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## POLITICAL CATHOLICISM IN POLAND IN 1945–1948. AN OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF CATHOLICS\*

**Abstract:** The article is a reconstruction of the most important strands in the historiography devoted to the political activity of the laity after 1945, especially the period between 1945 and 1948. The author first discusses pre-1989 literature and then the most recent studies devoted to political Catholicism in Poland. In the main part of the article he presents three strands in historiography: research into the Labour Party, research into groups associated with Catholic socio-political weeklies, and biographies and syntheses of the history of the Catholics and the Church.

**Keywords:** political Catholicism, Catholic Church in the Polish People's Republic, Christian Democracy.

### Introduction

The aim of the article is to carry out an overview of the most important tendencies in the historiography devoted to social and political activities of lay Catholics in 1945–48. This, I hope, will make it possible to provide an important addition to the existing overviews of the literature on the relations between the Church and the state.<sup>1</sup> The scope of the problems tackled in the article are determined by the use of the term ‘political Catholicism’

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<sup>1</sup> See Henryk Słabek, ‘Polityka i Kościół w Polsce 1945–1950. (Przegląd problematyki)’, *DN*, 23, 1991, 2, pp. 105–14; Jerzy Eisler, ‘Stosunki Kościół–państwo w powojennej Polsce w najnowszych publikacjach’, *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, 2004, 1 (5), pp. 385–402; Jan Żaryn, ‘Państwo–Kościół u progu PRL (1944–1956). Przegląd najnowszej literatury przedmiotu’, *DN*, 28, 1995, 4, pp. 119–25.

to capture the specificity of the political activity of lay Catholics in Poland in 1945–48. Research in this field is quite popular with English-language political scientists, covering primarily the formation of as well as rise to, maintenance and exercise of power by Catholicism-inspired parties.<sup>2</sup> In Poland the term political Catholicism has not caught on:<sup>3</sup> instead, we hear about the work of lay Catholics or the topic is described on the margins of reflections on the relations between the Church and the state.

I am interested not only in — the relatively scarce — publications focusing on the political entanglement of Catholics, but also in those publications in which politics is just one of the topics tackled by their authors. That is why in addition to comparing the most important works dealing with the subject matter in question, I have decided to devote some attention to publications which, although not referring directly to the key topics of the present article, nevertheless are a source of important ideas and inspirations.

This is about analysing the Stronnictwo Pracy (Labour Party), groups associated with socio-cultural weeklies and, finally, individuals involved in the political life of the Catholic Church in Poland as elements of a single phenomenon — political activity of groups deriving their identity primarily from religion.<sup>4</sup> Political Catholicism, understood not as political

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<sup>2</sup> See *Political Catholicism in Europe 1918–45*, ed. Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Woh-nout, London and New York, 2004; *Christian Democracy in Europe Since 1945*, ed. Michael Gehler and Wolfram Kaiser, London and New York, 2004; *Political Catholicism in Europe 1918–1965*, ed. Tom Buchanan and Martin Conway, Oxford, 1996; *European Christian Democracy. Historical Legacies and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Thomas Kselman and Joseph A. Buttigieg, Notre Dame, IN, 2003; Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*, Ithaca, NY, 1996; Carolyn M. Warner, *Confessions of an Interest Group. The Catholic Church and Political Parties in Europe*, Princeton, NJ, 2000; Kees van Kersbergen, *Social Capitalism. A Study of Christian Democracy and the Welfare State*, London and New York, 1995; Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of the European Union*, Cambridge, 2007; idem, 'Christian Democracy in Twentieth-century Europe', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 39, 2004, 1, pp. 127–35; Stathis N. Kalyvas and Kees van Kersbergen, 'Christian Democracy', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 2010, pp. 183–209.

<sup>3</sup> The term is rarely used in Polish scholarly publications, see Marian Jasiukiewicz, 'Katolicyzm polityczny w Polsce 1939–1949', *Przegląd Historyczno-Politologiczny*, 2, 2009, 1, pp. 17–28; Wojciech Buchner, 'Katolicyzm polityczny i jego wrogowie', *Horyzonty Polityki*, 5, 2014, 12, pp. 99–113. In the second publication the term is used in reference to the pre-modern links between the Church doctrine and hierarchy, and politics, that is in a sense different from the one proposed here; see also Paweł Skibiński, 'Chadecja w PRL? Czy polscy katolicy byli chrześcijańskimi demokratami?', *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, 2017, 2 (30), pp. 154–78.

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted here that when it comes to the political activity and thought of the part of the nationalist camp that was not linked to Bolesław Piasecki's group,

use of religion but as religious inspiration of political activity, makes it possible to look at various research problems as elements of a broader political phenomenon.<sup>5</sup> This perspective also reflects to some extent the suggestions of a young subdiscipline of political science, namely political science of religion.<sup>6</sup>

It is worth noting here that Catholic political thought and the organizational structures of the institutional Church as well as various Catholic circles before 1948 were the most important alternatives to the dominant Marxism.<sup>7</sup> We also need to bear in mind that immediately after the Second World War Western Europe saw an unprecedented rise of Christian democratic parties, although we cannot forget about electoral successes of Catholics in Czechoslovakia and in Hungary.<sup>8</sup>

The choice of the boundary dates of my review — 1945 and 1948 — has been motivated by the following arguments. Firstly, from 1945 a revived Labour Party tried to operate legally. It represented the pre-war traditions of Christian democracy and after merging with the ‘Union’ in 1943 it became a broader platform bringing together voices and attitudes of the Catholics, as was manifested in the Labour Party’s Cracow programme of 1945, formulated by the ‘Uniates’.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, 1945 was also marked by the emergence of new Catholic milieus associated with Catholic weeklies — *Tygodnik Powszechny*, *Tygodnik Warszawski* and *Dziś i Jutro*.

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Catholicism played a key role. See Jolanta Mysiakowska-Muszyńska, *Zabiegi o legalizację Stronnictwa Narodowego w kraju 1945–1947*, Warsaw, 2011; Rafał Łętocha, ‘Katolicyzm a nacjonalizm. Charakter wzajemnych relacji na przykładzie myśli obozu narodowego lat wojny i okupacji’, *Nomos*, 34/36, 2001, pp. 139–50.

<sup>5</sup> This distinction is used by, for example, Ilsa Barea, ‘Political Catholicism and Catholic Politics’, *Political Quarterly*, 17, 1946, 4, pp. 290–302.

<sup>6</sup> Ryszard Michałak, ‘Politologia religii — nowe wyzwania i perspektywy badań’, paper delivered at the 4th International Religious Studies Congress, 17–20 June 2015 <[https://www.academia.edu/15889173/Politologia\\_religii\\_nowe\\_wyzwania\\_i\\_perspektywy\\_bada%C5%84](https://www.academia.edu/15889173/Politologia_religii_nowe_wyzwania_i_perspektywy_bada%C5%84)> [accessed 9 August 2016]; Piotr Burgoński and Michał Gierycz, ‘Introduction’, in *Religia i polityka. Zarys problematyki*, ed. iidem, Warsaw, 2014, pp. 19–25.

<sup>7</sup> Jarosław Rabiński, ‘Two Forms of Polish Christian Democracy: 1945–1979 under Communistic Regime and towards International Cooperation. Karol Popiel, Konstanty Turowski, Janusz Zablocki, Konrad Sieniewicz’, in *Christian Democrat Internationalism. Its Action in Europe and Worldwide from post World War II until the 1990s*, ed. Jean-Dominique Durand, 3 vols, Brussels, 2013–14, vol. 2, 2013, p. 254.

<sup>8</sup> Konrad Sieniewicz, ‘Międzynarodowa działalność chrześcijańskich demokratów Europy Środkowej’, paper delivered during the colloquium Christian Democracy in the World, Paris 2–4 May 1984, AAN, Janusz Zabłocki’s files (hereafter AJZ), no. 20, no pagination; Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation. Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, Lanham, MD, 2004, pp. 234–52.

<sup>9</sup> Konstanty Turowski, *Historia ruchu chrześcijańsko-demokratycznego w Polsce*, 2 vols, Warsaw, 1989, vol. 2, pp. 499–502.

The end of the period in the history of Polish political Catholicism I am interested in came in the autumn of 1948 — with the suspension of *Tygodnik Warszawski* and arrest of members of its editorial team.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, in December 1948 Konstanty Łubieński published an ‘Open letter to Juliusz Łada’ in *Dziś i Jutro* in which the group associated with Bolesław Piasecki openly expressed its support for the existing political order, thus ending the search for a form of political activity other than that of Stalinism.<sup>11</sup>

Thus 1945–48 can be viewed as a time during which Catholics were looking for a form of political activity as the communist system of power was being shaped. The search was ended by the Stalinization of the country, which made any action or reflection in its pre-1948 format impossible.

Despite the specificity of the period most of the publications discussed here refer to a broader chronological framework. This stems from the fact that so far historians have focused more often on the actors whose activity stretched over the period of before and during the Second World War as well as Stalinism and period after 1956. The historians writing about Polish Catholicism have paid less attention to processes or ideas associated with specific moments in post-war history. Thus the years 1945–48 have been consistently seen as one of many episodes in the history of a group, political formation or biography. I believe, however, that the period constitutes a self-contained whole in the life of Polish Catholicism, especially when it comes to its social and political aspect. That is why in the case of publications with a broader chronological scope I have focused on those fragments that concern the topic in question directly.

The article is divided into six parts. In the first I briefly discuss journalistic approaches to the topic in question; the second is a presentation of recent publications, which testify to scholars’ growing interest in the subject of political Catholicism in the early days of the Polish People’s Republic. Part three is devoted to the post-war history of *Stronnictwo Pracy* (Labour Party) in Polish historiography. Part four focuses on publications discussing the three socio-cultural weeklies around which revolved the intellectual and political life of the Catholics. Part five explores political Catholicism in the most important syntheses of the Church-state relations as well as in the latest biographies. Finally, in part six I discuss the most important

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<sup>10</sup> Tomasz Sikorski and Marcin Kulesza, Introduction in *Niezłomni w epoce fałszywych proroków. Środowisko ‘Tygodnika Warszawskiego’ (1945–1948)*, ed. iidem, Warsaw, 2013, pp. 114–20.

<sup>11</sup> Konstanty Łubieński, ‘List otwarty do Pana Juliusza Łady’, *Dziś i Jutro*, 49 (158), 5 December 1948.

English-language publications dealing with the political and intellectual activity of the Catholics. I have chosen these publications, because their authors' point of view is different from that of Polish scholars. The whole ends with conclusions.

Historical journalism:  
Micewski — Michnik — Zabłocki

Before I proceed to a discussion of scholarly literature, it is worth presenting the history of reflection on the role of Catholics in the early days of the Polish People's Republic. It must be noted here that the following analysis does not provide the full picture of research into the beginnings of the Polish People's Republic in Catholic journalistic writing at the end of that period. Instead, using three examples I would like to point to some links between journalism and historiography. The first example is Andrzej Micewski's book *Współrządzić czy nie kłamać* (Co-Rule or Not Lie),<sup>12</sup> published in Paris in 1978, the second is Adam Michnik's essay *Kościół — lewica — dialog* (The Church and the Left). The third is made up of articles published in *Chrześcijanin w Świecie* as well as the book *Chrześcijańska demokracja w kraju i na emigracji 1947–1970* (Christian Democracy in Poland and Among Émigrés 1947–70) by Janusz Zabłocki. Michnik's book is all the more interesting given the fact that it is almost completely silent about lay Catholics in 1945–48. Suffice it to say that Michnik begins his narrative proper in 1948, making only a brief reference to the socialist Jan Strzelecki's concepts and a lack of the Church's consent to the reform of marriage law. When it comes to the reception of Strzelecki's ideas among the Catholics and the Catholics' arguments against the introduction of civil marriages, the author of *The Church and the Left* makes no mention of them. This is not about pointing out errors to the author — his book is not a scholarly but a political publication. The problem with Michnik's book stems solely from the success of the vision presented in it: that the activity of lay Catholics is considered in terms of a dialogue with the Left, and that there is no mention of the existence of attitudes combining a critical approach to communism with a desire to actively oppose this ideology by organising independent community organizations and a political party. This was the attitude of people associated with *Tygodnik Warszawski* but also

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<sup>12</sup> Micewski was commissioned to write a study on the history of the PAX movement and *Dziś i Jutro* by Więź; a preliminary version was ready in 1958. The typescript is available in AAN, AJZ, no. 2.

of some authors writing for *Tygodnik Powszechny* in 1945–48, especially Father Jan Piwowarczyk and Józef Marian Świącicki. Michnik evidently seeks to place the beginning of the Catholic opposition in the post-1956 period and views the earlier period primarily with regard to Stalinism.<sup>13</sup> Such an approach is not conducive to paying much attention to the pre-1948 period.

Micewski's study is not an analysis carried out by a journalist, historian or political scientist, but a moral judgement — hence the dilemma in the title: 'co-rule or not lie'. Without entering into a polemic with the author, it is possible to point to one crucial problem: Micewski juxtaposes two extremes of Polish Catholic life after 1957 — the Znak group understood as a parliamentary club as well as Cracow and Warsaw circles supporting it, and the PAX group after the so-called *Fronde* by Mazowiecki, Zabłocki and Micewski himself. This juxtaposition is shifted to an earlier period, as if the dilemma described by the author concerned Poland's entire history after 1945 and not the post-1956 period. This shift leads to a conclusion similar to the one in the case of Michnik's book: the political situation in the 1970s had an impact on a selective memory of the 'consolidation of people's power' period.

A turning point in terms of a memory of the period came with publications in *Chrześcijanin w Świecie* and *Ład* — this was where *Tygodnik Warszawski* was brought back from obscurity and where ideological disputes of the 1940s were reconstructed.<sup>14</sup> The effects of this 'remembrance' can also be seen in Zabłocki's book.<sup>15</sup> Despite the author's declaration that he focuses on the period of 1947–70, he also devotes quite a lot of attention to the

<sup>13</sup> I have used the 2009 edition published in the Biblioteka Gazety Wyborczej series: Adam Michnik, *Kościół — lewica — dialog*, Warsaw, 2009 (English edition: Adam Michnik, *The Church and the Left*, ed, transl. and introd. David Ost, Chicago, IL, and London, 1993).

<sup>14</sup> Witold Ciechowski, 'Tygodnik Warszawski 1945–1948', *Ład*, 1983, 29; idem, 'Jan Hoppe [1882–1969] — optymista mimo wszystko', *Ład*, 1983, 12; Jan Wiszniewski, "'Tygodnik Warszawski' (1945–1948)", *Chrześcijanin w Świecie*, 20, 1988, 11, pp. 49–66; Konstanty Turowski, 'Dzieje Stronnictwa Pracy w latach 1945–1946', *Chrześcijanin w Świecie*, 14, 1982, 1, pp. 28–46; idem, 'Ks. Jan Piwowarczyk (zm. 1959) jakim go znałem', *Ład*, 1981, 27; Henryk Bogusz, 'Rozwój stosunków między Kościołem i państwem', *Chrześcijanin w Świecie*, 15, 1983, 3, pp. 57–71; Jan Wysocki, 'Działalność kardynała prymasa Augusta Hlonda w archidiecezji warszawskiej 1945–1948', *Ład*, 1981, 25; L. Kula, 'Dziennikarz w sutannie. Ks. Jan Piwowarczyk', *Ład*, 1983, 7; Juliusz Braun, 'Zarys historii i doktryny "Unii" 1940–1945', *Chrześcijanin w Świecie*, 17, 1985, 4, pp. 27–37; Maciej M. Łętowski, 'Dwa tygodniki "Tygodnik Warszawski" i "Tygodnik Powszechny" (1945–1953) w życiu katolicyzmu społecznego w Polsce', *Chrześcijanin w Świecie*, 17, 1986, 11, pp. 41–56.

<sup>15</sup> Janusz Zabłocki, *Chrześcijańska demokracja w kraju i na emigracji 1947–1970*, Lublin, 1999.

period of 1945–53. The undoubted values of historical writings of Zabłocki (as the organizer of the Centre for Social Documentation and Studies (ODISS), editor of *Ład* and author of the book) include the inclusion of a broader spectrum of Catholic thought – traditions of the Labour Party, ‘Union’ or *Tygodnik Warszawski*. When compared to earlier writings this is certainly a considerable asset, as it moves away from a binary presentation of Catholics – PAX as opposed to the Znak group. Obviously, this historical journalism, too, had its political weight, creating, in a way, a genealogy of groups associated with Zabłocki and thus legitimizing his political activity.

As the above outline of journalistic writings on political Catholicism in Poland of 1945–48 suggests, reflection on the period was, if not unoriginal, then certainly not systematic and not scholarly. An exception is Zabłocki’s publication, which contains an extensive critical apparatus, refers to source materials and seeks to present the history of the Catholic movement in an objective manner. On the other hand Micewski’s publications as well as those from Catholic journals opened up a space for debate for professional researchers.

### New publications dealing with the beginnings of the Polish People’s Republic and political Catholicism

The following reflection has been directly prompted by two events on the publishing market. The first was the publication, in 2014, of Andrzej Leder’s much talked about book *Prześlona rewolucja* (The Dreamed Revolution). The author suggests in it that the social revolution of 1939–56 is ‘non-existent in the thinking’ of the Poles.<sup>16</sup> According to Leder, Polish society apparently was passive in its experience of brutal and thorough transformations, it was incapable of abandoning pre-revolutionary ways of thinking.<sup>17</sup> Leder draws on Marcin Zaremba’s book<sup>18</sup> as evidence of post-war anomie. Taking nothing away from the Warsaw historian’s theses concerning the general condition of Polish society after 1945, it is worth, nevertheless, asking whether there were no elites alternative to the communists, elites that were capable of diagnosing the ‘revolutionary nature’ of the transformations and were trying to give a specific

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Andrzej Leder, *Prześlona rewolucja. Ćwiczenie z logiki historycznej*, Warsaw, 2014, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23; Marcin Zaremba, *Wielka trwoga. Polska 1944–1947. Ludowa reakcja na kryzys*, Cracow, 2012.

shape to those changes. In other words, were there no non-communist forces in Poland of 1939–56 ready to assume the responsibility for the further fate of the state and the nation? Research into Polish political Catholicism is an exploration of the ‘difficult genealogy’ of contemporary society, difficult not only because of the crimes committed, as Leder would have it,<sup>19</sup> but also because of the unfulfilled dreams of a more just, modern Poland. In this sense, research into Polish political Catholicism is a search for a Polish form of modernity.<sup>20</sup>

What has also prompted me to explore the topic is scholars’ growing interest in it: Andrzej Friszke’s recently published book, the edited volume *Sensus Catholicus*, studies by Małgorzata Strzelecka and Piotr H. Kosicki make it possible to appreciate the interpretative and theoretical efforts of Catholics. Although Friszke focuses on the young generation whose members were to appear on the main stage of history only after 1956, the very fact that the author notices the question of this first or, in fact, second — after the wartime underground activities — political school of young Catholics seems important.<sup>21</sup> *Sensus Catholicus* is a significant publication on account of its scope. A broad thematic scope, selection of authors and good balance between monographic and comprehensive studies make this book maybe not a complete, but certainly rich panorama of research into Catholicism in the Polish People’s Republic, research currently conducted in Poland. The book is divided into three parts: ‘Orientations of various groups’, ‘Characters’ and ‘Between the centre and the peripheries’. The protagonists of part one are Catholic groups — PAX, Znak and *Tygodnik Powszechny*, to a lesser extent the group associated with the Labour Party until 1946 or with the ODiSS after 1968. Part two focuses on the fate of the most important representatives of the Catholic groups, usually offering monographic approaches to selected aspects of the biographies of national as well as regional leaders of Catholic groups. Part three is devoted to the stories of regional Catholic organizations (including Catholic Intellectuals’ Clubs, PAX Association, Christian Social Association (ChSS) in Gdańsk and Szczecin.

The introduction contains an apt diagnosis of the apparent wealth of the literature concerning the ‘ideological choices of lay Catholics in 1945–89’. The editors present a long list of groups yet to be described or those that have been described perfunctorily, while the very aim of the

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<sup>19</sup> Leder, *Prześlńiona rewolucja*, p. 199.

<sup>20</sup> See Jan Maciejewski, ‘Forma Polska. Program Gombrowicza i Wyszyńskiego’, *Pressje*, 34, 2013, pp. 18–28.

<sup>21</sup> Andrzej Friszke, *Między wojną a więzieniem 1945–1953. Młoda inteligencja katolicka*, Warsaw, 2015.



book — to create a panorama of Catholic groups in communist Poland and indicate the main research problems to be tackled in the field — was a direct inspiration for the present article.<sup>22</sup>

Małgorzata Strzelecka's book *Między minimalizmem a maksymalizmem. Dylematy ideowe Stanisława Stommy i Janusza Zabłockiego* (Between Minimalism and Maximalism. The Ideological Dilemmas of Stanisław Stomma and Janusz Zabłocki) is a multi-level analysis of a clash of two concepts of politics pursued by Catholics in 1956–76. The author analyses the 1945–48 period from the perspective of a debate, going on at the time, over Stomma's article 'Maksymalne i minimalne tendencje społeczne katolików' (Maximum and minimum social tendencies of Catholics) published in the *Znak* monthly. This draws attention to the genealogy of the disputes from the 1960s and 1970s; however, since the topic is not the main focus of the author's attention, she does not devote too much time to it.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, I should mention a book by Piotr H. Kosicki, a researcher associated with the University of Maryland, who has recently published a study devoted to the links — ideological and personal — between the Polish Catholics of the Piasecki group and *Tygodnik Powszechny* group, and Emmanuel Mounier and the *Esprit* circle.<sup>24</sup> Kosicki tackles an important problem of Polish Catholics' participation in world and European Catholic movements.

Personalism, referred to in the title of the book, was a heterogeneous movement, but in the mid-twentieth century it was closely associated with the figures of Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier. Maritain and Mounier, as the author rightly notes, were present in Catholic intellectual circles in the 1930s in Poland and Europe. However, the movement became popular shortly after the Second World War, becoming the dominant philosophy of Christian democrats.<sup>25</sup>

Kosicki tries to place the Polish case within the framework of these pan-European processes. He undoubtedly deserves praise for showing the international theatre of various activities of the PAX group, which

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<sup>22</sup> *Sensus Catholicus. Katolicy świeccy w Polsce Ludowej. Postawy — aktywność — myśl*, ed. Radosław Ptaszyński and Tomasz Sikorski, Toruń, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> Małgorzata Strzelecka, *Między minimalizmem a maksymalizmem. Dylematy ideowe Stanisława Stommy i Janusza Zabłockiego*, Toruń, 2015; worthy of note is also an earlier book by the Toruń-based scholar: eadem, *Trudne kompromisy. Środowisko 'Tygodnika Powszechnego' wobec reform systemu oświaty i wychowania w latach 1945–1989*, Toruń, 2009.

<sup>24</sup> Piotr H. Kosicki, *Personalizm po polsku. Francuskie korzenie polskiej inteligencji katolickiej*, transl. Jerzy Giebułtowski, Warsaw, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Jan-Werner Müller, *Przeciw demokracji. Idee polityczne XX wieku w Europie*, transl. Jakub Majmurek, Warsaw, 2016, pp. 188–92.

he presents not as a Trojan horse, but as an autonomous milieu with its own political and social programme (Catholic socialism), which it tried to implement either by supporting the communist government or by organizing a ‘Catholic-socialist international’.<sup>26</sup> In addition, Kosicki demonstrates numerous parallels as well as points of divergence between Christian socialism in Poland and in France.

The author reconstructs Stomma’s political line of thinking in an interesting manner — believing that it is a mistake to attribute a minimalist attitude to this Catholic writer and politician. Kosicki sees here an apolitical element and rather than a formulation of the minimalists’ programme.<sup>27</sup>

What may be regarded as controversial is the author’s opinion about groups that were not enthusiastic about Mounier’s personalism: is it really true that ‘the Christian democrats from the Union were far worse prepared for the role of Catholic intellectuals than the *Odrodzenie* group’?<sup>28</sup> Kosicki will certainly find many polemicists in Poland,<sup>29</sup> which allows us to hope that the wave of growing interest in various strands of political Catholicism in Poland will not recede any time soon.

Summing up the above paragraphs, it could be said that recent years have given a new impetus to research into political Catholicism in Poland. Scholars are interested both in the period of the building of the Polish People’s Republic and in the unique stories of Catholics who wanted to take part in the process. The arguments presented above encourage a different look at the activity of Catholics in the first post-war years, but first they require an exploration of the literature on the subject, both the most recent publications as well as those emerging in communist Poland or in the 1990s.

Below I present strands of research into political Catholicism in Poland immediately after the end of the Second World War: the history of the revived Labour Party, of the three groups of intellectuals associated with socio-cultural weeklies, biographies of figures associated with the Catholic movement and the Catholic Church as well as relations between the state and the Church. At the end I discuss the literature on the activity of lay Catholics originating outside Poland, that is detached from the historiographic debates going on in Poland.

<sup>26</sup> Kosicki, *Personalizm po polsku*, pp. 301 ff.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 217–19.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>29</sup> See for example Grzegorz Kucharczyk, ‘Ofensywa “Tygodnika Warszawskiego”’, in idem, *Chrześcijaństwo-narodowi. Szkice z historii idei*, Dębogóra, 2009, pp. 127–49, in which the author formulates theses completely opposite to Kosicki’s stance.

## Labour Party

An important strand in historiography is made up of studies devoted to institutions by means of which Catholics in Poland tried to change the existing reality. One of the most important among them was a political party — the Labour Party, which until 1946 could call itself Catholic as understood in political Catholicism. Comprehensive monographs devoted to the party were written even before 1989. Books by Andrzej Andrusiewicz or Waldemar Bujak<sup>30</sup> discuss its official history, which does not undermine their values with regard to such issues as party organization, official reactions of its leadership to the events of 1945–47 or presentation of the party's programme. Nevertheless, the authors fail to tackle topics not admissible in the pre-1989 discourse: surveillance of the Labour Party by the Ministry of Public Security, the party's international contacts or relations between the party's politicians and the underground. These limitations also apply to studies in which the history of the Labour Party is not the only topic tackled: Jacek Majchrowski focuses on the pre-1945 period (and on outlining the Labour Party — National Radical Camp alternative),<sup>31</sup> while Konstanty Turowski limits himself to 1946 in his presentation of the history of the Christian democratic movement in Poland. These monographs, devoted to the history of the party on the central level, are complemented by studies devoted to its regional structures<sup>32</sup> as well as a monograph exploring the activity of the party in the government in exile.<sup>33</sup> The

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<sup>30</sup> Andrzej Andrusiewicz, *Stronnictwo Pracy 1937–1950. Ze studiów nad dziejami najnowszych chadecji w Polsce*, Warsaw, 1988; Waldemar Bujak, *Historia Stronnictwa Pracy 1937–1946–1950*, Warsaw, 1988.

<sup>31</sup> Jacek Majchrowski, *Stronnictwo Pracy. Działalność polityczna i koncepcje programowe 1937–1945*, Cracow, 1979; idem, *Geneza polityczna ugrupowań katolickich. Stronnictwo Pracy, grupa 'Dziś i Jutro'*, Paris, 1984.

<sup>32</sup> Aleksandra Namysło, 'Stronnictwo Pracy', in *Województwo Śląskie 1945–1950 Zarys dziejów politycznych*, ed. Adam Dziurok and Ryszard Kaczmarek, Katowice, 2007, pp. 328–53; Adam Makowski, 'Stronnictwo Pracy na Pomorzu Zachodnim wobec przemian politycznych w latach 1945–1950', in *Monumenta manent. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana profesorowi Tadeuszowi Bialeckiemu w 70. rocznicę urodzin*, ed. idem and Edward Włodarczyk, Szczecin, 2003, pp. 245–62; Jan Draus, *Stronnictwo Pracy w województwie rzeszowskim 1945–1946–1950. Z dziejów regionalnej chadecji*, Rzeszów, 1998; Tadeusz Potemski, *Stronnictwo Pracy na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1937–1950*, Katowice, 1969; Roman Sławiński, 'Stronnictwo Pracy w województwie olsztyńskim w latach 1946–1950', *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie*, 1979, 4, pp. 467–78; Janusz Stefaniak, 'Stronnictwo Pracy w woj. lubelskim w latach 1946–1950. Przegląd problemu', *Rocznik Lubelski*, 27/28, 1985/1986, pp. 217–28.

<sup>33</sup> Jarosław Rabiński, *Stronnictwo Pracy we władzach naczelnych Rzeczypospolitej na uchodźstwie*, Lublin, 2012.

authors listed above have also published a number of articles devoted to various aspects of the Labour Party's activity.<sup>34</sup>

When it comes to the Labour Party's national policy after 1945, the prevailing opinion is that the party had too weak structures and was too heterogeneous internally to fight for its subjectivity on the political scene. Closest to the communist discourse, Andrusiewicz stresses the class-bound, petit bourgeois and, consequently, centre-right nature of the Labour Party. The class perspective prevents the author from providing a more accurate analysis of the ideological and sociological nature of political Catholicism in Poland: on the one hand there is an emphasis on a lack of coordination between the activity of various lay circles and on the other the author suggests that there were close links between Karol Popiel and the editorial board of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and thus some degree of coordination. Nevertheless, Andrusiewicz is accurate in pointing to Father Jan Piwowarczyk as a leading writer for *Tygodnik Powszechny* in 1945–48 and noting the tension between the writings of Jerzy Turowicz and Father Piwowarczyk. What also seems debatable is the fact that Wojciech Kętrzyński is presented as the main figure behind the founding of the journal *Dziś i Jutro*, although the ideological primacy is given to Bolesław Piasecki. Finally, the institutional perspective makes it impossible for the author to notice that the Labour Party before and after July 1946 are basically two very different organizations: the fact that he omits from his analysis the ousting of former 'Union' members from the organization allows him to speak of collaboration between the Labour Party and *Tygodnik Warszawski* and not of a transfer of a group of activists and ideologists from the party to the journal.<sup>35</sup>

Bujak shies away from passing judgements, focusing instead on a description of the history of the party, somewhat irrespectively of the change in its nature after 1946. Like Andrusiewicz, he points to the heterogeneity of political Catholicism: in Bujak's opinion Father Zygmunt Kaczyński or Jerzy Braun were conservatives, while Kazimierz

<sup>34</sup> Andrzej Andrusiewicz, 'Myśl polityczna Stronnictwa Pracy', *Studia Nauk Politycznych*, 6, 1984, pp. 63–87; Waldemar Bujak, 'Stronnictwo Pracy — partia Władysława Sikorskiego', *Przegląd Polonijny*, 1981, 2, pp. 89–106; Jacek Majchrowski, 'Geneza Stronnictwa Pracy', *SH*, 18, 1975, 4, pp. 443–60; idem, *Stronnictwo Pracy*; idem, 'Polityczno-doktrynalne determinanty roli Stronnictwa Pracy w latach 1939–1945', *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace z Nauk Politycznych*, 8, 1975, pp. 129–59; idem, 'Problem utworzenia partii katolickiej w Polsce Ludowej', *Euhemer*, 26, 1982, 3/4, pp. 65–75; Andrzej Palczak, 'Stronnictwo Pracy w latach 1945–1946', *Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Śląskiej*, 44, 1985, pp. 71–80.

<sup>35</sup> Andrusiewicz, *Stronnictwo Pracy 1937–1950*, pp. 233–43.

Studentowicz was apparently a Catholic radical. What is not mentioned either is the fact that acceptance of socialism by the *Dziś i Jutro* group, symbolized by the ‘Open letter to Mr Juliusz Łada’, ultimately made the recognition of the Catholicity of the journal by the hierarchy and most of the laity impossible.<sup>36</sup> Worthy of note is the fact that both authors end their narratives in 1950, the year when the Labour Party was incorporated into the Democratic Party, which suggests the primacy of an institutional over ideological point of view — in this sense the scholars do not describe the history of the Polish Christian democratic party, but, rather, the history of the Labour Party, which went through various ideological moments before eventually disappearing in 1950. Such a perspective is understandable in the context of the feigned ‘normality’ of political life in Poland after 1945. However, today it seems very outdated.

A different take on the Labour Party is presented by Turowski, who closes his narrative in 1946, indicating, in a way, this date as marking the end of a period of activity of Christian democrats in Poland. In this sense we can speak of the primacy of an ideological point of view over an institutional one. At the same time, the split within the Labour Party marked the end — as is suggested by the conclusion of the book — of the political epic of Christian democrats.<sup>37</sup> Turowski sees an ideological and personal connection with Catholic groups active after 1946, groups that brought together Labour Party survivors. Yet in his analyses he focuses exclusively on the fate of the Popiel faction in the Labour Party, without describing the groups associated with Catholic weeklies.

What all these studies have in common is a privileged position of political and institutional history: as we read the monographs devoted to the Labour Party, we can follow political processes as well as organizational transformations — because of a lack of more recent analyses based on documents from the Ministry of Public Security’s archives we cannot say to what extent these reconstructions are reliable. Ideological or socio-political issues are treated as marginal, which is another reason why the available information about the Labour Party is limited.

### Three weeklies

Catholic political life did not end with the life of the Labour Party. Owing to the suspension of the Labour Party’s activity and even earlier, from March 1945, intellectual life of socially and politically active Catholics

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<sup>36</sup> Bujak, *Historia Stronnictwa Pracy*, pp. 189–91.

<sup>37</sup> Turowski, *Historia ruchu chrześcijańsko-demokratycznego*, vol. 2, p. 557.

centred around the press, especially<sup>38</sup> three weeklies: *Tygodnik Powszechny* (Universal Weekly) as well as the *Znak* (Sign) monthly, *Tygodnik Warszawski* (Warsaw Weekly) and *Dziś i Jutro* (Today and Tomorrow). Scholars were interested mostly in the first group. Beginning with Micewski's study, a number of scholars, but primarily people associated with the milieu in one way or another, attempted to write down its history.<sup>39</sup> It must be noted, however, as Roman Graczyk has recently pointed out,<sup>40</sup> that the period of 1945–48 was treated in a perfunctory manner in stories of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, with many opinions and assumptions being 'transferred' from later periods to the first few years of the weekly.

Worthy of note in this context are publications by Michał Jagiełło and Piotr Ściślicki, which refer to the period I examine in the present article. Like Turowski in his book on the history of the Christian democratic movement, Jagiełło points to the continuity between the Catholicism of the Odrodzenie Catholic Student Association and Catholic groups active after 1945. In his view, the more 'restrained' line adopted by *Tygodnik Powszechny* was closer to the idea of the Odrodzenie group than the confrontational, maximalist *Tygodnik Warszawski*. Jagiełło provides a detailed reconstruction of important debates tackled by *Tygodnik Powszechny* and his book is the best guide to the concepts of the Cracow circle.

Ściślicki's book, despite certain shortcomings — the biggest of them being excessive focus on summarising the analysed texts and providing a minimum of interpretation — enables us to see a different, more defiant face of *Tygodnik Powszechny*. The dissonance between historians looking at the 1945–48 period in the history of the weekly from the perspective of

<sup>38</sup> Czesław Lechicki, 'Polska prasa katolicka 1945–1948', *Kwartalnik Historii Prasy Polskiej*, 22, 1983, 2, pp. 65–87; Janusz Stefaniak, *Polityka władz państwowych PRL wobec prasy katolickiej w latach 1945–1953*, Lublin, 1998.

<sup>39</sup> Bożena Bankowicz, 'Neopozytywizm — platforma ideowa "Znaku"', *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace z Nauk Politycznych*, 39, 1991, pp. 7–22; Witold Beres, Krzysztof Burnetko and Joanna Podsadecka, *Krąg Turowicza. Tygodnik, czasy, ludzie 1945–1999*, Limanowa and Cracow, 2012; Michał Jagiełło, *Próba rozmowy. Szkice o katolicyzmie odrodzeniowym i 'Tygodniku Powszechnym' 1945–1953*, 2 vols, Warsaw, 2001; Robert Jarocki, *Czterdzieści pięć lat w opozycji (o ludziach 'Tygodnika Powszechnego')*, Cracow, 1991; Maria Wanda Poznańska, *Środowiska inteligencji katolickiej wobec wizji 'nowej kultury' u zarania Polski Ludowej*, Cracow, 1993; Piotr Ściślicki, *Publicystyka ks. Jana Piwowarczyka jako przykład opozycyjnej postawy 'Tygodnika Powszechnego' wobec przemian ustrojowych w Polsce w latach 1945–1948*, Warsaw, 2011; Jacek Żakowski, *Trzy ćwiartki wieku. Rozmowy z Jerzym Turowiczem*, Cracow, 1990; idem, *Pół wieku pod włos czyli życie codzienne 'Tygodnika Powszechnego' w czasach heroicznych*, Cracow, 1999.

<sup>40</sup> Roman Graczyk, 'Realizm polityczny "Tygodnika Powszechnego" (1945–1989)', *Politeja*, 25, 2013, pp. 79–112; idem, 'Początki "Tygodnika Powszechnego"', Piwowarczyk — Świącicki — Stomma — Turowicz', in *Stulecie urodzin Jerzego Turowicza*, ed. Joanna Sulikowska and Anrzej Sulikowski, Szczecin, 2015, pp. 13–31.

Turowicz's legacy and those who notice other, at least just as significant, voices (Graczyk, Ściślicki) is one of the most interesting manifestations of the complicated history of the Cracow-based periodical. Studies devoted to the Cracow weekly, also those exploring the years 1945–48, are dominated by ideological topics, that is a search for and definitions of the 'line' adopted by the periodical and its key authors. Historians are less interested in the relations between the weekly's editorial board and other Catholic circles, the Cracow Diocesan Curia or the communist authorities.

Another weekly, *Tygodnik Warszawski*, was regarded as the most sceptical about the new government and, at the same time, the most 'political' among the Catholic periodicals of 1945–48. It was the only one not to survive the Stalinist period – it was closed down in November 1948 and had to wait for quite a long time for its first and, so far, the only monograph.<sup>41</sup> Apart from Jan Wiszniewski's book, various authors have published primarily articles concisely describing the history of its editorial team or studies exploring a selected aspect of the articles published by the weekly.<sup>42</sup> In addition, a selection of articles from *Tygodnik Warszawski* has been published with an extensive introduction providing an in-depth analysis of the intellectual life of the

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<sup>41</sup> Jan Wiszniewski, *Z historii prasy katolickiej w Polsce: Tygodnik Warszawski 1945–1948*, Cracow, 1998.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Stopikowski, 'Polemiki światopoglądowe na łamach "Tygodnika Warszawskiego"', *DN*, 27, 1995, 4, pp. 101–08; Jan Wiszniewski, 'Problematyka społeczno-polityczna "Tygodnika Warszawskiego" 1945–1948', *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace z Nauk Politycznych*, 25, 1986, pp. 113–40; idem, 'Koncepcje społeczno-polityczne "Tygodnika Warszawskiego" 1945–1948', *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace z Nauk Politycznych*, 29, 1986, pp. 81–98; Evelina Kristanova, "'Tygodnik Warszawski" (1945–1948) na tle polskiej prasy katolickiej pierwszych lat po II wojnie światowej', *Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne*, 17, 2008, pp. 247–55; eadem, "'Tygodnik Warszawski" (1945–1948) a władza komunistyczna', in *Niewygodne dla władzy. Ograniczanie wolności słowa na ziemiach polskich w XIX i XX wieku. Zbiór studiów*, ed. Dorota Degen and Jacek Gzella, Toruń, 2010, pp. 357–73; Mirosław Biełaszkowski, 'Rola prasy w kształtowaniu się środowisk katolickich w latach 1945–1948. Casus "Tygodnika Powszechnego", "Tygodnika Warszawskiego" i "Dziś i Jutro"', in *Aparat represji wobec inteligencji w latach 1945–1956*, ed. Rafał Habielski and Dominika Rafalska, Warsaw, 2010, pp. 155–81; Mirosław Biełaszkowski, "'Tygodnik Warszawski" i jego środowisko (1945–1948)', *Biuletyn IPN*, 2007, 4, pp. 77–83; idem, 'Środowisko "Tygodnika Warszawskiego" w latach 1945–1948', in *Warszawa miasto w opresji*, ed. Kazimierz Krajewski and Magdalena Pietrzak-Merta, Warsaw, 2010, pp. 261–79; Ryszard Wawryniewicz, 'Przyczynki do badań nad obliczem politycznym "Tygodnika Powszechnego" i "Tygodnika Warszawskiego" w latach 1945–1948', *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis*, 1135, *Historia*, 78, 1991, pp. 271–91; Jarosław Rabiński, 'U początku sporów o "minimalizm" i "maksymalizm" w polskim katolicyzmie społecznym', *RHum*, 54, 2006, 2, pp. 109–15.

Catholics after the Second World War.<sup>43</sup> The main topic explored in publications devoted to the Warsaw-based periodical and its circle is the combination of anti-communism and political as well as social activism, an attitude often compared to that of groups associated with *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Dziś i Jutro*. The Cracow-based weekly was apparently characterized by restraint in expressing its opinions and by avowed apolitical stance,<sup>44</sup> while the weekly of Bolesław Piasecki's group — by a far-reaching acceptance of the various reforms and social model introduced by the communists.<sup>45</sup> Tomasz Sikorski and Marcin Kulesza present *Tygodnik Warszawski* as a milieu with its own vision of Poland, a vision deeply rooted in Catholic social teaching. The vision comprised both a theological thought, and a specific political and social programme.<sup>46</sup>

Interestingly, despite the fact that various authors do note that after the suspension of the Labour Party many of its leading ideologists moved to the editorial team of *Tygodnik Warszawski*, studies focusing on the line adopted by the weekly rarely present the party and the editorial team or the line of the Popiel group and that of the weekly as a continuum.

The last weekly, *Dziś i Jutro*, is a special case. Unlike the studies devoted to the other periodicals and people associated with them — studies in which scholars focus on a reconstruction of the line and definition of the milieu — those devoted to the future PAX view this circle primarily with regard to the figure of Bolesław Piasecki. Consequently, many studies examining the 'unnamed movement', as Piasecki wrote about the future PAX Association, are, in fact, biographies of its leader.<sup>47</sup> We should, therefore, give special credit to the authors of studies included in the book *Komu służył PAX* (Whom Did PAX Serve),<sup>48</sup> in which attempts are made to describe the PAX group from the point of view of other actors,

<sup>43</sup> *Niezłomni w epoce fałszywych proroków*.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71 f.

<sup>47</sup> Antoni Dudek and Grzegorz Pytel, *Bolesław Piasecki. Próba biografii politycznej*, London, 1990; Andrzej Jaszczuk, *Ewolucja ideowa Bolesława Piaseckiego 1932–1956*, Warsaw, 2005; Jan Engelgard, *Wielka gra Bolesława Piaseckiego*, Warsaw, 2008; idem, 'Bolesław Piasecki — między neoromantyzmem a realizmem', in *Marzyciele i realności. O roli tradycji w polskiej myśli politycznej od upadku powstania styczniowego do XXI wieku*, ed. Tomasz Sikorski and Adam Wątor, Szczecin, 2009, pp. 399–411; Mikołaj Stanisław Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red: Nationalism, Catholicism, and Communism in Twentieth-Century Poland — The Politics of Boleslaw Piasecki*, Athens, OH, 2013; Bożena Bankowicz, 'Wieloświatopoglądowość w ujęciu Bolesława Piaseckiego', *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace z Nauk Politycznych*, 34, 1988, pp. 7–19.

<sup>48</sup> *Komu służył PAX*, ed. Sabina Bober, Warsaw, 2008; Antoni Dudek, 'Program Stowarzyszenia PAX. Realizm, koniunkturalizm czy utopia?', *Politeja*, 25, 2013, pp. 69–78.



for example, the Primate of Poland August Hlond. This shift — from the history of a movement or doctrine to a political or ideological biography — means that the dominant perspective is that of political history, with the programme or ideas providing the foundation of the project also being analysed from a strictly political perspective. Moreover, when analysing a movement mainly from the point of view of its leader, authors lose the perspective of the organization or an external perspective. That is why it can be said that the PAX Association and people linked to it are still waiting for their historian (not associated with the movement).<sup>49</sup>

This outline of historiographic tendencies concerning three Catholic weeklies shows that the literature on the subject is both vast and varied — the situation is positive, because methods applied in the study of one periodical can be used to study another. However, what constitutes a negative aspect of the fact that the weeklies are examined separately is the impossibility of noticing similarities and effectively comparing the processes taking place inside and between these groups. The area in which such a comparison has been successfully explored is the question of the attitude of Catholic circles to the new government.<sup>50</sup> Another field in which the attitudes of the analysed groups can be compared is reception of personalism as interpreted by Mounier — however, in this respect we had to wait for the results of research conducted in the *Esprit* archives by the US-based scholar Piotr H. Kosicki.<sup>51</sup> Finally, in appreciating the value of comparing the periodicals and describing their lines, it is worth bearing in mind that many authors wrote for more than one weekly at the same time — their moves from editorial team to editorial team, and, ultimately, closure of collaboration and consolidation of the stances of the various weeklies is a part of the reality of 1945–48 that has been only perfunctorily described.

### Biographies and syntheses

The biographies of Bolesław Piasecki are just an example of a broader trend in the historiography of the history of the Church and the Catholics in the Polish People's Republic. Worthy of note are the recently

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<sup>49</sup> The question of young people associated with Piasecki is discussed by Friszke, *Między wojną a więzieniem*, pp. 263 f.

<sup>50</sup> Bielaszko, 'Rola prasy w kształtowaniu się środowisk katolickich'; Andrzej Friszke, 'Strategie przystosowania ośrodków katolików świeckich w pierwszych latach powojennych', in idem, *Przystosowanie i opór. Studia z dziejów PRL*, Warsaw, 2009, pp. 33–57.

<sup>51</sup> Kosicki, *Personalizm po polsku*; idem, 'Polskie personalizmy 1918–1948, cz. 1', *Więź*, 2014, 4 (658), pp. 82–92; idem, 'Polskie personalizmy 1918–1948, cz. 2', *Więź*, 2015, 1 (659), pp. 65–78.

published biographies of Tadeusz Mazowiecki, which, using the figure of the future Prime Minister of Poland, convey the spirit of 1945–48 and provide an accurate description of the ideological choices of the day.<sup>52</sup> In addition, there are complete or partial biographies of the Primate of Poland: August Hlond and Stefan Wyszyński, as well as other clergymen — key figures in the state–Church relations and the political history of the laity.<sup>53</sup> The biographies of the Church dignitaries make it possible to understand the context of the activity of lay Catholics, as the topic of the place of the laity in the concepts of the two primates has not been explored as a separate research problem. In the case of Ryszard Gajewski’s book devoted to Father Kaczyński we are dealing with a description of the Labour Party circle rather than a typical political biography;<sup>54</sup> similar shortcomings can be found in another biography by the same author — this time devoted to Karol Popiel.<sup>55</sup> Another noteworthy publication is a book by Jarosław Rabiński, who, focusing on Turowski’s political and organizational activity, demonstrates the limitations the Catholics had to grapple with at the beginning of communist Poland. A biography of Jerzy Braun, discussing primarily the ideological, philosophical and literary legacy of its protagonist, has been published by Rafał Łętocha.<sup>56</sup> Maciej Urbanowski has published a selection of Braun’s writings,<sup>57</sup> while Tomasz Sikorski and Marcin Kulesza have for several years been popularizing Kazimierz Studentowicz’s oeuvre,<sup>58</sup> focusing on the economic thought of the ‘Polish Savonarola’.

Another Szczecin-based scholar, alongside Sikorski and Kulesza, is Radosław Ptaszyński, author of an extensive biography of Stanisław

<sup>52</sup> Roman Graczyk, *Od uwikłania do autentyczności. Biografia polityczna Tadeusza Mazowieckiego*, Warsaw, 2015, especially pp. 25–48; Andrzej Brzeziecki, *Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Biografia naszego premiera*, Cracow, 2015, pp. 31–48.

<sup>53</sup> Peter Raina, *Kardynał Wyszyński*, 20 vols, Warsaw, 1993–2010, vol. 1: *Droga na Stolicę Prymasowską*; Ewa K. Czaczkowska, *Kardynał Wyszyński. Biografia*, Cracow, 2013; Jerzy Pietrzak, *Pełnia prymasostwa. Ostatnie lata prymasa Polski kardynała Augusta Hlonda 1945–1948*, 2 vols, Poznań, 2009; Maciej Grzegorz Smoliński, *Biskup negocjator. Zygmunt Choroński (1892–1968). Biografia niepolityczna?*, Warsaw, 2014; Ryszard Gajewski, *Ks. Zygmunt Kaczyński — kapłan i polityk*, Lublin, 2013.

<sup>54</sup> Gajewski, *Ks. Zygmunt Kaczyński*, pp. 265 f.

<sup>55</sup> Ryszard Gajewski, *Karol Popiel 1887–1977*, Suwałki, 2008; Jarosław Rabiński, *Konstanty Turowski 1907–1983. Życie, działalność, myśl społeczno-polityczna*, Katowice, 2008.

<sup>56</sup> Rafał Łętocha, *‘Oporet vos nasci denuo’*. *Myśl społeczno-polityczna Jerzego Brauna*, Cracow, 2006.

<sup>57</sup> Jerzy Braun, *Kultura jutra, czyli Nowe Oświecenie*, ed. Maciej Urbanowski, Warsaw, 2001.

<sup>58</sup> Tomasz Sikorski and Marcin Kulesza, *Sen o Kalopei. Ewangeliczny socjalizm Kazimierza Studentowicza*, Warsaw, 2014; *Polski Savonarola. Pisma polityczne Kazimierza Studentowicza z lat wojny i okupacji*, ed. Tomasz Sikorski, Toruń and Łysomice, 2013.

Stomma. What makes his book stand out is its detailed reconstruction. Its traditional structure enables us to find out what Stomma thought and did in a given period. In addition, the book seems to be confirming the existing opinions about the Catholic politician rather than suggesting new interpretations of his activity.<sup>59</sup>

The above list shows that in recent years research into the activity of lay Catholics has intensified — writings of key thinkers are being published, as are political biographies of key figures in post-war Catholicism in Poland. I am happy to see a balance between biographies of representatives of the clergy and the laity, which to some extent makes it possible to note the activity of the Catholics of both orders.

The last group of publications worth discussing in the context of gathering dispersed threads concerning the political activity of the Catholics in the second half of the 1940s comprises studies dealing with the history of the Catholic Church in the Polish People's Republic. Despite the fact that studies of this type focus on the relations between the Church hierarchy and representatives of the communist authorities, they do not completely ignore the question of the activity of the laity. The most important studies of the history of the Church in the Polish People's Republic are those by Jan Żaryn<sup>60</sup> and Antoni Dudek (with Ryszard Gryz)<sup>61</sup> or Father Zygmunt Zieliński.<sup>62</sup> Worthy of note is also an earlier study by Marian Jasiukiewicz, who rightly — after Krystyna Kersten — points out that the opposition of the Church was an opposition 'inside the system', unlike that of groups that protested the very existence of communist Poland.<sup>63</sup> After reading these studies I am inclined to conclude that they do not provide new information and do not present new theses concerning the activity of the laity; nevertheless, they do enable us to see the activity of the laity in the context of the activity of the Church. In the chapter devoted to the 1945–50 period Antoni Dudek omits the topic of lay groups altogether, while Father Zieliński and Sabina Bober present the history of Catholic groups on the basis of the literature on the subject. Worthy of note are studies by Jan Żaryn, who in his first book combines a story of the contacts of the Church

<sup>59</sup> Radosław Ptaszyński, *Stommizm. Biografia polityczna Stanisława Stommy*, Cracow, 2018.

<sup>60</sup> Jan Żaryn, *Dzieje Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce (1944–1989)*, Warsaw, 2003; idem, *Kościół a władza w Polsce (1945–1950)*, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>61</sup> Antoni Dudek and Ryszard Gryz, *Komuniści i Kościół w Polsce (1945–1989)*, Cracow, 2003.

<sup>62</sup> Zygmunt Zieliński (with Sabina Bober), *Kościół w Polsce 1944–2007*, Poznań, 2009.

<sup>63</sup> Marian Jasiukiewicz, *Kościół Katolicki w polskim życiu politycznym*, Wrocław, 1993. Some researchers even speak of a paradoxical legitimization of the communist government by the Church: Michael Fleming, *Communism, Nationalism and Ethnicity in Poland, 1944–50*, London and New York, 2010, pp. 101 ff.

hierarchy with additional information about lay circles,<sup>64</sup> while in his second, more general book he skilfully places a passage about the activity of lay Catholics within the framework of the ‘policy of divergence’ of the Church and the state, which apparently lasted until late 1947 and early 1948.<sup>65</sup>

These studies are important, because only by referring the history of lay Catholics’ activity to the political conditions and the activity of the Church hierarchy can we notice the institutional and systemic limitations within which the laity had to operate. However, perceiving the activity of the laity as part of the relations between the state and the Church carries with it the risk of making the mistake of treating laypersons as ‘second tier’ actors acting only, if at all, within the mandate granted to them by the ecclesiastic authorities. It seems that for the period of the first few years following the war this assumption is indefensible.

### Overseas research

Ending the above overview, it is worth paying some attention to the English-language literature dealing with the political activity of the Catholics after the Second World War. Studies originating outside Poland are distinguished as a separate group for two reasons. Firstly, pre-1989 studies were written in a unique geopolitical context necessitating specific research methods and limiting access to sources. Secondly, studies written outside Poland after 1989, when their authors were in closer contact with Polish scholarship and Polish scholars, focus on topics less well represented in the Polish literature on the subject. As early as in 1967 Adam Bromke published a book on the Polish traditions of realism and idealism, in which he provided an extensive description of the attitudes of the PAX and the Znak groups.<sup>66</sup> The groups were also examined by Norbert Żmijewski in his book on the dialogue between Marxism and Catholicism.<sup>67</sup> The topic had earlier been tackled, in a broader, Central European perspective, by Paul Mojzes.<sup>68</sup> Thus researchers working outside Poland were interested particularly in the question of ‘agreements’ be-

<sup>64</sup> See for example Żaryn, *Kościół a władza*, p. 127.

<sup>65</sup> Idem, *Dzieje Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, pp. 83 f.

<sup>66</sup> Adam Bromke, *Poland's Politics. Idealism vs. Realism*, Cambridge, MA, 1967.

<sup>67</sup> Norbert A. Żmijewski, *The Catholic-Marxist Ideological Dialogue in Poland, 1945-1980*, Aldershot, 1991.

<sup>68</sup> Paul Mojzes, ‘Christian-Marxist Dialogue in Eastern Europe: 1945-1980’, *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, 4, 1984, 4, Article 3, pp. 13-53 <<http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol4/iss4/3>> [accessed 14 May 2017].

tween the Catholics and the communists — in this respect the period of 1945–48 was for them only an introduction to the main narrative concerning the years following the thaw of 1956.

More recent studies conducted outside Poland should be treated separately from those originating in Poland, because they are characterized by interesting methodological approaches. An interesting perspective is adopted by Brian Porter-Szűcs in his analysis of the evolution of key notions of Polish Catholicism in the late nineteenth and the twentieth century.<sup>69</sup> Finally, Piotr H. Kosicki in his book *Personalizm po polsku* (Personalism à la Polonaise) as well as in a number of articles has tackled the topic of contacts between the Polish and the French personalists, and, more broadly, the history of the Catholic left in Poland.<sup>70</sup>

Researchers active primarily abroad include Mikołaj Kunicki, the author of the biography of Piasecki referred to above. Kunicki argues in favour of the ideological consistency of Piasecki, who for him remained a nationalist adapting to the changing systemic determinants, but constantly seeking to implement his concept of an ethnic authoritarian state. Kunicki's book was unfavourably received in Poland: the author was accused of pursuing political and not scholarly objectives, of being unfamiliar with the literature on the subject and drawing on a scant source base.<sup>71</sup>

This concise overview of the literature suggests that the topic of the Catholics' activity does attract some interest of scholars active on the English-language market. Particularly worthy of note are studies by Kosicki and Porter-Szűcs. The former, thanks to his preliminary research carried

<sup>69</sup> Brian Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland*, Oxford and New York, 2011.

<sup>70</sup> Piotr H. Kosicki, 'Between Catechism and Revolution: Poland, France, and the Story of Catholicism and Socialism in Europe, 1878–1958', unpublished doctoral dissertation, Princeton University, 2010; idem, 'The Soviet Bloc's Answer to European Integration: Catholic Anti-Germanism and the Polish Project of a "Catholic-Socialist" International', *Contemporary European History*, 24, 2015, 1, pp. 1–36; idem, 'L'avènement des intellectuels catholiques. Le mensuel *Więź* et les conséquences polonaises du personnalisme mounierien', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 2009, 2 (102), pp. 31–48; idem, 'Promieniowanie personalizmu. Mounier, "Esprit" i początki "Więzi"', *Więź*, 2008, 2/3 (592/593), pp. 111–22; idem, 'The Legacy of Polish Christian Democracy. Questions, Materials and Methods for Research', in *Christian Democrat Internationalism*, vol. 1, pp. 75–92.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. the review: Wojciech J. Muszyński, 'Bolesław Piasecki as the Victim of Post-Modernist Historical Revisionism', <<http://www.glaukopis.pl/index.php/book-reviews/18-boleslaw-piasecki-as-the-victim-of-post-modernist-historical-revisionism>> [accessed 30 August 2016]; Ewa Thompson, review of Mikołaj Stanisław Kunicki, *Between the Brown and the Red. Nationalism, Catholicism, and Communism in 20th-Century Poland: The Politics of Bolesław Piasecki*, Athens, OH, 2012, *The Sarmatian Review*, 33, 2013, 3, pp. 1781–84.

out in the *Esprit* archives, has provided an insight into the contacts between PAX, *Tygodnik Powszechny* and the Mounierists, which makes it possible to better understand the nature of the reception of Mounierism in Poland. The latter has proposed an original method of exploring the link between Polishness and Catholicism, a method consisting in an analysis of concepts from the intersection of the languages of religion and politics. The method has enabled the Michigan-based historian to explore the ideological and theoretical content of the term *Polak-Katolik* (Catholic-Pole). I should also mention two collections of articles: the first devoted to the reception of the Second Vatican Council in Central and Eastern Europe,<sup>72</sup> the second — to Central European Christian democracy, in which Polish authors discuss in detail examples of biographies of transnational activists of the movement.<sup>73</sup>

### Conclusions

Summing up the above overview of the literature on political Catholicism, it can be said that research of Polish historians focuses on selected groups — be it political or social. Individual studies treat particular groups as somewhat closed universes, often sharing the opinions of the figures described in them. Taken together, these studies provide a more or less detailed ‘political geography’ of the Catholics in the Polish People’s Republic. Some authors also examine the attitude of selected groups to a specific aspect of the reality in post-war Poland — usually culture.<sup>74</sup> Comparisons between the groups are based on their attitude to the authorities — with authors pointing to more ‘conciliatory’ and more ‘intransigent’ groups. More recent studies, by Andrzej Friszke, Piotr Kosicki or Małgorzata Strzelecka and Radosław Ptaszyński propose a cross-sectional, generational view or focus on the dominant intellectual trends of the period (for example, personalism or neo-positivism), which provides new areas of comparisons between the attitudes of the Catholics in the first few years after the Second World War.

When it comes to studies dealing with the Labour Party, they are outdated when it comes to the national perspective — the most important among them originated before 1989. Instead of providing a realistic diag-

<sup>72</sup> *Vatican II Behind the Iron Curtain*, ed. Piotr H. Kosicki, Washington, DC, 2018.

<sup>73</sup> *Christian Democracy Across the Iron Curtain: Europe Redefined*, ed. Piotr H. Kosicki and Sławomir Łukasiewicz, Cham, 2018.

<sup>74</sup> Strzelecka, *Trudne kompromisy*; Poznańska, *Środowiska inteligencji katolickiej wobec wizji ‘nowej kultury’*.

nosis of the specificity of the political system in which the Labour Party operated, their authors assume that the political parties operated under normal conditions and treat the takeover of the party by the Zryw group as a victory of one internal faction over another. The situation is different when it comes to regional studies — these usually more recent studies are based on surveys of the security services' archives, which makes it possible to provide a more accurate reconstruction of the history of the group.

When it comes to the studies dealing with the Catholic Church, the perspective of laypersons is taken into account in them as a background rather than an equally important topic. For Polish researchers the Church is primarily the institution and the hierarchy.

Generally speaking, research into Catholic groups is dominated by the perspectives of the history of ideas and political history. Unfortunately, these two strands do not complement each other well. There are topics that have been described only from the perspective of political science (for example, the history of PAX and Bolesław Piasecki) as well as those that are of interest primarily to researchers studying the intelligentsia (the case of the *Tygodnik Powszechny* group). Thus, there is room for new research, even drawing on the available and well-known source material, based on new methodological approaches.

Notwithstanding the relevancy of describing the history of Catholic activity in communist Poland from the perspective of various groups, for the 1945–48 period this perspective is hardly sufficient: first of all, because there was a considerable movement of people between various periodicals and organizations, including the Labour Party. The attitudes of Paweł Jasienica, Józef Marian Świącicki or Stefan Kisielewski as well as the Labour Party activists who moved to *Tygodnik Warszawski* after 1946 demonstrate that it is hard to make sharp distinctions between the various groups and assign specific views to them in this particular period. It could be said that various attitudes (for example, neo-positivism, minimalism, maximalism) were negotiated on the pages of each weekly (and to some extent also within each editorial board). This is why it is worth looking for new ways of describing the Polish Catholic reality after 1945.

What turns out to be particularly illuminating in this context is a comparison between studies and topics tackled by Polish historians, and those by researchers active in other countries, especially Porter-Szűcs and Kosicki, as it makes it possible to indicate potential fields to be explored. The book *Faith and Fatherland* is an example showing that research into Catholic thought — asking questions not only about its attitude to communism — can be fruitful. In 1945–48 and, more broadly,

in communist Poland, socially and politically active Catholics developed some ideological solutions which we have to tackle today as well. Porter-Szűcs' book encourages us to see in the Catholics' political thought not only anti-communism but also an original and autonomous reflection on Poland.

Piotr Kosicki's studies reveal the transnational nature of Polish Catholicism: this scholar has focused on Mounierism and contacts between Mounier and his followers, and Poles. It should be noted, however, that political Catholicism in Europe had many faces and Mounier was by no means its main ideologist. That is why looking at other Polish groups in a transnational context, that is in the context of various Christian movements in Europe sharing some intellectual strands and dynamics, may highlight both what is common and what is unique in the Polish thought.

The last question worth exploring is one of research into institutions and networks of Catholic life — be it in the context of the activities of media entities, especially PAX, or in the context of formal and informal associations.

*(Translated by Anna Kijak)*

## Summary

The article is an attempt to provide an overview of research into political Catholicism in Poland in 1945–48. The application of the notion of political Catholicism, in a manner similar to the one used by English-language scholars, makes it possible to provide an analysis of groups and phenomena hitherto tackled separately. The first part of the overview is devoted to a discussion of studies by Adam Michnik and Andrzej Micewski — with an emphasis on their non-academic nature and political motivation of the authors at a time when the books were written (1977 and 1978), which influences the picture of the activity of lay Catholics at a time when people's democracy was being built in Poland. These accusations apply to Janusz Zabłocki's book though to a lesser extent. The analysis is followed by a discussion of the state of research in the following areas: the history of the Labour Party, groups of lay Catholic gathered around social-cultural-political weeklies, studies dealing with the relations between the state and the Church, and biographies. A separate section is devoted to studies written by scholars active outside Poland on account of profound differences in topic formulation and methodology. The conclusion points to the non-autonomous nature of the functioning of the 1945–48 period in the literature, being often regarded as an introduction to the proper history of the Catholics in the Polish People's Republic. In addition, the author notes the gaps in the existing studies: non-use of sources produced by the Ministry of Public Security in research into the Labour Party, no research into the ideology of Catholic groups with the exception of questions like the sup-



port of or opposition to the government, finally, limited interest in the network of contacts as well as financial and organizational determinants of the activity of lay Catholics in the early days of the Polish People's Republic.

(Translated by Anna Kijak)

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