Polish Families left the party. In 2005, the Movement failed to win any seats in the parliament and became marginalised.

Law and Justice

Law and Justice is the primary example of two central themes that run through Polish party-based Euroscepticism: the importance of political Catholic Euroscepticism in Poland and the fluid nature of this phenomenon in Polish politics. The party was created by Jarosław Kaczyński in 2001 to capitalise on the popularity that his twin brother, Lech, had gained while serving as minister of justice in the AWS-led government.

The party's European policy underwent several changes. In the initial period, Law and Justice underlined the need for Poland to anchor itself in Europe, at the same time pointing out various risks that European integration may pose for the Polish economy and culture (Kaczyński 2003). In the pre-accession referendum period, the party strongly criticised the conditions of Poland's EU membership negotiated by the Democratic Left Alliance government led by Leszek Miller, going as far as to threaten to support a 'No' vote if the accession conditions were not improved during the last round of negotiations at the Copenhagen summit (Szczerbiak 2008). Ultimately, the party decided to support Poland's accession to the EU, despite a significant internal rift on the issue, with openly anti-EU opinions expressed by a large faction built around the former members of the Christian National Union.

Following the EU accession referendum, Law and Justice's leadership made a strategic-tactical decision to accentuate doubts its members had about the integration process and became more explicitly anti-federalist, defining its new EU stance as 'Euro-realist' (Szczerbiak 2012). One of the clear manifestations of the party's new approach was its strong opposition to the EU Constitution Treaty. The party declared that it could support the new treaty only if it included clear references to Christian values, maintained the Nice

system of voting in the Council of the EU, and did not contain statements about the primacy of EU law (PiS 2004).

The next step in the evolution of Law and Justice's European policy was the period from 2005 to 2007, when it formed a coalition government together with the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence. Here, it is important to note the apparent difference between the party's rhetoric and the real policy choices it made. Artur Zawisza pointed out that Law and Justice's opinion on the EU after the 2004 referendum 'began to evolve in some aspects but not in others Law and Justice significantly sharpened its rhetoric, making 90% of its public discourse Eurosceptic However, in reality, Law and Justice remained faithful to its original line: the EU "Yes"; distortions "No". A clear example of this was the party's vote in favour of the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty' (Interview with A. Zawisza 2013). After gaining power, the party declared that it would significantly 'reorient' Polish European policy, in order to 'reclaim' it from a post-1989 establishment, which it saw as overly conciliatory and faint-hearted when it came to protecting Polish national interest. However, as Szczerbiak (2012) noted, the European policy of the Law and Justice government was a continuation or even strengthening of Polish support for European integration in various areas (e.g. foreign and defence policy).

Following the fall of the Law and Justice coalition government and the loss of power in 2007, the party once again decided to strengthen its Eurosceptic rhetoric by returning to 'Euro-realism' and support for the Gaullist idea of a 'Europe of Nations'. As explained by Ryszard Legutko, Law and Justice MEP, 'the main difference [between Law and Justice and other parties] is its support for a "Europe of Nations". All the federalist models ... it's not something that we like here. For example, a motto of Prime Minister [Tusk] "More Europe in Europe" is not a motto that Law and Justice members would enthusiastically subscribe to' (Interview with R. Legutko 2013). A similar view was shared by Ryszard Czarnecki MEP, who stated, 'We believe that it would be harmful for Poland if one European state was created. We believe that, for Poland, the ideal situation is the development of the EU as a "Europe of Nations". We don't want to transfer more power to Brussels' (Interview with R. Czarnecki 2013). In its criticism of the EU, the party focused on threats to national sovereignty posed by the integration process and defence of Polish national interests. 'A belief that sovereignty is an important dimension of statehood is a key element of the Law and Justice [EU] policy', declared the party's MEP K. Szymański (Interview with K. Szymański 2013). Another characteristic feature of the party's Eurosceptic rhetoric was its

anti-German trait. Piotr M. Kaczyński, a Brussels-based analyst of Polish politics, noted that Germany was the main theme of anti-European rhetoric of Law and Justice: '[For Law and Justice] Brussels is a slightly more distant Berlin They threaten [Poles] with Germany' (Interview with P.M. Kaczyński 2013). Ryszard Czarnecki, a prominent Law and Justice MEP, said that "“More Europe” is a covert way of saying “More Germany in Europe”" (Interview with R. Czarnecki 2013). Another important Law and Justice politician Janusz Wojciechowski MEP noted that 'Federal Europe, but dominated by the German vision of Europe, is not attractive to us We don't want a European federal republic of Germany I don't know of a matter [in the EU] that was settled contrary to the wishes of the Germans ... We will need to accept that what is good for Germany is good for Europe and I'm not convinced [about that]' (Interview with J. Wojciechowski 2012).

Finally, an important element of the party's European policy was the protection of Christian values as the basis of Polish national identity and social order, which the party saw endangered by liberal values represented by the EU (Interviews with K. Szczerski 2013, J. Wojciechowski 2012, R. Czarnecki 2012, R. Legutko 2013). As noted by Anna Słojewska, a Brussels correspondent of the daily *Rzeczpospolita*, 'Law and Justice has a “less-Europe” approach. It wants a greater degree of state sovereignty. This is related to [their] perspectives on sovereignty and independence. It is also related to moral-ideological issues, i.e. [Law and Justice's] objection to the harmonisation of EU law, which could violate the Catholic spirit of Poland and the Catholic-nationalist tradition in Poland' (Interview with A. Słojewska 2012). This point is discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

League of Polish Families

The League of Polish Families was created in June 2001, only three months before the September parliamentary elections, as a coalition of smaller right-wing parties, including *inter alia* the National Party (*Stronnictwo Narodowe*), All-Polish Youth (*Młodzież Wszechpolska*) and the People's Party 'Patrimony' (*Stronnictwo Ludowe 'Ojcowizna'*). Radio Maryja, a national Catholic broadcaster, and its charismatic leader Father Tadeusz Rydzyk played an important role as a catalyst in the formation process of the party (Interviews with D. Pawłowiec 2013, M. Giertych 2013). The League was a clerical-nationalist party, merging Catholicism with nationalist rhetoric and drawing extensively from the heritage of an interwar nationalist party called National Democracy, whose leader Roman Dmowski created the foundation of the modern Polish nationalist movement. The League is the best

example of how political Catholicism in Poland, with its distinct Catholic-nationalist character, became the key element of 'hard' Euroscepticism in Poland.

In terms of its European policy, the League of Polish Families was probably the most Eurosceptic party in Poland. Criticism of the EU and the complete rejection of Polish EU membership formed a cornerstone of the party's programme (Zaluska 2001). Zuba (2006) noted that the importance of Euroscepticism for the League had not been matched by any other Polish party. Indeed, out of seven key programmatic points presented during the 2001 election campaign, three referred to the European Union and the party's opposition to it (LPR 2001). The League made a strategic decision to focus its criticism on the economic aspects of Poland's EU membership: 'Initially, the anti-EU rhetoric [of the League] focused on value issues like "Poland" and "sovereignty". In the end, it focused more on numbers ... we will lose that much, we will gain this much, so much is under threat, etc.', said former member of the party, Daniel Pawłowiec (Interview with D. Pawłowiec 2013). However, as Szczerbiak (2012: 162) noted, the party's 'anti-EU stance was not based simply on an instrumental economic cost-benefit analysis. Rather it was more ideologically and axiologically underpinned by fundamental objections to European integration as a threat to Poland's continued statehood.' Much of the League's ideological opposition to the EU was based on a perceived threat to Christian values allegedly posed by the EU. 'Poland is a country built on Christian values ... [but] it was meant to join an organisation based on different, liberal values – focused on fighting with Christianity – which carried with them moral hazards that we wanted to avoid' (Interview with D. Pawłowiec 2013). As the most radical anti-EU party, the League spearheaded the 'No' campaign before the Polish accession referendum in 2003.

Following the referendum, which approved Polish accession to the EU, the party declared it would accept the results, underlining at the same time its anti-federalist stance and support for the EU as a union of fully independent states. D. Pawłowiec of the League of Polish Families explained the situation as follows: 'Then [after the Polish EU accession in 2004] ... we decided that we would stop demanding that Poland should leave the EU, and try instead to establish contacts with Eurosceptic forces in Europe and gain influence in Polish politics allowing us to reduce the damages associated with EU membership' (Interview with D. Pawłowiec 2013). After the 2005 elections, the party joined the coalition government formed by Law and Justice as a junior partner and then rarely spoke about European policy (Zuba 2009). Indeed, Law and Justice not only demanded that the party

would not criticise the foreign (and European) policy of the government, but it also deprived the League of any influence on the EU policy of the Polish government (Szczerbiak 2012).

After the collapse of the coalition government in 2007, the League renewed its commitment for a strong position of Poland in the EU and opposed the introduction of the euro during the parliamentary election campaign. However, as a result of a conflict with Father Rydzyk, who wanted to exert more direct control over the party (Interview with M. Giertych 2013), the League was denied the support of Radio Maryja, whose listeners were encouraged to vote for Law and Justice instead. Consequently, the party lost most of its electoral base and did not re-enter the parliament, ultimately disappearing almost entirely from the political scene in Poland.

Self-Defence

Self-Defence started as a farmers' union in the early 1990s. It was set up by Andrzej Lepper as a protest movement against farmers' debt foreclosures and soon became notorious for its road blockades, for emptying freight wagons with imported cereals directly on railway tracks and spraying manure on Police forces that tried to intervene. The Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland party (*Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*) was registered in November 1999 as a sign of the growing political aspirations of the movement. Capitalising on his popularity as the 'tribune of the people' gained through years of leading protests and using anti-establishment rhetoric, Andrzej Lepper and his party emerged as the third strongest political force in the 2001 parliamentary elections (10.2% of the votes and 53 seats in the *Sejm*). The party continued its successful electoral performance by securing 11.4% of votes in the 2005 parliamentary elections (56 seats), though the biggest surprise was Andrzej Lepper's third place with 15.1% of votes in the presidential elections held the same year. In 2006, the party entered the coalition government with Law and Justice and the second junior partner, the League of Polish Families. In the 2007 elections, however, the party suffered a slump in its electoral support and did not manage to win enough votes to pass the 5% threshold. Consequently, the party disintegrated and moved to the fringes of Polish politics.

In terms of its attitudes to European integration, Self-Defence was perceived as Eurosceptic, but is also yet another illustration of the fluidity of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland, whereby the Polish parties could significantly change their

attitudes to the EU. Its criticism of the EU focused on the allegedly asymmetrical and exploitative economic relations of Poland with the EU. This was in contrast with the League of Polish Families, whose stance on Europe had a strong axiological and ideological basis. In reality, however, Self-Defence was a protest movement without any strong values, ideology or even a well-developed programme (Szczurbiak 2012). Zuba (2006) described three key features characterising Self-Defence's European policy. Firstly, a lack of stable and principled stance on Europe, which meant that its EU policy was highly inconsistent. Secondly, the fact that Self-Defence's policy on European integration was entirely shaped by its leader, Andrzej Lepper. Thirdly, the lack of an expert base and intellectual underpinning for the development of its foreign policy. A good example of this was 'The programmatic assumptions of the movement Self-Defence' published in 1999 (Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1999). The chapter devoted to European policy titled 'We are in Europe' was written by Witold S. Michałowski, an engineer specialising in pipeline construction. Undoubtedly, his professional background led him to conclude that Poland did not have to join the EU, as it was Europe that needed Poland in order to transport natural resources from the East via Polish rail and road networks (Zuba 2006).

The inconsistency of Self-Defence's EU policy was quite evident during the parliamentary term from 2001 to 2005, when it occasionally described the process of integration in positive terms (Pszczółkowska 2002), or during the accession referendum campaign, which it conducted under a very enigmatic slogan 'The Choice is Yours' (although in reality its programmatic document contained strong criticism of the EU and left little doubt as to the choice Self-Defence supporters should make). After 2006, like the League of Polish Families, the party withdrew from the European debate and did not have an influence on the government's European policy (Szczurbiak 2012).

Polish Peasants' Party

The Polish Peasants' Party was formed in 1990 as a direct successor of the communist satellite United People's Party (*Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe* – ZSL). In 1991, the party entered the *Sejm* with 8.7% of votes (48 seats) and doubled its support in 1993 to 15.4%, when it created a coalition government with the Democratic Left Alliance for the first time. Following this success, the party suffered a significant loss in voters' support and won only 27 seats (7.3% of votes) in the 1997 parliamentary elections. Since then, the party's performance in national elections oscillated between 6% and 9%, with repeated doubts of commentators over its ability to pass the 5% threshold. In 2001, the party joined the

Democratic Left Alliance as a junior partner in the second coalition government of the two parties, which lasted until 2003. It returned to government as a junior partner in 2007 by forming a coalition with Civic Platform.

The Polish Peasants' Party had an ambivalent but also changeable attitude towards European integration. Initially, it was in favour of tough negotiations with the EU and during the 2001 election campaign declared its position to be 'Euro-realist'. This was partly a consequence of the fact that its electoral constituency, farmers, was the least enthusiastic about the EU, with many surveys describing it as the only professional group whose majority opposed Poland's accession to the EU. During its time in the 2001-2003 coalition government, the party very reluctantly gave its consent to some of the government's negotiation terms concerning agriculture, and reacted very critically to the European Commission's proposal regarding the limitation of direct farm subsidies for the new member states (Szczerbiak 2012). The party supported a rather loose model of European integration and 'conditionally' agreed to Polish EU membership, following the government's fulfilment of many of the farmers' demands. After the accession referendum, the Polish Peasants' Party limited the European aspect of its rhetoric and programme, and ultimately withdrew from its critical position. Consequently, the party began to support Polish EU membership, pointing to the many opportunities and benefits enjoyed by Polish farmers thanks to the Common Agricultural Policy (Zuba 2009). The change of the party's position could be partially attributed to the fact that farmers were the group that drew significant and most direct benefits from EU membership, becoming very supportive of the integration process (Szczerbiak 2012).

Despite its withdrawal from Eurosceptic positions, the party retained some of its cautiousness – it was very reserved about the prospects of introducing the euro in Poland and it criticised the Constitutional Treaty. At the same time, it was in favour of a stronger common European foreign and defence policy, a common energy policy and further expansion of the EU (Kaczyński 2008).

Union of Real Politics

The Union of Real Politics was registered as a party in 1990 and as such was a very specific entity in the Polish party system that merits some analysis, particularly in the context of Polish party-based Euroscepticism. The party's programme – whose character it owed to its highly controversial leader, Janusz Korwin-Mikke – was based on a radical version of

conservative liberalism (Zuba 2006). It is also one of the very few examples of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland that was not political Catholic.

In terms of political performance, the party almost always existed on the fringes of Polish politics with only one brief period during which three of its candidates were elected to the Polish parliament in 1991 (the party received 2.26% of votes). In the 1993 elections, the party improved its result and obtained 3.2% of votes, but because of the introduction of the 5% threshold, no members entered the *Sejm*.

One of the most interesting features of the Union of Real Politics was the consistency of its stance on European integration and the distinctiveness of its European policy. The party retained its opposition to Polish EU membership, using a similar set of arguments from the beginning of Polish transformation in 1989 until Polish accession to the EU in 2004, which makes it quite exceptional in comparison with other Polish political actors.

The party's criticism of the EU stemmed from its support for libertarian values, understood as maximal (almost limitless) freedom of an individual and a free market based on non-intervention of the state. In its programme, the party called for the radical reduction of state intervention in the economy, the lowering of taxes and the scrapping of social protection programmes: 'Social security programmes should be carried out by private organisations, charities, Church organisations, and in particular by private individuals (who are helped by the state that leaves money in their pockets)' (UPR 2004).

Indeed, the party focused its criticism of the EU on the economic dimension of the integration process and rarely evoked threats to national sovereignty that were accentuated by other parties. It perceived the EU as a 'socialist' and 'bureaucratic' institution that tried to impose socialism on its member states: 'the Union [of Real Politics] sees a threat *inter alia* in the bureaucratised model of European integration, which tried to impose socialism through the supranational level on the nations of Europe' (Najwyższy Czas 1993). According to the party, the most grievous threats associated with the EU were related to the economy and the European economic setup. In addition, the Union identified the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as an element threatening the Polish national interest, since it could jeopardise Polish relations with the US (UPR 2003). In contrast to other Eurosceptic parties (most notably the League of Polish Families), which were concerned about liberal values of the EU endangering Polish national identity based on

Christian values and Catholicism, the Union of Real Politics did not regard this as an important argument against Poland's membership in the EU (Gierycz 2003).

The final aspect of the Union's European policy that is worth mentioning here is the alternative to the EU membership that the party was proposing. In fact, the party was offering three alternatives: the preferred one was the Polish accession to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a free-trade area consisting of the US, Canada and Mexico. The party used the example of Mexico, which joined NAFTA in 1994 and experienced economic growth, as the strongest argument for its proposal (Marczuk and Sommer 2003). Another alternative was Poland's accession to the European Economic Area (EEA). As Marczuk and Sommer, two commentators associated with the party, explained: '[this alternative] is advantageous because it allows simultaneous free trade with almost all countries of Europe, freedom of movement and settlement in the EU, and exclusion from the Common Agricultural Policy – the stupidest agricultural regime in the world' (2003: 19). The third alternative, finally, was the creation of a transatlantic free trade area, an American-European free trade zone.

At the end of the 2000s, the party underwent a series of changes in its leadership, resulting in a breakup and the withdrawal of Janusz Korwin-Mikke from the party. Korwin-Mikke went on to create a new party, which ultimately adopted the name Congress of the New Right. This new entity participated in the 2011 parliamentary elections, gathering 1% of votes, and in the 2014 European elections, in which it received 7.1% of votes, winning four seats in the European Parliament to the surprise of many observers of Polish politics. The party's European programme remained largely unchanged when compared to Korwin-Mikke's previous party. Its objective was the disbanding of the current form of the European Union by reducing it to a simple free trade zone. The party opposed any interventionism, etatism or taxation at the EU level and promised to significantly reduce the number of European regulations and norms (KNP 2014).

4.4 Describing party-based Euroscepticism in Poland

The brief overview of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland presented in the previous section allows us to identify two key themes characteristic to the Polish manifestation of this phenomenon. Firstly, the distinct relationship between party-based Euroscepticism in Poland and political Catholic parties. The strongest and most ideologically rooted current

of Polish Euroscepticism can be identified among such parties as the League of Polish Families, the Christian National Union, the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland or the Polish Agreement. Perhaps the only party that is different in this respect is the Union of Real Politics, which based its Eurosceptic approach on an ultra-liberal ideology. Secondly, the fluidity of Polish party-based Euroscepticism, whereby parties moved between ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ Eurosceptic positions or, in their rhetoric, between a pro-EU stance and ‘soft’ Euroscepticism.

In this section, I will attempt to provide a concise description of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland, drawing on key studies of this phenomenon carried out so far. The analysis will start by discussing the proportion between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ Eurosceptic parties in Poland in order to verify the strength of Polish party-based Euroscepticism. Having discussed the base issue of Polish party-based Euroscepticism, I will move on to examine the fluid nature of this phenomenon in Poland, and discuss the issue of not mistaking short-term changes in party rhetoric for fundamental adjustments of party positions. The section will conclude with a discussion of the role of political Catholic parties in driving Euroscepticism in Poland.

4.4.1 ‘Hard’ vs. ‘soft’ Euroscepticism in the Polish party system

Before describing Polish party-based Euroscepticism, a look at how this phenomenon was defined by other scholars is necessary. In two seminal works on party-based Euroscepticism Szczerbiak and Taggart (2004) and Kopecky and Mudde (2002) respectively analysed Central and Eastern European countries, among them Poland, categorising Eurosceptic parties. Szczerbiak and Taggart (2004) identified three ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parties (the Polish Agreement, Self-Defence, the Union of Real Politics) and three ‘soft’ Eurosceptic parties (the Christian National Union, the Polish Peasants’ Party, the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland). They also concluded that Poland, similar to other established states of Central and Eastern Europe, had low levels of party-based Euroscepticism and ‘hard’ party-based Euroscepticism was significantly less evident than ‘soft’ Euroscepticism. This was true at the time of writing the article (late 1990s/early 2000s). ‘Hard’ party-based Euroscepticism was limited at the end of 1990s, but it soon grew in strength gaining 18% and 19% of votes in the 2001 and 2004 parliamentary elections respectively. Following the 2005-2007 Law and Justice government, which as of 2006 included the ‘hard’ Eurosceptic League of Polish Families and Self-Defence as junior

partners, the latter two lost the 2007 elections, with a significant part of their electorate being taken over by their senior 'soft' Eurosceptic coalition partner.

Kopecky and Mudde (2002) analysed the location, type and electoral strength of party-based Euroscepticism in the then four candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. In the Polish case, the authors classified the parties as follows: (i) Euroenthusiasts: Civic Platform, the Polish Peasants' Party, the Democratic Left Alliance and Freedom Union, (ii) Eurosceptic: Solidarity Electoral Action, Law and Justice, (iii) Eurorejects: the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence. There were no Polish parties identified in the fourth category, Europragmatists. The classification of the Polish Peasants' Party by the authors as Euroenthusiast is quite surprising, given the history of its doubts regarding the integration process, which were prevalent elements of the party's attitude to Europe until Poland's EU accession. The classification of Polish Eurosceptic parties was also another example of the redundancy of the Europragmatist category – no party of this characteristic could be found in Poland in the late 1990s.

In their analysis of Euroscepticism and the emergence of political parties in Poland, Markowski and Tucker (2010) identified two Eurosceptic parties, the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence. They consciously decided not to include both Law and Justice and the Polish Peasants' Party, because they regarded the change of Law and Justice's rhetoric after 2004 to a more Eurosceptic one as 'an electoral device rather than a serious programmatic goal' (Markowski and Tucker 2010: 528). While not including the Polish Peasants' Party among Eurosceptic parties because of the changeable nature of its European policy could be understandable, the exclusion of Law and Justice seems not to be entirely justified. The party's Eurosceptic rhetoric, as will be shown by this study, was not simply a short-term strategic rhetorical choice, but rather a deeply entrenched ideological predisposition, stemming from intrinsic features of political Catholicism in Poland. Naturally, the party's character and position on Europe might not have been clear in the first years of its existence. From 2004 onwards, however, its 'soft' Euroscepticism has become more obvious.

In the context of the discussion on classifying Polish Eurosceptic parties, it is worth spending more time on the classification developed by Zuba (2006) in his monograph on Polish Euroscepticism. The author provided a detailed analysis of both popular and party-based Euroscepticism in Poland, offering a new classification of attitudes to European

integration, which was developed based on the Polish case. The author's point of departure was the analysis of the most influential typologies of Euroscepticism by Szczerbiak and Taggart (2004), Kopecky and Mudde (2002) and Flood (2002). Zuba agreed with Kopecky and Mudde's criticism of the 'hard'/'soft' typology that any classification should look at the issue from all perspectives, not only at opposition to European integration. He also concurred with other researchers who criticised Kopecky and Mudde's model for describing Eurosceptics as supporting European integration, which clashed with the deeply rooted understanding of this term. Moreover, he dismissed Flood's typology as too difficult and complex to be a useful analytical tool. Consequently, Zuba (2006: 55) proposed a three-dimensional typology of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland:

Figure 1: Typology of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland

Euroenthusiasts for integration	Eurorealists ambivalent attitude	Eurosceptics against integration
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Source: Zuba (2006)

Euroenthusiasts is a rather self-explanatory category. When it comes to Euroscepticism, the category was defined as meaning opposition to European integration, manifested as support for the withdrawal of a country from the EU or as opposition to joining the union. The author believed that the distinction between support for the idea of European integration and support for its current embodiment, the EU was of limited practical use. According to him, it resulted from the lack of an intermediate category that encapsulated ambivalent attitudes to the EU. Zuba observed that some parties may in principle be in favour of integration, but their proposals for alternative ways of integrating Europe may be entirely unrealistic. In such cases, parties should be unambiguously defined as Eurosceptic. However, if parties put forward proposals that were directed at reforming the EU in its current form and not creating a new organisation instead (e.g. returning to the idea of a 'Europe of Nations'), they should be defined as Eurorealist. In other words, Zuba's Euroscepticism was limited to the 'hard' Euroscepticism of Szczerbiak and Taggart, while 'soft' Euroscepticism was moved to the Eurorealist category.

Eurorealism, according to Zuba, was the key element within his framework. This category encompassed not only a considerable number of parties, organisations, citizens' initiatives, but also individuals, becoming much more prominent than the category of Eurosceptics. Eurorealists were those actors who in general accepted European integration, but questioned its elements or the direction of its development. The main feature of this category was ambivalence and resulting heterogeneity and changeability. In fact, the

category included 'soft' Euroscepticism and 'soft' Euroenthusiasm. Zuba noticed that this category may seem too all-encompassing and may include opposing views, but according to the author, it best reflected the reality of politics. Eurorealist organisations were, for example, parties with both pro- and anti-EU factions or a large part of members with no specified opinion. Eurorealism was also typical of parties for which European integration was a secondary issue, making European policy a highly changeable element that could be treated instrumentally, in line with the needs of short-term political strategies. As the electoral base of Eurorealist parties was divided on the issue of European integration, they could switch their attitudes on Europe from 'soft' Euroenthusiasm to 'soft' Euroscepticism, depending on internal factors (e.g. conflict between factions) or external factors (inter-party competition). In contrast, Euroenthusiast and Eurosceptic parties found this type of behaviour more difficult, as their positions were rooted in ideological-programmatic elements, and as such could not be easily changed (Zuba 2006: 56-57).

Zuba (2006) classified as Eurosceptic the League of Polish Families, the Polish Agreement, the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland, Self-Defence and the Union of Real Politics. In the Eurorealist category he placed the Polish Peasants' Party, Law and Justice, the Christian National Union, Solidarity Electoral Action and other historical and largely defunct organisations, like the Nonpartisan Bloc for Support of Reforms (*Bezpartyjny Blok Wspierania Reform*, BBWR), the Centre Agreement and the Confederation for an Independent Poland (*Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej*, KPN).

Zuba's categorisation seems to face the same problems as the classification by Kopecky and Mudde. Rather than solving the key problem of categorisation, it developed a redundant, too all-encompassing group of Eurorealism. In the words of the author, it not only covered 'soft' Euroscepticism, but also 'soft' Euroenthusiasm. Firstly, it seems wrong to combine parties who in general were in favour of integration (what Zuba called 'soft' Euroenthusiasm) with 'soft' Eurosceptic parties. Secondly, this category owes its existence to the changeable and fluid nature of Euroscepticism, whereby parties moved between different degrees of Euroscepticism, occasionally moving to pro-EU positions. This category seems to overlook the importance of ideology in shaping the underlying positions on Europe and put too much emphasis on electoral tactics, which may result in temporary shifts in party positions on Europe. Thirdly, the Eurorealist category, as the author himself confirmed, was yet another attempt at classifying parties which were simply difficult to categorise as they did not elaborate their European policies in enough detail, treating it as a

secondary issue. However, it seems unnecessary to create categories to describe something that was unclassifiable. In reality, the Eurorealist category seems superfluous to the already established ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ division of Szczerbiak and Taggart. The ‘soft’ Eurosceptic category already encompassed organisations which may in principle be in favour of European integration, but criticise one or more policy areas.

By drawing on the results of scholarly analyses outlined in this section and descriptions of Eurosceptic parties’ programmes, it is now possible to present in a concise way ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ Eurosceptic parties in Poland. In doing so, I will apply Szczerbiak and Taggart’s definitions and present ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ Eurosceptic parties by years in which Polish parliamentary elections were held between 1991 and 2011. The analysis will focus on those parties which won more than 1% of votes in elections, while also including the Polish Agreement. This party did not participate in elections and was formed as a parliamentary group by MPs of Solidarity Electoral Action in 1998, but it was the first Polish party that made the European issue a key element of its programme and the first party in the Polish parliament after 1993 with a ‘hard’ Eurosceptic stance.

Table 3: Eurosceptic parties in Poland and their electoral performance.

Hard Eurosceptics	Union of Real Politics (2.3)	Union of Real Politics (3.2)	Polish Agreement 1998-2001 ***	League of Polish Families (7.9)	League of Polish Families (8)	League of Polish Families (1.3)	
		Self-Defence (2.78)		Self-Defence (10.2)	Self-Defence (11.4)	Self-Defence (1.5)	
Year	1991	1993	1997	2001	2005	2007	2011
Soft Eurosceptics	Christian National Union (8.74*)	Christian National Union (6.37**)	Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland (5.56)	Law and Justice (9.5)	Law and Justice (27)	Law and Justice (32.1)	Law and Justice (29.9)
	Polish Peasants’ Party (8.7)	Polish Peasants’ Party (15.4)	Polish Peasants’ Party (7.3)	Polish Peasants’ Party (9)			

The table shows % of votes in national parliamentary elections. Non-parliamentary parties marked in grey.

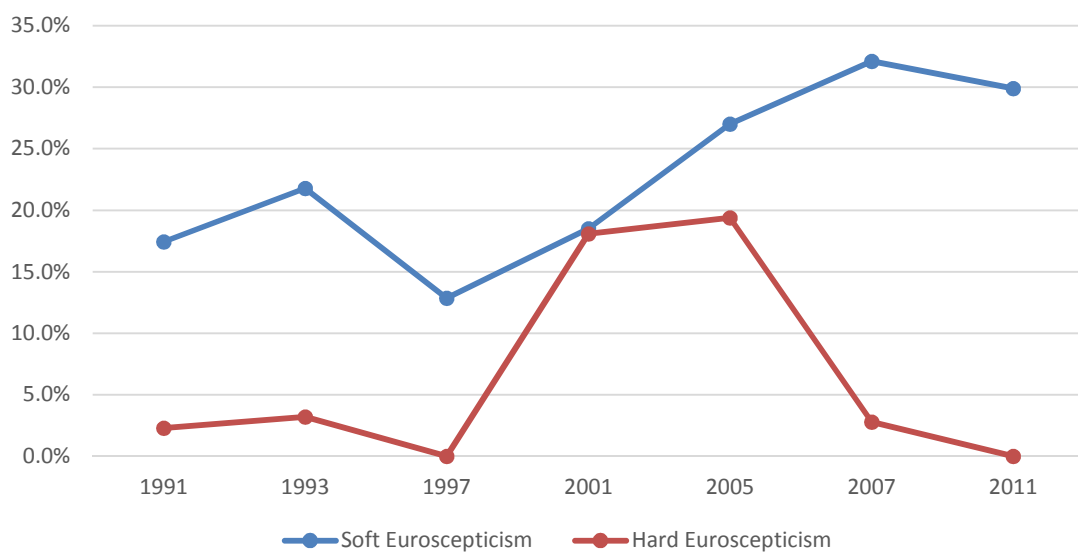
*Electoral Catholic Action (coalition formed around Christian National Union), **Catholic Electoral Committee ‘Fatherland’ (coalition formed around Christian National Union), ***Polish Agreement created in September 1998 as a parliamentary group by 7 MPs of Solidarity Electoral Action; in 2001 ran in elections together with the League of Polish Families. Source: Author’s own calculations.

The data presented in Table 3 clearly show the following trends. Firstly, the fluid nature of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland, meaning certain parties, such as the Polish Peasants’ Party, moved from a Eurosceptic position to a pro-EU stance. Secondly, a clear difference between the 1990s, when ‘hard’ Euroscepticism was largely marginalised, and the period from 2001 to 2007, when it gained a strong foothold in the Polish parliament. Thirdly, the strong role of political Catholic parties with Catholic-nationalist traits in driving party-based

Euroscepticism in Poland. In fact, two out of four ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parties – the League of Polish Families and Polish Agreement – represented Polish political Catholicism. In addition, three out of four ‘soft’ Eurosceptic parties claimed political Catholic inspiration: the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland, the Christian National Union and Law and Justice.

In this context, it is important to note the relative electoral strength of Polish party-based Euroscepticism. That is why Figure 2 presents the combined electoral performance of selected ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ Eurosceptic (see Table 3 for the list of selected parties). Naturally, a party’s share of the votes is not an entirely precise tool, mainly because of the low level of salience of the European issue in inter-party competition and the limited role European policy plays in determining voters’ behaviour (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008b). This is why I will use the electoral performance of Eurosceptic parties only as a rough indication of the importance of Euroscepticism in the Polish party system.

Figure 2: Combined electoral strength of selected Eurosceptic parties in Poland



Source: Author’s own calculations

The first observation is that the period of the strongest presence of ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parties on the Polish political scene was between 2001 and 2007. This was the consequence of significant support for Self-Defence and the League of Polish Families, which together gathered 18% of votes in 2001 and 19.4% in 2005. The highpoint for Eurosceptic parties in Poland was naturally the period between 2006 and 2007, when ‘soft’ Eurosceptic Law and Justice formed a coalition government with two ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parties – Self-Defence and the League of Polish Families. Paradoxically, the influence of both junior partners on

European policy was almost completely extinguished, and the government's European policy was shaped by Law and Justice, which used a Eurosceptic rhetoric but in reality toned down its criticism of the integration process (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2012). Following the 2007 elections, 'hard' Eurosceptic parties disappeared from the Polish parliament and eventually were completely marginalised. It should be noted, however, that the 2014 European Parliament elections in Poland saw a new Eurosceptic entrant – the Congress of New Right of Janusz Korwin-Mikke, which won 7.1% and 4 seats in the European Parliament. It remains to be seen what impact this party will have on domestic Polish politics.

In terms of 'soft' Euroscepticism, the upward trend visible from 2001 onwards was mainly the effect of the growing electoral success of Law and Justice. Even though the Polish Peasants' Party moved away from its Eurosceptic attitude between 2001 and 2005, and thus its share of votes was removed from the total value, support for 'soft' Euroscepticism continued to grow as a result of the increasing vote share of Law and Justice.

Naturally, in the case of almost all parties, apart from the League of Polish Families, Euroscepticism should not necessarily be treated as the main element driving their electoral success. In addition, the European policies of Self-Defence, Law and Justice and the Polish Peasants' Party before the Polish EU accession were not aimed at the substance of the European project, but were rather about problematising Europe: they were criticising the conduct of the accession negotiations and the conditions of Polish EU membership and not questioning the principle or trajectory of the integration project (Szczerbiak 2008b). However, it is clear from the data presented above that Eurosceptic parties have been an important feature of Polish politics, gathering roughly 20 to 30% of votes since the 1990s.

What is also characteristic of the Polish party system is the fact that it had low levels of party-based Euroscepticism and 'hard' party-based Euroscepticism was significantly less evident than 'soft' Euroscepticism. In addition, there were no single-issue anti-EU parties in all Central and Eastern European countries (although the Polish Agreement came close to this category), which marks a stark contrast to Western Europe with the presence of such parties in Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2004).

The emergence of stronger party-based Euroscepticism in Poland coincided with a radical swing of the Polish political system towards the right. Since 2005, parties of the right began

to dominate Polish politics, with Civic Platform and Law and Justice together accumulating around 70% of votes cast in the 2007 and 2011 parliamentary elections (although since 2007 Civic Platform became increasingly centrists). Szczerbiak and Taggart (2004) observed that there was a tendency for Eurosceptic parties in Central and Eastern Europe (including Poland) to be more on the right of the political spectrum than in Western Europe. Szczerbiak and Taggart noticed that there was a strong tendency for the right to be more nationalist than its Western counterparts, hence more natural affinity between Eurosceptic rhetoric and the Eastern European right. This is why, in the Polish case there was no left-wing Euroscepticism. Parties at the left end of the political spectrum – most notably the communist successor Democratic Left Alliance – were strongly and unequivocally not only pro-EU, but also in favour of a federal Europe. It goes beyond the remit of this study to analyse Polish Europhile parties, but in the case of the Democratic Left Alliance, support for the EU was seen as a way of building the new party's image and legitimising its transformation to a modern democratic party (Szczerbiak 2012).

The heyday of 'hard' Euroscepticism in Polish politics came to an abrupt end with the 2007 parliamentary elections. The League of Polish Families and Self-Defence were marginalised and in reality stopped participating in the public debate. The growing popular support for the EU following the 2004 accession reduced space for 'hard' Eurosceptics, while Law and Justice took over most of the remaining Eurosceptic electorate.

This section showed that in quantitative terms, Euroscepticism did play a significant role in Polish party politics and that it is an important phenomenon to study. At the same time, it is clear that the European issue often had limited salience and Europe was rarely a realigning issue for Polish politics. Particularly in the post-accession period, Europe had limited influence on parties. For example, Szczerbiak and Bil (2009) found that there was very little evidence of the European topic significantly influencing inter-party competition in Poland. Indeed, no party focused considerably on European issues in any election campaigns. In addition, the authors did not find a significant impact of European integration and of relations with European party-federations on Polish parties' organisation.

Finally, when it comes to the qualitative impact of Euroscepticism on policy-making, the situation is more complicated. Taggart and Szczerbiak (2012) analysed the 2006-2007 coalition government of Law and Justice with two 'hard' Eurosceptic parties – Self-Defence and the League of Polish Families. They concluded that the Eurosceptic parties'

participation in government and their impact on European policy of the government was 'medium', with a mixed track record in both dimensions. For Law and Justice and Self-Defence, they observed a significant toning down of Eurosceptic rhetoric as a result of government participation. The participation of Eurosceptic parties also had an effect on the government, as it adopted a European policy that would vigorously defend Polish national interests, declaring a major break with the line taken by the previous government. However, the authors pointed to the difference between the Eurosceptic rhetoric of the new government and actions it actually undertook, with support for large EU budgets, a stronger agricultural policy, common energy and defence policies and a strengthened Commission. In addition, Self-Defence and the League of Polish Families in reality had very little – if at all – impact on the European policy of the government, as Law and Justice ensured that both junior coalition partners were excluded from shaping European policy (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2012). What should be, however, noted is that support for large EU budgets or stronger co-operation in certain sectors was, according to the Law and Justice government, in line with the Polish national interest. Therefore these policies did not automatically mean that the party became decisively pro-integration or non-Eurosceptic.

4.4.2 The fluid nature of Polish Euroscepticism

The fluid nature of Polish party-based Euroscepticism, whereby Polish parties changed their attitudes towards European integration quite markedly, has been mentioned already several times in this chapter, so it is time to look more closely at this phenomenon. Firstly, a certain important change between the pre- and post-accession periods needs to be observed. In the 1990s, there was an overwhelming consensus not only among Polish elites but also among ordinary citizens about the need for Poland to join the EU. This period was marked by 'Return to Europe' rhetoric and the perception of the EU as a necessary step for Poland on its way to modernisation, to becoming a Western, fully democratic and capitalistic state.

The first Polish parliament that was elected in entirely democratic elections in 1991 contained only one unambiguously 'hard' Eurosceptic party – the Union of Real Politics. In the following years, other Eurosceptic parties marked their presence in Polish politics, such as the Christian National Union, the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland and the

‘hard’ Eurosceptic Polish Agreement, but their influence on the European policy of the government or public opinion was quite limited.

At the beginning of the 2000s, in the pre-accession referendum period, the situation changed markedly. Public support for the Polish EU membership dropped to the level of 53% in July 2001, while Euroscepticism reached between 20% and 30% in the early 2000s (CBOS 2014). As a result of political non-representation of a large part of the (Eurosceptic) electorate, two ‘hard’ Eurosceptic parties appeared on the Polish political scene: the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence (Markowski and Tucker 2010), gaining 18% of votes in the 2001 parliamentary elections (although in the case of Self-Defence, the impact of its Euroscepticism on voters’ behaviour was rather limited because of its focus on anti-establishment rhetoric).

The early 2000s marked the departure from the homogeneity of opinions on European integration that was characteristic of the 1990s. Euroscepticism found a permanent place among Polish parties. Indeed, unlike in Western Europe, in Central and Eastern Europe there was no disincentive for mainstream parties to express views opposing European integration – in Poland, the Eurosceptic rhetoric was used both by parties in government as well as those in opposition (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2004). Only the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance seemed to remain unequivocally Europhile (Szczerbiak 2012), while other parties resorted to some sort of Euroscepticism, starting with Law and Justice – which during the 2005-2007 period in government set a new agenda of a radical break with pre-2004 politics and focused on the protection of national interests – to the obviously Eurosceptic League of Polish Families and Self-Defence, to the pro-EU Civic Platform with its famous ‘Nice or death’ episode.⁵

In this context, it is worth discussing the Polish Peasants’ Party in more detail, as it is the only party that moved away from a (‘soft’) Eurosceptic position to a more pro-EU stance. Batory and Sitter (2004) analysed the attitudes of agrarian parties towards European integration in Western and East Central Europe. Their main conclusion was that, as a whole, agrarian parties had a propensity toward Euroscepticism as a result of the centre-periphery and urban-rural cleavages, where ‘Brussels’ was often seen as ‘distant,

⁵ In September 2008, one of Civic Platform’s most prominent politicians, Jan Rokita, made a statement in the Polish *Sejm* launching the catchphrase ‘Nice or death’ as a symbol of the party’s ambition to defend the provision of the Nice Treaty concerning the distribution of votes in the EU Council, which was deemed more favourable for Poland than the double majority-voting introduced in the Treaty of Lisbon (Szczerbiak 2012).

cosmopolitan government', removed from the rural interests, and the source of centralised bureaucracy. However, the authors identified significant variations to this, depending on the relations between the European issue's impact on more long-term factors such as parties' economic and value-/identity-based preferences (party identity and policy) on the one hand, and short-term electoral strategies, inter-party competition and the quest for office on the other hand. In the case of Poland, the Polish Peasants' Party used rhetoric which associated European integration with foreign domination and centralisation remaining, however, generally supportive of Poland's EU membership. Nonetheless, the party found its attitudes towards the European issue particularly difficult to handle. On the one hand, the growing popularity of Euroscepticism in Poland, especially among farmers, in the late 1990s and early 2000s provided a compelling reason to adopt a strong Eurosceptic position. On the other hand, the party faced significant competition for the Eurosceptic electorate from the centre-right parties (the Christian National Union, a member of Solidarity Electoral Action), as well as Self-Defence and the League of Polish Families. It also attempted to expand its electoral appeal beyond its core agrarian constituency, hence it settled for an uneasy choice: Eurosceptic rhetoric to please its traditional constituency and general support for the Polish EU membership so not to discourage potential voters in the centre. Finally, in the context of the wide-ranging elite consensus on Polish EU membership, the need to be a viable coalition partner and the growing support for the EU among farmers required toning down its Euroscepticism, which significantly impacted the Polish Peasants' Party. Consequently, by 2005 most Eurosceptic elements of its programme and Eurosceptic attitudes of its agrarian electorate were gone (Markowski and Tucker 2010).

4.4.3 'Strategy' vs. 'ideology' – political Catholicism as the driving force of Polish Euroscepticism

The fluid nature of Polish party-based Euroscepticism is evident – the parties moved between different degrees of Euroscepticism, some pro-EU parties occasionally resorted to Eurosceptic rhetoric, and in one case a party moved from a Eurosceptic position to a more pro-European one (the Polish Peasants' Party). Nonetheless, it is also important not to mistake a simple change in rhetoric, which usually results from inter-party competition, for a fundamental change in party positions on Europe.

Gaisbauer (2007) and Dakowska (2010) analysed Polish party-based Euroscepticism in the aftermath of the 2003 EU membership referendum and the parliamentary elections of

2005, when Eurosceptic parties gathered significant electoral support (19% combined share of votes for the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence). Gaisbauer tried to assess the extent and causality of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland and to establish whether it was a matter of party tactics or rather stemmed from ideological convictions. In doing so, he modified the original model developed by Kopecky and Mudde by breaking up the Eurosceptic category into Szczerbiak and Taggart's 'hard' and 'soft' Eurosceptic dichotomy. Based on party positions on the Constitutional Treaty, he classified their attitudes to Europe in 2001 as follows: Civic Platform and the Democratic Left Alliance were marked as Euroenthusiasts; the League of Polish Families as Euroreject; Law and Justice and the Polish Peasants' Party as 'soft' Eurosceptic; while Self-Defence fell into the 'hard' Eurosceptic category. Following the accession referendum and the 2005 elections, Gaisbauer identified some significant changes in party attitudes towards Europe: Civic Platform and Self-Defence became 'soft' Eurosceptic, while Law and Justice and the Polish Peasants' Party were 'hard' Eurosceptics. Based on these movements, which occurred mostly within the 'strategic' dimension of the typology (the strategic axis ranging from 'pro-EU' to 'EU-critical'), Gaisbauer concluded that Eurosceptic positions of Polish parties were largely tactical in nature and resulted from inter-party competition.

Dakowska (2010) analysed the use of the issue of European integration by Polish conservative and radical parties (mainly Law and Justice and the League of Polish Families) to modulate their relationship to other parties, contributing to the ideology vs. strategy discussion among scholars. Dakowska pointed out that the conservative Law and Justice party's position on Europe shifted significantly between the time when it was in opposition and when it was in government. She also noticed some ambiguous changes in the League of Polish Families' seemingly 'hard' Euroscepticism. The author's main argument was that if party positions on Europe were underpinned by ideological considerations anchored in deeply rooted cleavages, sudden and quick changes seemed unlikely. Consequently, according to Dakowska, the stance on European integration was used by Polish parties as an expression of strategic calculations – a tool to distinguish itself from other political parties, to differentiate mainstream from protest parties or parties which competed for a similar electorate.

As support for her hypothesis, Dakowska drew on examples of Polish parties' affiliation with European party federations, where political strategy seemed to have played an important role. For example, the Freedom Union leaders decided to leave the EPP and join

the European Liberals in 2003 mostly as a result of domestic inter-party competition. Before the 2004 European elections, Law and Justice affiliated itself with the Union for Europe of the Nations, following its domestic discourse focused on such issues as 'sovereignty', 'national interest' and 'patriotism', even though Law and Justice MEPs had had experiences with the EPP and 'claimed general convergence between their priorities and those of other Polish MEPs situated on the right wing of the EPP' (Dakowska 2010: 261). Dakowska referred also to domestic politics, describing how the European policy of Law and Justice changed when the party was in government (toning down its Euroscepticism) and later toughening its position as an attempt to attract the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence electorates in the 2007 elections and to reposition itself as an anti-establishment party. Another example used by the author was the process of ratification of the Lisbon Treaty and the rhetoric adopted by Civic Platform, with the famous 'Nice or death' slogan which resulted from competition between Law and Justice and Civic Platform, whereby both organisations were fighting to be seen as pragmatic parties, able to defend Polish national interests and tackle citizens' demands.

Dakowska (2010) and Gaisbauer (2007) found that changeability of party opinions on Europe suggested a tactical nature of Euroscepticism in Poland. However, both authors seem to treat temporary changes in party rhetoric (e.g. Law and Justice's period in government, the 'Nice or death' period of Civic Platform) as evidence of fundamental changes in party positions on European integration. What they overlooked is precisely the distinction between underlying party position on Europe and the use of the European issue in inter-party competition, both of which have different causal mechanisms and should not be confused.

So what does the issue of 'strategy' vs. 'ideology' look like in the case of Polish Eurosceptic parties? Szczerbiak (2012: 185) noted that Self-Defence was 'essentially a protest party, and its approach to European issues was always instrumental and contingent on the current political situation', with its attacks on the EU being linked to anti-establishment rhetoric. Contrary to Self-Defence, the League's Euroscepticism was much more strongly underpinned by ideological objections to the EU, which it saw as a threat to the Christian foundations of Polish national identity and key values that were necessary to guarantee the successful development of Polish society and state.

The Polish Peasants' Party, as an office-seeking party, seemed to have developed its opinion on European integration more out of strategic-tactical reasons than any other

political grouping. Its attempts to be perceived as a viable coalition partner and the strong competition it was facing for the votes of a Eurosceptic rural electorate from other, more radically anti-European parties (Self-Defence and the League of Polish Families) led to it playing up its Euroscepticism in the pre-accession period. Following the changing attitude of Polish farmers, who became the most direct beneficiaries of EU funds during the first years of Poland's EU membership, the party re-positioned itself as more pro-European.

Finally, Law and Justice's Euroscepticism is more difficult to grasp, particularly during the first years of its existence, as initially its European policy was rather uncertain. Once it emerged as 'soft' Eurosceptic, its position on Europe, particularly during the 2006-2007 coalition government, was subject to some changes. At that time, the party restrained its Euroscepticism in order to give its government room for manoeuvre at the 'Treaty of Lisbon negotiating table' (Szczerbiak 2012). Law and Justice, however, always retained a Eurosceptic line, broadly in favour of a 'Europe of Nations' and anti-federalist in nature.

What is most remarkable, however, is that a number of parties, like the League of Polish Families, the Christian National Union, the Polish Agreement or the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland, which displayed the 'hardest', most unequivocal Euroscepticism, were political Catholic in nature with a strong Catholic-nationalist trait. Together with the 'soft' Eurosceptic Law and Justice party (but with the exception of the Union of Real Politics), these parties seem to have based much of their criticism of the EU on their concerns for the protection of Christian values as a key element of Polish national identity and social order in Poland. This means that the Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism is a phenomenon much more strongly embedded than a simple short- or mid-term tactical choice. Superficially, the changes in rhetoric and accents of European policies may seem to indicate the prevalence of political strategy and calculations, but if analysed over a longer period of time, the position of Polish political Catholic actors reveal their strong ideological underpinnings and the fact that they are historically and culturally rooted. In the following chapter, which analyses the causality of political Catholic Euroscepticism in Poland, the strong role of well-embedded values in driving parties' opposition to Europe will become more evident.

The unique role of Catholic-national parties outlined above was already noticed by other scholars. For example, this phenomenon was clearly reflected in Gierycz's model (2003) of Polish party-based Euroscepticism. According to his typology, there were two main strands of Polish party-based Euroscepticism: conservative-liberal and national-Catholic. National-

Catholic Eurosceptic parties put emphasis on Polish national politics and national interest, based on the traditional morality of Poles and the fundamental role of Christianity. In fact, at the ideological level the EU was unacceptable for national-Catholic parties because of the moral-cultural sphere. Such issues as the access to abortion, gay civil partnerships or marriages, the lack of references to Christianity in the EU Constitutional Treaty were the most important elements driving the opposition of this group to the EU. As a result, national-Catholics were closer to the concept of looser and limited co-operation between states exemplified by the Council of Europe rather than the deeper integration process as present in the case of the European Union. These parties supported co-operation of fully sovereign states with independent economic and social policies. They also expressed strong opposition to any supranational European institution, rejected the current trajectory of European integration, while remaining in favour of European co-operation. This position could be summed up as wishing to return to the pre-integration *status quo*. In addition, national-Catholic parties seemed to advocate a strong presence of the state in the economy (in contrast with support for individual property and capitalism in the first strand) and were in favour of duties, subsidies and protectionism (Gierycz 2003).

Zuba (2006) also concluded his monograph on Polish Euroscepticism with the observation that the Catholic-national current of Euroscepticism is a characteristic feature of Polish party politics. This leads to further discussion of the relationship between Euroscepticism and parties which find inspiration in Catholic social teaching and are greatly concerned about the role and place of Christian values in public life, i.e. political Catholicism. The following chapters will discuss the development of the Eurosceptic approach among Polish political Catholic parties in detail and will try to describe to what extent Polish political Catholicism differs from Western European manifestations of this phenomenon.

Euroscepticism outside of political Catholicism – the case of Union of Real Politics

In order to complete the analysis of the role of political Catholicism in driving party-based Euroscepticism in Poland it is necessary to verify the impact of non-political Catholic Euroscepticism on opposition to Europe in Poland. The only example of such a party is the Union of Real Politics.

Section 4.3 described Polish Eurosceptic parties in detail, including the Union of Real Politics and its position on European integration. It is enough then to reiterate here the key aspects of the Union's European policy. Firstly, the consistency of its 'hard' Eurosceptic

stance, which the party owed to its charismatic leader Janusz Korwin-Mikke, could not be matched by any other political force of post-1989 Polish politics. The party opposed European integration, including Polish membership of the Council of Europe, from the beginning of the democratic transition in 1989. Secondly, the party focused much of its criticism of the EU on the economic aspects of integration. The Union of Real Politics was a party based on libertarian values – namely, maximised personal liberty and non-intervention of the state not only in the economy, but also in many aspects of social order – calling for a radical reduction of taxes, the scrapping of social protection programmes and the privatisation of the health care system (UPR 2004). It perceived the model of European integration as bureaucratised, ‘socialist’ and over-regulated. The 2014 programme of Korwin-Mikke’s new party, a programmatic continuation of the Union of Real Politics called the Congress of New Right, stated that the party’s objective was the disbanding of the current form of the EU by reducing it to a simple free trade zone, opposition to interventionism, etatism or taxation and over-regulation at the EU level (KNP 2014). This form of Euroscepticism, based on libertarianism and worries about the economic impact of European integration was fairly unique in Poland and stood in contrast to the concerns of political Catholic parties about the liberal values of the EU endangering Polish national identity based on Christian values and Catholicism. It should, however, be noted that the Union’s electoral performance and its ability to impact on policy making was extremely limited. The party entered the Polish parliament only once in 1991, winning 3 seats, but failed to secure enough votes in the next elections in 1993. Since then until the 2014 European elections, the party remained on the fringes of Polish politics with minimal support. The situation changed in 2014, when the Congress of New Right won 7.15% of votes and 4 seats in the European Parliament.

4.5 Conclusions

This chapter aimed to describe Polish party-based Euroscepticism as an empirical phenomenon. On the basis of the analysed material, it identified three important features characteristic of Euroscepticism in Poland. Firstly, the fluid nature of Euroscepticism, where some Polish parties changed their attitudes to European integration quite decisively, while others resorted to Eurosceptic rhetoric on numerous occasions. In fact, the only party that stayed unequivocally pro-European was the post-communist Democratic Left

Alliance, while others voiced Eurosceptic arguments, including parties that were in government, which usually acts as an element that tones down anti-EU rhetoric.

Secondly, Polish political Catholicism was not only markedly Eurosceptic but, more importantly, dominated party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. What is more, parties associated with Polish political Catholicism formed the strongest and ideologically rooted current of Polish Euroscepticism. Organisations such as the League of Polish Families, the Christian National Union, the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland or the Polish Agreement displayed a range of Eurosceptic views and opinions. Perhaps the only exception here were the parties of Janusz Korwin-Mikke like the Union of Real Politics or the Congress of New Right, which based their Eurosceptic approach on an ultra-liberal ideology.

Thirdly, the chapter showed that although Polish party-based Euroscepticism was changeable, extra care should be taken not to mistake temporary modifications of rhetoric resulting from short-term electoral tactics for a fundamental change of the party's position on Europe. This study is another argument in favour of the distinction described by Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008b) between long-term party positions on Europe, which are shaped by the underlying ideology and cannot be easily adjusted, and short- or medium-term changes in how Euroscepticism is used in intra-party competition and government-opposition dynamics.

This chapter also showed the importance of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. In quantitative terms, its influence on politics was clear, with 'hard' Eurosceptics winning as much as 18% and 19% of votes in the 2001 and 2005 parliamentary elections respectively. When it comes to its policy influence, the situation is more complicated. Studies cited above proved that the influence of 'hard' Eurosceptic parties on the government's European policy was rather limited. The League of Polish Families and Self-Defence, for example, were kept away from foreign policy issues by Law and Justice. Nonetheless, the 'soft' Euroscepticism of Jarosław Kaczyński's party clearly impacted government policy, at least affecting how its position on Europe was portrayed in contrast to the previous governments, which it described as failing to secure Polish national interests in the EU.

What is, however, distinctive and most interesting about the Polish case of Euroscepticism is not necessarily its role in party politics, but the relationship between religion, namely Catholicism, and opposition to Europe, which was clearly shown in this chapter. The next

chapter will closely analyse how this interlinked relationship contributed to the fact that a typically pro-European movement of political Catholicism became in the Polish case Eurosceptic.

5 Political Catholicism and Euroscepticism – the deviant case of Poland?

5.1 Introduction

Typically, West European political Catholicism has been markedly pro-integrationist. Indeed, Christian democracy, the most prominent embodiment of political Catholicism in Western Europe, has been a driving force behind European integration, fostering such basic foundations of the process like the idea of reconciliation, transnational cooperation, supranationalism and subsidiarity, together with the notion that economic integration is instrumental in solving political issues.

However, political Catholicism in Poland differs significantly from its West European counterpart when it comes to attitudes towards European integration. A comparative analysis of different Christian democratic parties and Catholic and Protestant churches across the EU (Minkenberg 2009) showed that the core of them were overwhelmingly supportive of integration. There were only two exceptions to this rule: firstly, ‘fundamentalist, fringe’ parties in the Netherlands (Protestant parties) and Poland (the League of Polish Families), and secondly, the Polish Catholic Church, which was decidedly sceptical about Poland’s accession to the EU. In other words, the nature of Polish political Catholicism – with its distinctive, sceptical attitude to European integration – put it at odds with the political Catholic movement in Western Europe.

This chapter aims to look at this phenomenon in more detail and answer the key question: under which circumstances can political Catholicism adopt a Eurosceptic position; to what extent is the Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism driven by intrinsic features of the movement, strategic/tactical consideration or perhaps other (ideological) influences? In doing so, this chapter analyses mainly primary data in the form of semi-structured interviews conducted with 18 representatives of the most important Polish political Catholic parties, as well as experts, commentators of Polish politics and journalists (see the full list of interviewees in the bibliography).

This chapter will argue that the Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism stems from two primary factors: firstly, the aspiration to protect Polish sovereignty; and, secondly, the

perceived cultural struggle between the 'liberal West' and the 'Catholic Poland'. Both elements are strongly linked and derive from the close connection between Catholicism and Polish national identity, leading to the formation of a distinct Catholic-nationalist trait of political Catholicism in Poland. As a result, political Catholicism in Poland sees Christian values as the framework of the social order in Poland and is concerned about the potential impact of European integration, because Western European societies are based on culturally different secular values that can potentially contribute to unwanted social and religious changes in Poland. As such, the chapter will argue that the Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism is not a simple matter of short- or mid-term electoral tactics; rather that is, in fact, deeply entrenched in the ideological predispositions of Polish political Catholicism.

Much of this chapter's discussion is devoted to Law and Justice because it is the most important political party of the political Catholic movement in Poland, dominating the right of the political spectrum for the past 10 years. Nonetheless, this chapter also includes some empirical evidence from other political Catholic parties (such as the League of Polish Families, Poland is the Most Important, and the now defunct Christian National Union), non-party political Catholic actors and the Catholic Church hierarchy.

5.2 The issue of national sovereignty

Chapter 3 described how, as a result of a turbulent history marked by periods of bitter struggle for independence from foreign rule, Catholicism and Polish national identity became combined in a strongly inter-woven relationship. This 'Catholic nationalism' meant that political Catholicism started displaying strong concerns for protecting the sovereignty of the Polish state. It is quite a distinct feature compared with post-1945 West European manifestations of this movement, which felt at ease with the concept of supranationalism and the pooling of sovereignty, leading to the process of European integration. This strong aspiration of Polish political Catholicism to protect national sovereignty is a crucial element of its Eurosceptic position.

Sovereignty and European integration

Sovereignty is a key principle that established nation states and became a foundation of the international system. De Benoist (1999: 99) defined it as 'supreme public power, which has

the right and, in theory, the capacity to impose its authority in the last instance.’ The original concept was developed in the 16th and 17th century by Jean Bodin, Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who were concerned with maintaining domestic order and focused on establishing the legitimacy of a single hierarchy of domestic power – in this sense, sovereignty denoted ‘supreme power’. However, political practice redefined the original meaning of the concept. The Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, which ended the Thirty Years War in Europe, was a milestone in the history of sovereign states since it established national self-determination as a principle for the formation of a state, recognised monarchs’ freedom from external interferences and introduced formal equality between rulers of different countries. Thus, sovereignty began to mean a state’s formal independence from foreign powers and exclusive jurisdiction and supremacy over its territory and inhabitants. As a result, the principles of non-intervention in domestic affairs and formal equality between states developed in modern international law (Miyoshi 2009).

Currently, the notion of national or state sovereignty consists of four key aspects: territory, population, authority and recognition (Biersteker and Weber 1996). This is a reflection of the Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States signed on 26th December 1933, whose article 1 provides that ‘the State as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: (a) a permanent population, (b) a defined territory, (c) government, and (d) the capacity to enter into relations with other States.’ At the same time, the second half of the 20th century witnessed strong trends aimed at restraining national sovereignty, which could be observed in three main fields. Firstly, the development of international organisations, whereby states accepted that a supranational organisation may take decisions they no longer have a decisive influence on. Secondly, the establishment of international judicial institutions, where states accept the institutions’ jurisdiction over their inhabitants, particular in human rights issues. Thirdly, the area of conflict and foreign intervention, where states seemed to accept infringements on territorial sovereignty in order to protect individuals from serious human rights violations (Miyoshi 2009).

In the context of this research, the integration processes in Europe are, of course, the most relevant. The progressing economic integration based on the agreement of EU member states to pool their sovereignty is a clear example of a situation in which nation states lose control over significant aspects of their functioning. Monetary policy, which expanded immediately after the Second World War, providing states with new tools to exert their

autonomous authority (Keynesian economics⁶), changed completely after the establishment of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the introduction of the euro, depriving some EU states of autonomous control over their currencies and budget deficits (Krasner 2001). Tight economic interdependence created by the European integration process led to a ‘spillover’ effect, expanding integration into the non-economic areas. It is exactly this process that caused sceptical attitudes to the EU expressed by adherents of Polish political Catholicism, who are deeply worried about further encroachments by the EU on the autonomy of the Polish state. Such a sovereignty-based Euroscepticism is defined not by utilitarian concerns about a lack of economic benefits, but rather by a reluctance to increase the competencies of the EU and weaken national sovereignty (Sorensen 2006).

Polish political Catholicism and sovereignty-based Euroscepticism

Polish-EU relations were viewed primarily by proponents of Polish political Catholicism through the paradigm of maintaining Polish sovereignty and securing Polish national interests. In March 2014, while presenting candidates for the 2014 European elections, Jarosław Kaczyński, leader of Law and Justice, said: ‘We want to be in the EU and we want the EU to endure. However, under no circumstances does this statement contradict another one, the most basic one for our identity and our direction of action – that it is worth being Polish and it is worth for Poland to endure The EU cannot become a superstate, because it would be a civilisational and cultural disaster. [To create a superstate] could be an aim only of ideological madmen or cynical players who would like to manipulate people without identity, separated from their culture’ (Kaczyński 2014). This statement exemplified the attitudes of Law and Justice to the EU, which was based on the need to protect sovereignty and identity, coupled with opposition to further transfers of national decision-making powers to the EU. For example, Ryszard Czarnecki, Law and Justice MEP, defined the EU policy of his party as being critical of the fact ‘that more and more decisions are taken outside of Poland ... [and] that the EU is departing from the [founding] principle of economic cooperation ... [, which did not include] the process of a gradual takeover of [national] competences’ (Interview with R. Czarnecki 2013).

Concerns about protecting Polish sovereignty meant that there was no enthusiasm in Polish political Catholicism for widening and deepening the integration process in most areas. This approach was often defined, in the words of Ryszard Legutko, Law and Justice

⁶ Keynesian economics relate to the ideas of John Maynard Keynes, who believed that, in a recession, the economy can be made to grow and unemployment reduced by increasing government spending and making reductions in interest rates.

MEP, as ‘support for a Europe of Nations’, and was based on the belief that ‘the idea of a nation state has not diminished It's an idea that functions very well’ (Interview with R. Legutko 2013). Some of Law and Justice’s politicians went even further and declared that Polish EU membership was unconstitutional as it deprived the Polish nation of its rights as a sovereign state. For example, Krystyna Pawłowicz, Law and Justice MP, stated: ‘Polish accession to the EU was a breach of the Polish constitution, because article 4 [of the constitution] specifies that the Polish nation is sovereign ... while the essence of successive [European] treaties was the transfer of sovereignty to the EU This means that the EU institutions become sovereign [at the expense of the nation]’ (Interview with K. Pawłowicz 2013). In an interview for one of the Polish internet news portals Pawłowicz added: ‘What’s most important is that after the EU’s collapse, Poland would regain its sovereignty’ (Nizinkiewicz 2012).

The defence of Polish national interests in the EU is another sign of the major importance assigned by proponents of Polish political Catholicism to the protection of national sovereignty. As Janusz Wojciechowski MEP explained, ‘Law and Justice is and was for Polish EU membership, but an equal membership. [The party] objects to any discrimination against Poland, emphasising [the need to protect] national interests’ (Interview with J. Wojciechowski 2012). Point 5 of the Prague Declaration of the European Conservatives and Reformists, a political group in the European Parliament of which Law and Justice is also a member, identified support for the sovereign integrity of the nation state, opposition to EU federalism and a renewed respect for true subsidiarity as key elements of its political programme (ECR 2014). Law and Justice often perceived European politics as a ‘zero-sum game’, where the fight for national interests was the most important determinant of all activities. This was exemplified by Krzysztof Szczerski MP, one of the Law and Justice politicians responsible for shaping its foreign policy, who described the nature of politics at the European level as ‘rivalry, competition, hierarchy, [and] building dependencies [between nations] EU membership needs to serve the development of Poland; everything should start from a question: where does Polish national interest lie?’ (Interview with K. Szczerski 2013).

In the context of relations between states at the EU level, it is important to point out the very traditional understanding of sovereignty held by Law and Justice. As mentioned above, one of the foundations of international law was the principle of equal treatment of states, regardless of their size or economic power. Law and Justice’s attachment to this

principle in the context of the EU is very characteristic and of a high priority for the biggest Polish political Catholic party. For example, in a press interview, Janusz Wojciechowski MEP noted that ‘we are not treated equally in the European Union There is a lot to do, we need to ensure equal and proper treatment’ (Wojciechowski 2014). This approach was confirmed by the already mentioned Prague Declaration of European Conservatives and Reformists, which Law and Justice supported, in which ‘respect and equitable treatment for all EU countries, new and old, large and small’ (ECR 2014) was enshrined as one of the key principles. This rather traditionalist view of the idea of sovereignty put Polish political Catholicism in close proximity to some of Europe’s nationalist parties rather than other West European political Catholic (mostly Christian democratic) groupings.

The aspiration to defend sovereignty and the perception of EU politics as a competition between states was also related to a preference for intergovernmentalism. Law and Justice frequently stressed that the source of EU legitimacy were the decisions of member states, which conferred upon this organisation certain objectives to be fulfilled. As a result, the party often casted doubts on the role of the European Parliament in the EU institutional setup and favoured a more important role of the Council of the EU, representing the governments of member states. This was confirmed by Konrad Szymański MEP, a Law and Justice politician who explained that ‘sovereignty is an important dimension of statehood and a key element of Law and Justice policy [National sovereignty] is also a matter of democratic legitimacy. I don't agree that you can replace democratic legitimacy at the nation-state level with any supranational democratic legitimacy, because there is no European demos’ (Interview with K. Szymański 2013). In an interview for the Polish daily *Rzeczpospolita* Szymański added: ‘I believe that [to ensure] democratic control [in the EU], the Council of the EU, i.e. the governments of member states, suffices. They have a democratic mandate and are controlled by national parliaments’ (Słojewska 2014). Janusz Wojciechowski, Law and Justice MEP, stated: ‘Essentially, the EU is a game of national interests, and you need to emphasise them [Our focus is on a] strong defence of Polish national interests ..., opposition to federalist tendencies in the EU, [and] maintaining the sovereignty of member states’ (Interview with J. Wojciechowski 2012).

One good example of the role the issue of national sovereignty played in the EU policy of Law and Justice was the case of negotiations on, and the introduction of, the so-called Fiscal Compact (formally the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the

Economic and Monetary Union). This international treaty was signed as a response to the failure of the Stability and Growth Pact to ensure manageable levels of sovereign debts in the EU. As a result of the global financial crisis, the eurozone countries decided it was necessary to strengthen fiscal coordination and introduced new measures to counteract excessive state borrowings (above 3% of GDP). Initially, the new provisions were to become a part of the *acquis communautaire*. After the British veto, however, an international agreement was developed, compulsory for the eurozone members and open to other EU states. Finally, the treaty was signed by 25 out of the then 27 member states (all except for the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic), including Poland, whose government saw it as a way to improve its financial standing in the international markets and to ensure that it was not excluded from vital economic discussions and decision-making that could eventually lead to the creation of a two-speed Europe.

Law and Justice fervently opposed the treaty on the grounds that it limited Polish sovereignty, while not offering any significant benefits in return. Jarosław Kaczyński declared, '[w]e are dealing with a far-reaching attempt ... to limit our sovereignty and hence to limit our democracy. Our status as citizens, after the adoption of such regulations, will be much weaker than it currently is. The impact of our voice as voters will be limited – it will be adjusted by an external factor' (Kaczyński 2011). Tomasz Poręba, Law and Justice MEP, further developed this opinion: 'The Fiscal Compact is a serious blow to our sovereignty in the area of social and economic decisions This document may adversely impact the economic growth of Poland and lead to the loss of sovereignty in the decision-making process concerning key areas of the economy' (Poręba 2013). Once the agreement was ratified by the Polish *Sejm* and the President, Law and Justice filed a complaint to the Constitutional Tribunal, stating that 'the Fiscal Compact limits in an arbitrary way the ability of the state to decide about its budget, taxation, finance It changes the relationship between the Polish political system, the constitution, national law and external law' (Szczerński 2013).

The predominant concern for the defence of sovereignty and the protection of national interests as a source of Eurosceptic views was also evident in the case of the party that made references to Christian values a key feature of its identity, that is: the League of Polish Families. Daniel Pawłowiec, at the time one of the most prominent members of the League and former secretary of state in the Office of the Committee for European Integration (from 2006 to 2007), declared that sovereignty was the most important value

for the party: ‘We believed that the EU model was harmful for Poland We believed that losing sovereignty would not bring Poland anything in exchange, no benefits’ (Interview with D. Pawłowicz 2013). This was further reinforced by Maciej Giertych, a League’s MEP during 2004-2009 and its 2005 presidential candidate, who, when questioned about the main reasons for the Eurosceptic programme of his party, answered that it ‘was the traditional independence of Poland. We didn’t leave the Warsaw Pact and [gain political independence from] Russia only to become subordinate to the EU We as a nation, as a state, can stand on our own two feet and not listen to external directives’ (Interview with M. Giertych 2013).

The concern to preserve national sovereignty was also a feature of the position of the party that, contrary to the League of Polish Families, did not reject Poland’s EU membership outright, but favoured a more nuanced approach – the now defunct Christian National Union. The Christian National Union was a significant political player throughout the 1990s, forming government coalitions and fairly successful electoral coalitions (e.g. Catholic Electoral Action, which gathered 8.7% of votes in the 1991 parliamentary elections). Artur Zawisza, a former Secretary General of the party, defined its approach to the EU as being ‘In favour of European integration, but against a European federation’ (Interview with A. Zawisza 2013). Later a leading figure in the extreme right-wing National Movement (*Ruch Narodowy*, RN), Zawisza also stressed his new party’s concerns about the relationship between Polish sovereignty and the process of European integration and called for a new European treaty to be signed – a ‘sovereignty treaty’, providing for the return of prerogatives to national capitals.

National sovereignty was an important element for political Catholicism in Poland. It was a striking feature, as typically parties of this genre in post-1945 Europe subscribed to supranationalism as well as the idea of transnational cooperation and refrained from using nationalistic rhetoric. In many instances described in this chapter, the EU and its decision-making process were viewed by Polish political Catholic politicians with suspicion, while relations between member states were seen from a traditional, if not crude, perspective of power politics. In the words of Jarosław Kaczyński: ‘Are we to be reduced to the role of abused peripheries of the EU? This could be our only role in a federalised Europe The rules of European and world politics, even though more civilised, have not changed. Stronger [states] win, take over, sometimes exploit. If we look today at the social and economic life, we can easily see this phenomenon’ (Baliszewski 2013).

What is also worth noting in this discussion is the attachment of Polish political Catholicism to the traditional understanding of sovereignty, defined by the principle of exclusive supremacy over a territory and formal equality between states in the international arena. The strong focus on national sovereignty and the role of states in international relations meant that proponents of Polish political Catholicism were also distrustful of supranationality and had a strong preference for intergovernmentalism.

These two elements, the aspiration to protect national sovereignty and the preference for intergovernmentalism, were at the core of the Eurosceptic approach of Polish political Catholicism. The situation can perhaps best be summarised with the words of Artur Zawisza: ‘The dominant right wing in Poland [before the war] was the Christian-national camp Today, it does not exist in the same form ..., but this way of thinking remains. Polish Christian-social thought is intrinsically national-patriotic, more so than in any other European country. A Polish Catholic has a very strong tendency towards Euroscepticism, while a German Catholic has a tendency towards pro-European attitudes’ (Interview with A. Zawisza 2013). However, the question remains why political Catholicism in Poland was so concerned about national sovereignty and, in this respect, differed significantly from other traditional manifestations of the movement in Western Europe. It is a central argument of this chapter that the strong focus on maintaining sovereignty was part of another, larger feature of Polish political Catholicism, namely its Catholic-nationalist trait, which made it perceive Christian values as an essential element of Polish national identity threatened by the liberal values of the West.

5.3 The perceived threat of European integration to the Church and Christian values as a repository of national identity

There are two most significant characteristics of Polish political Catholicism, which drive its aspiration to protect national sovereignty and thus lead to its Eurosceptic stance. Firstly, the belief that the Catholic Church is a repository of national values and that Christian ethics provide the basis for the proper functioning of Polish society. Secondly, the perception that the EU – as an organisation based on secular, liberal values – may threaten the role of Catholicism in Polish society. Previous chapters outlined how Polish national

identity became entangled with Catholicism as a result of historical events: the dissolution of the Polish state in the 18th century, a bitter struggle for independence throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, and almost 45 years of communist rule. During that time, the Church steadily grew in its role as one of the few institutions upholding Polish traditions and nurturing the feeling of national identity. Hence, it is not surprising that Polish political Catholicism regards the Church and Christian values as a bedrock of social life, valuing it probably to a much higher degree than its contemporary Western European counterpart.

The following words by Krystyna Pawłowicz, a Law and Justice MP, epitomised this feature of Polish political Catholicism. ‘There is no Poland without Catholicism and Christian values My responsibility is to protect Christianity as the fundamental basis of the Polish nation. This is not bigotry, this is history’ (Interview with K. Pawłowicz 2013). This opinion was widely shared across Polish political Catholicism, as well as by people outside of politics and Church sympathisers, such as Tomasz Terlikowski, Catholic journalist, head of the Catholic internet portal *fronda.pl* and a commentator of Polish politics. He observed that ‘the language of Christianity [the Christian narrative] is the only one available in Poland This language was used by both secular and religious opposition during communism Everything in Poland revolves around this language and [the Christian values] system’ (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). Prof. Andrzej Zybertowicz, sociologist and Law and Justice MEP, similarly stated: ‘As a researcher, I say: to distract Poles from the [Catholic] Church is to deprive us [Poles] of the most vital juices of Polishness’ (Zybertowicz 2014).

The fact that Polish political Catholicism identified Christian values as the framework for the functioning of Polish society was perhaps not so surprising for a movement of this kind. What was, however, extraordinary in this context was what seemed to be a rather widespread belief among representatives of Polish political Catholicism that European integration and the institutions of the EU, at least to some degree, discriminated against Christian values, trying to eradicate them from public life and thus threatening the foundations of Polish society.

In order to understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to outline the history of the Polish Catholic Church’s attitudes towards Poland’s EU membership and the institution’s influence on Euroscepticism among proponents of Polish political Catholicism. The role of Radio Maryja is of paramount importance in this context and needs to be examined before analysing how the perceived cultural struggle between the EU’s ‘liberal’ values and Polish

‘traditional values’ translated into Euroscepticism within the political Catholic movement in Poland.

5.3.1 The Catholic Church and Polish EU membership

After the collapse of communism in 1989-91, not only the external environment in which the Catholic Church in Poland was operating changed, but the Church also evolved internally. One of the signs of this evolution was the fact that it ceased appearing as a monolith in its opinions on socio-economic life. The Polish Church has never voiced a single opinion on European integration. This is hardly surprising, considering the size of the Polish Church with its almost 34 million registered faithful (out of 38 million Polish citizens), 9,505 parishes, 56,325 clergymen and the great number of functions and roles this institution plays (ISKK 2012). This heterogeneity was especially noticeable in the case of the European integration process, where the Church’s opinion in the pre-accession period varied significantly.

The Polish Catholic Church, for most of the time, was anxious about the ‘moral-cultural’ influence of EU membership on Polish society, which also ultimately affected political Catholicism in Poland. In particular, the Church voiced concerns about the possible effects of European integration on traditional Christian values and the way Polish society functioned.

In the early 1990s, the prospects of Poland’s EU membership were rather vague and the magnitude of the process was unclear to many, including the Polish Church, which was largely positive about Polish attempts to join the EU. At that time, integration was equated mostly with its economic dimension and any moral-cultural aspects of the process that could potentially change the role of the Polish Church and traditional Christian values in Polish society were ignored (Jackowska 2003). The Church also did not participate in the EU membership debate because it was fully aware of the enormously varied opinions among its clergy and the faithful. At the same time, concerns about the accelerating processes of secularism, consumptionism and individualism were common and there was no disagreement in the Church as to their existence. The discussion focused rather on the question whether secularisation was directly linked to European integration and if EU policies generated or strengthened the unwanted social trends (Zuba 2006).

The period between 1994 and 1997 was characterised by fear of the liberal and immoral Europe, which was feeding the Eurosceptic position of many clergymen (e.g. the homily of

Primate Józef Glemp in Jasna Góra on 15 August 1995). Bishop Pieronek, an important member of the Episcopate at the time, blamed this on the lack of understanding and knowledge of the essence of European integration among priests. In addition, some of the concerns voiced by Pope John Paul II about moral values and civilisation choices of Western Europe were over-interpreted by the Polish Church, driving its opposition to Poland's EU membership (Zuba 2006).

The year 1997 marked a noticeable shift in the opinion of the Church on European integration toward a more pro-EU stand, which was a direct result of the visit of Polish bishops in Brussels in November 1997. Although the Church's authorities adopted a more favourable attitude towards integration, they also accepted opposing views within the Church and did not attempt to pacify them (Zuba 2006).

Polish primate Józef Glemp is perhaps the best example of the evolution of the Church's opinion on the EU. Initially, Glemp was reluctant and distrustful of the integration process. However, his position slowly evolved to reach the acceptance stage around the year 2000. Glemp never became a strong supporter, but he clearly disassociated the process of EU integration from secularisation. Although the Church remained divided on the issue, Glemp's authority meant that his voice was perceived as the official position of the Church, while it also influenced other more sceptic senior clergymen to tone down and eventually change their sceptical approach (Zuba 2006).

Until the early 2000s, the official Church position remained unchanged, with 59% of priests declaring support for the European integration process (Kolarska-Bobińska 2003). With the advancement of Polish accession negotiations, however, the full extent of the possible influence of EU membership on Poland became obvious, including the impacts on national law and progressing liberalisation of the 'moral-cultural' sphere. Although the Episcopate expressed its acceptance of Poland's plans to join the EU, the bishops warned that the European integration process may lead to 'the dissemination of the kind of lifestyle as if there was no God' and demanded that the process would not entail 'the renunciation of national, political and cultural sovereignty, including religious identity' (Polish Episcopate 2002). The Episcopate also pointed to indirect links between European integration and secularisation: '[The process of secularisation] remains closely linked with the materialistic and secularised lifestyle, which is endorsed and promoted [in Western Europe]' (Machaj, Białas-Zielińska 2014: 4).

Similar worries about maintaining Poland's cultural heritage, national and religious identity in addition to protecting Christian values as the basis of Polish society were repeated in other documents by the Polish Episcopate. In 'The Word of Polish Bishops regarding the Polish EU accession' (Polish Episcopate 2003), the Church supported Polish EU membership, but warned that Polish cultural heritage and national identity must be protected in the process. In two documents⁷ published in March 2004, two months before Polish accession to the EU, bishops once again pointed out that the most serious threat brought about by the integration process was the growing secularisation of Europe. They asked that Polish society resisted certain Western influences, such as growing disrespect for the religious dimension of public life. The main theme of both documents was the concern of the Polish Church for the preservation of Christian values as the basis of European culture and society (Machaj, Bialas-Zielińska 2014). Archbishop Henryk Muszyński, the first representative of the Polish Episcopate to the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE), described the situation as follows: 'To put it simply, many senior clergymen link this [negative ethical and religious changes] with the EU. Since [Polish accession to] the EU there has been greater laxity in terms of social mores' (Interview with Archbishop Muszyński 2013). Despite a rather positive opinion of the Church on the EU, it remained focused very much on concerns rather than opportunities that integration could create. The Church's position was described by Bishop Kazimierz Nycz as 'yes, but – with an emphasis on the "but"' (GW 2002). A clear example would be the Church's demands for a declaration to be attached to the Polish EU accession treaty stating the supremacy of Polish law in the field of abortion and safeguarding the rights of the family defined as a relationship between a man and a woman.

Following EU accession, the Polish Church continued to voice its concerns about the impact of the European integration process on traditional Christian values. For example, in a 2011 statement of the Polish Episcopate on the occasion of the first Polish presidency of the EU Council, the bishops emphasised the need for Poland to promote family values, religious freedom and the protection of life from natural conception (Polish Episcopate 2011). In addition, one of the most contentious issues was the inclusion of *Invocatio Dei* (a reference to God) in the draft Constitutional Treaty. The bishops continuously expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that the document did not mention Christianity as a

⁷ 'Christian Responsibility for the Country. The Appeal of Polish Bishops for Responsibility for the Future of Poland and Europe in the Face of Poland's Accession to European Union Structures' (Polish Episcopate 2004a) and 'The Word of Polish Bishops on the Occasion of Poland's Admission to the EU' (Polish Episcopate 2004b)

source of European identity and that it did not make sufficient references to the principles of Catholic social teaching (Machaj, Białas-Zielińska 2014).

The Polish Church hierarchy also remained anxious about the role of the Church and religion in Polish public life, as stated in May 2014 by Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki, President of the Conference of the Polish Episcopate: 'The [Polish] state and the Church are not simply two institutions living next to each other, with their own, autonomous lives. These are two institutions that rely on each other, and they rely on each other in a similar way as the body and the soul. The Church, if it is authentic, must be the soul of the state. Without spiritual values that the Church provides, the body of the state withers away. For some, this may sound provocative, but it is true' (Gądecki 2014).

It is clear that the position of the Polish Church on the EU was difficult to grasp and quite nuanced. Some commentators, like Tomasz Terlikowski, believed that 'the Catholic Church hierarchy in Poland would say that they don't want to speak out on this matter [European integration], because they take a lot of money from the EU. This is why they are unwilling to criticise the EU. However, the position [of the Church] is not Euro-enthusiastic Currently [the Polish Church] is rather Eurosceptic or Euro-realist, and not Euro-enthusiastic' (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). It seems that the Church's attitude towards the EU was best summarised by Catholic journalist Marek Zajac, who said that although bishops were often sceptical about the integration process, they generally believed that it was better to be a critical member of the EU than an applicant excluded from the process (Zajac 2009). This was confirmed by Bishop Pieronek, who said, 'If we had not been in the EU, would it have been any better? Not at all' (Interview with Bishop Pieronek 2013). What is, however, crucial in the context of this study is the fact that concerns about the impact of Poland's EU membership on the moral-cultural framework of Polish society, secularisation and the role of the Church in public life, were clearly visible themes that characterised the opinion of the Polish Church on European integration.

What was the impact of the Church's opinion about the EU on Polish political Catholicism? Chapter 3 already showed that the overall influence of the Church on Polish politics was limited to an indirect impact, resulting from the strong authority of the Church. This seems to have been the case as well in the field of Euroscepticism. Tomasz Terlikowski, a Catholic journalist, noticed that, '[the Church's Euroscepticism] influences Catholic public opinion in Poland [more than it does political parties]' (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). Polish political Catholicism, a movement that declared its respect for,

and attention to what the Church had to say in the matter of European integration, was, at the same time, eager to assert its independence in shaping its European policies. For example, Konrad Szymański MEP declared that ‘there are no institutional links [between the Church and Law and Justice].... However, this is important – the Church not only represents a large part of Polish society, but also is a national institution We try to listen attentively to the opinion of the Church [on European integration]’ (Interview with K. Szymański 2013). This view was shared by other Law and Justice politicians, like Ryszard Czarnecki MEP. In answer to the question ‘Does the opinion of the Catholic Church have any influence on the Law and Justice EU policy?’, he firmly stated ‘None’ (Interview with R. Czarnecki 2013). Other parties that formed part of Polish political Catholicism also declared that their EU policy was not directly affected by the opinion of the Church. Daniel Pawłowiec pointed out that the League of Polish Families’ policy on Europe was only partially in line with the opinion of the Polish Church. ‘When it comes to the issues of faith and morality ... the Church was for us the ultimate authority ...; however, in politics we were independent The voice of the Polish Church was for us an important source of advice, but not a decisive one’ (Interview with D. Pawłowiec 2013). This was expressed even more decisively by Maciej Giertych, the League’s 2005 presidential candidate: ‘In political matters, we [the League of Polish Families] have been free of the Church’s opinion The national movement was never a tool of the Church, and politically we were independent’ (Interview with M. Giertych 2013). Marek Migalski, MEP of the Poland is the Most Important party, also stated that ‘[today,] the opinion of the Church’s hierarchy in political matters is less and less important’ (Interview with M. Migalski 2012). This agreed with the statement of Artur Zawisza, former member of the Christian National Union, who pointed out that ‘the Church’s opinion [on the EU] has been changeable For a long time the Church had no coherent position; thus, it was not a good source of inspiration [in terms of building the party’s EU policies] However, what really mattered was not what the bishops would say, but the opinion of Pope John Paul II’ (Interview with A. Zawisza 2013).

The Church’s concerns about European integration focused on the cultural struggle and the protection of traditional Christian values as the basis of Polish society, culture and politics. This was noticed by Katarzyna Wiśniewska, a *Gazeta Wyborcza* journalist, who stated that ‘the concerns [of Polish bishops regarding European integration] are related to moral-cultural issues. They are afraid of homosexual marriages and adoptions, which they link [with the EU] Most bishops share these concerns’ (Interview with K. Wiśniewska

2013). The moral-cultural revolution which, according to some clergymen, was fuelled by Poland's EU membership, as set out earlier in this section, was the main source of the Eurosceptic sentiment within the Polish Church. This position seems to have had an indirect influence on political Catholic groupings in Poland, for whom the main concern remained maintaining Polish national sovereignty, with the protection of traditional, Christian values mentioned as a second-order issue. Naturally, these two elements – the protection of national sovereignty and the moral-cultural struggle – cannot be artificially separated, as they are interwoven with each other. Defending the traditional Catholic framework of Polish society was quite often seen as a way to preserve elements of Polish sovereignty.

5.3.2 Radio Maryja – fusion of passion for the faith, the Church and Poland

Zuba (2006) noted that one can speak only about tendencies or streams within the Church, both pro- and anti-EU, as the Church's position was incoherent and evolved over time. One of the most prominent of these 'streams' was Radio Maryja and its milieu. This is why, in the context of the Polish Church's concerns about EU influence on the Christian basis of Polish society, it is essential to analyse the media conglomerate of the charismatic Father Tadeusz Rydzyk in more detail. *Radio Maryja*, a TV station, *Telewizja Trwam* ('I persist') and the national daily *Nasz Dziennik* ('Our daily') were the most vocal parts of the Polish Church pointing at a direct link between Polish EU membership, the process of secularisation in Poland and a threat to Polish national identity.

Chapter 3 described a relatively high politicisation of Radio Maryja, and the 'specific' type of Catholicism it subscribed to: a fusion of passion for the Catholic faith, the Church and Poland. This meant that Radio Maryja and associated media believed that the social order in Poland was entirely embedded in the Catholic moral order, which needed to be protected and upheld in order to guarantee the development of Polish society. In this context, Euroscepticism among Radio Maryja's followers was not surprising as, in its discourse, Western Europe was quite often depicted as a source of cultural threats endangering the (Catholic Christian) moral foundations of the Polish nation. Piotr Maciej Kaczyński, a Brussels-based analyst, pointed out that a characteristic feature of the radio station's Euroscepticism was the link that it constructed between Poland's EU membership and the accelerating process of secularisation in Poland (Interview with P.M. Kaczyński 2013).

Eurosceptic opinions, the charisma of Father Rydzyk and the power of his media all came together in the early 2000s, when Radio Maryja's influence on the Polish political scene became particularly important. Szczerbiak (2001, 2004b) noted that had it not been for the support of Radio Maryja, the 'hard' Eurosceptic League of Polish Families would not have been able to gather so many supporters in the 2001 parliamentary elections, making the radio station's support crucial for the electoral success of the party. This is how Daniel Pawłowicz described the early 2000s and the formation process of the League of Polish Families: 'This was the time when Solidarity Electoral Action was in complete disarray ... [and] many groups started leaving it These groups were looking for their own place, which Radio Maryja became for them ... Under the patronage [of Radio Maryja], these groups [started co-operating]' (Interview with D. Pawłowicz 2013). In the words of Maciej Giertych, 'Radio Maryja proposed the combination of different [political] groups into one formation called the League of Polish Families Radio Maryja encouraged some smaller groups to reach a [political] agreement' (Interview with M. Giertych 2013). Another good illustration of Father Rydzyk's role in Polish politics was, as Szczerbiak (2001) observed, Jan Łopuszanski's October 2000 presidential bid, for which he failed to secure Radio Maryja's backing and received a minimal share of vote.

The assessment of the radio channel's influence on the Eurosceptic position of Polish political Catholicism naturally varies depending on analysts' affiliations and sympathies. For example, Piotr Maciej Kaczyński described the radio station as the main inspiration not only for Law and Justice, but for the whole of the Polish Church when seeking to understand how European integration impacts the role of Christian values in public life in Poland (Interview P.M. Kaczyński 2013). Contrary to this view, Tomasz Terlikowski, Catholic journalist, believed that 'the role of Radio Maryja [in driving Polish Euroscepticism] is over-estimated. Naturally, Radio Maryja represents the more Eurosceptic milieu of the Polish Church, but I don't think that it is [the view] of the majority. There are many more shades of Euro-realism in the Polish Church' (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). It is clear that Radio Maryja was an important element of Polish political Catholicism. As explained in chapter 3, its ability to mobilise and, to a certain degree, shape the political preferences of its listeners was a significant tactical factor that parties took into consideration. At the same time, the radio station's influence on Polish politics was limited, just as its follower base was also limited, with Polish political Catholicism being eager to assert its organisational and ideological independence. The strength of the channel's power was further mediated by the fact that its Eurosceptic views

were declared not to have a direct effect on parties' programmes and rhetoric. Politicians like Krzysztof Szczerski MP and Ryszard Legutko MEP described the radio station and its supporters inside the party as either 'not shaping the European policy of Law and Justice' (Interview with K. Szczerski 2013) or not being sizable enough for a party to exist based on its support, asking, 'How big is the listenership of Radio Maryja? The party Solidaristic Poland of Zbigniew Ziobro was created, which tried to capitalise [on Euroscepticism and Radio Maryja] ... and what support do they have? Two percent?' (Interview with R. Legutko 2013). Maciej Giertych, a prominent politician of the League of Polish Families, when asked about the influence of Radio Maryja on the League's Eurosceptic position, used the word 'convergence' to describe the interaction between the party and the radio station's world views (Interview with M. Giertych 2013). Daniel Pawłowicz, ex-member of the same party, said 'Radio Maryja was Eurosceptic ..., and between us [the party and the radio station] there were no problems about this; we were complementary.... These were parallel processes. The radio station reached its [Eurosceptic] position in its own way, while the League had its own way to Euroscepticism' (Interview with D. Pawłowicz 2013). Very similar words were used by Krystyna Pawłowicz MP, while speaking about Law and Justice's EU policy: 'There is no connection [between Radio Maryja's opinion and the Law and Justice EU policy]. Law and Justice looks closely at public opinion [, which has become more Eurosceptic] We are simply heading in the same direction [and] care about the same values' (Interview with K. Pawłowicz 2013).

Perhaps what was most curious about Radio Maryja was the specific type of Catholicism the radio station supported, based on the amalgamation of religion with the feeling of national identity and on the integration of care for the faith with care for Poland, which – coupled with a perceived cultural struggle between 'Catholic Poland' and the 'liberal West' – drove its Euroscepticism.

5.3.3 The cultural struggle between Catholic Poland and the 'liberal West'

The problem of the 'endangered Polish identity' in the context of European integration formed the key argument for EU opponents, making the cultural and identity dimension of the EU debate in Poland the most heatedly discussed and controversial point (Styczyńska 2012). The anxieties of most Eurosceptics focused very much on the unique role of Catholicism in Polish national identity and a possible advancement of secularisation processes caused by Poland's EU membership. In the pre-accession period, many

Eurosceptics were concerned that, as a result of European integration, a new kind of identity would emerge that would overtake the current form of Polish national identity and lead to the loss of Polish cultural identity (Mach and Niedźwiecki 2002). EU opponents resorted to a rhetoric which presented Polish society as traditional, healthy and based on morality, contrary to the Western European identity, which was secular, libertarian and morally relativist (Zuba 2006).

Section 3.4 outlined how Polish political Catholicism regarded West European manifestations of this movement as an empty ideological shell. The perception that West European political Catholicism departed from its Christian roots led to the logical conclusion that the EU as a whole, having been driven for many years by Christian democracy, moved away from its Christian origins. Katarzyna Wiśniewska, journalist of *Gazeta Wyborcza* specialising in state-Church relations, pointed out that '[the Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism] stems from the belief that the EU departed from its [Christian] roots I think that many Catholics and Christians share the belief that the EU departed from its Christian roots, that it was supposed to be something completely different than [it is] now' (Interview with K. Wiśniewska 2013). This opinion was supported by Krystyna Pawłowicz MP, who said that 'in the beginning, the founding fathers ... wanted to create a structure ... that would allow [countries] to trade and find markets without conquering anyone. They did not want to liquidate the idea of a nation and create a European nation, [or to] liquidate nation-states and create a European state, a European flag, [or] a European currency The EU has become the main source for financing ... the moral-cultural revolution' (Interview with K. Pawłowicz 2013). Similarly, Maciej Giertych noticed that 'today, [West European Christian democracy] is not steered by Catholics Schuman, Adenauer, and de Gasperi were people who wanted to create something in the spirit of Christianity and Catholicism. This [approach] has completely evaporated from the Union. [The EU] is governed by liberals and the left Today's EU does not have the face of Adenauer Today, there are no important Catholic statesmen in the EU' (Interview with M. Giertych 2013). This view was also shared by senior clergymen of the Polish Catholic Church. For example, Archbishop Henryk Muszyński said, 'Today, I have serious doubts as to what extent Western European Christian democracy is able to protect authentic Christian values' (Interview with H. Muszyński 2013). For Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek 'the EU has clearly moved away from [its Christian foundations] The beginning was very idealistic ...; however, the building of this grand structure [the EU] had to start from coal and steel, and nuclear energy. These were all very

pragmatic actions It all rather focused on the economy, while the spirit was forgotten ... and lost' (Interview with T. Pieronek 2013).

It seemed to be a quite widely shared opinion among Polish representatives of political Catholicism that the events of 1968 in Western Europe marked a turning point in the role Christian values played in the process of European integration. Ryszard Legutko MEP described the situation as follows: '[The Christian democrats of today are different] – the old generation was almost entirely Catholic, heavily involved in religion, [and] two of [the founding fathers] are in the process of being beatified. [They had] different educational backgrounds and [had] the horrible experience of the war. Today, [Christian democrats], who use the pro-integration rhetoric, are the aging generation of 1968. Their formative experience is 1968 and the contestation of reality When they think of “Europe”, they think of 1968, while [the founding fathers] ... thought not only about Christianity, but also about the Roman Empire, [and] the fact that everybody spoke Latin and read the same books' (Interview with R. Legutko 2013). Krystyna Pawłowicz MP depicted the situation in a similar way. 'For some time, the generation of 1968 has been controlling the EU ... and has been implementing [its ideas] – equality based on sameness [and] the blurring of natural law in relations between men and women They [the 1968 generation] believe that they need to take over institutions and make law, so that they won't have to ask for anything from anyone' (Interview with K. Pawłowicz 2013).

However, the Polish political Catholic movement not only felt that the EU had departed from its Christian roots, it also believed that European integration and the institutions of the EU, at least to some degree, discriminated against Christian values, trying to eradicate them from public life and thus threatening the foundations of Polish society. For example, an ex-member of the League of Polish Families, Daniel Pawłowiec, noted that 'the law of the EU and customs of Western Europe have shown that Christianity is discriminated against in the sense that laicism or other religions have been privileged' (Interview with D. Pawłowiec 2013). This point was also emphasised by Krzysztof Szczerski MP: 'It's not only about [protecting] Christian values – it is about [protecting] the social order, because in Poland the social order is based on Christian values The EU is responsible for this [trying to change the traditional social model in Poland]. There are many initiatives that promote a different social model using EU money' (Interview with K. Szczerski 2013). Another example of this phenomenon was the statement of Krystyna Pawłowicz MP: 'The EU has become the main source for financing the moral-cultural revolution, [replacing

Christian values with liberal ones,] because this is the last obstacle on [the way to] subjugate the [Polish] state. [This revolution] is a threat to the Polish state and every Catholic nation' (Interview with K. Pawłowicz 2013).

Fears of the impact of EU membership on Polish society seem to have been fostered by the spreading opinion that the EU actively pursues a policy to diminish the role of Christian values in public life in order to remodel the Christian foundations of Polish society. The concerns of the Church hierarchy in this respect and the strong Eurosceptic rhetoric of Radio Maryja further contributed to this feeling. For example, Krystyna Pawłowicz MP declared that 'there is a total war against the [Catholic] Church', adding that there was strong ideological lobbying on the part of the EU. She stated, for example, that 'the acquisition of EU funds is often subject to changing the [traditional, Catholic] moral setup [of Polish society] De-Christianisation is one of the features of the EU's functioning The EU has become an ideological project and not an economic one' (Interview with K. Pawłowicz 2013). This view was largely shared by other political Catholic politicians, like Krzysztof Szczerski MP, who stated, 'I start to notice that ... the integration process has become significantly ideologised I am more inclined to agree with the claim that the EU is partially responsible for promoting anti-values [anti-Christian values] in Poland' (Interview with K. Szczerski 2013). Another prominent Law and Justice politician, Konrad Szymański MEP, agreed with this opinion stating that 'the deal at the beginning of the accession process [was that European] integration would not have anything to do with attempts to change the moral set-up of Polish society via European law or the policies of European institutions The EU is not standing by its part of the deal' (Interview with K. Szymański 2013).

The Church hierarchy is also concerned about the role of the EU in advancing social change in Poland. Archbishop Henryk Muszyński said: 'Theoretically, in ideological and moral issues [Poland and the EU] are autonomous, but in reality there is a great deal of lobbying [on the EU side] We need to take care of our historical, national identity, [while] being at the same ready to compromise ..., but not in matters like the family or marriage, where compromises are impossible' (Interview with H. Muszyński 2013).

The cultural struggle between the 'liberal' values of West European societies and more traditional set-up of Polish society, based on Christian values and the high authority of the Catholic Church, is important for this analysis. It clearly exposes an intriguing phenomenon – a Catholic-nationalist trait of Polish political Catholicism, which is based on

the conviction that the Catholic Church and Christian values are crucial for maintaining Polish culture and traditions. This fusion of nationalism and religion is not only a feature that distinguished it from the post-1945 political Catholic movements in Europe, which since the Second World War shied away from nationalist rhetoric. Besides concerns for sovereignty, it was also the element which drove the Euroscepticism of the Polish manifestation of this movement. The feeling that European integration endangered Christian values as the foundation of Polish society, clearly depicted in the statements presented above, led to a significant level of opposition to the EU. This observation was confirmed by Archbishop Henryk Muszyński, who agreed that, in the case of Poland, the protection of Christian values was often translated into Euroscepticism, with these two phenomena overlapping (Interview with Archbishop Muszyński 2013).

Euroscepticism rooted in concerns for maintaining national identity is not uncommon as proven by academic research (Carey, 2002, McLaren 2002, 2004, Hooghe and Marks 2004). In such cases, Euroscepticism is less about distrust of European institutions or utilitarian concerns about economic losses, but has more to do with fears about threats to the national community. Indeed, many experiments clearly show that identity is important for people and that they can become protective even of those identities which were artificially created in laboratory conditions (McLaren 2007).

Hooghe and Marks (2005) examined the question of how communal (national) identity can cue Euroscepticism. They concluded that national attachments can be a more powerful influence on scepticism toward European integration and can override other, more utilitarian factors (such as economic ones). In other words, European integration did not only yield economic benefits or losses, but it also provoked a strong feeling of threat to the Polish identity among defenders of the nation and those opposing multiculturalism. This is confirmed by a wide range of scholarly research. In her analysis of types of Euroscepticism, Sorensen (2006) cited the study of British Euroscepticism conducted by Smith (2005), who defined public support for the EU as being either utilitarian or ideological, while scepticism generally meant 'an emotional detachment from particular claims, doctrines and ideals' (Smith 2005: 1). This means that opposition to the EU stemmed from a lack of 'compatibility' between the integration process and people's identity, values and emotional attachments. McLaren (2002) found that 'antipathy toward the EU is not just about cost/benefit calculations or about cognitive mobilisation ... but about fear of, or hostility toward other cultures'. If identification with the national community is constructed in an

exclusive way, it tends to further strengthen the perception of European integration as a threat to the national identity (Kriesi and Lachat 2004).

The research mentioned above points to the strength of Euroscepticism based on identity. In the Polish context, national identity coupled with religious identity seemed to be a particularly significant factor influencing the development of Euroscepticism. The feeling of a 'mismatch' between the values of the Polish society and Western Europe, and a belief that the EU pursued anti-Christian policies, posing a threat to Polish national identity, came together to create a detachment from European claims and ideals and, in effect, provided a fertile ground for the development of Euroscepticism. The intertwined relations between Catholicism and Polish national identity led to the formation of a distinctly Catholic-nationalist political Catholicism, which was concerned about the potential impact of European integration, based on culturally different secular values that could potentially contribute to unwanted social and religious changes in Poland.

5.4 Non-Eurosceptic political Catholicism?

In order to complete the analyses of the Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism, one needs to verify, whether there was, in fact, a non-Eurosceptic political Catholicism in Poland? Firstly, it is necessary to examine Civic Platform – a party, where a number of politicians claimed attachment to Christian values. Secondly, a brief look at the *Tygodnik Powszechny* milieu will be presented.

Civic Platform was formed in 2001 as a liberal conservative platform, with Donald Tusk becoming its sole leader in 2003. The party narrowly lost the 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections, but won the 2007 elections and formed a coalition government with the Polish Peasants' Party. Regarding the party's EU policy, it initially found it difficult to take a clear stance on the European issue as it criticised the left-wing government for its allegedly uncritical support for European integration on the one hand, while on the other hand forcefully distancing itself from other Eurosceptic parties. Nevertheless, the party joined the 'Yes' camp in the accession referendum. Since then, Civic Platform had periods during which it adopted a more critical stance on the European integration process, particularly when it came to the EU Constitutional Treaty, which contained EU Council voting provisions less favourable for Poland than those of the Nice Treaty. However, despite this Eurosceptic episode, the party remained largely pro-EU, in some aspects even

supporting deeper integration. Particularly when Law and Justice came to power in 2005, the party began to favour a more open, consensual approach to the EU, in contrast to the governing party (Szczurbiak 2012).

Over the years, Civic Platform grew by absorbing different politicians and becoming a more eclectic, 'catch-all' party of the centre than it had originally been in 2001. This meant that a group of politicians that claimed attachment to Christian values and the Polish Church also became active within the party, represented by such politicians as Jan Olbrycht, Róża Thun or Jarosław Gowin (who left the party in 2013). Why is it then that these politicians remained pro-EU and pro-integration, despite being devout Catholics? Why did they not necessarily see the EU as a threat to Polish Catholicism and national identity? It seems that they tended to separate their Catholicism and moral values from politics and chose to focus on those fields where the EU had a direct influence such as the economy. This compartmentalisation is well illustrated by Róża Thun MEP, who said in an interview for weekly *Polityka* 'I cannot create a law that would be dictated by my personal worldview, because it should apply to everybody We confused our worldviews (*światopogląd*) with politics Herman van Rompuy is a devout Catholic ... but does it show in his statements? Never. Instead, he works tirelessly to reach agreements, he searches for solutions, leads to accords. The best example for me is one of the EU's founding fathers, Robert Schuman He was a very religious man, starting each day with a mass ... but he never said that people ought to go to church every Sunday and that you can't have homosexual marriages. He did not intervene in these spheres and until this day, the EU leaves it to member states. When it comes to the state, we should consider whether the sphere of worldview (*strefa światopoglądowa*) should be included in politics and to what extent, or whether it should be left, for example, to the Church...' (Paradowska 2014).

Such a separation of values and beliefs from acts in the public sphere means that this approach cannot really be classified as a political Catholic one, since it is a breach of one of the characteristic features of the movement – the willingness to include principles of Catholic social teaching in the body of law, making them binding for all members of a society. Nonetheless, it clearly explains why certain groups of politicians in Poland, who were strongly involved with Catholicism and the Church, did not assume Eurosceptic positions – they clearly differentiated between areas where the EU had real decision-making power, leaving the moral-cultural sphere out of politics. Consequently, they did not assume that European integration could potentially have an impact on the secularisation

process in Poland and threaten the role of Catholicism in Polish society. Even if it did, they would not try to counteract it by political means, because they separated their beliefs from their activity in the public sphere. Indeed, those Civic Platform members who thought differently and were willing to enshrine Christian worldviews in Polish law – like Jarosław Gowin, Jacek Żalek and John Godson – left the party, with conflicts over the role of Christian values in law-making playing an essential role in their departure.

Finally, in the context of the discussion about the non-Eurosceptic political Catholicism, 'Universal Weekly' (*Tygodnik Powszechny*) and a small pocket of Catholic intellectualist clustered around it need to be mentioned. This weekly magazine was created in 1945 in Kraków. Its role in communist Poland cannot be easily overstated – until 1989 it was the only of the media outlets in Central and Eastern Europe that remained semi-independent from, but tightly constrained by, the communist authorities. Despite harassment and persecution, it endured as an open voice of the anti-communist opposition, even though it had to carefully phrase its message to avoid the communist censorship. Following the 1989 fall of communism in Poland, the magazine's readership and its ability to influence Catholic public opinion started slowly deteriorating, which forced a number of reorganisations and changes in the editorial content (Kolasa 2001).

Since 1989, the Weekly's opinion on European integration was stable and did not change significantly. It presented a pro-EU approach, supporting in the pre-accession period quick integration of Poland with the EU. The Weekly's editing team and the group of intellectualists associated with the magazine believed that the place of Poland was in the Western civilisation, of which the EU was the main component. This milieu also opposed the view that the EU somehow transformed and gradually merged national identities into one European identity. According to the Weekly, the issue was not the alleged threat that European integration posed to Polish national identity, but the ability of Poles to adjust to the modern world and global economy. This view strongly contrasted with the opinions of more traditional and integrist parts of the Polish Church, which voiced concerns about the influence of European integration on Polish traditions, culture and national sovereignty (Staszczyk, Jartyś 2002).

As mentioned before, the role of the Weekly in public life started diminishing significantly after the fall of communism. Its circulation dropped from 100 000 copies in 1989 to 30 000 in the early 1990s (Kolasa 2001). In 2014, it sold, on average, 17 thousand copies monthly, making it one of the smallest of national weeklies in Poland. As a result, the Universal

Weekly and its milieu became rather marginalised. In addition, those who supported the views of the magazine and identified with its opinions never developed into an organised civil society network. As a result, their influence remained quite limited, particularly when compared to Radio Maryja and other Catholic media outlets of Father Rydzyk.

5.5 Why is Polish political Catholicism Eurosceptic?

Having analysed different aspects of the Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism, it is now time to answer the main research question: under what circumstances can political Catholicism assume a Eurosceptic stance? The hypothesis assumed that the intrinsic ideological features of the Polish political Catholic movement drove its Eurosceptic stance, leading it to perceive the EU as an entity based on the concepts of ‘secularism’, ‘individualism’, and ‘materialism’, which in turn endanger the core values of Polish national identity. The design of this study also indicated that there may be other, non-political Catholic ideologies or electoral tactics (the alternative explanatory factors mentioned in section 1.3) influencing the Euroscepticism of the Polish political Catholic movement.

Analyses in this chapter identified two key factors underpinning the Eurosceptic stance of political Catholic parties in Poland: firstly, the aspiration to protect national sovereignty, and secondly, the perceived need to respond to the cultural struggle between traditional, Christian values of the Polish society and liberal values of Western Europe, which threatened Polish national identity. It is a central argument of this chapter that both elements driving the Eurosceptic position of political Catholicism in Poland are, in fact, intrinsically ‘ideological’ features of this movement and feed into the phenomenon of Catholic-nationalism – a distinct fusion of Catholicism and Polish national identity. This characteristic feature of Polish political Catholicism grew out of the centuries-long relationship between Catholicism and Polish national identity, leading to the creation of a Catholic-nationalist trait, which made the movement see Catholicism and Christian values as a framework for the functioning of Polish society. This, in turn, drove its Euroscepticism, since the EU was perceived as an organisation based on secular, liberal values that may endanger Polish society.

Consequently, the influence of political Catholicism on the development of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland was of significant importance. It provided the basis for a Euroscepticism focused on combating the moral-cultural changes that, as a result of

Poland's EU membership, exerted stronger pressures on the traditional moral set-up of Polish society, but also fuelled concerns for the protection of national sovereignty. Defending the state and its prerogatives was seen as a way to secure the primary role of Christian values in Polish politics, culture and society and to slow down the undesired processes of secularisation in Poland, which according to Polish political Catholicism, threatened the development of the country. This phenomenon can be clearly observed in the following statement by Artur Zawisza: 'There are two types of [Eurosceptic] arguments [in Poland]: those based on sovereignty or those based on Christianity. Naturally, at the end of the day, they can significantly overlap One type is: Poland should be sovereign, one way or the other but sovereign, and the EU won't impose anything on us The other type of thinking is [focused on] Christian values: the EU may interfere here and there, but hands off Christianity; Christianity needs to be respected Not everyone may be convinced by the sovereignty-type arguments ... but when we talk about Christian values they have no choice. [The EU] may ask us to recycle garbage but they can't force us to [accept] abortion. The argument of protecting Christian values has been a common element of the whole political scene [Protecting the] Christian identity of Poland as a condition for Polish participation in European integration has become a constitutive element of the whole political scene' (Interview with A. Zawisza 2013).

The integration of care for the Catholic faith, the Church and Poland, so clearly exemplified by Radio Maryja, was the essence of Polish political Catholicism, and stemmed from the unique role Catholicism has played throughout Polish history in nurturing Polish culture and traditions. Since Polish political Catholicism perceived the EU as an organisation based on liberal, secular values, it identified it as a potential threat to the role of Christian values in the functioning of Polish society which, in turn, drove its Euroscepticism. Therefore, it seems that Euroscepticism is a strongly embedded, underpinning feature of Polish political Catholicism and not a result of short-term tactical considerations.

At the same time, this study listed three additional explanatory factors (AEFs) of strategic/tactical nature that may have influenced Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism. In general, the design of this research suggests the possibility that a party may adopt a Eurosceptic stance to make itself distinctive on the political stage or as a result of government-opposition dynamics, to expand its electoral base or limit the political space for rival parties. However, the primary data collected here indicated that none of these

considerations was the most important element in the context of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland, though they did play a certain role.

First and foremost, popular support for Poland's EU membership remained at very high levels in the country and Poles were quite enthusiastic about European integration. In fact, support for the EU not only remained extremely high, but grew within five years of accession from 64% in April 2004 to 85% in April 2009. At the same time, public opinion polls showed the proportion of Poles believing that Poland gained more than it lost as a result of its EU membership growing from 39% in February 2004 to 65% in April 2009, with the number of those who thought the opposite dropping from 38% to 13%. Similarly, according to the 2013 Eurobarometer survey (EB 79.5), 78% of Poles believed that their country benefited from EU membership (the second best result after Lithuania with 80%), while 53% felt that the Polish EU membership was something good compared to 10% who thought otherwise. Consequently, the electoral rewards for adopting a Eurosceptic position was fairly limited in Poland and seemed not to be sustainable as the foundation for the electoral success of a political party. Ryszard Legutko MEP described this situation as follows: 'If somebody is rational, s/he knows that it is impossible to build, in the foreseeable future, a strong anti-EU right-wing party in Poland. You can politically capitalise on combating the euro ..., [but] without saying that you are generally for or against the EU' (Interview with R. Legutko 2013). What seems to transpire from this short statement is the fact that Polish political Catholicism did not assume a Eurosceptic position to attract voters but quite the contrary, it appeared to tone down its rhetoric in order not to limit its potential electoral base.

At the same time, some commentators of Polish public life cited the fact that the EU policy of Law and Justice, the largest political Catholic actor in Poland, changed from a pro-EU to more Eurosceptic as proof that tactical reasons and inter-party rivalry played a role in shaping its EU policies. This seems to be true to a certain extent, particularly when considering government-opposition dynamics and the competition between Law and Justice and Civic Platform. For example, Krzysztof Szczerski MP explained that the EU policy of Law and Justice and its development should be placed in the broader context of EU-Poland relations. 'Initially, we had [a period of] preparations for EU membership, and EU membership was an autonomous aim of Polish foreign policy Then there was a turning point – Poland joined the EU and ... Law and Justice took over the power. Our first years in the EU were a time of a realistic discourse. We are in the EU, but what for?

... [The post-2007] transition of [the EU policy of] Law and Justice to a more critical position ... is rather a sort of reaction to a very EU-enthusiastic policy of Donald Tusk's [Civic Platform] government' (Interview with K. Szczerski 2013). The last sentence indicates that although strategic/tactical factors were not the main reason to adopt a Eurosceptic position, they did have some influence, in particular on the strength of the anti-EU discourse as a way to differentiate a party from the ruling grouping. Konrad Szymański MEP pointed out that '[Law and Justice] tries to listen to everybody ... we are trying to represent as broad a spectrum of views as possible. Contrary to many parties in Poland, we believe that people and groups who have doubts about the European integration process should be listened to attentively We don't believe that they should be excluded from the public debate' (Interview with K. Szymański 2013). This also shows that the willingness to attract Eurosceptic voters may have played a certain role for Law and Justice in adopting a sceptical stance on European integration.

One should consider in this context the role of Radio Maryja and its impact on parties' position on Europe. Most commentators underline the willingness of right-wing parties such as Law and Justice or Solidaristic Poland of Zbigniew Ziobro to maintain close relations with Father Rydzyk in order to secure the votes of his supporters. Piotr Maciej Kaczyński explained that Law and Justice was so close to Radio Maryja, 'mainly because it did not want any rival party to appear further to the right [of the political scene]' (Interview with P.M. Kaczyński 2013), and used the followers of Father Rydzyk as a potential support base. Tomasz Bielecki, a correspondent of *Gazeta Wyborcza* in Brussels agreed. '[Law and Justice and] Kaczyński often resist the raging Euroscepticism [of Radio Maryja] [The party's relationship with] Radio Maryja is a cynical, tactical alliance with someone who can generate a few percentage points in elections Kaczyński has never spoken and will not speak [about European integration] using Rydzyk's words' (Interview with T. Bielecki 2012). Inga Czerny, Brussels correspondent of the Polish Press Agency, followed suit: '[Radio Maryja] is so important, because ... it [offers] a stable electorate [a group of loyal supporters]' (Interview with I. Czerny 2012). This assessment of the situation is partially confirmed by Ryszard Czarnecki MEP, who said that 'when Solidaristic Poland was established, Law and Justice was concerned that ... they would try to take over the support of Radio Maryja. [This] could have led to a certain hardening [of the party's EU policy]. However, this is a thing of the past, because Solidaristic Poland ... is no longer a threat, ... thus, Law and Justice ... has relaxed its policy and rhetoric' (Interview with R. Czarnecki 2013). He also pointed out that it is likely that 'in the European elections [of 2014], Law

and Justice will have a more Eurosceptic programme than in the [national] parliamentary and presidential elections. This is because ... Poland has the third lowest turnout in the European elections after Lithuania and Slovakia. [This means that] our electorate has to participate in elections and our hard-core electorate is more Eurosceptic [and] Euro-realist' (Interview with R. Czarnecki 2013). Marek Migalski MEP agreed: 'Father Rydzyk is an important element in the electoral competition on the right [between Solidaristic Poland and Law and Justice] ... and this may have an influence on the election results. He is not a decisive broadcaster but he can add or remove thousands of votes' (Interview with M. Migalski 2012). Migalski, who used to be a member of Law and Justice, may not be an entirely reliable source when it comes to criticising his old party. Artur Zawisza, an ex-Christian National Union member, however, went in the same direction, providing the bluntest description of the situation: 'The great plan of Kaczyński was to become the leader of the right wing [in Poland] by adjusting his rhetoric to the beliefs of the electorate, without changing his real political direction Kaczyński started using various tricks, trying to attract the right-wing electorate He decided to take over Radio Maryja's support from the League of Polish Families and started using sharper rhetoric. This was an element of his strategy [to dominate the right-wing in Poland]' (Interview with A. Zawisza 2013).

This means that Law and Justice may have taken a tactical decision to align itself closely with Radio Maryja, as it brought the party significant benefits in the form of electoral support while limiting the scope for potential political competition. It is worth noting that the leader of Law and Justice, Jarosław Kaczyński, for many years kept his distance from the Church and, while acknowledging the importance of Catholicism throughout Polish history, opted for a strong state with a clear separation of the state from the church, which is well exemplified by his famous statement 'The shortest road to the de-Christianisation of Poland leads through the Christian National Union', referring to the more clerical position of this party (Dudek 2013). Another clear example that points to pragmatism in Law and Justice's EU policy choices was its changeability. Law and Justice was significantly less Eurosceptic during its period in government than before or afterwards in opposition. Finally, the political competition from the Law and Justice breakaway party, Solidaristic Poland of Zbigniew Ziobro (SP), which also tried to secure Radio Maryja's support, was also mentioned as one of the factors influencing Law and Justice's position on the EU and its strategic alliance with Radio Maryja.

Thus, it seems that party-based Euroscepticism in Poland may have been fuelled by a degree of electoral tactics focused on ensuring support from the Radio Maryja milieu. However, this fact does not preclude stronger, ideological influences on the development of the Eurosceptic stance of political Catholicism. In fact, Radio Maryja was a constitutive part of the political Catholic movement in Poland and its impact on the Polish political scene exemplified the close connection between political Catholicism and Euroscepticism in Poland. As Anna Słojewska explained, ‘a part [of the Law and Justice] political programme results from the actual beliefs of [party] members, while a part is there for tactical reasons However, ultimately, Law and Justice is simply like that [most of its policies are ideologically based]’ (Interview with A. Słojewska 2012). This is confirmed by statements by the interviewed politicians presented earlier, who declared that the Eurosceptic programmes of Polish parties were not a result of electoral tactics, such as attempting to secure Father Rydzyk’s support, but developed separately and were rather a convergence of similar views. Attempts to ensure Radio Maryja’s support should not be regarded as the main factor shaping party-based Euroscepticism in Poland, but should instead be seen as an element that drove the intensity of the Eurosceptic rhetoric, which varied depending on the role a party plays on the political stage (government vs. opposition), potential threats from rival parties (Law and Justice vs. the League of Polish Families and Solidarity Poland) or the proximity of elections and the expected turnout. Tomasz Terlikowski observed that ‘Clearly, Radio Maryja has a certain political influence, but I would not overestimate it It can secure 3% to 5% of votes in elections ... and this electorate is constantly decreasing ... [it includes] mostly elderly people, who do not have significant political influence’ (Interview with T. Terlikowski 2013). It is obvious that attempts to woo this group did play a role in shaping Euroscepticism within Polish political Catholicism, but this tactical consideration was fairly limited.

All in all, it is clear that tactical considerations, encapsulated in alternative explanatory factors, were not the main driver of political Catholic Euroscepticism in Poland. They rather influenced the intensity of the Eurosceptic rhetoric and the distribution of accents within the established political discourse. The Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism seems to have been developed independently and in parallel with different parts of the movement, and subsequently converged into a similar worldview. Consequently, Polish political Catholicism is a movement with a strongly embedded ideology and has had a long-standing Eurosceptic agenda that did not change significantly with each electoral cycle and is not merely a result of short-term electoral tactics. This

finding corroborates the conclusions of Szczerbiak and Taggart's (2008b) comparative study of party-based Euroscepticism in Europe. Having presented a number of country case studies, the authors stated that, in the case of policy-seeking parties, underlying party positions on Europe should be distinguished from how parties use this issue in inter-party competition, as both phenomena are driven by different causal mechanisms. A party's long-term policy on Europe is determined by a blend of ideology and what it perceives the interests of its members to be. Whether or not the party uses its position on Europe in inter-party competition is a matter of short-term electoral strategy, and coalition-formation and government-participation tactics.

The evidence presented in this chapter reiterates that the fusion of nationalism and religion make Polish political Catholicism a specific case compared to Western Europe. As explained in previous chapters, traditional political Catholicism had at its core such values as the idea of forgiveness, co-operation between nations and support for the supranational concept, which resemble the strong, transnational authority of the Pope and the Church hierarchy. The emphasised concern for national sovereignty was a more characteristic feature of right and far-right movements, which are strongly based on the ideas of nationalism, independence, self-rule, and occasionally outright xenophobia or chauvinism. This is why, in the Polish context, a distinct form of political Catholicism can be identified – a movement based on the fusion of national-patriotic elements with the need to protect Christian values as the foundation of society.

5.6 Conclusions

This chapter served a twofold purpose: firstly, to identify and understand the relationship between political Catholicism and Euroscepticism; and, secondly, to complete the description of political Catholicism in Poland, including the causes of its Eurosceptic approach. Euroscepticism is a striking feature for a movement of this type as, historically, political Catholicism has been supportive of European integration. Political Catholicism in Western Europe (mainly in the form of its best-known manifestation – Christian democracy) has had a lasting impact during the second half of the twentieth century, thanks to its important role in post-war politics and its remarkable ability to form transnational networks of co-operation, which led to the formation of the European Coal and Steel

Community, its expansion into the European Economic Community, and, finally, the creation of the European Union.

This is why the surprising phenomenon of Euroscepticism displayed by political Catholicism in Poland became the focal point of this research. In this chapter, I attempted to understand ‘the Polish deviant case’ – to identify the roots of Euroscepticism within Polish political Catholicism, and to establish whether it resulted from an intrinsic ‘ideological’ feature of political Catholicism in Poland, or parties’ strategic/tactical choices. By analysing primary data in the form of semi-structured interviews and a selection of relevant secondary data, it was established that the sceptical opinions of Polish political Catholicism on Europe are driven by two primary factors: firstly, the aspiration to protect Polish sovereignty, and secondly, the perceived cultural struggle between the ‘liberal West’ and ‘Catholic Poland’. What is, however, most interesting is that both elements fed into a characteristic feature of Polish political Catholicism – a Catholic-nationalist trait. As a result of the inter-twined histories between Catholicism and Polish national identity, Polish political Catholicism formed its distinct ‘national-religious patriotism’. It believed that social and economical development in Poland was only possible if Christian values preserved their importance in Polish society and was concerned about the potential impact of European integration, which allegedly promoted secularisation.

This Catholic nationalism was a consequence of the Polish history and the special role that the Catholic religion and the Catholic Church played in upholding and nurturing the feeling of Polish identity throughout the past two hundred years. The strong emphasis on national sovereignty and the need to rely on internal potential and resources for the development of the country, coupled with ‘national-religious patriotism’ are factors that clearly differentiated Polish political Catholicism from other manifestations of this movement in Europe and drove its Euroscepticism.

I also argued in this chapter that the Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism was a deeply entrenched, underpinning characteristic of the movement, rather than a result of electoral strategy or tactics. This phenomenon is well exemplified by Radio Maryja and the type of religiosity that it promoted, where religion and faith were inextricably linked with Polish national identity, and where care for religion was synonymous with care for Poland. Over the past 20 years, Radio Maryja and its supporters were an active political force, fostering the formation of political parties or contributing to their demise, as was the case with the League of Polish Families. In essence, the approach represented by Radio Maryja

identified the development of Poland to be conditional upon the maintenance of Catholic values at the core of Polish society and, as a result, led to Euroscepticism due to Western Europe (and the EU) being perceived as the source of a civilisational threat that endangered the (Catholic Christian) moral foundations of the Polish nation. A characteristic feature of this type of Euroscepticism was the link that it established between Polish EU membership and the acceleration of the secularisation process in Poland.

I did discover certain tactical considerations that may have played a role in shaping Euroscepticism within Polish political Catholicism. However, they rather influenced the intensity of the Eurosceptic rhetoric, but did not constitute its main cause. This confirmed Szczerbiak and Taggart's (2008b) conclusion that an underlying party position on Europe needs to be distinguished from temporary changes in rhetoric caused by intra-party competition and coalition participation tactics.

Anna Slojewska stated that 'Polish Christian democracy is located much further to the right than the Western European one I don't think that [the right being more Eurosceptic than the left] is very specific to Poland. It is a Europe-wide phenomenon' (Interview with A. Slojewska 2013). This may be true, but what is different in the Polish case is the fact that it is not just any right – it is the traditionally pro-integrationist movement of political Catholicism that has become Eurosceptic in Poland. The movement is fully aware of its distinctiveness from other, similar European groupings – as a deviant case in the political Catholic family.

6 Political Catholicism and European integration – a comparative perspective

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapters described a distinct relation between political Catholicism in Poland and Euroscepticism. They noted that the strongest trait of party-based opposition to Europe in Poland can be found in parties of political Catholic provenance, such as the League of Polish Families, the Christian National Union, the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland or the Polish Agreement. In addition, one of the two main parties which dominated the Polish political scene since the early 2000s – Law and Justice – also combined a political Catholic background with ('soft') Euroscepticism. This sceptical opinion of Polish political Catholicism regarding Europe was driven by two main factors: firstly, by concerns for the defence of national sovereignty and secondly, by the perceived cultural struggle between the traditional Catholic moral-cultural setup of Polish society and liberal, secular values of the West. Both of these elements stemmed from the closely intertwined relationship between Catholicism and Polish national identity, leading to Polish political Catholicism acquiring a distinct Catholic-nationalist trait.

I also argued that Polish political Catholicism and its Eurosceptic stance are distinct compared with other manifestations of this movement. As discussed before, political Catholicism was a key actor in Western European politics throughout the 20th century. It gave birth to one of the most influential political families, Christian democracy, which shaped the social and political framework of most Western European countries, and, thanks to a unique mix of pre- and post-war historical circumstances and Christian democratic ideological preferences, became the driving force behind the process of European integration.

As the final element of the analysis of political Catholicism in Poland, this chapter aims to provide a concise comparative overview of the development of political Catholicism in Europe and the movement's position on European integration. As a result, I hope to compare the main features of political Catholicism in Europe with the findings concerning its Polish manifestation. To this end, this chapter presents short case studies of 15 different

European countries which met the following conditions: firstly, a high percentage (above 60%) of Catholics among the population in 2010 (see Table 4 below), and secondly, a certain prominence of political Catholicism in a given country, as identified in the academic literature. The case selection also includes countries where the level of religious practice and membership in the Catholic Church significantly declined, but where political Catholicism was or still is an important part of politics.

Table 4: Percentage of Catholic population in European countries in 2010

Percentage of 2010 population that declared Catholic faith	European country	Percentage of 2010 population that declared Catholic faith	European country
> 99%	Vatican City	33.9%	Germany
95.8%	Malta	29.1%	Netherlands
92.3%	Portugal	19.1%	Latvia
92.2%	Poland	16.2%	United Kingdom
90.5%	San Marino	8.7%	Belarus
88.5%	Croatia	5.7%	Romania
88.4%	Ireland	5.6%	Ukraine
88.2%	Andorra	3.6%	Montenegro
83.2%	Lithuania	3.2%	Iceland
83%	Italy	2.3%	Kosovo
82.3%	Monaco	2.0%	Norway
81.7%	Liechtenstein	1.3%	Cyprus
75.3%	Austria	1.2%	Sweden
75.3%	Slovakia	0.7%	Denmark
75.2%	Spain	0.7%	Estonia
74.8%	Slovenia	0.7%	Greece
65.9%	Luxembourg	0.5%	Bulgaria
62%	Belgium	0.5%	Russia
60.6%	Hungary	0.4%	Republic of Macedonia
60.4%	France	< 0.1%	Finland
43.9%	Switzerland	< 0.1%	Moldova
35.4%	Czech Republic		

Source: Pew Research – Religion & Public Life Project data, available at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/table-christian-population-as-percentages-of-total-population-by-country/>, accessed on 20.04.2015

In line with the stated criteria, the selection of comparative cases is as follows: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland. For the sake of clarity, the countries will be discussed in the context of their geographical region, divided into Western Europe and Central and Eastern Europe, as geographical proximity often determined the history of political developments and the shape of the institutional environment, particularly after the Second World War.

This selection offers a broad range of cases in which political Catholicism demonstrated its influence by decisively affecting the shape and functioning of states, societies and

economies. The set contains countries which have been engaged with the integration project since its very beginnings (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands), but also those which have joined the EU fairly recently (the 2004 enlargement included Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia) or decided to stay out (Switzerland). In terms of the role of Catholicism, my selection contains cases in which secularisation led to a significant decline of religious practice (Belgium, France), but also those in which the Catholic Church and Catholicism still hold an important position in society (Croatia, Malta, Slovakia). Geographically and politically, this chapter discusses established democracies of Western Europe, but also countries from Central and Eastern Europe where the democratic system was introduced only in the 1990s. Finally, I included cases in which political Catholicism lost much of its former influence (Italy, France, Switzerland) and others in which it still occupies an essential position in politics (Austria, Germany, Malta, Belgium).

The analysis of each case study is based on scholarly literature and primary sources (e.g. election manifestos, public statements or programmatic documents), examined and reviewed in the following manner: the first section of a case study presents the historical development of political Catholicism and the influence it had on society and politics, while the second section focuses on analysing political Catholic attitudes to European integration and the EU. As a result, this chapter offers a comprehensive description of political Catholicism, including its similarities and differences across Europe, and will be the basis for the comparison of Polish political Catholicism with other manifestations of the movement.

This chapter will argue that there are five main differences between manifestations of political Catholicism in Western and Central and Eastern Europe. Firstly, in terms of political significance, political Catholicism in Western Europe has played a much more prominent role in shaping political, economic and social systems, while in Eastern Europe its influence has remained fairly limited in most cases. To this is tied another difference, the apparent lack of successful Christian democracy in most Central and Eastern European countries, which was replaced by a form of political Catholicism that is much more focused on national issues such as sovereignty and the protection of national interests. Thirdly, there is a contrast between the development of political Catholic movements in Europe. While in Western Europe political Catholicism developed as a result of the church/government cleavage described by Lipset and Rokkan (1967), where the movement was essentially a defence of Catholicism against liberalisation attempts, in Central Europe it

grew out of the fusion of religion and national identity, which matured during struggles for independence of the countries presented in this analysis. Fourthly, Central and Eastern European manifestations of political Catholicism have always been different from Western European ones; however, the gap has grown even wider with the gradual departure of Western European political Catholic parties from making direct references to Christian values, which is not the case in Eastern Europe. Last but definitely not least, this chapter will show how the majority of political Catholic groupings support the process of European integration, while only in two cases – Poland and Slovakia – political Catholicism has acquired a clear Eurosceptic trait. The key question in the context of this study is: Why did political Catholicism in Poland (and Slovakia) become Eurosceptic, while it remained largely pro-EU in other countries, where the development of the movement bears strong resemblance to the Polish case (e.g. Ireland)?

6.2 Western Europe

6.2.1 Austria

Political Catholicism in Austria

As was the case in many Western European countries, political Catholicism played a major role in Austrian politics. The political Catholic movement in Austria originated in the late 19th-century Catholic social movement initiated by Karl Freiherr von Vogelsang. His newspaper *Das Vaterland* was highly influential in developing and popularising Catholic social teaching. Building on von Vogelsang's ideas, the Christian Social Party (*Christlichsoziale Partei*, CS) was established in the run-up to the 1891 elections of the *Reichsrat* (Boyer 1981). It was a confessional party supported by large parts of the Catholic petit bourgeoisie, the rural population, but also the aristocracy thanks to its backing of the Habsburgs' rule. It included a large number of priests among its ranks, e.g. Ignaz Seipel, who became Austrian chancellor twice in the 1920s. The Christian Socials were a dominant element of the Austrian political scene, being among the largest three parties. In 1934, the party set up an authoritarian Austro-fascist regime and was merged into the Patriotic Front (Müller and Steininger 1994). It officially ceased to exist after the 1938 *Anschluss*.

The political Catholic movement was reborn after the Second World War, when in 1945 the Austrian People's Party (*Österreichische Volkspartei*, ÖVP) was founded. The party was

eager to claim that it was completely new, but in reality, it was a successor of the interwar Christian Social Party, as it appealed to the same constituency, recruited its leadership from among former Christian Social Party ranks and accepted the ideological heritage of its predecessor party. However, as was the case in other countries, it did drop the confessional label and decided to woo a broader electorate (Müller and Steininger 1994), which was largely interpreted as a departure from traditional political Catholicism in favour of a broader people's party. The Austrian People's Party was hugely successful in the post-war years, remaining a senior coalition partner until 1966 and governing Austria alone until 1970, when the party lost power and moved to opposition for the following 16 years. In 1987, it re-entered the government in a grand coalition with the socialists, which continued until the late 1990s. In the 1990s, the party suffered a significant electoral decline (from 41.3% in 1986 to 26.9% in 1999). In 2000, it formed a highly controversial coalition with the right-wing Freedom Party of Austria (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, FPÖ), which caused widespread outrage in Europe. Following some programmatic shifts, in which the party 'sharpened' its image and repositioned itself more to the right by underlining its liberal-conservative traditions, it was able to double its electoral support, reaching 42.3% in 2002 and taking over half of the former Freedom Party of Austria voters (Fallend 2004). In 2008, the party entered a grand coalition with the Social Democratic Party (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs*, SPÖ).

Austrian political Catholicism and European policy

The Christian democratic Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) can be characterised as the most pro-European party of the Austrian political system. Although Austria did not take part in the creation of the ECSC and the EEC, the Austrian People's Party played an important role in establishing transnational networks of Christian democratic parties in post-1945 Europe (Kaiser 2007) and gradually built up an image as the 'European party' of Austria (Fallend 2008). The Austrian People's Party had periods during which its support for European integration decreased, most notably during the 2000-2002 coalition government with the Eurosceptic Freedom Party. Heinisch (2010) noted that during this period, the Austrian People's Party was significantly less pro-European, while its Chancellor Schüssel became increasingly assertive on EU policy, particularly in the areas of enlargement and access to the Austrian labour market (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2013). However, the party quickly returned to its unequivocal pro-EU stance, stating on its website that 'Europe is deeply rooted in our DNA' (ÖVP 2014). It made the following points key elements of its 2014 European elections manifesto: support for a more powerful European Parliament,

backing of further enlargements and a stronger internal market, support for EU-wide referendums on key issues and establishment of a new Convention on the Future of Europe (ÖVP 2014b).

One should also mention two smaller parties that strive to protect Christian values in the public sphere in Austria and are Eurosceptic: the Christian Electoral Alliance (*Christliche Wählergemeinschaft*, CWG) and the Christian Party of Austria (*Christliche Partei Österreichs*, CPÖ). The Christian Electoral Alliance opposed the EU on many grounds, including its alleged negative impact on Austrian sovereignty, neutrality, democracy, agriculture, security, etc., but it also declared its concerns about the departure from a religiously led, Christian life and the growing agnosticism in the EU (CWG 2014). The party won 1.5% in the 1999 European elections. The Christian Party of Austria fought for the role of Christian values in society and politics. For the 2014 European elections it joined the Reform Conservatives (*Die Reformkonservativen*, REKOS) – an electoral alliance which opposed the centralisation of the EU, and advocated a renewal of Europe based on its Christian roots and rallied for social justice on the basis of Catholic social doctrine (CPÖ 2014). The alliance won 1.18% in the 2014 European elections.

6.2.2 Belgium

Political Catholicism in Belgium

Belgium was at the centre of political Catholic activities in the 20th century (Conway 1996). The country was leading the development of political Catholic trade unionism, with such organisation as the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (*Confédération des syndicats chrétiens*, CSC), established in 1904 (current name as of 1923), which in 2010 was still the largest trade union in Belgium (ETUI 2014), and the Young Christian Workers (*Jéunesse ouvrière chrétienne*, JOC), which eventually spread worldwide with more than 60 national movements (ICYCW 2014).

The first electoral success of the confessional Catholic Party (fr: *Parti catholique*, nl: *Katholieke Partij*) in 1884 was a reaction to anticlerical policies of the liberal government (Conway 1997). Thanks to the dominant position that the party occupied from 1884 until 1918, there was no other country in Western Europe where Catholicism and the Catholic Church enjoyed as principal a role in shaping not only religious, but also social and political life as it did in Belgium. Indeed, politicians representing parties of a political Catholic nature were members of Belgian governments continuously since 1884, with a brief break from 1940 to

1944 (German occupation) and short periods in opposition between 1945 and 1947 as well as 1954 and 1958 (Conway 1996). Up until 1999, Christian democrats were the leading political force that set the agenda and ran the country (Beke 2004).

Following the Second World War, the confessional Catholic Party remodelled itself into a more modern Christian democratic party – the Christian Social Party (fr: *Parti social-chrétien*, nl: *Christelijke Volkspartij*, PSC/CVP). In 1968, the party split along linguistic lines. The Christian Social Party remained the largest Flemish party until 2014 (share of votes varying from 60.4% in 1950 to 20.5% in the 2014 regional elections), with the exception of the period between 1999 and 2004 when the Flemish Liberals and Democrats (*Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten*, VLD) took over the lead. In 2001, the CVP changed its name to Christian Democrat and Flemish (*Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams*, CD&V). The Walloon Christian Social Party performed worse than its Flemish counterpart, winning second or third place in regional elections (21.6% in 1995, 16.1% in 2009), behind the Socialists and Greens (De Winter 1990). The French-speaking party is also one of the best examples of a trend among political Catholic parties in Western Europe to tone down the religious basis of their programmes. In an attempt to renew itself and attract non-Catholic voters, it removed references to Christianity from its name and in 2002 became the Humanist Democratic Centre (*Centre démocrate humaniste*, CDH). It did, however, remain the party attached to Christian values values, ‘offering an alternative to individualism and libertarianism in Belgian politics and society’ (Beke 2004: 158). One should also mention Christian democratic parties in the German-speaking community of Belgium: the Christian Social Party (*Christlich-Soziale Partei*, CSP), which secured 27% of votes in the 2009 regional elections, and ProDG (*Pro Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft*) with 17.5%.

Belgian political Catholicism and European policy

Belgium is one of the six founding members of the European Community. Initially, however, Belgian political Catholicism’s interest in European integration was only limited. It was not until the 1950s, when the ECSC and the EEC were formed, that the Christian Social Party developed a strongly pro-European line. Since then, most of the party’s members have remained supporters of European federalism, with Belgian politicians playing a major role in the European Christian democratic network (Lamberts 2004). At the same time, the salience of the European issue in Belgian politics had been traditionally very low. There was a lack of serious public debate about the integration process during national elections, while European elections tended to be debates between supporters of

the EU and even stronger supporters (Deschouwer and Van Assche 2008). Nonetheless, if party support for the ratification of consecutive European treaties is considered a proxy for the grouping's position on Europe, the pro-European stance of Belgian political Catholicism becomes obvious. The treaties of Maastricht, Amsterdam and Lisbon were supported by Christian democratic parties present in the Belgian national parliament. The situation was somewhat different in the case of the Nice Treaty. It was backed by the Flemish Christian democrats, but to the surprise of many, the Francophone Christian democratic party became its main challenger. The party argued that the treaty did not advance the preparations for the upcoming enlargement and did not maintain a balance between large and small member states. It also believed that the treaty benefited the Council of the EU at the expense of other institutions. However, Deschouwer and Van Assche (2008) pointed out that the Walloon Christian democrats' position did in fact not differ from the opinion of other parties that voted in favour of the Nice Treaty, and that its unexpected opposition to the treaty was driven by government-opposition dynamics (the party was in opposition at that time). Following the change of the name, the Christian Democrat and Flemish party increasingly used Flemish 'nationalist' rhetoric as a response to growing pressures from the nationalistic New Flemish Alliance (*Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie*, N-VA). Hence, it focused more on how the EU benefited Flanders and not necessarily the whole of Belgium, without, however, turning to Euroscepticism.

6.2.3 France

Political Catholicism in France

Initially, at the turn of the 20th century, most French Catholics were characterised by their strong conservatism and support for the French Action (*Action Française*) – a royalist, anti-republican, anti-Semitic and nationalist organisation. Following Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, numerous social Catholic initiatives were created, most notably the French Catholic trade union movement. Politically, France saw the emergence of different Christian democratic parties, but there were never any confessional Catholic parties. The People's Liberal Action (*Action Libérale Populaire*), formed in 1901, perhaps came closest to the notion of a Catholic party. It represented Catholic supporters of the republic and, as many others in Western Europe, aimed at combating anticlerical legislation introduced by the left in the early 20th century (McMillan 1996). In 1924, the Popular Democratic Party (*Parti démocrate populaire*, PDP) was established as a blend of Christian democracy, social

Catholicism and liberal Catholicism. It was, however, quite limited in terms of political influence – its electoral support never exceeded 3% (Delbreil 2004).

The post-war period witnessed the most successful political Catholic party in France, namely the Christian democratic Popular Republican Movement (*Mouvement Républicain Populaire*, MRP). The party was the first politically effective force of the Christian democratic family in French history (in 1946, it won 28.2% of votes in parliamentary elections, becoming the strongest party in France) (Béthouart 2004). It played a major political role until the late 1950s, when the creation of the Fifth Republic by de Gaulle and the increasingly polarised political scene led to its decline. Ever since, the French Christian democratic movement has gradually withered. Since the late 1960s, the strategy of French Christian democracy has been one of alliance, starting with the merger of the incumbent MRP with the Democratic Centre (*Centre démocrate*) into the Centre of Social Democrats (*Centre des démocrates sociaux*, CDS) (Elgie 1994). In 1978, the Centre of Social Democrats joined the coalition of centrist parties, the Union for French Democracy (*Union pour la Démocratie Française*, UDF), where it was one of the four founding parties. In 2002, many Christian democrats split from the Union for French Democracy and joined the pro-Chirac Union for a Popular Movement (*Union pour un mouvement populaire*, UMP), while more socially conservative politicians founded the Christian Democratic Party (*Parti chrétien-démocrate*, PCD).

French political Catholicism and European policy

French political Catholicism was instrumental in the development of European integration in the late 1950s and 1960s. Largely as a result of the influence of Robert Schuman, who was French Foreign Minister in ten successive governments between 1948 and 1953, the Popular Republican Movement developed a vision of European integration based on Franco-German reconciliation. This became the party's foreign policy goal, eventually resulting in the successful formation of the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Economic Community (McMillan 1996). The European question also became one of the key dividing elements between two right-wing parties, the Popular Republican Movement and the Gaullist movement. In fact, the Popular Republican Movement left the government it formed with de Gaulle's party in 1962 as a result of the 'Empty Chairs' crisis in the Council of Ministers. French political Catholicism retained its markedly pro-European stance, being in general 'less Jacobin, more Eurofriendly and more liberal on both economic and societal issues' (Evans 2003: 122). In later years, the Union for French

Democracy was one of the most cohesively pro-European parties (e.g. support for the ratification of the treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam), although it suffered some internal splits over the European issue in the 1990s. As was the case with the Popular Republican Movement and the Gaullist movement in the 1960s, European policy also played a role in party competition between the main right-wing parties, namely the Union for French Democracy and the Union for a Popular Movement, in the following decades. Some commentators saw the Union for French Democracy's pro-European stance as a way to differentiate itself from its hegemonic neighbour and to justify its separate existence (Evans 2003). The Christian Democratic Party, formed in 2002, can be described as largely pro-EU. It aimed to preserve the heritage of Robert Schuman and was against 'the weakening of Europe' (PCD 2014). At the same time, the party was in favour of intergovernmentalism and an increase in power of the Council of the EU. It also expressed its support for the EU to clearly recognise its Judeo-Christian roots (PCD 2014).

6.2.4 Germany

Political Catholicism in Germany

Throughout the 19th and 20th century, German Catholicism was a significant political force. In the second half of the 19th century, German Catholics formed a strong structure of social organisations, including a confessional political party and trade unions, which integrated the group. Faced with the pressure from Protestant Prussia and the Bismarckian *Kulturkampf*, which was largely an opportunistic attempt to win over liberals by focusing hostility on a supposedly anti-nationalist Catholic minority, in 1870 Catholics formed the Centre Party (*Zentrumspartei*) (Conway 1997). Soon the party became a political representative of German Catholics, winning as much as 27.9% of votes in the 1874 elections, which roughly equalled 80% of the Catholic vote (Lönne 1996). The *Zentrumspartei* survived the fall of the monarchy after the First World War, although in 1919 the Bavarian People's Party (*Bayerische Volkspartei*, BVP) split from the rest of the party to pursue a more conservative and Bavarian-centred policy. The Centre Party dissolved itself in July 1933, following increasing reprisals by Hitler's government and a massive defection of members.

The post-war period was marked by a general dissatisfaction with narrow, conservative and confessional parties, which had failed to resist Hitler. Therefore, two organisations were set up in 1945 – the Christian Democratic Union (*Christlich Demokratische Union*, CDU) and its

Bavarian sister-party, the Christian Social Union (*Christlich-Soziale Union*, CSU). Both were designed as ‘catch-all’ parties (Lees 2008). They have remained independent from each other organisationally, but at the federal level have cooperated closely, forming one group in the German *Bundestag*. The Christian Democratic Union and Christian Social Union became key players in German politics, dominating the two decades from 1945 until 1969, when they first lost power to a social-liberal coalition of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD) and the Free Democratic Party (*Freie Demokratische Partei*, FDP). CDU/CSU returned to power from 1982 to 1998 under the leadership of Helmut Kohl. The party suffered an electoral defeat in 1998, but regained voters’ support in 2005, when it formed a grand coalition with the Social Democratic Party. In 2009, CDU/CSU formed a coalition with the Free Democratic Party. Following the 2013 federal elections, CDU/CSU secured 41.5% of votes and set-up another grand coalition with the Social Democratic Party.

Progressing social changes such as the transformation of traditional values and secularisation, resulting in a loss of confessional voters, put a question mark over how politically Catholic the Christian Democratic Union remained. Undoubtedly, until the 1960s, both the Christian Democratic Union and the Christian Social Union were an expression of political Catholicism, even though they made some concessions to Protestant partners. Although the party was multi-confessional, its leadership was recruited from among the ranks of the Catholic Centre Party, while most of its members and voters were Catholic (Kaiser 2007). Since then, the Christian Democratic Union has slowly transformed itself into a genuine ‘people’s party’, resigning from making open references to Christian values or Catholic social teaching, even though it still remained broadly in favour of the social market economy (Lönne 1996).

German political Catholicism and European policy

The two parties – the Christian Democratic Union and the Christian Social Union – were the most pro-European mainstream parties in Germany and played a central role in the formation of the European integration project. The enthusiasm of German Christian democracy for European integration for many years remained undiminished (Broughton 1994), which is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that Konrad Adenauer, one of the founding fathers of a united Europe, was a devout Catholic and a Christian Democratic Union politician (previously a member of the Centre Party). Undoubtedly, the strong support for European integration was a way for German Christian democratic parties to

stress their anti-Nazism, to pave the way for the redemption of past sins, but also to reduce Allied oversight of West German affairs by creating a free trade zone in Europe which German politicians expected to be beneficial for the country's industry (Lees 2008).

There were instances when both parties experienced phases of stronger scepticism toward the EU (e.g. for the Christian Democratic Union the 1996 crisis over subsidies to Volkswagen in Saxony, which were declared unlawful by the European Commission). However, it was the Bavarian sister-party Christian Social Union which displayed a more coherently sceptical position toward the integration process. The Christian Social Union had always been more conservative with a more nationalistic, Bavarian agenda, which the party promoted at the local level. This regional nationalism was built around the self-perceived distinctiveness of Bavaria from other *Bundesländer* and a feeling of resentment toward fiscal transfers from richer to poorer states (Lees 2008). The 'soft' Eurosceptic trait in the party's rhetoric came to light in the 2000s, when the Christian Social Union developed its own position on some key European issues, focused on limiting what was perceived as excessive interventionism by Brussels. At the same time, as Jeffery and Paterson (2003: 72) noted, 'Bavarian thinking is about a rebalanced European federalism. It does not question the fundamental desirability of European integration. On the contrary, the Bavarian view can allow for further competences to be transferred to the European level (for example, on internal security) and even for strengthening of supranational institutions'. This found reflection in the common CDU/CSU position on Europe, which remained largely in favour of the EU with awareness of evident benefits of integration. This was, however, counterbalanced by clearly voiced concerns for German taxpayers' money paid to the EU budget and a demand for the adequate representation of German citizens' interests in EU institutions (Lees 2008).

The Christian Social Union's Euroscepticism grew particularly in strength after 2005 as a result of the Eurozone crisis, when the party began to send out Eurosceptic signals to its supporters, although it did remain pro-European. The party voted in line with the government's position, but at the same time voiced strong criticism of bailout packages, argued in favour of excluding Greece from the eurozone and threatened to veto the European Financial Stability Mechanism (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2013). In the 2014 European elections, the Christian Democratic Union and Christian Social Union ran separate campaigns, with the CSU advocating some changes that its sister-party did not support, i.e. cutting the number of commissioners in half, introducing referenda in

Germany over the country's European policy, limiting the freedom of movement to skilled workers and reducing the alleged exploitation of social security systems by immigrants (König 2014). Finally, the apparent difference between the regional and national level of the Christian Social Union's activities needs to be stressed. The local reflection of the Christian Social Union tended to stress Bavarian uniqueness, while the party's politicians at the national level toned down such rhetoric and were often very pro-European. As Taggart and Szczerbiak (2013) noted, 'the Christian Social Union has always been a balancing act between being in a pro-European national government, and a Eurosceptic, regional party that criticises the central government.' It is clear, therefore, that the Christian Social Union's Euroscepticism was not connected to its Catholic roots or any deeper ideological concerns, but was rather a form of political strategy that was always a part of its political approach and is not restricted to European integration but is a much broader phenomenon.

6.2.5 Ireland

Political Catholicism in Ireland

The role of Catholicism and the Catholic Church in Ireland was of particular importance, as throughout the 19th and early 20th century the definition of belonging to the Irish nation included belonging to Catholicism (Pulzer 2004). Similar to many Central and Eastern European countries and Malta, Catholicism became a symbol of Irish nationalism and the rejection of foreign domination (Conway 1997). However, following the 1921 treaty with Britain and the establishment of the Irish Free State, unlike many countries in continental Europe, there were no truly confessional parties established. The close relations of the Catholic Church with the two major Irish parties and the fact that members of the new government were Catholics made the creation of a confessional party appear superfluous (Keogh 1986). Indeed, the Church had such a strong position in Irish society and politics that the 1922 and even more the 1937 versions of the Irish constitution were an almost exact copy of the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, and were described as 'the perfect Christian democratic constitution' (Pulzer 2004: 17). Therefore, it was not until 1926 that political Catholicism in Ireland was significantly boosted by Pius XI and his 1925 encyclical *Quas Primas*.⁸ As a result, the League of the Kingship of Christ (*An Ríoghacht*) was formed with

⁸ The encyclical *Quas Primas* restated the doctrine that Christ must reign temporally not only in the hearts of the faithful, but also in society and the state.

the aim to ensure the recognition of Catholic social principles in Irish public life and promote Catholic social action (Keogh and O'Driscoll 1996).

When in 1932 the Fianna Fáil party came to power, many Catholic integralists hoped for the introduction of a confessional government policy, but they soon were disappointed. The leader of the party, Éamon de Valera, although a devout Catholic, also quickly became attracted to pragmatism and was not interested in rebuilding Irish society in line with the social teaching of the Catholic Church (Keogh and O'Driscoll 1996). Pragmatism remained at the core of Fianna Fáil, which became a centre-right, conservative 'catch-all' party.

1933 saw the emergence of Fine Gael, which, together with Fianna Fáil, dominated the Irish political system. For many years, the party was overshadowed by Fianna Fáil, which governed Ireland for 61 out of 79 years between 1932 and 2011. Fine Gael described itself as the 'progressive centre' (FG 2014), although it was seen more as a traditional right-wing party, with analysts disagreeing on whether to classify it as Christian democratic. On the one hand, Madeley (2013: 17) as well as Kalyvas and van Kersbergen (2010) included Fine Gael in the Christian democratic family, while Hanley (1994) on the other hand noticed that Fine Gael had as many (or as few) Christian democratic features as Fianna Fáil. At the same time, it was Fine Gael which was admitted to the European People's Party, while in 2009 Fianna Fáil joined the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (beforehand, the party was a member of the conservative Alliance for Europe of the Nations). Perhaps the best solution to this issue was proposed by Pelinka (2004), who poignantly observed that both parties (FG and FF) were less Christian democratic and more Catholic-nationalistic. Regardless of this slightly theoretical discussion, the fact is that Irish Catholics were finding political representation throughout the 20th century through both organisations (Keogh and O'Driscoll 1996).

What is important to note is the fact that political Catholicism was always well represented by mainstream Irish parties, not only the two largest ones – Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael – but also through the Irish Labour Party whose long-term leader (1932-1960) William Norton was a devout Catholic with a very conservative political outlook (Brown 1980), and Sinn Féin. As a result, the Church never had to exert direct influence, as Irish politicians were inherently pro-Church (Private correspondence with M. Holmes 2014).

Irish political Catholicism and European policy

Both main Irish political parties, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, shared a pro-European approach, with the former developing a somewhat more Eurosceptic rhetoric in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and the latter being one of the most pro-EU parties in Ireland (next to the Progressive Democrats) (Gilland 2008). Fine Gael supported the EU constitutional treaty, even though it was in opposition to the Fianna Fáil-led government, which also advocated the new treaty (Crum 2007). In its 2011 election manifesto, Fine Gael declared that the EU was a cornerstone of Irish economic recovery. It also supported an EU common security and defence system and carefully planned future enlargements, and in general was in favour of greater EU co-operation and integration on issues of mutual concern (FG 2011).

In its 2014 European elections manifesto, Fianna Fáil stated that ‘it is committed to a stronger, simpler and more democratic European Union’ and described itself as pro-European (FF 2014). When launching the party’s 2014 European elections manifesto, its leader, Micheál Martin TD, stated that ‘we [Fianna Fáil] absolutely believe that a strong, successful EU is in Ireland’s interests – and we believe that the only way to achieve this is to be active in the critical debates’ (FF 2014b). In reality, however, Fianna Fáil members started to display more Eurosceptic opinions. For example, then Cabinet Minister Eamon Ó Cúiv admitted that he voted against the Nice Treaty (Irish Times 2012), while Irish European Commissioner Charlie McCreevey called the initial rejection of the Nice Treaty ‘a sign of healthy democracy’ (Irish Independent 2010). The only Fianna Fáil MEP, Brian Crowley, also voiced criticism of European integration based on the perceived conflict between Catholicism and the liberal values of the EU, and decided to move from the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats group in the EP to the ‘soft’ Eurosceptic European Conservatives and Reformists (Irish Times 2014).

Nonetheless, what is particularly interesting in the Irish case is the role of civil society organisations in advancing Euroscepticism inspired by Catholicism. Most of these movements do not belong to political Catholicism, as they are mostly single-issue movements that do not try to advance a holistic political programme. However, their Euroscepticism based on concerns for the protection of traditional Catholic values is important in the context of this study. There have always been Catholic social groups in Ireland which participated in the ‘No’ campaigns in EU referendums. For example, a group called ‘Christian Family Action’ campaigned against the Single European Act in the 1980s

on grounds of rejecting abortion and divorce, although the efforts to mobilise Catholic anti-divorce groups to oppose European integration against a supposed tide of European secularism had little success (Gallagher 1988). Similarly, during the Maastricht Treaty referendum, the Pro-Life Action Campaign ran an anti-Maastricht campaign over the abortion question (Holmes 1993).

The role of Catholic social movements grew even stronger when child abuse scandals, which started surfacing from the mid-1990s onwards, tore apart the public authority and influence of the Irish Catholic Church. This is why Catholic groups took over the role of mobilising Catholic opposition to European integration. Catholic traditionalists were always against the integration process, based on a belief that the Catholic basis of the Irish constitution and society were to suffer from the liberal values of a secularised Europe. They also objected to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), which challenged some of the conservative Irish social laws. However, when faced with the clear benefits that the EU was creating for the Irish economy, including structural funds and farm subsidies, the opinion of these groups had almost no influence on public opinion. The situation changed with the dynamic growth of Irish economy, which meant that more post-materialist concerns took a centre stage.

In this context, C  ir, a conservative Catholic and Eurosceptic group, is particularly interesting. The movement was formed from various Catholic society groups, mostly anti-abortion actors, specifically to campaign for a ‘No’ in the Irish referendum on the Treaty of Lisbon in 2008. It campaigned against the treaty based on opposition to the introduction of abortion laws in Ireland and the defence of traditional Catholic values. The group also underlined its opposition to incorporating of some of the ECHR’s jurisprudence into the treaty (FitzGibbon 2013). It is debatable whether these social movements could be classified as part of Irish political Catholicism – in general, single-issue movements do not fulfil the criteria necessary to fall with this category, mainly because they do not form a holistic political action but rather focus on a limited numbers of topics. There is, however, a niche Eurosceptic movement in Ireland, which emerged as a result of protests against the liberalisation of Irish society and the ECHR conflated with European integration. It was led by social movements because of the low public authority of the Church’s hierarchy.

Finally, it should be noted that the majority of Irish Euroscepticism does not stem from a political Catholic background, but is fuelled either by growing right-wing assertiveness, which sees the EU as a source of constraints on the market, or by resentments at the

bailout programmes and austerity measures introduced in Ireland following the economic crisis of the late 2000s (Private correspondence with M. Holmes 2014).

6.2.6 Italy

Political Catholicism in Italy

The history of political Catholicism in Italy differs from that of other European states because of the pivotal role that the papacy played in the ideological and organisational setup of this movement and the long history of hostility between the Holy See and the Italian state. In effect, political Catholicism in Italy quickly became an agent in the papacy's struggle with the liberal Italian state in the 19th century, when the *Risorgimento* significantly decreased the territorial sovereignty of the pope, as well as the legal privileges, land property and social influence of the Church on the Italian peninsula (Kalyvas 1996). One of the first movements created with the aim of defending the Church against the secularisation and liberalism of the modern Italian state was the formation of the Catholic Youth Association (*Società della Gioventù Cattolica*) in 1868 (Pollard 1996), a forerunner to the very influential *Azione Cattolica Italiana*, the Catholic Action, which in 1959 attracted as many as 3.5 million members (ACI 2014).

The first political Catholic party was formed in the turbulent period after the First World War, as the Pope initially forbade Catholics to participate in national politics as a result of conflicts between the Vatican and the Italian state. The Italian People's Party (*Partito Popolare Italiano*) was set up in 1919 with the approval of the Holy See and announced a political programme entirely in line with the papal teaching on issues such as the family and freedom of education. Almost immediately, it received broad support from many Catholics across the country, winning 20.5% of votes in the 1919 elections. The party underwent a significant crisis in the 1920s connected to the creation of a new pro-fascist Catholic party approved by the pope, and the defection of 14 MPs supporting Mussolini. As a result of the Vatican's increasing support for Mussolini, who promised to solve the Roman Question (the issue of territorial sovereignty of the Holy See), the party was dissolved in 1926 (Pollard 1996).

Following the Second World War, Alcide De Gasperi formulated a programme for modern Italian Christian democrats and, as a result, a plethora of political Catholic groups created immediately after the war merged into the united Christian Democracy (*Democrazia Cristiana*, DC). The party played a major role in the establishment and development of the

post-war Italian republic, growing to become the largest Christian democratic party in Western Europe with more than 1.5 million members (Masala 2004). The party experienced unprecedented electoral success for almost 40 years, winning between 30% and 40% of votes (peaking at 48.5% in 1948) and saw only one brief period with a non-Christian democratic prime minister (1981-1987), though the party itself participated in the government coalition. It all came to an abrupt end between 1992 and 1994, when the entire Italian political system collapsed following a corruption scandal (the *mani pulite* – clean hands). In 1994, the party dissolved into a number of smaller successor organisations, two of which claimed to be the real Italian Christian democratic party: the Italian People's Party (*Partito Popolare Italiano*, PPI-DC) and Christian Democratic Centre (*Centro Cristiano Democratico*, CCD), which subsequently merged into the Union of Christian and Centre Democrats (*Unione dei Democratici Cristiani e Democratici di Centro*, UDC) (Kalyvas and van Kersbergen 2010).

It is also worth mentioning a lay Catholic movement, Communion and Liberation (*Comunione e Liberazione*, CL), which in the 1960s grew out of the Catholic youth association *Gioventù Studentesca*. The public role of the movement in Italy increased particularly during the 1974 referendum on the legalisation of divorce and the 1981 referendum on the legalisation of abortion. The Communion and Liberation created a political wing within the Italian Christian Democratic Party called *Il Movimento Popolare*, which had considerable influence during the 1980s and 1990s. Following the collapse of the Christian Democratic Party, the movement was supportive of Silvio Berlusconi and his party *Forza Italia*. It followed the Church's stance on social issues, including its focus on the protection of life, opposition to stem cell research and same-sex unions.

Italian political Catholicism and European policy

For many years, Italian Euroscepticism was non-existent, as the country's elites and public opinion were supportive of the integration process and the European Union, with Italian mainstream parties mirroring this widespread public support (with the exception of the Italian Communist Party before the 1970s, when the party displayed hostile attitudes to the then EEC). It was not until the 1990s, when the Italian political system underwent a complete makeover, that some Euroscepticism surfaced, mainly on the centre-right of the political spectrum (Quaglia 2008).

Among the mainstream parties, Christian Democracy, representing the political Catholic strand, was strongly pro-European. The Christian democratic party already in 1943 spoke out in favour of a European federation of free states with direct representation of citizens and dual European and national citizenships (Masala 2004). Indeed, its founder and leader, Alcide de Gasperi, is considered one of the founding fathers of the integration process, next to Robert Schuman and Konrad Adenauer, with whom he met on a regular basis to discuss European policy issues. De Gasperi, who himself was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was educated in Vienna and became an MP in the Austro-Hungarian Parliament, played an active role in the creation of the ECSC and in 1953 became the president of the Common Assembly of this organisation (EPP n.d.). In the following years, Italy under the Christian Democracy's leadership supported closer integration in the field of security and defence and, in order to counterbalance the Franco-German tandem, was in favour of even greater institutionalisation of the integration process (Masala 2004). In fact, the party played a key role in ensuring a wide pro-EU stance of Italian parties, as it made support for European integration a prerequisite for entering the government, which imposed a favourable stance toward the EU (and NATO) on various coalition partners (Conti and Verzichelli 2012).

The successor parties of the Italian Christian Democracy remained loyal to its traditional pro-European programme throughout the 1990s and 2000s, despite some criticism of the Constitutional Treaty's omission of the Christian roots of Europe and resentment for the rejection of Rocco Buttiglione as EU Commissioner in 2004. Despite the emergence of 'soft' Euroscepticism in the Italian party system in the mid-1990s, the country remained mostly a pro-European and pro-EU state, with high levels of public and party support for integration (Quaglia 2008). The situation started to change following the economic crisis of the late 2000s, with popular Euroscepticism steadily gaining ground. For example, in the 2014 European elections the Eurosceptic Five Star Movement won 21.2% of votes. The opposition to the euro seems to particularly have grown in Italy: only 43% of Italians in October 2014 thought that having the euro was a good thing for their country, the second lowest result among eurozone countries, with a majority of 47% believing that it was a bad thing – the highest score among all the states using the common currency (FB 2014).

6.2.7 Malta

Political Catholicism in Malta

Catholicism and the Catholic Church have played an important role in Malta. The island's Catholic heritage dates back to the Middle Ages and with no experience of Reformation, Christianity has been a continuous thread running throughout Maltese history (Cini 2002). In 1880, amidst the Anglicisation vs. Italianità conflict, whereby the Italian language was identified with education, public affairs, liberty and religion, while English was seen by parts of society as a language of colonial domination, the Anti-Reform Party was set up (Frendo 1994). The party represented the pro-Italian elite of the island and opposed the British colonial authorities and measures to anglicise the educational and judicial system, strongly supporting the struggle for Maltese independence (Pace 2001). It also protected the Catholic Church's influence and enjoyed its powerful support. In 1903, the party was renamed the National Party and in 1921 it was succeeded by the Democratic Nationalist Party. In 1926, the party merged with the Maltese Political Union to form the modern-day Nationalist Party (*Partit Nazzjonalista*, PN). Since Malta was granted independence in 1964, its political scene was dominated by two parties: the Maltese Labour Party (*Partit Laburista*, PL) and the Nationalist Party, with the two organisations alternating in government. The modern Nationalist Party is Christian democratic in nature, but also increasingly neo-liberal (Fenech 1988), and was traditionally perceived as a party of the middle class, business and the Church (Cini 2000).

Maltese political Catholicism and European policy

The Nationalist Party was consistently in favour of European integration and Maltese EU membership. Closer cooperation with European communities and the EU was seen by the party as a way to enhance economic growth, internal stability and security, but above all, to consolidate Malta's identity and recently established statehood (Pace 2002). Not surprisingly, it was the Nationalist Party that signed the association agreement with European communities in 1970 and filed an application to join the EU in 1990. Contrary to the Nationalist Party, the Labour Party assumed a more Eurosceptic position, and when it was in power, it would shift the Maltese policy towards neutrality at the expense of closer relations with the EU. When in 1998 the Nationalist Party won a victory over the Labour Party, it was able to lead Malta through the accession negotiations, culminating in full EU membership in 2004.

6.2.8 The Netherlands

Political Catholicism in the Netherlands

The importance of the Protestant (Calvinist)-Catholic religious cleavage for the Netherlands in the late 19th century and early 20th century cannot be overstated. It was one of the key elements leading to the ‘pillarisation’ of Dutch society – a division into several groups, namely Protestants, Catholics, and the two secular ones, liberals and socialists (Van Kersbergen and Becker 1988). Each group, or ‘pillar’ (nl: *zuil*), had a separate set of social organisations such as trade unions, political parties, churches, occupational associations, schools, universities, sports clubs, youth clubs, cemeteries or hospitals. As a result, the religious cleavage largely shaped Dutch politics and determined the key role of Christian and Catholic parties in the Dutch political system (Van Kersbergen 1995).

Roman Catholics were the second minority, after Protestants, to start organising themselves politically. Originally, Catholic politicians and members of parliament cooperated closely with liberals, whose support for freedom of religion was more appealing to them than cooperation with Protestants, who instituted a number of discriminatory policies against Catholics during the Dutch Republic period (16th to 18th century). At the end of the 19th century, liberals and Catholics began to grow apart, following the liberals’ opposition to the institution of religious (Catholic) schools. In 1904, the General League of Roman Catholic Caucuses (*Algemeene Bond van Roomsche-Katholieke Kiesverenigingen*) was founded as a federation of Catholic caucuses and parliamentarians. Relatively soon, the goal of obtaining public financing for religious schools led to the creation of a Catholic-Protestant coalition, which resulted in a number of coalition governments, particularly after 1917, and the introduction of universal male suffrage as well as the system of proportional representation (Ten Napel 1997).

The first Catholic confessional party was created in 1926 under the name of the Roman Catholic State Party (*Roomsch-Katholieke Staatspartij*), which in 1945 became the Catholic People’s Party (*Katholieke Volkspartij*, KVP). The Catholic People’s Party was a permanent member of all post-war Dutch governments from 1945 until 1977, winning around a third of votes until the late 1960s. Similar to other countries, the 1960s marked a significant social change in the Netherlands and the beginning of the secularisation process, which led to the demise of ‘pillarisation’, prompting the ultimate decline of electoral support for all confessional parties. In response to this trend, a federation of three confessional parties

(the Catholic People's Party, the Protestant Anti Revolutionary Party, and the Protestant Christian Historical Union) was established in 1975, and in 1980 a unified party – the Christian Democratic Appeal (*Christen-Democratisch Appèl*) was founded (Duncan 2007). The new party was multi-confessional and became more distinctively Christian democratic than its predecessors (Kalyvas and van Kersbergen 2010). This meant that the party lost its exclusively Catholic character, but continued to represent Catholic voters (in 2002, 66% of practicing Catholics voted for the Christian Democratic Appeal, compared with 53% of practicing Protestants (Andeweg and Irwin 2002)). In 1994, the Christian Democratic Appeal suffered a setback in national elections and lost a third of its seats in the parliament, which meant that for the first time since the introduction of male suffrage in 1917 (and universal suffrage in 1919), no party with a strong Catholic representation would be part of government. Since then, the party has enjoyed a rather mixed track-record. It regained some of its support in the 2000s, following organisational and programmatic changes, which introduced a more communitarian social approach at the expense of the market-centred policies pursued in the 1990s (Duncan 2007). In 2010 and 2012, the Christian Democratic Appeal again suffered significant electoral defeats, falling to the fifth place in the Dutch parliament and remaining outside of the government coalition – for only the second time in its history.

Dutch political Catholicism and European policy

Initially, Dutch political Catholicism in form of the Catholic People's Party was quite reserved about the idea of European integration. This was mainly due to an inward focus of politicians of the older generation that dominated the party's leadership until the 1960s. However, the situation changed in 1960 with a new generation taking the lead and advancing European integration, when the party began to support supranational cooperation and international solidarity, taking a markedly pro-European stance (Bosmans 2004). After the formation of the multi-confessional Christian Democratic Appeal, the party remained strongly pro-integrationist, e.g. it supported the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty, despite a wide gap between the opinions of the people and their parliamentary representatives with 47% of the Christian Democratic Appeal supporters voting 'No' in the Dutch EU Constitution referendum (Crum 2007). Following its electoral defeat in 2010, the Christian Democratic Appeal established the so-called Strategic Council, which worked on redefining the party's key policies. As a result of its work, the council advised *inter alia* to maintain the pro-European policy of the party. At the same time, the Christian Democratic Appeal and other mainstream parties in recent years sounded less

Europhile, in line with the growing Dutch public discontent with the EU. In the 2014 European elections campaign, the party took a more pragmatic approach to the integration process, stating that Europe should focus on core issues and not overly interfere with policies that can be best developed at national and local levels (van Kessel 2014).

It should be noted here that a Protestant Christian democratic party, the Christian Union (*Christen Unie*), displayed ‘soft’ Eurosceptic opinions, believing that the Netherlands should remain an independent political entity in the European Union (for more on Protestantism and Euroscepticism see: Vollaard 2006).

6.2.9 Portugal

Political Catholicism in Portugal

The story of the Catholic Church in Portugal is one of long-standing close relations to the monarchy and authoritarian regimes, which impacted significantly on the (under)development of political Catholicism in this country. The Church was the institution most closely associated with the monarchy before the 1910 revolution and the creation of the First Portuguese Republic. As a result, it found itself in a precarious situation when it was identified as the easiest one to penalise for the wrongdoings of the *ancien régime* (Gallagher 1996). The new republic did not only separate the Church from the state, but instituted anticlerical legislation on a grand scale, including nationalisation of all Church property, restrictions on worshipping and freedom of movement of the clergy, prohibition of religious teaching in schools and closing down of faculties of theology (Conway 1997). This led to the establishment of *Centro Académica da Democracia Cristão* (CADC) in 1912, – a pressure group designed to reinstitute the Church’s influence and protect Catholic interests. Oliveira Salazar, who later became dictator of Portugal and dominated political life in the country for almost 40 years, was the leading figure of the movement. In 1917, an explicitly Catholic movement was established, the *Centro Católico Portuguesa* (CCP) (Gallagher 1996).

Following the 1926 coup d’état and the 1928 rise to power of Salazar, Portuguese political parties slowly disintegrated. The Church, in return for the protection by Salazar’s authoritarian state, did not encourage any political movements or parties that could claim Catholic inspiration, thus, when political freedoms were returned in 1974, there were no foundations for the development of strong political Catholicism – ‘the time for advancing a Christian democratic alternative to the left or to secularism had long passed’ (Gallagher

1996: 129). As a result, political Catholicism remained a minority movement in Portugal, also because the Catholic Church stayed away from direct intervention in political affairs.

The Democratic and Social Centre (*Centro Democrático e Social* – CDS) was set up in 1974 by conservative politicians with links to the old regime and received support from areas where the Church still had a strong influence (Corkill 1993). Originally, the party subscribed to Christian democratic values, but it underwent some programmatic shifts in the 1990s, which moved it more to the centre of the political scene. It participated in the 1979, 1980 and 2002 coalition governments, with average support of around 8% to 10%, although it did suffer a significant loss of votes at the end of the 1980s, when its support fell to 4.3% in 1987. Madeley (2013: 17) also identified the Portuguese Social Democratic party as Christian democratic, because of a faction within it that subscribed to some aspects of Christian democracy.

Portuguese political Catholicism and European policy

During the mid-1970s, following the transition to democracy, all major political parties in Portugal, apart from the communists but including Democratic and Social Centre (*CDS-Partido Popular*, Democratic and Social Centre-People's Party as of 1993), adopted a pro-EU stance. EU membership held the promise not only for rapid economic development, but perhaps more importantly, of firmly anchoring Portuguese politics and the state within a network of Western pluralist democracies, preventing the return of authoritarian governments. However, the situation changed in the 1990s, after the Democratic and Social Centre-People's Party suffered a significant outflow of its supporters to the Social-Democratic Party (PSD) (the CDS-PP share of votes fell from ca. 16% in 1976 to 4.3% in 1987). Following a change in leadership, the party decided to differentiate itself more on the political scene and capitalise on the economic recession and growing discontent with Europe. It declared its opposition to the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and made it a major campaign issue (Magone 2003). Ultimately, this led to the expulsion of the party from the European People's Party. The Democratic and Social Centre-People's Party abandoned its Eurosceptic position in the second half of the 1990s, when it became apparent that its new anti-EU stance was making it increasingly difficult to enter into centre-right coalitions, in particular at the local level, where the party was pushed out of power in many Portuguese cities. Since then, the party either played down its Euroscepticism or reformulated its position on European issues into a generally pro-EU stance, such as its renewed commitment to the European single currency. This was made

easier by the low salience of European issues in Portuguese politics, where most parties either converged on Europe or remained silent (Lobo and Magalhães 2011). The party supported the adoption of the treaties of Amsterdam (with some MPs defecting) and Nice. It also voted in favour of the Constitutional Treaty.

In addition, the Portuguese Social Democratic Party proclaimed its support for European integration, advocating for closer cooperation at the EU level. Its manifesto stated: ‘The historic deeds already achieved by the European communities, such as securing lasting peace on the continent, overcoming aggressive nationalisms, constituting a large space of prosperity, freedom, tolerance and respect for human rights, together with the defence of cultural diversity and of solidarity between peoples, strengthen us in our commitment to a more united Europe’ (PSD 2014: 11).

6.2.10 Spain

Political Catholicism in Spain

Ties between Catholicism, the Spanish state and society were always very strong. Disputes about the role of the Church in Spain formed a central element of often violent conflicts between liberal and republican anticlericalists on the one side and Catholic monarchists on the other (Conway 1997). At the same time, the construction of a uniformly Catholic Spanish society was the ambition of many intellectuals, preachers, politicians and the Church hierarchy. The first decades of the 20th century saw the development of political Catholicism in Spain in the form of trade unionism, which was particularly successful in agrarian areas, e.g. the National Catholic Agrarian Confederation (*Confederación Nacional-Católica Agraria*, CNCA), founded in 1917. Another influential organisation was the National Catholic Association of Propagandists (*Asociación Católica Nacional de Propagandistas*, ACNdeP) – an elite Catholic lay organisation, which played a significant role in pre-civil war Spain (Vincent 1996).

The 1920s marked a new beginning for Spanish political Catholicism. With the advancement of mass politics, the first Spanish political Catholic party, the People’s Social Party (*Partido Socialista Popular*, PSP) was formed in 1922. However, the party never attracted large support, as for many Catholics the idea of a uniform, monarchist and Catholic Spain was incompatible with pluralist politics, represented by the People’s Social Party. The party fell into disarray following the 1923 military coup of General Miguel Primo de Rivera (Conway 1997). At the time, many Catholics and political Catholic groups

welcomed the military dictatorship, hoping it would ensure the privileged position of Catholicism in the state. Following the fall of the monarchy and the defeat of the monarchist parties in 1931, Catholics instituted a new organisation, the National Action, soon renamed Popular Action (*Acción Popular*, AP). The party was formed to protect Catholic interests and was a vehicle for those who campaigned against the republic, which in 1931 passed a new constitution that disestablished the Catholic Church and prohibited religious orders from engaging in education. The Popular Action later became a key element of an umbrella electoral organisation, the Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right-wing Groups (*Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas*, CEDA), whose aim was to bring the Spanish Catholic right into mass politics. The ‘principal aim and fundamental reason for its existence’ was to work for ‘the empire of the principles of Christian public law in the governance of the State’ (*Programa votado por el primer congreso de la CEDA (febrero-marzo de 1933): Conclusiones aprobadas* in Vincent 1996). At the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, very few Catholics remained loyal to the republican government (mostly from regional Basque and Castilian Catholic parties). In 1939, most Catholics welcomed Franco’s victory, but paradoxically it brought an end to Catholic parties, as they were banned, similarly to all others. At the same time, Franco recognised the privileged position of Catholicism in Spain, which further strengthened the connection between religion and the state (Vincent 1996). The effect of Franco’s era was so strong that in fact it marginalised other definitions of Spanish national identity that did not include religious references, but rather drew on the Enlightenment traditions.

Spanish political Catholicism went through significant changes in the post-Franco era, transforming itself from a minority party on the far right to a political party of the centre, occupying a major position in Spanish politics. As of the 1970s, the Spanish Catholic Church consciously chose not to interfere in party politics and decided not to promote any parties that would be based on Catholicism and Catholic social teaching. This meant that there was no direct link in Spain between the Church and Catholicism on the one hand and the party formation process on the other.

In 1976, following Franco’s death and the gradual transition to parliamentary democracy, members of the pro-reformist bloc in Franco’s regime created the People’s Alliance (*Alianza Popular*, AP) and the Union of the Democratic Centre (*Unión de Centro Democrático*, UCD), both containing Christian democratic factions. In 1982, the Union of the Democratic Centre suffered a split, which resulted in the creation of a Christian democratic

People's Democratic Party (*Partido Demócrata Popular*, PDP). The party began cooperating closely with the People's Alliance, which started to take over the significantly reduced electoral base of the Union of the Democratic Centre and in 1989 merged with its allied parties (among them the PDP) into the People's Party (*Partido Popular*, PP) (Matuschek 2004). The People's Party first came to power in 1996, only to lose again to the Socialists in 2004. Finally, in 2011 it won a clear victory in national elections with 44.6% of votes. The party could be described as a pragmatic, catch-all right wing party at times. However, it aligned itself with the Church on some policy issues and supported the political mobilisation of Catholics, e.g. on issues of abortion law or gay marriages. In modern-day Spain, two more parties can be included in the political Catholic group – both regional, Christian democratic organisations: the Democratic Union of Catalonia (*Unió Democràtica de Catalunya*, UDC) and the Basque Nationalist Party (*Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea*, EAJ). In fact, the Basque Nationalist Party in its earlier days was a clerical, pro-Catholic and pro-Church party.

Spanish political Catholicism and European policy

Spanish mainstream political parties have traditionally been regarded as pro-European. This reflected public opinion in Spain, where citizen's support for EU membership has almost always maintained levels above 50%, with a brief period below this threshold between 1994 and 1995. The Spanish People's Party, representing political Catholicism on the Spanish political stage, took a strongly pro-integration stance, including during the time of the Socialist government, when the party was in opposition (Gómez-Reino et al. 2008). Before accession, EU membership was perceived by the public and political parties alike as a historical opportunity for Spain on its way to the modernisation of economy and to ensure increased political safety in the post-Franco period. Following EU accession, despite growing controversies surrounding the newly launched EMU, Spanish political parties, including the People's Party, increasingly backed the integration process. When the People's Party took power in 1996, it exhibited the highest share of positive discourse on the EU out of all national Spanish parties, remaining at the same time opposed to the federalisation of the EU (Ruiz Jimenez and Egea de Haro 2011). Nevertheless, the entry of Spain into the eurozone in 1999 was presented as one of the greatest achievements of the People's Party government. The party also supported the Constitutional Treaty during the 2005 Spanish referendum (Crum 2007). It declared, however, that the EU should remain a union of national states, where national sovereignty should be a key element, with no need for federal constructs to be developed (García et al. 2010). Despite supporting the Church's

opposition to the liberalisation of abortion law or the introduction of gay marriages, the party has never criticised the EU based on moral-cultural issues, and continued to perceive Spanish EU membership positively because of its beneficial influence on the modernisation effort, particularly in the sphere of economy. The other two parties traditionally associated with political Catholicism, the Basque Nationalist Party and the Democratic Union of Catalonia, also belonged to the pro-EU camp.

6.2.11 Switzerland

Political Catholicism in Switzerland

The political Catholic movement in Switzerland originated in the 19th century, amidst the Swiss *Kulturkampf* and the civil war of 1847 – the clash of the anticlerical, radical liberals on one and the clerical-conservative Catholics on the other side (Geissbühler 1999). Political Catholicism started emerging essentially as the parliamentary representation of the losers of the civil war, i.e. seven Catholic cantons which became the heartland of Catholic conservatism in Switzerland. Initial attempts to create national political Catholic parties failed, mainly because of the differences between the seven Catholic cantons and Catholics in other places around the country, which were more progressive. Finally in 1912, the first successful nationally united political Catholic party was founded under the name of the Swiss Conservative People's Party (*Schweizerische Konservative Volkspartei*, SKVP). It attracted quite divergent social groups, sometimes with competing economic interests, but the party was bound together by the common foundations of Catholic social teaching and fierce anti-socialism as well as strong anti-liberalism (Rölly-Alkemper 2004). The Conservative Party's strict course of opposition to the federal government forced the ruling liberals to include a member of the party in the Swiss Federal Council (a Swiss collective head of state organ); and as of 1919, the party occupied 2 out of 7 seats in the council. Throughout the 1950s, the party enjoyed high levels of public support, culminating in 23.4% of votes won in the 1963 elections. Following a number of name changes, in 1970 the party adopted its current name, Christian Democratic People's Party of Switzerland (*Christlichdemokratische Volkspartei der Schweiz*, CVP). This was a sign of the party's attempt to open itself up confessionally, as a response to social changes, and to win elections in traditionally non-Catholic urban centres. Despite this, the Christian Democratic People's Party remained a distinctly Catholic party (Gees 2004). In the decades following the breakup of more secular Catholic support networks, the support base of the party eroded, with only 15% of Catholics declaring their attachment to the Christian Democratic People's Party, compared

with 20% in the 1980s (Geissbühler 1999). The situation was aggravated by competition from the Swiss People's Party (*Schweizerische Volkspartei*, SVP), which demanded a second seat in the *Bundesrat*. Following the vote in the federal assembly, one of the two Christian Democratic People's Party members of the Federal Council, Ruth Metzler, was not re-elected, and was replaced by Swiss People's Party member Christoph Blocher. Since then, the Christian Democratic People's Party maintained support of 12 to 14% of the electorate (14.6% in the 2007 national elections).

Swiss political Catholicism and European policy

Switzerland is a country with strong Euroscepticism, which tended to overshadow pro-EU opinions. The country is neither a member of the EU nor of the European Economic Area (EEA). In the 2001 referendum, the Swiss rejected the possibility to commence accession negotiations (Favero 2013). The Christian Democratic People's Party stance on Europe could be described as somewhat ambiguous. In 1998, in an attempt to attract new voters, the party demanded Swiss entry in the European Union. Then, following a national drift away from considering accession to the EU, it toned down its rhetoric and began stressing its support for cooperation with the EU through bilateral agreements (Gees 2004). Since then, the party remained pro-EEA, but took no stance on the issue of Swiss membership in the EU (Schwok 2009). In its 2013 programmatic document called 'The path of Switzerland in Europe' (*La voie de la Suisse en Europe*), the party declared that 'Switzerland needs to strengthen its ties with the EU' via bilateral agreements in the fields of energy, public health, safety of food, registration of chemical substances and products and an emissions trading scheme, among others. The party supported the agreement on free movement of people and the cooperation with the EU in security and defence, underlining at the same time the need to maintain Switzerland's neutrality. Reflecting the political reality, the party stated that 'the accession to the EU is not on the agenda' (CVP 2013) and did not take a stance on this issue. Taking into account that Swiss lukewarm attitudes to the EU are mostly affected by voters' attachment to neutrality and fear of the negative consequences EU membership could have for the Swiss economy (Christin and Trechsel 2002), the party's ambiguous position on Europe seems to be an attempt to adjust to political reality, where Swiss support for EU membership remained at low levels.

6.3 Central and Eastern Europe

6.3.1 Croatia

Political Catholicism in Croatia

The roots of political Catholicism in Central and Eastern Europe are often different to those of Western European countries, where the political mobilisation of Catholics originated in the 19th and early 20th century as a way to oppose hostility or open persecution of Catholics and the Catholic Church. Many of the political Catholic groups in CEE made their name by associating themselves with national liberation movements and advocating national sovereignty (Grzymala-Busse 2013), as was the case in Croatia.

Political Catholicism in Croatia took an organised shape in 1900 with the establishment of the Croatian Catholic Movement (*Hrvatski katolički pokret*). Similar to other political Catholic groups of the time, the Croatian Catholic Movement was a lay organisation focused on defending and promoting Catholicism in public life. In 1919, a political branch of the movement was created – the Croatian Popular Party (*Hrvatska pučka stranka*). The party originated from grievances of the Croat population over the policies of the central government in Belgrade and the growth of Serbian influences within the common Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, but it was not as successful as its counterparts in other European countries (e.g. Slovenia). It lost the 1920 elections for the constitutional assembly and the 1923 general elections to its rival party, the Croatian Peasant Party (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka*), which presented a more radical, pro-independence programme (Conway 1997). After King Alexander implemented his dictatorial rule in 1929, the party was dissolved. From 1941 to 1945, Croatia's fascist movement, *Ustaša*, successfully enlisted some of the more radical Croat Catholics, which left a mark on Croatian Catholicism and remained a sensitive issue for decades (Biondich 2007). In fact, many parish priests and Catholic nationalist organisations enthusiastically supported the *Ustaša* state, while the authorities were eager to stress the Catholic character of the new country by nominating clergy to prominent posts and passing laws against freemasonry, contraception or blasphemy (Conway 1997).

Following the fall of communism in 1990, the Croatian political scene saw the establishment of a number of parties that related to Christian democratic principles, most notably the Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*, HDZ), the Croatian

Christian Democratic Party (*Hrvatska kršćanska demokratska stranka*, HKDS) and the Croatian Democratic Party (*Hrvatska demokratska stranka*, HDS). The latter two merged in 1992 to form the Croatian Christian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska kršćanska demokratska unija*, HKDU), but it remained fairly unsuccessful, securing only one seat in the parliament in the 1995 and 2000 elections.

The Croatian Democratic Union was the party that dominated much of the post-communist Croatian political scene. It ruled Croatia under the undisputed leadership of President Franjo Tuđman. After his death in late 1999, the party suffered significant losses in the 2000 elections, but returned to power in 2003. In 2011, the party moved to opposition after 8 years in government. There is a certain controversy regarding the inclusion of the Croatian Democratic Union among Christian democratic parties, e.g. Grzymala-Busse (2013: 340) stated that ‘the party was largely the electoral engine of President Tuđman until his death in 2000, without espousing Christian democratic doctrine.’ Perhaps in the 1990s, it was possible to classify it as nationalist, but since the death of Tuđman, who had heavily influenced the party’s programme and policies, the organisation underwent a significant reorientation, calling itself a modern Christian democratic and conservative party (Šedo 2010). Madeley (2013: 17) included it among his list of Christian democratic parties in Europe, and in July 2013, when Croatia joined the EU, the Croatian Democratic Union became a full member of the EPP. Regardless of this, the party can be included in the political Catholic movement, as it portrayed itself as the defender of Catholicism and enjoyed the strong support of the Catholic Church, which helped the party to return to power in 2003 (Perica 2006, Iveković 2002).

The fundamental role of the Catholic Church in the construction of the Croatian nation is an important one, particularly in the context of this study. Indeed, as Perica (2006: 312) noted ‘the Church was one of the nation’s co-founders’, and in order to emphasise its role, it adopted the semi-official title ‘Church of the Croats’ (*Crkva u Hrvata*). The role of Catholicism for state and nation building was so strong that Catholicism became a state religion *de facto*, with many elite members during Tuđman’s period presenting their Catholicism as a patriotic duty and the Church advancing an agenda of building a Catholic Croat nation (Perica 2006). Similar to Poland, the Church in Croatia ‘rather actively sought (political) power’ (Jakelić 2010: 67). It established a close alliance with President Tuđman and the Croatian Democratic Union. It is also important to note the apparent split of the Croatian Church between liberal reformers inspired by the Second Vatican Council and

conservatives, who believed that the council was a mistake. The liberal-conservative split, which became more clearly visible after 1989, meant that the Church maintained an ambiguous position on the EU integration process (Stojić 2006), although the liberal wing of the Church played a supportive role in Croatian EU accession.

Croatian political Catholicism and European policy

During the 1990s, Croatia was in unofficial international isolation, left outside of European integration, and thus EU membership was not an immediate goal of the ruling Croatian Democratic Union (Stojić 2006). In addition, because of the instability following Yugoslavia's dissolution, the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and its nationalistic programme, the Croatian Democratic Union put the European integration issue aside and pursued a 'go-alone' policy (Ashbrook 2010). After the 2000 electoral defeat and its return to power in 2003, the party became a strong supporter of Croatian EU membership (Stojić 2006). Indeed, the number one priority for the Croatian Democratic Union government of Ivo Sanader (2003-2009) was full Croatian EU membership (Ashbrook 2010). At times, the opposition even blamed the Croatian Democratic Union government for neglecting domestic problems and focusing instead on one card – the EU (Stojić 2006). The 2014 European elections manifesto of the Croatian Democratic Union continued to state that Croatian EU membership was the priority: 'We understand Europe as a continent whose peoples, in spite of all their national, political, cultural and economic differences, joined in a common historical heritage, common lived present and work together on unifying the future' (HDZ 2014).

6.3.2 Lithuania

Political Catholicism in Lithuania

All Baltic States experienced a similar history. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia for centuries changed hands between Russian, German and Polish rulers. Following the dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 18th century, most of Lithuania became incorporated in the Russian Empire. It was at that time that the Catholic Church, similar to Poland, became a key actor in upholding Lithuanian national identity and preserving the language, when throughout the 19th century the Russian Empire tried to suppress it, replacing it with the Cyrillic script (Bruce 2002). Naturally, the role of the Catholic Church was more complex. On the one hand, the clergy were an instrument of gradual Polonisation of Lithuania for centuries, but on the other hand, it was the key actor

opposing the tsarist government's attempt to strengthen Orthodoxy, which was used as a way to assimilate the Lithuanian peasantry into Russian culture (Valantiejus 2002).

The political organisation of Catholics in Lithuania started at the turn of the 20th century. The first political Catholic organisation, the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Union (*Lietuvių krikščionių demokratų sąjunga*, LKDS), was established in 1905. The collapse of the German and Russian Empires at the end of the First World War gave the Baltic States, including Lithuania, an opportunity to gain independence. In this new environment, the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party (*Lietuvių krikščionių demokratų partija*, LKDP) was founded in 1917. Its representative entered the Lithuanian Council, which declared the country's independence in 1918. The party was the largest political organisation from 1918 until 1926, winning 35% of votes in elections to the constituent Seimas in 1920. Similar to other parties in the region, it was perceived as a key nation-building force in the interwar period, displaying strong nationalistic sentiments based on anti-Polonism (Grzymala-Busse 2013). The multi-party system came to an abrupt end with the 1926 *coup d'état* led by the Nationalist Union (Krupavicius 1998).

Following the Second World War, Lithuania was incorporated into the Soviet Union and non-communist political activity was banned. As was the case in Poland, the Catholic Church became a haven for people opposing the regime, with many dissidents not distinguishing between their national and religious feelings (Senn 1997). After the collapse of communism, the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party reconstituted itself in 1990 and in 1996 the party became the second-largest force in Lithuania with 10.4% of votes, entering a coalition government with the Homeland Union (*Tėvynės sąjunga*, TS). This meant it became one of the most successful Christian democratic parties in Central and Eastern Europe. However, the coalition became quickly unpopular as a result of its programme of continued austerity policies, which resulted in a slump in support and a split of the party (Grzymala-Busse 2013). In 2001, the remaining core merged with the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Union (*Krikščionių demokratų sąjunga*, KDS) to form the Lithuanian Christian Democrats (*Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai*, LKD). The party ran in elections in 2004 and 2008 in coalition with the Homeland Union, with which it merged in 2008, creating the Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats (*Tėvynės sąjunga - Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai*, TS-LKD). The new party won the 2008 elections with 19.7% of votes, but lost four years later, when its support fell to 15%, which meant it was consequently excluded from government.

The members who opposed the merger of the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party with the Christian Democrats Union in 2001 created a new Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party (*Lietuvos krikščioniškosios demokratijos partija*), which merged in 2010 with the Christian Conservative Social Union (*Krikščionių konservatorių socialinė sąjunga*), another party that broke away from the Homeland Union in 2000. Together they created the Christian Party (*Krikščionių partija*, KP), which won 1.2% in the 2012 elections.

Lithuanian political Catholicism and European policy

Similar to other Central and Eastern European countries, there was a strong consensus among Lithuanian elites on foreign policy aims, including the country's accession to the EU. According to a 2006 expert survey, all main Lithuanian parties ranged from moderately to very pro-EU, with conservatives (which according to the methodology of the study included Christian democrats) at the top of the range on the pro-EU scale (Duvold and Jurkynas 2006: 115). The elite consensus remained largely unchanged even after accession, although several parties introduced more Eurosceptic elements in their manifestos. Despite this, in 2004, 2008 and 2011, all main parties continued to sign four-year agreements on foreign policy goals, approving of Lithuania's EU membership and sharing a similar view on how the country could benefit from it (Pigeonnier 2012).

In the pre-accession period, the Lithuanian Christian Democrats displayed its support for EU membership, favouring a rapid integration of the country with the EU and NATO. In fact, in the 2014 European elections the party stated that during 24 years of Lithuania's independence, it had been a driving force behind the country's ambition to become a full-fledged member of the Western world (TS-LKD 2014). In the late 2000s, the party remained supportive of the EU, although in the 2012 elections manifesto it defined its European policy as seeking '[i]ntegration while maintaining a prudent balance'. It also declared its opposition to a 'two-speed' Europe and supported strengthening European institutions with an aim to ensure balance between smaller and larger member states. In addition, it stated that '[i]n matters relating to the statehood, national heritage, cultural and traditional values, it is necessary to protect the independence of Lithuania. Our goal [is] a united, but not unified Europe" (TS-LKD 2012).

Apart from political parties, which remained largely pro-EU, it is possible to identify a few social movements in Lithuania that opposed the EU, mostly on the grounds that it may threaten the traditional family. The Citizens' Union for Honesty and the Nation (*Piliečių*

Sąsanka 'Už dorą ir tautą, PSDT) was a movement that united people willing to defend traditional (Christian) family values, and who were also very sceptical about the advancement of LGBT rights, which they saw as being promoted by the EU. The Grunewald National Resistance Movement (*Žalgirio nacionalinio pasipriešinimo judėjimo*, ŽNPJ) was a Eurosceptic movement focused on protecting Lithuanian sovereignty and defending traditional values. They were mostly concerned with sovereignty issues, but supported Catholic views on the family and strongly opposed legislation on same-sex marriages.

6.3.3 Slovakia

Political Catholicism in Slovakia

Unlike the Czechs, who emerged after the period of communism as one of the least religious societies in Central and Eastern Europe, their long-term compatriots, the Slovaks, remained more faithful to the Catholic religion (Froese 2005). The history of political Catholicism in Slovakia, similar to Croatia, was one of interconnection between Catholicism and nationalism. After the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, both nations, Croats and Slovaks, became parts of the largely non-Catholic states of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Czechoslovakia. The Catholic identity of both nations as well as the Church played a central role in their struggle for autonomy (Conway 1997). At the same time, it should be noted that a substantial Protestant minority was also politically active (e.g. leading the Slovak National Party (*Slovenská národná strana*, SNS) and engaged in the Slovak autonomy movement.

A key moment in the history of political Catholicism in Slovakia were the early 1900s, when the Slovak People's Party (*Slovenská ľudová strana*, SLS), also called Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (*Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana*, HSLS), was formed under the leadership of Andrej Hlinka, a Catholic priest. In 1925, the party won 34.3% of votes in Slovakia and began advancing Slovak autonomy within Czechoslovakia (Suppan 2004). One of the party's main reservations about the Czechoslovak state was the perceived secularism of the Czechs, in particular their elites, which contrasted a solid Catholic outlook of Slovakia's rural territories (Henderson 2001). The party was significantly compromised when Hlinka's successor – Jozef Tiso, also a Catholic priest – led the creation of an authoritarian, pro-fascist government, which ultimately transformed Slovakia into a German Nazi puppet state (Grzymala-Busse 2013). The party was disbanded in 1945.

After the fall of communism, the Christian Democratic Movement (*Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie*, KDH) was set up in 1990. From the very beginning, religion was central to the party, with most of its members in initial years recruited from among Catholic, anti-communist lay people and activist priests (Bugajski 2002). The leader of the Christian democratic Movement, Ján Čarnogurský, stated that Christianity was ‘the source of our internal stability, the inspiration for our decisions, and the source of our supporters’ (Haughton 2005 in Grzymala-Busse 2013). In the late 1990s, the party suffered a split when the more fundamentally Catholic wing of the party refused to merge with its electoral coalition partner, the liberal Democratic Union (*Demokratická únia*, DU). As a result, some of the Christian Democratic Movement’s members for whom religion did not play such an important role in policymaking moved to the newly established Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (*Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia*, SDKÚ), while the Christian Democratic Movement became more fundamentally Catholic and moved closer to the Catholic Church. These events ultimately led to a decline in the Christian Democratic Movement’s electoral support – in the 2006 elections, the party won only 8% of votes, compared with 15% for the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union, which ran a campaign surrounding economic reforms and support for EU membership. The Christian Democratic Movement tried to moderate its policy, but the change was perceived as not credible by voters and the party maintained its 8% support in the 2010 and 2012 parliamentary elections (Grzymala-Busse 2013), while the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union won 15% in 2010, but experienced a significant electoral defeat in 2012, winning only 6% of votes.

There is a disagreement as to the classification of the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union as Christian democratic. Madeley (2013) included it in his indicative list of 81 European Christian democratic parties, but others have pointed to the fact that over time, the party has profiled itself as liberal (Private correspondence with K. Henderson 2014), with an emphasis on maximising elements of direct democracy, gender equality and opposition to discrimination of single-parent families (Hloušek and Kopeček 2010: 125).

Madeley (2013) additionally identified the Party of Hungarian Community (Sl: *Strana maďarskej komunity*; Hu: *Magyar Közösség Pártja*, SMK-MKP) as a Christian democratic party. It was set up in 1998 and represented the ethnic Hungarian minority in Slovakia, focusing on protecting and strengthening Hungarian minority rights.

Slovakian political Catholicism and European policy

Throughout the 1990s, the Christian Democratic Movement was a strong supporter of European integration and Slovakia's EU membership. To this end, the party was taking advantage of its good relationships with other Christian democratic parties in Western Europe. However, following the creation of the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union, the Christian Democratic Movement moved to a more traditionalist position, becoming more prone to 'soft' Euroscepticism, characteristic for rural Catholic voters of Slovakia. The party's scepticism toward the EU resulted from a sensitivity to Russia and a belief that there was a cultural clash between Western values and the more traditional values of the Slovak nation (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2001). In its criticism of the integration project, the party focused on protecting Slovak national identity based on traditional family values, with opposition to the Council of Europe's recommendation on the registration of same-sex partnerships. The Christian Democratic Movement also joined other Christian democratic parties in Europe in demanding that Christian values as a source of European civilisation be inscribed in the European Constitution (Henderson 2008).

The Slovak Democratic and Christian Union was unequivocally pro-European. In fact, in the 2002 elections campaign, it projected itself as the sole guarantor of Slovakia's admission to NATO and the EU and made this issue a key element of its positioning on the political scene (Haughton and Rybář 2004). In its 2012 programme, the party declared that it 'believed in the efficiency and future of the EU' (SDKU 2012: 33), supported the participation of Slovakia in common efforts to protect the euro, and was in favour of EU policies that increased the Union's cohesion (SDKU 2012).

6.3.4 Slovenia

Political Catholicism in Slovenia

Similar to other Central and Eastern European countries, political Catholicism in Slovenia emerged in an environment where Catholicism became a key element in the formation of national identity and struggle for self-determination. The first political Catholic party to emerge in Slovenia was the Catholic National Party (*Katoliška narodna stranka*) established in 1892. Initially, it was a confessional, conservative party, focused on promoting traditional values. It slowly evolved into a mass party, paying greater attention to the evolving Catholic social teaching and support for workers and farmers. This was marked by the change of the party's name to the Slovene People's Party (*Slovenska ljudska stranka*, SLS). The SLS became

the largest Slovene party, advocating greater autonomy for Slovenia in the Habsburg Empire (Pulzer 2004). Following the First World War, the party suffered a significant decrease in electoral support (down from 87% to 36%) in the 1920s national elections, although it remained the largest political organisation in the country. However, in order to regain popular support, it changed its rather pro-Yugoslav policies and started advocating greater Slovene autonomy within the newly created Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, by supporting stronger federalisation of the state (Morawski 2013). In the years before the Second World War, the party suffered a significant outflow of members and supporters as a result of its cooperation with the dictatorship instituted by King Alexander in 1929. The party was banned in 1945, after the Communist Party of Yugoslavia took power.

The Slovene People's Party was re-established in 1988 as the first non-communist political organisation in Yugoslavia. However, it was the newly created Slovene Christian Democrats (*Slovenski krščanski demokrati*, SKD) that attracted more voters in the 1990s. In 2000, both parties merged to form the SLS+SKD party. Following a split in the newly merged party, however, a new organisation called New Slovenia – Christian People's Party (*Nova Slovenija – Krščansko ljudska stranka*) was formed the same year and renamed in 2013 to New Slovenia – Christian Democrats (*Nova Slovenija – krščanski demokrati*, NSi).

The post-1989 Slovene Christian democratic movement never regained the interwar Slovene People's Party strength, with an average vote share between 1990 and 2008 at the level of 9.7% (highest: 14.2% in 1992) (Grzymala-Busse 2013). In the 2014 parliamentary elections, the SLS won only 3.98% of votes and narrowly missed the 4% threshold, thus losing its representation in the Slovenian parliament. New Slovenia – Christian Democrats experienced its largest success in the 2004 European elections, when the party won 24% of votes (2 out of 7 Slovene seats in the EP). In the national arena, it performed much poorer, with support ranging from 9% (2004) to 5% (2014). In the 2014 European election, the party ran in an electoral coalition with the Slovene People's Party and received 16.56% of the vote.

Slovenian political Catholicism and European policy

The Slovene People's Party presented a pro-EU and pro-integration approach. In July 1997, it signed an Agreement on Cooperation in the Accession Process with the EU, together with other parliamentary parties (except for the Eurosceptic Slovenian National

Party – *Slovenska Nacionalna Stranka*, SNS) (Krašovec and Kustec Lipicer 2008). The party advocated the intensification of relations with other European countries, Slovenia's accession to the EU and Slovene membership in NATO. At the same time, the party emphasised the need for thorough economic preparations for accession to the EU (Adam et al. 2002). It remained broadly pro-EU, declaring that 'as a member of the EPP, one of the things that we appreciate most is our contribution to prosperity and peace in Europe, and our synchronous acting with our sister parties from other EU member countries' (SLS 2014).

In its 2009 manifesto, the New Slovenia – Christian Democrats declared their support for the European Union, stating that the country's membership would enable greater social security and prosperity for all people. At the same time, it stressed that it saw the EU as a voluntary community of states, based on the principle 'United in Diversity', which supported the development and consolidation of national identity, culture and language. The party also emphasised its commitment to the maintenance of Slovenia as a sovereign state, and support for an equal status of EU member states (NSi 2009).

6.4 Comparative analysis

Development and role of political Catholicism

Looking at the cases presented above, it is possible to draw the following comparative conclusions regarding the development of political Catholicism in Europe.

Firstly, in a significant majority of countries, political Catholicism played a crucial role in politics, shaping countries' socio-economic setup, in particular immediately after the Second World War, when Christian democracy dominated Western European politics in most states (e.g. Germany, Italy, Belgium, France [until the 1960s] or Austria). At the same time, it is important to note the apparent difference between Western European states and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where post-war politics were overshadowed by communism. As the functioning of non-communist parties was either banned or strictly limited, political Catholicism could not play a significant role in the political life of those states and, in many cases, it failed to regain its interwar strength following the fall of communist regimes (e.g. Slovenia). In the case of Spain and Portugal, where Catholicism was often perceived as a supporter or beneficiary of authoritarian regimes, it took either

decades for a political Catholic movement to rise to power (Spain) or it has remained crippled since (Portugal).

Secondly, in terms of the development and role of political Catholicism in European societies, there is another important difference between most Western European and Central European states. In countries like France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and Switzerland, political Catholicism developed at the turn of the 20th century with the aim of protecting the interests of Catholics and the Catholic Church in conflicts with Protestants or as a response to secularisation attempts conducted by states' authorities. They were, as Hanley (1994: 3) called them, 'essentially parties of religious, that is Catholic, defence'. One of the key elements in this respect was the matter of the right to confessional Catholic education, which became the main breeding ground of conflicts and an issue mobilising the Catholic agency. However, when it comes to CEE countries like Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania or Croatia, the genesis of the political Catholic movement is different, as Catholicism there grew into a key component of national identity, leading to an interconnection between nationalism and religion. Following the First World War, Slovakia, Slovenia and Croatia became parts of non-Catholic states (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Czechoslovakia), where Catholicism developed into a fundamental identity element in their struggle for autonomy or independence. In this regard, Ireland and Malta are also similar cases, where the definition of belonging to the Irish and Maltese nations included belonging to Catholicism and where Catholicism was a symbol of nationalism and the rejection of foreign (British) domination.

Thirdly, the more recent developments in the history of the political Catholic movement also show a differentiation between Western and Central and Eastern Europe. In many of the analysed cases, e.g. Belgium, Germany, Spain or France, political Catholicism in the form of Christian democracy gradually moved away from making direct references to Christianity in their policymaking and programmes – with the most telling example being the Belgian Christian Social Party, which changed its name to the Humanist Democratic Centre. By contrast, in CEE the fusion between Catholicism and nationalism meant that many parties continued to evoke Christian (Catholic) values as the basis of their manifestos (e.g. the KDH in Slovakia or Law and Justice in Poland).

The development of political Catholicism in Poland bears significant resemblance to other CEE countries. Throughout the 19th and 20th century, the Polish Catholic Church became one of very few institutions across the partitioned country that helped to uphold Polish

national identity, traditions and culture in opposition to the Russification and Germanisation attempts of foreign powers. The Church and Catholicism further grew in their role in the post-war years, when it provided shelter for anti-communist opposition. This meant that the fusion of two elements, Catholicism and the idea of belonging to the Polish nation, developed in a very similar manner as in other CEE countries like Croatia, Slovenia, Lithuania and Slovakia, which all experienced periods of struggle for independence or autonomy within non-Catholic states. As a result, the Central European brand of political Catholicism has always differed from its Western European counterpart, which focused on transnational cooperation and reconciliation, without any references to the compromised idea of nationalism. In fact, this difference has grown even greater with traditional Christian democracy in Europe refraining from making direct references to Christianity.

Another element worth noticing is the failure of Christian democracy to develop a strong position in Poland and other CEE countries (except from Lithuania) after the fall of communism. In the whole region, support for Christian democracy averaged at 6.6% between 1990 and 2010 (and this is only in countries where Christian democratic parties competed electorally), which stands in stark contrast to the success of this movement in Western Europe, where the average vote for Christian democracy reached 28.6% over the same period (Grzymala-Busse 2013). Bale and Szczerbiak (2008) noted that only one of seven factors identified as crucial for the development of Christian democracy was present in Poland (a substantial practicing Catholic population), while Grzymala-Busse (2013) suggested that the historical reputation for nation building, acquired by some Christian democratic parties in the interwar period, provided a weak basis for the development of strong Christian democratic parties after 1989. Indeed, many political Catholic parties in CEE regarded Christian democratic ideology as too rigid and restrictive, preferring instead to retain a strategic flexibility. However, what is interesting is that unsuccessful Christian democracy in CEE appeared to have been replaced by a form of political Catholicism that exhibited a significant Catholic-nationalistic trait, with Irish political Catholicism showing a similar characteristic. In countries, where Catholicism played such an essential role in state formation and the struggle for independence, and where belonging to a nation equalled belonging to Catholicism, a Christian democratic model based on transnational cooperation and lack of nationalistic references proved unattractive. Instead, it was replaced by a mixture of Catholic-nationalist elements, giving rise to different forms of political Catholicism in CEE. In fact, two of the analysed countries – Croatia and Slovenia (the

Croatian People's Party in the 1920s, the Croatian Christian Democratic Union and the Slovene Christian Democrats) – demonstrate that if Christian democratic parties in CEE attempted to stay true to their ideology, they could fail to win significant electoral support, which was also the case in Poland.

Political Catholicism and European integration

Turning to the issue of political Catholicism and its attitudes to European integration, the presented cases unequivocally show that political Catholicism in most countries was strongly in favour of European integration and a clearly pro-EU movement. Certainly, it played a pivotal role in the development of the integration project with such political Catholic politicians like Adenauer, Schuman or De Gasperi regarded as the founding fathers of a united Europe. Among all the presented cases, there were no instances of a 'hard' Eurosceptic stance displayed by parties of political Catholic provenance. In 12 out of 15 countries, parties assumed a strong pro-EU and pro-integration position. Naturally, in some cases, the pro-EU stance can be more nuanced, for example in France and Spain, which saw less enthusiasm for the integration process in the form of opposition to any federalisation attempts. In other instances, i.e. Portugal, Belgium and Austria, political Catholic parties had brief periods of 'soft' Euroscepticism, but these were only temporary effects of government-opposition dynamics or an attempt to regain falling electoral support, after which parties returned to their original pro-EU positions.

Only two cases displayed some more significant Euroscepticism – the Slovakian Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU). The Christian Democratic Movement became more prone to 'soft' Euroscepticism, characteristic of rural Catholicism in Slovakia, when it repositioned itself trying to secure support of Catholic voters in the face of increased inter-party competition. The party's scepticism toward the EU resulted from a sensitivity to Russia and a belief that there was a cultural clash between Western values and the more traditional values of the Slovak nation. The Euroscepticism of the Christian Social Union was different in nature. It was strongly rooted in regional nationalism and based on utilitarian concerns for 'tax payers' money' and objections to transfers from richer states to poorer ones (e.g. the party voiced strong criticism of bailout packages, argued in favour of excluding Greece from the eurozone and threatened to veto the European Financial Stability Mechanism). However, the apparent difference between the local and federal levels of the party's activity is noteworthy. The local reflection of the Christian Social Union tended to stress Bavarian uniqueness, while

the party's politicians at the national level toned down such rhetoric and were often very pro-European. In general, the Christian Social Union's position allowed for further competences to be transferred to the European level (for example, on internal security) and even for the strengthening of supranational institutions (Jeffery 2003), which regularly found reflection in the common CDU/CSU pro-EU position at the federal level.

In the context of political Catholic Euroscepticism, Croatia also needs to be mentioned, where even though the key party, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), adopted a pro-European stance, the Church remained split over the issue along its long-standing division between a liberal wing and a more traditionalist one. However, as the Church aligned itself with a pro-EU political force, its position never fully turned to Euroscepticism and stayed rather ambiguous.

Finally, the specific circumstances of Swiss politics, particularly a very strong attachment of Swiss voters to the notion of the state's neutrality, meant that the position of the Swiss Christian democratic People's Party on Europe was more ambiguous. The party was in favour of close cooperation with the EU via bilateral agreements, also in areas which could seem controversial and were at the very core of the integration project, like free movement of people. At the same time, the CVP refrained from taking any position on Swiss EU membership, claiming that the point was not on the agenda. However, looking at evidence from the past, when the party expressed support for the EU, it seems safe to assume that in a different political environment, the party would be more openly in favour of Switzerland joining the main integration stream.

We also need to note that the level of support for the EU differs between Central and Eastern European and Western European occurrences of political Catholicism. Political Catholicism in CEE, although supportive of integration, usually does not advocate European federalism. As a result of its Catholic-nationalist trait coupled with the fact that Central and East European countries only recently regained their full sovereignty, political Catholic groupings in Eastern Europe underline their scepticism about transforming the EU into a federal European state.

The key question emerging from this analysis is: Why did the Polish manifestation of political Catholicism adopt a Eurosceptic stance, while in the overwhelming majority of other cases the movement remained strongly pro-EU? In this context, the case of Ireland is particularly pertinent. There are evident similarities between Ireland and Poland in terms of

political Catholicism, its role in society and politics, while its position on Europe differed. Both countries experienced parallel developments in their history, wherein Catholicism became an essential part of the idea of the Polish and Irish nationalities, in opposition to religions of foreign forces, i.e. Protestantism of the British and Prussians and Russian Orthodoxy. As a result, in both countries Catholicism and nationalism became entangled, with the Catholic Church playing an important role in the struggle for independence. However, that is where similarities end. Political Catholicism in Ireland has never developed such a significantly Eurosceptic stance as its Polish counterpart. What is the reason for this difference? A comprehensive answer would require an in-depth analysis of the Irish case. It is, however, possible to propose certain hypotheses. Both in Poland and in Ireland, Catholicism helped to clarify the idea of belonging to the nation by offering a clear differentiation between 'Us' and the 'Other', an alien force: the British in the case of Ireland, and the Russians and Prussians in the case of Poland. In other words, Catholicism helped to underline the distinctiveness of the Irish and Polish from their powerful and dominating neighbours. The situation evolved after the Second World War, when the role of Irish Catholicism remained largely unchanged, but Catholicism in Poland became an element guaranteeing distinctiveness from the communist regime and its secular, foreign nature. In the 1990s, the Polish Church emerged very strong from the communist era, while Catholicism continued to co-define Polish national identity. With progressing European integration, secular Europe and the EU gradually became the new 'Other', helping to maintain the distinctiveness of the Polish nation against Western, liberal culture. In the case of Ireland, there was no need to redefine the 'Other' as the historical circumstances did not change significantly. In addition, the European integration process was not perceived as a threat to Irish Catholicism, but rather as a way to further strengthen independence from the UK. During the first 15 years of its EU membership, until the late 1980s, religiosity in Ireland remained at a very high level. When finally Church attendance started rapidly falling from above 80% to below 60% (19 percentage points between 1991 and 1998) (Hirschle 2010), the Irish Church was already deeply affected by a series of child-abuse scandals. So even if there had been attempts to link the growing secularisation with the integration process, the Church lacked authority to present this explanation as a viable option. This is why Irish political Catholicism remained largely pro-EU, while it were only Catholic social movements that began to oppose European integration on the grounds that it would impact adversely on some aspects of Irish legislation like abortion or euthanasia. The fact that the 'Other', against which Catholicism helped to define the Irish and Polish

nations, remained unchanged in Ireland (the British) but in Poland first changed to secular communism and then to a secular, Western culture, and the relative strength of the Polish Church compared with the increasing weakness of its Irish counterpart provide possible explanations for the non-emergence of Eurosceptic political Catholicism in Ireland.

There are also other cases, namely Malta, Croatia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia, where Catholicism was closely connected with national identity, but where political Catholicism, even though displaying Catholic-nationalistic traits, did not adopt a Eurosceptic stance. Firstly, it should be noted that for these smaller countries EU membership was often perceived as a way to consolidate their newly regained independence (Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia) and shore up their identities against the ‘Others’ which were perceived as a possible threat or foreign element (e.g. in case of Lithuania the Russians and Poles, in Slovakia the Czechs, in Slovenia and Croatia other Yugoslavian nations like Orthodox Serbs and Muslims). In these cases, the EU, and to a larger extent NATO, were perceived as guarantors of security and further national development, necessary to maintain strong national sovereignty. Secondly, in the case of Lithuania and Slovenia, political Catholicism was slightly closer to traditional Western European Christian democracy than that in Poland (e.g. Grzymala-Busse (2013) identified Law and Justice as overtly nationalist and the League of Polish Families as too clerical to be classified as Christian democratic, while including the Lithuanian LKD and Slovakian KDH, SDKU, SDK in her analysis of Central Eastern European Christian democracy). This meant that these parties were more likely to feel at ease with the idea of cross-national integration and supranationalism, just as other parties of this political family. Finally, for the Croatian Christian Democratic Party (HDZ) its strong pro-European stance could have been a way to mark a discontinuation between the time when the party was led by Franjo Tudjman and the country faced informal international isolation, and its new opening following Tudjman’s death.

6.5 Conclusions

Political Catholic parties were among the most successful political actors in 20th century Europe. This stems from the often overlooked fact that Catholicism, for decades, was the main religion of many European populations, having an immense influence on their daily lives. It is, therefore, surprising how little scholarly attention political Catholicism has

attracted, especially when compared with a vast body of research data on other movements and ideologies of the last century like Nazism, liberalism, socialism or communism.

This chapter aimed to provide a concise comparative overview of the development of political Catholicism and its stance on European integration in 15 European states. The short case studies were selected based on the size of Catholic populations and an important historical role that the political Catholic movement played in each country. As a result, the chapter presented a broad collection of cases, varying in terms of the size of population (from the least-populous country in Europe, Malta, to the largest one, Germany), participation in European integration (founding member states like Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy, the 2004 entrants Slovakia, Slovenia or Croatia, as well as non-members, i.e. Switzerland), state-Church relations (secular France, authoritarian regimes that stressed Catholicism as a key element of their identity, e.g. Franco's Spain, or countries where Catholicism became an important element in the self-identification of nations and their struggle for independence like Ireland, Croatia, Slovenia and Slovakia). It looked at multi-confessional countries (Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands), but also very homogeneous, Catholic societies like the Maltese, Spanish, Portuguese or Italian ones. In addition, all the selected countries fostered strong political Catholicism that impacted their development and a history of attitudes to European integration.

My analysis of the development of political Catholicism, particularly in Western Europe, showed the crucial role of the church-government cleavage described by Lipset and Rokkan (1967). The opposition to state-induced persecution was a trigger that helped the first confessional parties to grow. This chapter also confirmed the model of 'revival-reaction-politicisation' developed by Altinourdu (2010), according to which a successful religious party could emerge when a major religious revival led to a social counter-mobilisation and state repression, followed by the process of religion politicisation. The model offered a more comprehensive approach to explaining the emergence of religious parties than alternative concepts, like Lepsius' (1966 in Altinourdu 2010) 'social-moral' milieu theory, which claimed that religious parties (the German *Centre Party* in that case) emerged simply as 'action committees' of social-moral groups, holding common, distinct religious values. The story of political Catholicism in Western Europe proved the revival of religion, which in case of Catholicism happened in the 19th century, is a prerequisite on the way to successful establishment of a religious political party, as it leads to a counteraction of the state (oppression), followed by the politicisation of religion.

This chapter also revealed five main differences between movements of political Catholicism in Western and Central and Eastern Europe. Firstly, in Western Europe political Catholicism played a much more prominent role in shaping political, economic and social systems than in Central and Eastern Europe. This also contributed to the second difference, the apparent lack of successful Christian democracy in most Central and Eastern European countries. What is particularly remarkable is that traditional Christian democracy seems to have been replaced in CEE by a form of political Catholicism that displayed nationalist traits. As a result of the role Catholicism played in the struggle for independence in many CEE states and its fusion with the notion of national identity, Central and East European political Catholicism became more inclined to refer to ideas of sovereignty, national interests and patriotism than its Western European counterpart. Thirdly, political Catholicism in Western Europe developed mainly as a response to secularisation attempts of authorities, while in Central Europe it grew out of the fusion of religion and national identity in countries which struggled in the 19th and 20th century for independence. Fourthly, Western European political Catholicism since the 1960s has steadily withdrawn from making direct references to Christian values as a source of its programme, which contrasts with Central and Eastern Europe, where the role of Christianity in social life is often stressed. Finally, this chapter clearly showed that political Catholicism is supportive of the process of European integration, with two exceptions – Poland and Slovakia, where political Catholicism acquired a clear Eurosceptic trait.

The key question in the context of this research is: Why did political Catholicism in Poland become Eurosceptic, while in other countries, where the development of the movement bears strong resemblance to the Polish case (e.g. Ireland), it remained largely pro-EU? A detailed answer to this discussion requires more in-depth analysis. However, I hypothesised that the changing role of Catholicism in helping to define the ‘Other’ – in the Polish case a liberal, secular Europe became the new element clearly differentiating ‘Polishness’ – could be the key explanation of this phenomenon. In addition, the fact that during the first 15 years of Irish EU membership the levels of religiosity remained at high levels could also have played a role in limiting the Euroscepticism observed in the case of Irish political Catholicism. There are elements of Irish Euroscepticism that are inspired by Catholicism – as described above some civil society organisations opposed on different occasions new EU treaties on the grounds that they threaten Christian values. However, this Euroscepticism was fairly limited in its scope and influence, and could not be compared to the systemic opposition to Europe by Polish political Catholicism. In addition, these single-

issue movements do not meet the criteria to be fully classified as political Catholicism, because they do not constitute a holistic political action.

The presented cases prove that Polish political Catholicism is very distinct in its Euroscepticism. Almost all the parties of the same family in other European countries were markedly pro-European and had been advancing the integration process from its outset. Of the two cases where political Catholic parties adopted a more Eurosceptic position – Slovakia and Germany (Bavaria) – only the Slovak Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) bore some similarity to the Polish case: the KDH's sceptic position on Europe stemmed from the perceived cultural clash between traditional, Catholic values of the Slovak society and liberal, secular values of Western Europe. At the same time, the KDH's Eurosceptic position followed more tactical considerations. The party attempted to differentiate itself from its splinter-party, the SDKU, which assumed a strongly pro-EU stance. There are also certain traces of Euroscepticism in the case of Ireland and even more limited in Croatia. However, they never reached the levels of opposition to Europe present in Poland, with political Catholic parties in these countries remaining firmly in favour of the EU.

7 General conclusions and implications

The aim of this study was to deepen our understanding of the relationship between religion and politics in the modern world, where there is a clear lacuna of knowledge. Decreasing levels of religiosity and church attendance, particularly in Western Europe, made it easy to conclude that religion lost much of its former influence and hence, the study of the role of religion in politics did not enjoy a great deal of attention from scholars. However, in the decades following the Second World War, religion, especially Catholicism, continued to play an important role in shaping the social and political reality of Europe. Catholic social teaching and the experiences of the inter-war confessional Catholic parties gave rise to the post-war phenomenon of Christian democracy – a political Catholic movement which, as a distinct political family, was one of the most important players in Western European politics well into the 1960s. Since then Christian democracy has experienced decreased levels of support and some episodes of crisis. However, those who announced the end of this political movement were soon proven wrong by its remarkable re-birth. Christian democracy regained much of its power in countries like Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, with the European People's Party becoming the largest political group in the European Parliament in 1999 for the first since the first direct elections to this assembly held in 1979.

In this context, it is not surprising that the limited scholarly debate about religion (Catholicism) and politics in Europe was mostly devoted to analysing the Christian democratic movement. However, political action that found inspiration in Catholicism, political Catholicism, was not only restricted to Christian democracy, but was a much broader phenomenon, also geographically, including divergent political movements, often with significant political influence.

The aim of this study was to deepen our understanding of political Catholicism by describing its nature and role in European politics. It sought to answer three research questions: firstly, what is the nature of political Catholicism and how does its Polish manifestation differ from the Western European one; secondly, under what circumstances does political Catholicism adopt a Eurosceptic stance; and, thirdly, to what extent is Polish political Catholicism the main driver of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland?

In answering these questions, this study provides an original contribution to the existing body of research in at least three ways. Firstly, it analysed the largely under-researched phenomenon of political Catholicism, providing a more robust conceptualisation of the phenomenon than those developed by scholars so far. Secondly, this thesis is the first systematic empirical examination of Eurosceptic political Catholicism. Based on primary sources, it significantly develops our understanding of how religion and politics interact in contemporary Europe, and contributes to the discussion regarding the causality of party-based Euroscepticism. Thirdly, this study compared the distinctive Eurosceptic manifestation of the political Catholic movement in Poland to other Central, Eastern, and West European cases. As a result, it adds to our knowledge of the development of party systems in Europe, particularly in post-communist states, by explaining the different roles political Catholicism has played on the continent.

The nature of political Catholicism and its Polish manifestation

The point of departure for this study was the examination of the nature of political Catholicism. In doing so, this thesis presented a concise definition of political Catholicism and identified a set of primary and secondary features of this movement. This is an important, original contribution to the body of knowledge concerning the intertwined relations between religion and politics, as so far political Catholicism has remained largely a vague term, often used as a synonym for Christian democracy. This thesis showed that political Catholicism was a broad social and political movement, which drew on the principles of Catholic social teaching and aimed to enshrine them in law in order to make them binding for all members of society. The strong inspiration from Catholic social teaching and activity in the public sphere are the key features of political Catholicism. Those could be complemented by a number of second-order characteristics such as: its multi-faceted character, independence from the Church hierarchy, anchoring in sub-national local and regional politics coupled with the ability to form transitional networks, and, in Europe, support for the integration process based on the ideas of supranationalism and reconciliation. Last but not least, one of the secondary features was its ability to extend beyond a simple group of individual Catholics who were active in politics, in order to build an institutionalised political action with Catholic inspiration, based on Catholic social teaching.

All these features made it possible to classify political Catholicism as a distinct political movement, capable of constructing a coherent worldview based on such values and ideas

as solidarity, a focus on the family, the protection of human life and personalism – which, in opposition to liberalism, seen society as composed of persons, social beings focused on co-operation within communities (the family, work place, church or nation). This distinctive approach translated into a ‘third way’ between capitalism, liberalism and socialism, perhaps best exemplified by the post-war idea of the social market economy: a commitment to capitalism combined with a readiness to correct its social and cultural deficiencies via a social policy designed as a safety net protecting those threatened by market forces (van Kersbergen 1994). At the same time, I refrained from describing political Catholicism as a fully-fledged political ideology – it was defined more as a set of coherent principles, but principles that were open for interpretation, leading to divergent translations into political action.

This initial description of the nature of political Catholicism led to an important discovery, namely the apparent difference between West European political Catholicism and the Polish manifestation of the movement. In contrast to the changing face of West European political Catholicism – which, in many cases, since the 1980s gradually abandoned its religious labels and direct references to Christianity – political Catholicism in Poland, reborn after the 1989 fall of communism, continued to be closely and openly attached to Catholic values. It also remained eager to protect the role of the Church and religion in public life.

The detailed analysis of Polish political Catholicism, its historical development and role in contemporary Poland, found the sources of its divergent nature in the unique role that Catholicism played in Polish history, with the Catholic religion developing through centuries into a distinct socio-cultural system strongly influencing all major aspects of life in Poland. In fact, Catholicism in Poland became a civil religion – a set of religiopolitical symbols and rituals regarding a nation’s history and destiny (Morawska 1984), so that religious symbolism fused with civil national traditions, leading to a gradual entanglement of Catholicism and Polish national identity and making belonging to Catholicism an apparently essential part of being Polish. As a result, when Polish political Catholicism emerged in the interwar period, it was in the form of a Catholic-nationalist *Endecja* movement (National Democracy), which declared its passionate attachment to Catholicism and readiness to defend the rights and role of the Church. This fusion of Catholicism with nationalism soon became a defining element in Polish politics, whereby the right headed up by *Endecja* favoured a homogenous Polish nation state based on Catholic values, while

those represented by the *Sanacja* movement, led by Piłsudski, supported a more multi-cultural society and the separation of state from religion. This difference of approaches resurfaced after the 1989 democratic breakthrough and continues to impact on Polish politics and society until this day.

Perhaps one of the best examples of the distinct nature of Polish political Catholicism described in this thesis is Radio Maryja – a Catholic broadcaster with a remarkable ability to build a highly loyal, engaged and devoted group of supporters. Religiosity promoted by this influential organisation, which combined the Catholic faith with the feeling of ‘Polishness’ and care for the state, was exemplary of the Catholic-nationalist trait of Polish political Catholicism, which was driven by strong feelings of nationalism and affirmation of national identity, mixed with religious values. In this approach, religion and faith are inextricably linked with Polish national identity, which means care for religion equals care for Poland (Krzemiński 2009) and stands in opposition to other (neo-)liberal values.

This Catholic-nationalist trait of Polish political Catholicism stands in stark contrast to the post-war Western European manifestations of this movement, which subscribed to such ideas as supranationalism and international co-operation. Indeed, Polish political Catholic actors themselves were keen to underline the difference between Polish and West European political Catholicism which, in their view, became an ideologically empty vessel – a movement that departed from its Christian roots – while its Polish counterpart remained firmly rooted in Christian values and did not refrain from evoking religious elements in its programme.

The fact that political Catholicism has been an important actor in Polish politics may have been often overlooked because of one of its surprising features: the lack of successful Christian democratic parties in Poland and much of Central and Eastern Europe. This is yet another feature standing in stark contrast to Western Europe, where Christian democracy became almost a synonym for political Catholicism. The non-existence of the Christian democratic movement in Poland and other post-communist states attracted some attention from scholars, who tried to understand this surprising phenomenon. For example, Bale and Szczerbiak (2008) concluded that only one of seven factors necessary for the successful development of Christian democracy, namely a substantial and practicing Roman Catholic population, was present in Poland, with other factors being either absent or very limited. Although this study does not contradict Bale and Szczerbiak’s findings, it discovered that the fusion of Catholicism and nationalism so characteristic of the Polish

case meant that traditional Christian democracy based on co-operation, conciliation and the characteristic distaste for extremism could not attract significant electoral support when faced with the Catholic-nationalist *Endecja*. This was the story of the interwar Polish Christian Democratic Party, which did not find its place in the highly polarised Polish politics of the period, as it was torn between *Endecja* and *Sanacja*. The more radical Catholic-nationalist programme of *Endecja* related more closely to the existing strong connection between Catholicism and Polish national identity, thus eliminating moderate Christian democracy. This trend continued in contemporary Poland, defining the Polish party system. This finding is more in line with Grzymala-Busse's (2013) conclusion that Christian democracy succeeded in Central and Eastern Europe when it was perceived more as a nation-building force rather than an agent of clericalism. The Catholic-nationalist trait of the most successful political Catholic organisations in CEE meant that their support for national independence resonated better with the electorate than traditional Christian democracy, which proved to be too rigid a formula to develop successful political action.

It is in this context of the Catholic-nationalist trait of Polish political Catholicism that the study arrives at another major feature of Polish political Catholicism, namely its markedly visible Euroscepticism. Indeed, the Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism was the other major focus of this thesis. I tried to understand why a movement, which typically was a driving force behind European integration and felt at ease with supranational authority, adopted a Eurosceptic position in Poland. After all, the country was not only the largest of the new post-communist EU member states, but also the one that had the most prominent and electorally successful Eurosceptic parties (the League of Polish Families, Self-Defence and Law and Justice) which, until 2007, had formed a government coalition and one of whom (Law and Justice) subsequently enjoyed substantial support as the largest opposition party in the Polish parliament.

The causes of Eurosceptic political Catholicism in Poland and its role in driving party-based Euroscepticism

Having described the nature of political Catholicism and established how its Polish manifestation differed from the typical, Western European one, this study turned to the remaining two research questions. It discussed the circumstances that caused the Polish political Catholic movement to adopt a Eurosceptic stance and analysed to what extent Polish political Catholicism was the main driver of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. In doing so, this research looked at the general phenomenon of Euroscepticism in the

Polish party system. By tracing its development and discussing key Eurosceptic political actors, I was able to identify two important features of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland.

The first one was the fluid nature of Euroscepticism, whereby some Polish parties changed their attitudes towards European integration quite decisively. In particular, I noted the apparent difference between the pre- and post-accession periods. Before Polish accession to the EU, there was an overwhelming consensus not only among Polish elites but also among ordinary citizens about the need for Poland to join the Union. The situation changed in the immediate pre-accession period, when the debate on Poland's EU membership gained momentum, resulting in growing Euroscepticism among the public. As a result, for the first time since 1993, 'hard' Eurosceptic parties – the League of Polish Families and Self-Defence – entered the Polish parliament. Gradually, Euroscepticism found its permanent place in Polish politics, with almost all parties resorting to some form of Eurosceptic rhetoric. Only the communist successor Democratic Left Alliance seemed to have remained unequivocally Europhile, while the Polish Peasants' Party was the only one to move from a 'soft' Eurosceptic position to a more pro-EU one.

Secondly, the analysis of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland showed that it became dominated by political Catholic parties. This study found that the strongest and most ideologically-rooted current of Polish Euroscepticism could be identified among such parties as the League of Polish Families, the Christian National Union, the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland or the Polish Agreement. All of them were characterised by a strong attachment to Christian values as a key element of Polish national identity and supported the strong position of the Church in Polish society, displaying a strong Catholic-nationalist trait.

In looking for the answer to the research question regarding the circumstance under which Polish political Catholicism adopted a Eurosceptic stance, I concluded that it stemmed from two main factors: firstly, the aspiration to protect Polish sovereignty, and secondly, the perceived cultural struggle between the 'liberal West' and 'Catholic Poland'.

The preoccupation of Polish political Catholicism with securing the sovereignty of the Polish state was a surprising feature for a movement of this type. West European political Catholicism refrained from using nationalistic rhetoric or even referring to the protection of national interests in too obvious a way. What is also worth noting is the very traditional

approach of Polish political Catholicism to the idea of a state's sovereignty, understood as exclusive supremacy over a territory and formal equality between states in the international arena. Unsurprisingly, the strong focus on national sovereignty and the role of states in international relations meant that Polish political Catholicism was also distrustful of supranationality and had a strong preference for intergovernmentalism.

Concerns about the impact of EU membership on the traditional character of Polish society, based on Christian values and respect for the authority of the Catholic Church, formed another important element driving the Eurosceptic position of Polish political Catholicism. The movement perceived the Catholic Church as an institution crucial to upholding Polish national identity, and Christian ethics as the only viable basis for the proper functioning of Polish society. At the same time, it saw the EU not only as being based on liberal and secular values, but also quite often as an active promoter of these values. In other words, Polish political Catholicism perceived a certain incompatibility between the European integration process and the identity and values of Poles.

Naturally, both elements – the aspiration to protect national sovereignty and the concern for a cultural clash between the liberal, secular values of the EU and the traditional character of Polish society based on Catholicism – lead back to the Catholic-nationalist trait of Polish political Catholicism and the fusion of Catholicism and Polish national identity. The idea of political Catholicism in Poland – that care for the interests of Poland is synonymous with care for the Church – and that Christian values provide the only viable framework for the social order, is an underpinning theme of this study and something that clearly differentiated Polish political Catholicism from other instances of this movement in Europe.

The fact that political Catholic parties dominated party-based Euroscepticism in Poland did not mean that there were no Eurosceptic actors of other ideological provenance. Nor did it mean that the entire political Catholic movement in Poland was equally Eurosceptic. Among the Eurosceptics that were not connected to political Catholicism it is worth noting the parties led by Janusz Korwin-Mikke – the Union of Real Politics and the Congress of the New Right. These political entities presented 'hard' Eurosceptic views with a consistency un-matched by other parties in Polish politics. Korwin-Mikke's opposition to the EU stemmed from the party's libertarian values and focused very much on the economic aspect of the integration process. Based on the party's support for maximised personal liberty and, non-intervention of the state, not only in the economy but also in

many other aspects of the social order, it opposed the EU, which it perceived as bureaucratised, 'socialist' and over-regulated. Nonetheless, the party always remained on the fringes of Polish politics with minimal, if any, influence on public policy and public opinion. Consequently, it was the much stronger and influential movement of Polish political Catholicism that became the main driver of Euroscepticism in Poland.

Non-Eurosceptic political Catholicism was an even more ephemeral phenomenon. In this context, one should look at Civic Platform, which included a faction of politicians claiming strong attachments to Catholicism who did not display any Euroscepticism. However, they also refrained from attempts to enshrine Catholic social teaching in the body of law, which puts a question mark over the party's classification as part of the political Catholic movement. The approach of this group could be characterised by a separation of its (Catholic) beliefs from its activity in the public sphere, focusing instead on areas where the EU had direct decision-making power, leaving the moral-cultural sphere out of politics. There was also the 'Universal Weekly' (*Tygodnik Powszechny*) and a small pocket of Catholic intellectualist clustered around it. Although, the Weekly presented a pro-EU approach, supporting quick integration of Poland with the EU, its influence on Polish politics and (Catholic) public opinion was quite limited. Thus, Euroscepticism remains the dominant trait within Polish political Catholicism and it cannot be matched in strength and importance by pro-EU opinions, which became marginalised.

Verifying the hypothesis and additional explanatory factors

The hypothesis of this research assumed that political Catholicism was a distinctive political movement whose Polish manifestation differed significantly from that seen in Western Europe because of its Euroscepticism and its role as the main driver of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. According to the hypothesis, the Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism resulted from the intrinsic ideological feature(s) of the movement. As a result, the EU came to be perceived as an entity based on the concepts of 'secularism', 'individualism', and 'materialism', which in turn endanger the core values of Polish national identity.

The key findings outlined above confirm this explanation, but they also draw our attention to the particular importance of the close relationship between Catholicism and nationalism. It was the Catholic-nationalist trait of Polish political Catholicism that drove the Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholic actors in the first place. Without this element,

even the existing perception of the EU as an organisation promoting secular, liberal values and endangering Christian values would probably not have led to such strong opposition to the EU. It was the fusion of faith and national identity, as well as the belief that the development of Polish society depended upon maintaining the role of Christian values in public life, that drove Euroscepticism within Polish political Catholicism.

It is also important to note the role of the Polish political Catholic movement in driving party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. In fact, other forms of opposition to the EU, such as those focused on more utilitarian, economical concerns as represented by the parties of Janusz Korwin-Mikke (the Union of Real Politics, the Congress of New Right), were marginal in the Polish party system, and did not significantly impact either the EU policy of Polish governments or public opinion.

This study also assumed that a number of strategic/tactical factors already described and analysed by other scholars may drive the Euroscepticism of the Polish political Catholic movement. These additional explanatory factors (AEF) specified that a Eurosceptic stance may be a result of attempts by parties to distinguish themselves in the political scene or as a result of government-opposition dynamics (AEF1), expand their support base (AEF2), or limit political space for the emergence of competitive parties (AEF3).

The evidence presented above confirmed that the Eurosceptic stance of Polish political Catholicism is mostly driven by an intrinsic ideological feature, namely, its Catholic-nationalist characteristic. As such, this thesis supports cleavage theory, which argues that parties are not simply empty vessels into which policy positions are poured in response to electoral pressures, but are organisations with embedded ideologies. This study showed that there was a limited electoral reward for a party that would like to adopt a Eurosceptic position in order to make itself distinctive in the political scene or to expand its support base. I also discovered that short-term electoral tactics have a certain influence on the Euroscepticism of Polish political Catholicism, such as, for example, the toning down of Eurosceptic rhetoric by Law and Justice during its time in government or attempts to ensure the support of *Radio Maryja*.

However, it is clear that strategic and tactical considerations were not the main reason for political Catholicism in Poland to adopt a Eurosceptic stance, but rather that they influenced the intensity of its Eurosceptic rhetoric and the distribution of emphasis within the established political discourse. This finding is in line with the conclusions of Szczerbiak

and Taggart's (2008b) comparative study of party-based Euroscepticism in Europe. Szczerbiak and Taggart stated that, in the case of policy-seeking parties, underlying party positions on Europe should be distinguished from how parties use this issue in inter-party competition. A party's long-term policy on the EU is determined by a blend of ideology and what it perceives the interests of its members to be, while the extent to which it highlights its (Eurosceptic) position in inter-party competition is a matter of short-term electoral strategy or tactics. This study proved that Polish political Catholicism is a movement with a strongly embedded ideology and has had a long-standing Eurosceptic agenda. Any modulations in the strength of its Eurosceptic rhetoric, such as its weakening during Law and Justice's time in government or its strengthening during electoral campaigns, should not be confused with fundamental policy changes.

The comparative perspective

This study also provided a concise comparative overview of political Catholicism and its attitudes towards European integration across Europe. This allowed us to draw conclusions which may have broader implications for the study of relationships between religion and politics in contemporary Europe, particularly in comparing the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe with the well-established democracies of the West. I found five key differences between the countries of Western and East-Central Europe in terms of the development and role of political Catholicism and its stance on European integration. Firstly, in a significant majority of West European countries, political Catholicism played a crucial role in politics, shaping their socio-economic set-up, in particular immediately after the Second World War when Christian democracy dominated European politics in many states (e.g. Germany, Italy, Belgium, France [until the 1960s] or Austria). This was not the case in Central and Eastern Europe mainly as a result of communist rule, which made the (re)development of political Catholic movements impossible after the Second World War.

Another striking difference was the unsuccessful Christian democracy movement in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe, a phenomenon documented and described by other scholars. In the whole region, support for Christian democracy averaged 6.6% between 1990 and 2010 (for countries where Christian democratic parties competed electorally), which stood in stark contrast to the success of this movement in Western Europe, where the average vote for Christian democracy reached 28.6% over the same period (Grzymala-Busse 2013). What was, however, most interesting is the fact that

Christian democracy in Central and Eastern Europe appeared to have been replaced by a form of political Catholicism that exhibited a significant Catholic-nationalist trait. In countries where Catholicism played an essential role in state formation and where belonging to the nation was perceived to be synonymous with belonging to Catholicism, a Christian democratic model based on transnational cooperation and lack of nationalistic references proved unattractive. Instead, it was replaced by a mixture of Catholic-nationalist elements, giving rise to different forms of political Catholicism in Central and Eastern Europe.

This led to the third factor differentiating West European political Catholicism from its Central and East European counterparts. In Western Europe, political Catholicism developed essentially as a movement in defence of Catholicism, the Church and the faithful in conflicts between Protestants and Catholics or as a response to secularisation attempts conducted by state authorities. However, in CEE countries like Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Croatia or Poland, the genesis of the political Catholic movement was different, as Catholicism there grew into a key component of national identity, leading to an interconnection between nationalism and religion. Consequently, a Catholic-nationalist political Catholicism became much more focused on protecting the state's sovereignty and national identity from the external 'Others' than was ever the case in Western Europe.

This also meant that there was an apparent gap between political Catholicism in Western Europe and Central and Eastern Europe. They both grew out of different historical circumstances, so the difference between them was always apparent. However, with the nature of West European political Catholicism changing, leading to Christian democratic parties departing from making direct references to Christianity and Catholic social teaching which used to form the basis of their political programmes, the gap between the two groups became wider. In countries like Poland or Slovakia, political Catholicism remained firmly attached to Christian values, Catholicism and the Church. The manifesto of the biggest political Catholic party in Poland – Law and Justice – openly stated the inspiration it drew from Catholic social teaching and declared the party's intention to protect the role of the Catholic religion in public life.

The final element of the comparative analysis, to which much of this study was dedicated, was the issue of European integration. This study confirmed that political Catholicism in most countries was strongly in favour of European integration and a clearly pro-EU movement. It played a pivotal role in the development of the integration project with such

Catholic politicians like Adenauer, Schuman or De Gasperi regarded as the founding fathers of a united Europe. It was only in the case of Poland, Slovakia, and to a certain extent Bavaria, that I found Eurosceptic political Catholic movements.

However, this raises the key question for this research: to what extent is Polish political Catholicism a deviant case, as argued in the title of this study? The comparative analysis confirmed that indeed it is very distinctive as a result of its Euroscepticism. Almost all political Catholic parties in Europe were markedly pro-EU and, in the case of Western Europe, had been advancing the integration process from its outset. Of the two cases where political Catholic parties adopted a more Eurosceptic position – Slovakia and Germany (Bavaria) – only the Slovak Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) bore some similarity to the Polish case: the KDH's sceptic position on Europe stemmed from the perceived cultural clash between traditional, Catholic values of the Slovak society and liberal, secular values of Western Europe. At the same time, the KDH's Eurosceptic position followed more tactical considerations. The party attempted to differentiate itself from its splinter-party, the SDKU, which assumed a strongly pro-EU stance. There are also certain traces of Euroscepticism in the case of Ireland and even more limited in Croatia. However, they never reached the levels of opposition to Europe present in Poland, with political Catholic parties in these countries remaining firmly in favour of the EU. Consequently, it can be concluded that the Polish case of political Catholicism is deviant in the set of unique historical, social and political circumstances that produced the outcome, that is: political Catholicism which adopted a Eurosceptic stance. This study found out that these circumstances do not replicate in exactly the same manner, although they did appear to a different degree in other countries, mostly Central and East European. At the same, in none of the analysed cases did the circumstance lead to the emergence of Eurosceptic political Catholic movement, whose opposition to the EU would be underpinned by deeply-rooted ideological features, such as the Catholic-nationalist characteristic.

Broader implications of the study and areas of further research

Apart from developing an in-depth understanding of the Polish case, this research also has broader implications for the study of religion and politics, party politics, and party-based Euroscepticism in particular. Firstly, it clearly shows that studying religion and its influence on politics can be helpful, and sometime necessary, to understand the programmes, policy preferences and origins of political actors in contemporary Europe. Faith and religiosity can shape party and voters' behaviours, including the mobilisation of voters, while the

Catholic Church and its organisation can be essential elements of party or coalition formation processes (e.g. Radio Maryja). The study also demonstrated that religion remained an important element that should be taken into account by political analysts, despite what was expected by the supporters of the theory of secularisation, which predicted the withering of religion and its influence in public life.

Secondly, this thesis developed a more robust definition of political Catholicism – a term that so far was vaguely characterised and quite often used as a synonym for Christian democracy. This study showed that political Catholicism was a distinct political phenomenon, which could be clearly contrasted with other political ideologies. At the same time, despite offering a wide ideological framework for political activism, it could not be qualified as a full-fledged ideology, mainly because it was not specific enough and prone to differing interpretations leading into divergent political programmes.

Thirdly, this thesis revealed that under specific circumstances – that is when Catholicism is fused with national identity as a result of its role in struggles for independence and autonomy, in which it provides an essential element of belonging to the nation and defining the ‘Other’ – political Catholicism becomes markedly more nationalistic, concerned with the protection of sovereignty, national interests, identity and traditions built around Christian values and the role of the Church. This was the case in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, namely Poland, Croatia, Lithuania, Slovenia and Slovakia, where a more Catholic-nationalist form of political Catholicism either fully replaced traditional Christian democracy – with its characteristic dislike of ‘extremism’, its acceptance of supranationality, support for transnational cooperation and reconciliation – or mediated these characteristic features by displaying more vocal concerns for preserving national sovereignty and identity. This also shows how a history of nation and state building can affect the development of political movements, providing an essential framework for political activity in contemporary Europe.

Fourthly, this study contributed to the academic discussion on the causality of party-based Euroscepticism, which in general was focused on the ‘strategy vs. ideology’ issue. Is party-based Euroscepticism more a matter of deeply entrenched ideological predispositions, and hence cannot be easily changed, or is it more a matter of strategic and tactical considerations and the party position on Europe can be conveniently adjusted in line with short- or medium-term political calculations, intra-party competition or coalition-participation considerations? This issue is even more pertinent in the light of the apparently

fluid nature of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland. What this research found was in line with Szczerbiak and Taggart's (2008b) distinction between the long-term underlying party position on Europe, which is shaped by a party's wider ideological profile and the perceived interests of its supporters, and whether or not a party uses the European issue in inter-party competition, which depends on electoral strategic and coalition tactical factors. Thus, it is crucial not to mistake temporary, strategic or tactical changes in party rhetoric – as in the case of Law and Justice, which toned down its Euroscepticism during its 2005-2007 government because it could have handicapped its policy initiatives at the European level – and a long-term party position on Europe – which in the case of Law and Justice was Eurosceptic, and shaped mostly by the intrinsic features of Polish political Catholicism and the intertwined relationship between Catholicism and national identity.

Before concluding this thesis, it is worth briefly outlining the avenues for possible future research that stem from this study. An obvious one here would be a more detailed binary comparative analysis of the Polish and Irish cases of political Catholicism. The comparative section in this study showed a clear resemblance between Ireland and Poland in terms of the relationship between Catholicism and national identity. In both cases, belonging to Catholicism became an essential element of belonging to the nation. The Catholic religion helped to define the boundaries and accentuate the differences between the Polish or Irish nationalities and the 'Other' – the British in the case of Ireland, and the Russians, Prussians and communists in the case of Poland. However, despite the similar intertwined relations between religion and national identity, political Catholicism in Ireland did not start to perceive the EU as a liberal, secular organisation, which may threaten Irish national identity, and consequently did not develop a Eurosceptic stance like its Polish counterpart. I have hypothesised that this was caused by the fact that the 'Other' against which Catholicism helped to define the Irish and Polish nations remained unchanged in Ireland (the British), while in Poland it moved first to secular communism and then to the secular, Western culture. Additionally, the relative strength of the Polish Church compared with the increasing weakness of its Irish counterpart may also account for the development of Eurosceptic political Catholicism in Poland. However, deeper analysis of the Irish case is necessary to prove or disprove this theory.

The case of Poland also offers several areas for additional research. Firstly, the milieu of Radio Maryja could be analysed further to better understand the formation of its opinion on the EU and to assess its real influence on political Catholicism and the political scene

overall. So far, there has been only a small number of analyses of this phenomenon, most notably the monograph by Krzemiński (2009). This is because the milieu is quite closed and distrustful of anyone coming from the outside. However, this study proved that it is possible to engage with groups that may be rather unwilling to provide access to information out of fear of being manipulated or misrepresented (e.g., some of Law and Justice's politicians). More studies could improve our understanding of how Radio Maryja interacts with political parties and how it shapes its opinion on the European issue.

Secondly, more research into the opinion of the Polish Catholic Church regarding European integration could provide additional useful insights. This study briefly described how the opinion of the Church on the EU has evolved; however, within the Polish Episcopate there are diverging views about the integration process. Given that the last large-scale study of Polish clergy and their attitudes towards the EU was conducted in 2003 (see Kolarska-Bobińska 2003), a new, detailed, quantitative study could improve our understanding of how the Church differs internally in terms of its attitudes towards the EU, and how it influences the opinions of the faithful in this respect.

The role of political Catholicism in contemporary Europe and its influence in driving opposition to European integration remain a largely under-researched topic with a clear lacuna for further scholarly analysis. This study contributed to our knowledge of this important political phenomenon, helping us to understand the nature of political Catholicism and its role in driving Euroscepticism in Poland. Thus, this research not only explored the broad issue of the intertwined relations between religion and politics in contemporary Europe and enhanced our understanding of the important concept of Euroscepticism in a large, comparatively new EU member state. It also shed more light on a fairly new aspect of Euroscepticism, that is: its relationship with religion, proving that even in modernised and industrialised states one should not too easily discard religion as an unimportant element in shaping society and politics.

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4. GIERTYCH Maciej, 22.08.2013 – a member of the League of Polish Families; MP in 2001–2004; MEP in 2004–2009; Presidential candidate in 2005.
5. KACZYŃSKI Piotr Maciej, 11.01.2013 – a Brussels-based analyst working for *inter alia* the Centre for European Policy Studies, the EPP group in the European Parliament, and the European Institute of Public Administration.
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9. PAWŁOWICZ Krystyna, 22.10.2013 – MP chosen from the electoral list of Law and Justice and member of the Law and Justice parliamentary club in 2011–2015.
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