

CHANGING CONTEXT, CHANGING OPPORTUNITIES:  
THE EFFECT OF POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY  
STRUCTURES ON THE POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND AND  
SLOVENIA, 1992-2005

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IN POLAND AND SLOVENIA, 1992-2005

by

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A thesis submitted to the  
School of Graduate Studies  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

Department of Political Science  
Memorial University of Newfoundland

May 2009

St. John's

Newfoundland

## ABSTRACT

### CHANGING CONTEXT, CHANGING OPPORTUNITIES: THE POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POST-COMMUNIST POLAND AND SLOVENIA, 1992 - 2005

Krista F. Baker

The sweeping social, political, and economic changes that occurred over the period from 1992 to 2005 in Poland and Slovenia tested the Roman Catholic Church with a new structure of opportunities for and constraints upon political activity. The aim of this study was to discover how this shifting political opportunity structure affected the Church's ability to take part in the post-Communist political process. The relatively volatile nature of Polish politics, combined with a religiously adherent, yet somewhat skeptical, society presented the Polish Church with a political opportunity structure that was often variable, yet predominantly favourable for the Church. This allowed the Church to make considerable political gains. In contrast, the Slovene Church faced a remarkably different context than its Polish counterpart. A relatively stable political system and openly skeptical Slovene society presented few openings to the Church to attain a significant influence in politics and, aside from a few state concessions in the early 2000s, the Church was shut out of politics.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the financial assistance provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), which awarded me the Canada Graduate Scholarship in 2003, and the School of Graduate Studies, which provided me with fellowship funding from 2003 to 2005. These funds allowed me to pay for education and living expenses during the majority of my Master's program.

Valuable advice about issues related to my academic program, this thesis, and other matters was provided by two key individuals. First, Dr. Bill McGrath, my thesis supervisor, displayed endless patience during the somewhat tumultuous development of my topic and my life. Although I often encountered obstacles which appeared insurmountable Dr. McGrath never failed to remind of my abilities or the options which existed to overcome these difficulties. Also, during the editing process Dr. McGrath provided valuable advice about improvements to the final text. Second, I would also like to thank Dr. Close for his guidance during the entirety of my time at the Political Science Department. Dr. Close encouraged me to explore new ideas and pursue new directions as I developed my thesis. He also helped me to sustain the motivation to continue with my program, even when I was unsure about my present or future. Thank you both.

Many other people helped me to achieve the level of intellectual and personal development required to persist to this level of study. I owe great thanks to the multitude of teachers and professors whom I have encountered since I began my education at the tender age of four. Although some of these individuals may not remember me from the thousands of students that they have taught over the years, I am grateful to each and every one for the knowledge and skills which they imparted to me that have taught me to think critically and find solutions to problems.

My greatest gratitude is reserved for those closest to me - my parents, Howard and Netta, who have encouraged me to continue with my education and to reach my full potential, often at considerable financial and personal cost. I appreciate your many sacrifices and your undying faith in my abilities. Unfortunately, my Dad, who passed away in 2008, is not here to see the completion of this thesis and my degree, but I know that he would be proud at this moment. This work is dedicated to my Dad, Howard Baker (1942 - 2008), as a thanks for his unconditional love and undying faith in my abilities. I miss you.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

### General

ADP	Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov [Social Sciences Data Archive]
CBOS	Centrum Bandania Opinii Społecznej [Center for Public Opinion Research]
CDHR	Committee for the Defense of Human Rights
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme
PGSS	Polish General Social Survey
SJM	Slovensko Javno Mnenje [in English "Slovene Public Opinion"]
SPO	Slovene Public Opinion [in Slovene "Slovensko Javno Mnenje"]

### Political Parties: Poland

AWS	Solidarity Electoral Action
AWSP	Solidarity Electoral Action Right Wing
BBWR	Non-Partisan Bloc in Support of Reforms
BdP	Bloc for Poland
ChD	Christian Democracy
KLD	Liberal Democratic Congress
KPEiR	National Party of the Retired and Pensioners
KPEiRRP	National Alliance of the Retired and Pensioners of the Polish Republic
KPN	Confederation for an Independent Poland
KS	Christian Socialists
LiD	Left and Democrats
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
LPR	League of Polish Families
LS	Liberal Party
LSY	League of Socialist Youth
MNSO	German Minority in Silesian Opole
NDS	National Democratic Party
PC	Center Alliance
PchD	Christian Democratic Party
PiS	Law and Justice
PL	Peasant Alliance
PO	Civic Platform
PPPP	Polish Beer-Lovers' Party
PSL	Polish Peasant Party
PZPR	Polish Socialist Workers' Party
RdR	Movement for the Republic
ROP	Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland
SDPL	Social Democracy of Poland
SdRP	Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland
SD	Democratic Party

SDP	Party of Democratic Reform
SDPL	Social Democracy of Poland
SLD	Democratic Left Alliance
SN	Party of Independents
SO	Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland
UChS	Christian-Social Union
UD	Democratic Union
ULSD	United List of Social Democrats
UP	Union of Labor
UPR	Real Politics Union
UW	Freedom Union
WAK	Catholic Electoral Action
ZChN	Christian National Union

Political Parties: Slovenia

DEMOS	Democratic Opposition of Slovenia
DeSUS	Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenian
DSS	Democratic Party of Slovenia
LDS	Liberal Democratic Party (Slovenia)
LDSS	Liberal Democratic Party of Slovenia
Nsi-KLS	New Slovenia-Christian People's Party
SCD	Slovenian Christian Democrats
SDA	Slovenian Democratic Alliance
SDPS	Social Democratic Party of Slovenia
SDSS	Social Democratic Party
SKD	Slovenian Christian Democrats
SLS	Slovenian People's Party
SMS	Party of Slovenian Youth
SNP	Slovene National Party
SNS	Slovenian National Party
SPP	Slovene People's Party
SOPS	Party of Craftsmen and Entrepreneurs of Slovenia
SSS	Socialist Party of Slovenia
ZS	Greens of Slovenia
ZZ	United Greens
ZLSD	United List of Social Democrats

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The former Communist<sup>1</sup> countries of Central and Eastern Europe have undergone a period of profound economic, political, and social development over the last 16 years. This transition,<sup>2</sup> exemplified by the attempt to replace the rigid control of the former regimes with democracy and free markets, has shown varying success across the region. Often, such times of intense change provide a variety of actors, both powerful and weak, with opportunities to make an impression on the system which evolves during the transformation. However, the nature of each national context, exemplified in its political opportunity structure, determines which actors are presented with viable opportunities for influence.

Several indications of regenerating religious power in Poland, including the Polish Solidarity movement's use of religious symbolism in its political struggles and the Roman

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<sup>1</sup> The use of the term "communist" is not intended to imply that all of the regimes in this region fit within one catch-all definition of Communism. It is widely used in the literature that studies the politics of this region and it is this wide recognition of the term that necessitates its use.

<sup>2</sup> Although considerable debate revolves around the use of the term "transition" to describe the process of political change in the Soviet Union and East-Central Europe during the late 1980s and early 1990s, few alternatives are available which have entered widespread usage. Therefore, this term will refer to the "interval between an authoritarian political regime and a democratic one." This is not confined to the period between the breakdown of authoritarianism and the first fully free elections. Rather, the transition period persists beyond that time because of the myriad of pressing issues which confront elites, the indefinite nature of these issues, the uncertainty surrounding the endpoints of the reform process, and the necessity of finding solutions by compromise. Helga A. Welsh, "Political Transition Processes in Central and Eastern Europe," *Comparative Politics* 26, no. 4 (1994): 380-383.

Catholic Church's<sup>3</sup> active participation in Polish transitional politics, suggested that the atheistic facade of the Communist state hid a surviving, and often thriving, religious society. Similar, but less intense, hopeful signs in other central and east European nations also fed into the idea that this region was in the midst of a religious renewal in both private and public life. Simultaneously, the governing Communist parties, under significant economic and political strain, lost their monopolistic hold on power, thereby providing a large opening for new actors to attain influence over the development of the new system and the policies which emerged. Thus, religious organizations, including the Roman Catholic Church, which had traditionally been powerful actors in many nations prior to the institution of Communist rule, were presented with the possibility of restoring their power in the religious and political arenas. But, how would the structure of individual national contexts affect the Church's opportunities to influence the transformation and reclaim a prominent role in their nation's life?

The Roman Catholic Church once held a prominent position in a number of east-central European states, but two states, Poland and Slovenia, are of particular interest to this study. First, although Poland and Slovenia are separated by considerable distance within Europe, these two states represent the success stories of the democratic transformation; neither has achieved a perfect democratic or economic system, but their progress toward that goal has been greater than most other countries in the region. In

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<sup>3</sup> For the sake of convenience, the Roman Catholic Church will be referred to as either the Roman Catholic Church, the Catholic Church or, simply, the Church, for the remainder of this thesis.



addition, each country has received approval from the West, signified by their induction into both NATO and the EU early in this decade. Most importantly, in both of these countries, the Roman Catholic Church commanded a significant role in political life before World War II, after which Communist victories transformed state structures such that they were officially dedicated to the diminishment of religion in favour of an atheistic society, loyal only to the state and the officially sanctioned way of life. Also, Roman Catholicism has continued to be the dominant religion in each nation, claiming a majority of the population as adherents. These similarities, although superficial, suggest that these two contexts are suitable for comparative study.

At the same time, divergence between the Church's position in each developing polity suggests that deeper differences exist between the Polish and Slovene contexts that govern the political opportunities available to each national Church. In Poland, where the changeover in power was characterized by a great deal of dissension between the opposition and the Communists and, as well, the Church was an active supporter of the opposition and a major political player during the dying days of the Communist regime, the Church rode a wave of success into the political transition, committed to using its high status to attain political influence. This contrasts sharply with the situation in Slovenia, where the Church was a minor voice in the political realm, dwarfed by the consensus between the Communists and civil society about the necessity for reform and political independence from Yugoslavia. As each national Church entered the transition in a different position - the Polish Church experiencing many opportunities for power and

influence and the Slovene Church possessing fewer opportunities - how did both situational and enduring features of each context serve to exacerbate the divergence or create a degree of convergence between each Church's position as the democratic order consolidated?

### *A Preview of the Analysis*

The purpose of this thesis is to provide an analysis of the most significant factors, both situational and enduring, which form the Church's national context and thus its political opportunity structure, thereby regulating the Church's ability to take part in the post-Communist political process. This will reveal how new openings in the system, a changing society, and the development of the democratic state create a dynamic, changing context that either clears the way or raises obstacles on the Church's path to political influence during the time period stretching from approximately 1991 to 2005. Other, more enduring features of the state and mechanisms for dealing with non-state actors will also demonstrate the influence of context. This means that the Church's political power, in terms of its ability to influence politics to produce a desirable outcome, relies not only on the political strategies of its leadership, but also on the fortuitous confluence of various contextual variables to form a favourable political opportunity structure. In each national context, the Church initially encountered a different configuration of opportunities and constraints. In Poland, the Church initially confronted a highly favourable context, but the development and consolidation of the political system altered this context, weakening the Church's influence. Regardless, the Church remains a formidable presence on the Polish political scene. In contrast, the Slovene context was relatively constant in its closure to

significant political input from the Church. Consequently, the Polish Church retained its strength as an institution, holding many opportunities to influence the system, while the Slovene Church remained weakened, maintaining only modest political influence. Further, this analytical comparison of the Church's situation in both Poland and Slovenia will demonstrate that in a transitional context, it is crucial for the Church and other interests to pursue the opportunities which are available while other actors in the system are in the midst of reorganizing because this is a rare chance to secure a high level of influence. This framework, which seeks to explain political events in Poland and Slovenia, also has the potential to explain the varying success and failure of the Roman Catholic Church and other dominant religions in other post-Communist transitional contexts. It also promises to show that theoretical concepts which have been seldom used to study an established religious organization such as the Roman Catholic Church are useful when applied to novel applications.

### *Summary*

The nature of democratic transition and consolidation in eastern and central Europe over the last two decades provided unusual opportunities for political activity and influence, particularly for religious organizations, which were sidelined from decision-making processes during the Communist period. To discover how this type of context interacts with the ambitions of a religious organization, this thesis will compare the influence of both dynamic and stable contextual variables on the Roman Catholic Church's potential for and ability to achieve political influence in the countries of Poland and

Slovenia during the most of the post-Communist period with the goal of applying novel concepts to the analysis. Therefore, not only should this thesis explain the Church's situation in both countries, it should also provide a basic framework for analyzing majority religious institutions in other transitional contexts.



## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Before this comparative examination of the Roman Catholic Church's context in Poland and Slovenia begins, it is valuable to explore various scholarly perspectives on a selection of relevant topics. This review begins by considering works pertaining to issues in religious and general Church politics, gradually evolving to examine specific issues in Church politics in Poland and Slovenia. In order to understand the basic concepts that underlie the interaction between religion and politics, a small sample of relevant concepts is considered. From that point, the focus shifts to the Roman Catholic Church and some recent perspectives on its political role in the modern world. This consideration, outside of a specific national context, is intended to highlight themes and ideas that are relevant to the Polish and Slovene cases, especially those which arise from the transnational dimensions of Catholicism. In the most substantial portion of the review, the discussion converges on the Roman Catholic Church's role in two specific post-Communist contexts - Poland and Slovenia. This section is divided into separate discussions of first, Poland, second, Slovenia, and third, comparative studies of the east-central European region that include both countries. The final portion defines the main theoretical concept employed in this study to delineate the Church's context, political opportunity or, as it is often known, political opportunity structure (POS), by perusing some of the major literature on this topic.

*The Power of Churches in Politics*

In the past, across Europe, religious denominations dominated not only the moral and religious lives of their adherents, but also the political life of a nation. The modern liberal state tried to curb this level of religious influence in politics by using legal measures to explicitly situate religion in the private and politics in the public spheres of life.<sup>1</sup>

Another distinction between religion and politics tries to differentiate between the two based on how each organizes human existence; the religious is defined by morality and spirituality, while the political is defined by opposing world view.<sup>2</sup> However, despite this attempt to construct a barrier between religion and politics, religion and politics continue to interact across these artificially-defined realms. Because of this interaction and the nature of contemporary civil society, which allows the mingling of politics and morality, Inglis argues that civil society has become the arena for religious influence on political life.<sup>3</sup> Although this idea is intriguing, religious institutions still enjoy channels of access in the democratic system that circumvent civil society. Further, the spiritual nature of religious identity confounds conventional conceptions of civil society, which are otherwise capable

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<sup>1</sup> José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 40-41.

<sup>2</sup> Tom Inglis, "Understanding Religion and Politics," in *Religion and Politics: East-West Contrasts from Contemporary Europe*, eds. Tom Inglis, Zdzisław Mach, and Rafał Mazanek, (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2000), 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

of placing other types of organizations into this sphere.<sup>4</sup> Thus, religious organizations represent a conundrum in modern democratic societies by failing to fit into easily defined categories; they are simultaneously part of civil society, yet somehow separate.

Religious organizations translate their unique qualities into political power by utilizing their linkage to both the spiritual and the political orders. First, the collective dimensions of religious membership provide schemas for interpreting the world,<sup>5</sup> thereby shaping perceptions of political reality among adherents. But, simultaneously, "religious identities are subject to individual, collective, and institutional construction and reconstruction."<sup>6</sup> In this way, the prism through which adherents in a particular society view their context is also shaped by factors that lie beyond the control of institutional religion. Second, religious organizations act as pressure groups and organize for or against state policies, according to their own interests.<sup>7</sup> Religious organizations acting as pressure groups

may employ a variety of tactics, including (a) lobbying the executive apparatus of the State; (b) going to court; (c) building links with political parties; (d) forming alliances with like-minded groups, whether secular or from other religions; (e) mobilizing their followers to protest, and/or (f)

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<sup>4</sup> Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," in *Transnational Religion and Fading States*, eds. Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 246.

<sup>5</sup> Jeff Haynes, *Religion in Global Politics* (New York: Addison-Wesley Longman Ltd., 1998), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Hoeber Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," 246.

<sup>7</sup> Haynes, 6-7.

seeking to sensitize public opinion through the mass media.<sup>8</sup>

Based upon these activities, religious denominations appear to have the same range of tactics available to them as other pressure groups, but religious denominations also sponsor a variety of issue-oriented pressure groups that pursue specific goals, adding to their strength as a political interest.

In this era of 'globalization,' religion has an increased ability to move beyond state boundaries. Although many religious organizations, in the past, have spanned the world and had millions of adherents, profound changes in technologies and societies have also integrated states into a larger global community. According to Casanova, the forces of globalization make religious relationships more relevant, such that religion has become an organizing factor that unifies both within and beyond the nation-state.<sup>9</sup> Esposito and Watson see the unifying aspects of religion as an advantage for religious organizations. Globalization offers an opportunity for religious organizations to effect political change because while an individual state's ability to control its own territory has deteriorated, religious organizations often have structures which transcend state boundaries, expanding communication among groups located in different regions and in that way facilitating concerted action on a larger territorial scale.<sup>10</sup> This ties into the capacity of religious

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<sup>8</sup> Haynes, 8.

<sup>9</sup> Casanova, "Religion, the New Millennium, and Globalization," *Sociology of Religion* 62, no. 4 (2001): 428-431.

<sup>10</sup> John L. Esposito and Michael Watson, "Overview: The Significance of Religion for Global Order," in *Religion and Global Order*, eds. John L. Esposito and Michael Watson (Cardiff: University of

organizations to behave as pressure groups, expanding their reach beyond a single state, to larger groups of states and the world. Thus, religious organizations have great potential and capacity to make large-scale political gains.

*The Roman Catholic Church as a Political Actor*

As one of the largest and most prominent religious organizations in the world, the Roman Catholic Church has demonstrated its potential to affect politics at both the national and international level throughout its history, possessing many of the attributes of global religion espoused by the previous authors. The field of politics is opened to the Church by the hierarchy's interpretation of Roman Catholicism's "religious mission to be a sacrament of God's reign."<sup>11</sup> The Church is often required to participate in politics so that it may "defend human dignity and human rights, promote human unity, and help people find meaning . . . not . . . in the quest for power, wealth, or prestige, or on behalf of any ideology."<sup>12</sup> Additionally, the Church simultaneously exists as both a national organization in states around the world and as a transnational religious and political organization, providing it with several sources of political strength. First, the hierarchical arrangement of the Church means that the Roman Catholic Church draws strength from the formality of its structure, while taking advantage of the spread of its institutionally-supported

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Wales Press, 2000), 21-24; 33-34.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth R. Himes, O.F.M., "Vatican II and Contemporary Politics," in *The Catholic Church and the Nation-State: Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Paul Christopher Manuel, Lawrence C. Reardon, and Clyde Wilcox (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006), 23-24.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

organizations.<sup>13</sup> This increases the Church's ability to pursue political influence at the state level, as well as at the global level. Uniquely, among religions, the Roman Catholic Church is also 'state-like', with its own diplomacy, centre of government, bureaucracy, and system of rules. Its participation in international politics as a state, guided by the Church's visibility, image, and importance in global politics, allows the Church to maintain diplomatic relations with a multitude of states, while simultaneously existing as a religious organization within those states.<sup>14</sup> The Church's duality therefore provides an opportunity to pressure a state on the inside and from the outside.

The Church adopted a new approach to the modern state during the 1960s with the Vatican II and its declaration of *Dignitatis Humanae*, the right of the individual to religious freedom. This initiated a process in which the Church came to oppose regimes which violated individual freedoms, even if those regimes maintained formal relations with the Church.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the Church shifted its allegiance from authoritarian government to constitutional government.<sup>16</sup> This transformed the Church from "the paradigmatic form of

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<sup>13</sup> Hoeber Rudolph, 255-256.

<sup>14</sup> José Casanova, "Global Catholicism and the Politics of Civil Society," *Sociological Inquiry* 66, no. 3 (1996): 358.

<sup>15</sup> Andrzej Flis, "The Catholic Church and Democracy in Modern Europe," *Religion and Politics: East-West Contrasts From Contemporary Europe*, eds. Tom Inglis, Zdzisław Mach, and Rafał Mazanek (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2000), 45-46.

<sup>16</sup> Charles E. Curran, "Roman Catholic Christianity," in *God's Rule: The Politics of World Religions*, ed. Jacob Neusner (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 76-78.

antimodern public religion”<sup>17</sup> to a key player in the democratization of authoritarian states from the 1970s onward, known as the ‘Third Wave’ of global democratization. Casanova considers the Church’s role in these events to be so significant that he refers to the ‘Third Wave’ as the ‘Catholic Wave.’<sup>18</sup> However, this move disentangled Church and state from each another to such an extent that the Church was transposed to civil society.<sup>19</sup> According to Casanova, the Church’s evolution allows it to serve as the moral conscience for states caught in the throes of globalization, encouraging societies to reflect on their political, economic, and social development such that they can moderate some of the negative effects of economic globalization.<sup>20</sup> Thus, in this sense the Church’s move toward support of human rights and democracy can be viewed as a positive development because it can continue to serve society even when its privileged position vis-a-vis the state has been eroded.

Conversely, the Church’s role as moral conscience often leads to conflict with democratic principles. The Church’s separation from the state was also a separation from the privileged position of power that it had held in many authoritarian systems. This forces the Church to pursue its objectives constrained by democratic government and public

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<sup>17</sup> José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, 8-9.

<sup>18</sup> José Casanova, “Civil Society and Religion: Retrospective Reflections on Catholicism and Retrospective Reflections on Islam,” *Social Research* 68, no. 4 (2001): 1041-1042; José Casanova, “Global Catholicism and the Politics of Civil Society,” *Sociological Inquiry* 66, no. 3 (1996): 356-357.

<sup>19</sup> Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, 62-63.

<sup>20</sup> José Casanova, “Civil Society and Religion: Retrospective Reflections on Catholicism and Prospective Reflections on Islam,” 1048-1049.

opinion. When prevailing public opinion and the Church's goals clash, the Church's ambitions cause it to pursue activities which are antagonistic to democratic development and increase the Church's distance from contemporary democratic culture.<sup>21</sup> Further, the Church's rigid stance on some issues prevents its message from attaining a broad appeal in many societies.<sup>22</sup> This leads Flis to contend that "in its obsessive 'dream of power' the Roman Curia has alienated itself, probably for ever, not only from western secular culture, but from Christianity."<sup>23</sup> In this sense, we see the Church adopting a dual stance toward democracy. On the one hand, democracy is supported because it serves the principles of human rights, while on the other, democracy is disdained when it fails to serve the objectives of the Church.

The Church's prominent role in political change in eastern Europe, especially Poland, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, encouraged Pope John Paul II to aspire to a prominent role for the Catholic Church in these states.<sup>24</sup> Although the Church possesses vast material and moral resources, this vision was unrealistic for a number of reasons. First, tension between the centre and the periphery in the Church leads to different interpretations and applications of Church goals:

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<sup>21</sup> Flis, 46-48.

<sup>22</sup> Jose Casanova, "Globalizing Catholicism and the Return to a Universal Church," in *Transnational Religions and Fading States*, eds. Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 137.

<sup>23</sup> Flis, 48.

<sup>24</sup> Timothy A. Byrnes, *Transnational Catholicism in Postcommunist Europe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001), 3-6.



As national conferences of bishops take an active role in defining national issues, there emerges a dynamic tension between Roman and national centralization. Such a tension accounts for both the globalization of a Catholic position on many issues as well as the particular reflections that the general Catholic position assumes in any given national context.<sup>25</sup>

Policies formulated at the Vatican are tempered not only by national Churches, but also the particular circumstances within each society.<sup>26</sup> As a result, the Church is a transnational actor constrained by the unique circumstances of each country.<sup>27</sup> Also, regulatory laws have been enacted in many states to limit the relationship between church and state, define the status of religious organizations, and control the growth of religious organizations.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, religious organizations' attempts to influence politics through support of political parties and pursuit of other avenues of influence have aroused the suspicion among political elites and citizens that religious organizations are attempting to dominate political discourse.<sup>29</sup> Further, dominant religious faiths, especially Roman Catholicism, are facing threats to their traditional cultural role from the influx and diversity of ideas that have penetrated east-central Europe since the breakup of the communist monopoly on power in

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<sup>25</sup> José Casanova, "Globalizing Catholicism and the Return to a Universal Church," 136.

<sup>26</sup> Byrnes, *Transnational*, 18-19.

<sup>27</sup> Byrnes, *Transnational*, 24.

<sup>28</sup> Vedran Horvat, "Church in Democratic Transition Between the State and the Civil Society," *Religion in Eastern Europe* 24, no. 2 (2004): 1-18 [online]. Available from <http://www.georgefox.edu/academics/undergrad/departments/soc-swk/ree/2004/horvat.pdf> Internet: accessed 1 March 2005, 4-5; Irena Borowik, "Religion and Religious Conflict in Contemporary Eastern Europe," in *The Future of Religion. East and West*, eds. Irena Borowik and Przemysław Jabłoński (Kraków: NOMOS, 1995), 148-152.

<sup>29</sup> Borowik, "Religion and Religious Conflict in Contemporary Eastern Europe," 148-152.

1989.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, it is clear that the Church faces a number of challenges as it adapts itself to contemporary democratic politics in east-central Europe, but the Church's most significant challenge is to balance its goals with those of the democracies in which it operates.

*Confronting Change: The Roman Catholic Church in Post-1989 Poland*

Almost immediately after the Round Table negotiations between the opposition and the Communist authorities in 1989 and the subsequent formation of the transitional government, the Church's role in the new political order became a topic of intense interest for academics and many others. This interest has continued, perhaps even grown, such that a large number of studies exist. However, despite the amount of studies, many are repetitive such that this review considers a select group that represents the majority of these works, as well as those that are unique. The analyses in these studies cover a wide variety of topics, ranging from discussions of the Church's social and religious functions to discourses about its various political roles. Many authors focus on the behaviour of Church officials, the structure of the Church, and the political activities of the Church, to discern how the Church sees its role in democratic Poland and, then, proceed to evaluate the Church's political success by comparing the difference between intention and reality. Some also consider the Church's environment as an important influence over the Church's status in Poland, but almost always as a minor focus. Therefore, this is very much a

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<sup>30</sup> Zdzisław Mach, "The Roman Catholic Church and the Transformation of Social Identity in Eastern and Central Europe," in *New Religious Phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Grzegorz Babiński (Kraków: NOMOS, 1997), 65-66.

discourse about the internal workings of the Church and how the Church's intentions interact with its environment.

### Reaching for the Inconceivable:

#### The Church's Expectations for Democratic Poland

After the Round Table talks of 1989, Poland became a fledgling democratic state; a goal that so many, including the Church, had fought to realize. Now that Communism had been vanquished what would the Church look for from democratic Poland? Many observers share a common assumption that Church officials were certain that once the shackles of the Communist state were removed the Church could expand its influence in society and politics. Although this idea is both implicit and explicit in a number of works,<sup>31</sup> it is most evident in Pasini's examination of the Church's political strategy. Pasini asserts that the Church's approach to democratic politics has been formulated around two main goals: (1) "influence the development of a new sociopolitical system based on its [the Church's] interpretations of Christian Values," and (2) "sustain the broad-based support and influence they [the Church] had as the linchpin of civil society under communism."<sup>32</sup> To achieve these objectives, the Church applies a three-pronged strategy: (1) intensify the Church's meaning to society and its parishioners by initiating internal structural changes

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<sup>31</sup> According to Byrnes, "consolidation of the victory over communism involved two closely related projects: the deepening of the Church's institutional viability and independence, and its ability to shape public policy." Byrnes, "The Polish Church: Catholic Hierarchy and Polish Politics," 106.

<sup>32</sup> Rebecca Ann Pasini, "The Political Strategy of the Roman Catholic Church in Post-Communist Poland," (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1996), 1.

and by raising adherents' comprehension of Catholic values; (2) attempt to impress Catholic values on Poland's emerging legal system, mostly on moral issues such as abortion, contraception, and education; (3) ensure that the Church's role remains stable as the system evolves by securing constitutional provisions, as well as constitutional incorporation of the Concordat.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the Church intended to leave its mark on almost all aspects of Poland's development and to secure its own position as an influential player in the system. However, the Church's strategy has only shown partial success:

[I]n spite of the legislative passage of much of its policy agenda . . . it [the Church] is clearly losing the much larger and in the long run more significant battle for the support and understanding of Polish society.<sup>34</sup>

Pasini's analysis shows the Church as a self-interested actor, striving to satisfy its own goals, even against the popular will. Is this self-interest motivated by a concern with the continuity of Roman Catholicism and its attendant value system or with the continuity of the institution itself?

Osa provides a different perspective about the Church's political intentions and actions in the post-Communist era. She disputes the two leading hypotheses that seek to understand the Church's motives for influencing politics and society, instead positing that the Church aspires to ultimately effect political culture rather than politics. The two disputed hypotheses take for granted that the Church must engage in politics, but explain

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 6-7. After Pasini composed her thesis, the Constitution and the Concordat were finally passed in 1997.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 287.

the Church's motivations as either self-interested or divinely-motivated.<sup>35</sup> Alternatively, Osa, based upon her research into the Church's past in Communist Poland, makes the following proposition:

In the course of adapting to the changing social, political, and economic conditions brought about by state/regime formation . . . religious organization is reinstitutionalized; in so doing, the church repositions itself in the political sphere and redefines its place in the new, emerging political culture.<sup>36</sup>

This process is characterized by three phases: organizational adaptation, political accommodation, and pastoral mobilization. Organizational adaptation, characterized by altering the structure of the Church's institution to compensate for contextual transformation, is essential for the survival of the institution.<sup>37</sup> Next, political accommodation, signifies the process whereby the Church compromises with the political powers to obtain resources necessary for the Church to sustain itself.<sup>38</sup> Finally, pastoral mobilization, marked by "programs designed to strengthen the church-society link by involving believers in intensive religious activities"<sup>39</sup> involves the most strident political

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<sup>35</sup> Maryjane Osa, "Ecclesiastical Reorganization and Political Culture," *Polish Sociological Review* 3, no. 111 (1995): 194.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

<sup>37</sup> Following World War II, this first phase, organizational adaptation, began when the Church reorganized its dioceses to accommodate the border changes of the Polish state. Ultimately, the Church was less vulnerable to repression from the authorities because of its altered structure. *Ibid.*, 195-197.

<sup>38</sup> Osa find that the Church previously engaged in this process when it accommodated the Communist political order in return for concessions from the state. *Ibid.*, 197-198.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

claim-making. It demonstrates society's endorsement of the Church and its ideals and, by implication, society's disapproval of the political regime.<sup>40</sup> Osa applies this process to contemporary Polish politics and finds that the Church has failed to engage in this adaptive process. Instead, during the political transition, the Church successfully engaged elites on both sides of the divide to gain advantages; however the Church cannot sustain its influence based on this elite-centred, overtly political phenomenon.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the Church needs to replicate its efforts during the Communist period and adaptation to its new context once again.<sup>42</sup> Osa's analysis is concerned with process and structure over intentionality, avoiding the multitude of potential pitfalls involved in trying to extrapolate intentions from activities. She also makes it clear that the Church needs to adapt itself to the reality of its context and seek subtle means of influencing political culture instead of pursuing lofty, perhaps unobtainable goals in democratic politics.

Did the Church expect too much from Polish democracy and reach too far in its pursuit of its goals to make Poland a Roman Catholic state? Was it truly inconceivable that the Church would accomplish all of its goals? As events unfolded and the Polish state continued to develop, the Church experienced a mixture of results and a troubling picture

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<sup>40</sup> Pastoral mobilization was evident under the leadership of Cardinal Wyszynski during the planning of the Great Novena of the Millennium celebrations, ten year long celebrations, from 1956 to 1966, to commemorate one thousand years of Polish Catholicism. The event consisted of mass public gatherings, the procession of icons, masses, and many other ritual gatherings. This resulted in a large-scale mobilization of Poles. *Ibid.*, 198; 202-205.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 206-207.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

began to emerge.

### The Church in Action:

#### Defining the Church's Role in Polish Politics

In an early evaluation of the Church's political situation Morawska points out that Church's essential goal has remained consistent throughout most of its history; to preserve the institutional Church by means of the diffusion of Catholic values throughout Polish society.<sup>43</sup> During the communist era, the Church exploited the association between Catholicism and nationalism such that Poles filtered the Church's behaviour through a patriotic lense, leading to the false perception that the Church was the sole defender of the Polish nation.<sup>44</sup> In the immediate period after 1989, the Church enjoyed more freedom and greater political power because it was able to exploit Poles' perceptions of its role during the Communist era and politicians required its input into the political process to stabilize the new system.<sup>45</sup> The strength of the Church's political power at that time is indicated by its victories in the areas of religious education and abortion.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, at the time of this article's publication in 1995, Morawska perceives a growing discontent over the extent

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<sup>43</sup> Ewa Morawska, "The Polish Roman Catholic Church Unbound: Change of Face or Change of Context," in *Can Europe Work? Germany and Reconstruction of Postcommunist Societies*, eds. Stephen E. Hanson and Willifried Spohn (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1995), 48; 50-53.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 52-56.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 61-62.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 62-64.

of the Church's political influence.<sup>47</sup> This is connected to Poles' increasing disengagement from Catholicism, part of an inevitable tendency toward secularization that was postponed by the Communist period.<sup>48</sup> Also, policies which prioritize Catholicism's moral values over individual rights arouse suspicion among Poles, especially as the Church appears to be critical of the democratic state.<sup>49</sup> Accordingly, the Church's right to interfere in politics, based on its association with the definition of Polishness, is no longer so easily accepted by either society or politicians as it was during the initial period of the transition. In this analysis, changes in the political and civil environment undermine the extent of the Church's power in the post-communist period; as society transforms and follows a path that was disrupted by communism, the Church's ability to influence Poles attenuates. Moreover, the Church's activities create a reaction in society and politics that further undermines the Church's power.

Similarly to the previous authors, Eberts argues that, early in the transition era, the Church's high political status gave its leaders the confidence to demand a political role for the Church.<sup>50</sup> The Church's agenda called for Polish democracy to reflect the Church's moral teachings in its decision-making processes, thereby requiring a close relationship

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 66-67.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 65-67.

<sup>50</sup> Mirella W. Eberts, "The Roman Catholic Church and Democracy in Poland." *Europe-Asia Studies* 50, no. 5 (1998): 819-820.



between the religious and the political.<sup>51</sup> The realization of this agenda is evident in the state's decision to reinstate religious education in Polish schools, subject to substantial Church influence and control, and also in the passage of an extremely restrictive abortion law, which the Church has vehemently defended from subsequent attempts at liberalization.<sup>52</sup> The Church has not confined its political interference to issue-oriented lobbying, broadening its activities to have widespread effects on government and society. First, the Church has engaged in blatant interference in party politics, supporting certain parties and denouncing others, mostly on an unofficial level, from the pulpits of local churches.<sup>53</sup> Also, the morality of the Polish media receives a great deal of attention from the Church. Control of the media's content features high on the Church's list of priorities, which Eberts contends is a form of Catholic censorship.<sup>54</sup> Even though the Church achieved great gains in particular areas of policy, such as religious education and abortion, and it aggressively pursues broader areas of influence, it seems to have already reached the peak of its power. As Polish democracy consolidates and secularization continues, the Church's strong role will diminish and the Church's views will be less likely to form an integral part of state policy.<sup>55</sup> Consequently, it appears that the Church's level of influence

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 831-836.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 822-826.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 826-830.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 831.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 838.

is fated to decrease.

Byrnes, through several different works, manages to put a slightly different spin on the previous themes. He contends that the enduring connection between Roman Catholicism and Polish nationalism, even if somewhat weakened, as well as the work of Karol Wojtyla, Pope John Paul II, even posthumously, have and continue to provide the Church with a basis to assume a public role.<sup>56</sup> The Church utilized its power during the first decade of Polish democracy to secure its position, mainly through the protection of its special status in the new Constitution and the ratification of a Concordat.<sup>57</sup> The Church demanded that Roman Catholic values be incorporated at the heart of Poland's democracy in the 1997 Polish Constitution;<sup>58</sup> however, the Church only achieved partial victories on some of the language and, ultimately, moral law was not elevated above constitutional law.<sup>59</sup> The separate document governing Church-state relations, the Concordat, which was approved as an attachment to the Constitution, grants the Church a number of legal rights

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<sup>56</sup> Byrnes, "The Polish Church: Catholic Hierarchy and Polish Politics," 103; 108.

<sup>57</sup> Timothy A. Byrnes, "The Challenge of Pluralism: The Catholic Church in Democratic Poland," in *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The One, the Few, and the Many*, eds. Ted Gerard Jelen and Clyde Wilcox (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 30-34; Timothy A. Byrnes, *Transnational Catholicism in Postcommunist Europe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001), 36-41; Timothy A. Byrnes, "The Polish Church: Catholic Hierarchy and Polish Politics," 106-107.

<sup>58</sup> Byrnes engages in an extensive discussion of each of the Church's demands. These items include "a clear reference to God in the Preamble;" "prominent reference to the role of the church in Polish history;" constitution should not be declared as "the highest law in the land;" "ban abortion from the point of conception;" "declare marriage open only to relationships between a man and woman;" and abstain from using "any constitutional language requiring a 'separation' of church and state in democratic Poland." Byrnes, "The Challenge of Pluralism," 30-31.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

and gives it control over a number of activities.<sup>60</sup> But, the level of these concessions proved unsatisfactory for the Church, mainly because the entirety of its goals were not fulfilled. The Church leadership perceives the Church as a victim because they cannot tolerate this level of compromise on the Church's moral mission.<sup>61</sup> Later, the issue of European integration pulled the Church in two directions as the risk of Poland acquiring secular, western values from the EU competed against the hope of restoring Catholic values to the EU.<sup>62</sup> In the end, the Church decided to support EU expansion as Pope John Paul II "wanted Poland and the others to join the West in order to transform the West."<sup>63</sup> The increasing sophistication of both state and society create barriers to the Church's continuing political involvement because the Church is no longer the sole outlet for political expression - multitudes of options exist.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, Byrnes concludes that the Church remains relevant to Polish politics: "[t]he Church in Poland today is . . . an important organized interest, among many others, that has the historical standing, institutional weight, and (still) popular support needed for significant participation in a rapidly changing polity."<sup>65</sup> Even though Byrnes acknowledges that the Church's attitude

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 38-40.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 40-41; 46.

<sup>62</sup> Byrnes, "The Polish Church: Catholic Hierarchy and Polish Politics," 110-113.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>64</sup> Byrnes, "The Challenge of Pluralism," 46.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 52.

and the changing environment are impediments to Church power, he still sees the Church as a significant political force, endowed with many attributes that make it an essential player in Polish politics.

The preceding analyses have shown that the Church has the ability to influence political decisions on single issues, including religious education and abortion, and broader policies, including Constitutional reform. The Church's influence is evident in other realms as well. For instance, Korbonski utilizes the issue of taxation to demonstrate that the Church possesses a substantial amount of power vis-a-vis the state, insofar as it can prevent the state from scrutinizing its financial operations. The Church has been reluctant to allow its accounts to be inspected by state officials for taxation purposes.<sup>66</sup> At the same time, public claims of financial strain appear to be at odds with physical manifestations of the Church's wealth: Church buildings, land holdings, precious objects, and clerical resources.<sup>67</sup> Despite this apparent disparity, Church officials have successfully opposed any serious scrutiny of the Church's internal finances and maintained tax exemptions on most of the Church's resources; this qualifies as a victory against state regulation.<sup>68</sup> Although this is a minor issue, it highlights the Church's power to resist attempts to place it on an equal footing with other groups and individuals through the levy of taxes and demonstrates the

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<sup>66</sup> Andrzej Korbonski, "Poland Ten Years After: The Church," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33 (2000): 132-133.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

lack of government constraint on the Church's resource base. This issue also shows that the Church has the ability to make state officials retreat from any action which can be construed as an attack on the Church.

The Church also enjoys a comparatively greater level of power vis-a-vis other religious organizations and also receives preferential treatment from the state. Pietrzak contends that in spite of the enactment of constitutional and legal provisions which guarantee religious freedom and regulate the activity of religious organizations, differences between religious organizations arise during the application of these legal guarantees.<sup>69</sup> Often, interpretations of these laws by state officials negatively affect non-Catholic religious groups, particularly during the registration process.<sup>70</sup> Also, the Catholic Church receives proportionately more benefits than other religious organizations, mainly because the state is inclined to control new religions and promote cultural traditions.<sup>71</sup> This deference to the Church is also supported "by the numerical domination of Catholics and by the formidable role that the Roman Catholic Church has performed and continues to

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<sup>69</sup> According to Pietrzak, three different types of rules are involved: Constitutional, International, and legislative. Articles 25 and 53 of the Constitution support freedom of religion and regulate relations between the Catholic Church and the state through a reference to the Concordat. Poland's participation in various international declarations also binds it to respect freedom of religion and religious practice; however, the Concordat with the Vatican is the most significant international document, setting out the rules of interaction between the Roman Catholic Church and the Polish state. Finally, laws passed in Poland's legislature provide for the recognition and regulation of religious organizations through a registration process. Michał Pietrzak, "Church and State in Poland," in *Law and Religion in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Silvio Ferrari and W. Cole Durham, Jr., and assoc. ed. Elizabeth A. Sewell (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 220-221; 236-237.

<sup>70</sup> Pietrzak, 237.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

perform in Polish public life, which has reflected on the choices of all administrations after 1989.”<sup>72</sup> Despite these and other instances in which the state has acceded to the Church’s demands, it is apparent throughout the literature that the Church is experiencing difficulties in meeting its objectives and gaining the political clout that it desires. This suggests that the Church’s powerful appearance is merely a facade, hiding a reality that is much different and more troublesome for the Church.

### Religious Dysfunction

The political transition to democracy has also affected the Church’s ability to control the use of its doctrine and symbols. According to Zubrycki: “[t]he decade following the fall of communism has witnessed an unprecedented drop of popularity of the Church, as well as a rise in anticlericalism and a crisis within the Church: the monolith is breaking into a colorful, clashing mosaic, into a whole that is less than the sum of its parts.”<sup>73</sup> Alternative modes of personal expression, as well as society’s condemnation of the Church’s attempts to assume an overtly political role, have strained relations between the Church and its adherents.<sup>74</sup> As a result, the divisions between the Church and Polish society, which were subsumed in favour of displaying a united front for the opposition

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 237.

<sup>73</sup> Geniviève Zubrycki, “With or Without the Cross? Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2002), 252.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 252-255.

movement, are becoming apparent and affecting Poles' adherence to the Church.<sup>75</sup>

Moreover, "Catholic identity, symbols, and acts, were secularized through their politicization and ultimate fusion with national identity."<sup>76</sup> The controversy over the Papal Cross at Auschwitz demonstrates that the Catholic cross became a symbol of Polish nationalism.<sup>77</sup> Thus, the Church is weakened because its main vehicles of religious symbolism have been transferred to the public sphere:<sup>78</sup> in effect, misappropriated for political and social applications rather than for religious purposes.

As a continuation of Zubrycki's findings, Zalecki demonstrates that Roman Catholic clergy and parishioners<sup>79</sup> tend to identify the Church's past with opposition, nationalism, and patriotism, rather than religion.<sup>80</sup> Additionally, Zalecki shows a Church on the defensive against perceived threats to its existence. Many clergy perceive that they are being maligned by enemies who want to undermine the Church's place in society<sup>81</sup> by emphasizing the association between the Church and Catholic fundamentalists,<sup>82</sup> by blaming

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 255-261.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 302.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 289-292.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 304.

<sup>79</sup> The data set consisted of in-depth interviews with a sample of representatives from the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>80</sup> Paweł Zalecki, "How the Polish Roman Catholic Church's Representatives Explain Decline of the Positive Estimations of the Church's Public Activities," *Sociologia* 35, no. 6 (2003): 536.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 550-552.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 543.

the Church for Poland's transitional problems,<sup>83</sup> and by stressing the Church's political redundancy.<sup>84</sup> They condemn the accuracy of public opinion polling data which casts the Church in a negative light and blame the Church's problems on Catholic parishioners who misperceive the Church's intentions, and have either abandoned or altered the Church's conservative values.<sup>85</sup> In this way, Church officials appear to perceive Polish society and many of its own parishioners as hostile to the Church and its mission. How can the Church possibly fulfill its religious functions when a significant proportion of the leadership is suspicious of many of the Church's adherents? It seems unlikely that such an atmosphere is conducive to the formation of a strong spiritual bond. Fortunately, some clergy and parishioners acknowledge that the Church has many failings: departure from its religious mission, inaction on important societal issues, excessive focus on the language of politics, and paternalistic attitudes toward the laity.<sup>86</sup> Perhaps this acknowledgment of the Church's problems promises to help the Church better its connection to its parishioners and thereby increase the Church's ability to fulfill its religious functions.

Pater's work indicates that the Church is attempting to ameliorate some of the root causes of its religious disconnection from Poles. To broaden Catholicism's constituency and reassert Catholics' links to the institutional Church, the hierarchy has encouraged the

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 541-543.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 541.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 538;547;549.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 541;545-547.



creation of organizations such as *Catholic Action*, *Catholic Youth*, parish lay organizations, and the *National Council of Lay Catholics*, to draw youth and lay-people into the Church, as well as to serve as a communicative channel between the laity and the hierarchy.<sup>87</sup>

However, along with these efforts, the Church continues to pursue goals consistent with the moral regulation of society, clashing with the idea of individual choice which is inherent to the democratic state.<sup>88</sup> The Church also fails to contain extremists, indicating the Church's continuing sympathy for fundamentalism and its desire for political influence.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, despite Pater's account of the Church's efforts, on balance the Church appears to have lost some of its ability to fulfill the functions of a religious institution. Perhaps, as suggested by the national and political associations of Catholicism, the Church was pulled so far into the political arena during the Communist period that it cannot separate its religious functions from its political activities.

#### Institutional Dysfunction: A Church Divided

On the outside the Polish Church gives the appearance of a monolithic entity with little dissent within its ranks. Large institutions, though, are seldom monolithic and it should cause little surprise that a number of authors have managed to find evidence of conflict within the Church's ranks, especially around particular issues. Korbonski's

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<sup>87</sup> Dobrosław Karol Pater, "Grandiose Visions: Changes in the Catholic Church in Poland After 1989," *Religion in Eastern Europe* 15, no. 4 (1995): 5-7.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 7-11.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 12.

discussion of ideological divisions within the Polish Church's organization forms a small part of his arguments, yet this discussion is compelling in its revelations of the weaknesses within the Church structure itself. Korbonski points out that the united front presented by the Church is merely an illusion because, in reality, the hierarchy is split into three groups that are divided along ideological lines.<sup>90</sup> Fundamentalists form the largest portion of the Church hierarchy, consisting of "older bishops and priests . . . who believe that arrogance and aggressive posture, which served them well in the past . . . guarantee success in the future."<sup>91</sup> The second group pursues a more realistic, moderate approach which allows for a degree of concession to the state on moral issues.<sup>92</sup> Liberals form the last and smallest grouping and advocate the reform of Church structures for greater harmony with the democratic environment.<sup>93</sup> These three groups form a dynamic within the Church that is characterized by an indeterminate level of conflict over divergent policy goals.<sup>94</sup> Korbonski successfully identifies these groupings, but is unable to present any definitive data about the degree of dissension and conflict that occurs around policy issues within the hierarchy. Nevertheless, Korbonski raises worthwhile questions about policy uniformity within the Church, as well as the Church's ability to cope with dissent in its highest ranks.

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<sup>90</sup> Korbonski, 141-142.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 142-143.

Divisions within the Church hierarchy are further evident in Michlic's discussion of Catholic-Jewish relations. Michlic reveals similar divisions within the Polish Church, which are instead based on Polish integration with the West and the Church's anti-Semitic past. Internal divisions are polarized between two groups, which Michlic labels 'the Open Church' and 'the Closed Church.'<sup>95</sup> The former group is associated with a progressive outlook which is characterized by cooperation with the democratic state, openness to the rest of Europe, and respect for other spiritual orientations.<sup>96</sup> The latter group is more traditional, highly conservative, and very focused on preserving the historical correlates of Polish national identity. Consequently, they endorse the Church's role as sole spiritual leader in Polish society and refuse to cooperate with other religions, especially Judaism.<sup>97</sup> Michlic's two groups bear a striking resemblance to, respectively, Korbonski's fundamentalists and liberals; the only group missing is Korbonski's moderate group, which lies between these two polar groups. Michlic successfully supports her characterization of the Church hierarchy with an analysis of the content of Catholic journals. This analysis reveals that some journals appear to favour the views of 'the Closed Church,' evident in their omission of articles concerning Church reform and conflict with Jews, as well as their publication of negative articles. In contrast, others favour the views of 'the Open Church,'

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<sup>95</sup> Joanna Michlic, "'The Open Church' and 'the Closed Church' and the discourse on Jews in Poland between 1989 and 2000," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 37 (2004): 467.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 470.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 467-468.

evident in their publication of articles which openly discuss the same issues.<sup>98</sup> Further, Michlic also identifies several prominent Church personalities who are associated with each group.<sup>99</sup> Like Korbonski, Michlic determines that this split exists within the Church, but cannot determine the proportions of the hierarchy and the laity which are allied with either side. Also, Michlic sees the 'Closed Church' as the proportionately larger group because traditional views dominated during the Communist period and more liberal orientations only entered the Church after 1989.<sup>100</sup> However, since the late 1990s, the Church has become more open to normal discourse with Jews in Poland, indicating that the 'Open Church' may be gaining influence over the Church hierarchy.<sup>101</sup> Michlic asserts that this development is an important change for the Church: "[c]hallenging and deconstructing these anti-Jewish prejudices is a crucial process in the elimination of the Closed Church's influence on both the clergy and the lay Catholic community at large."<sup>102</sup> In combination with Korbonski's argument, Michlic's work raises questions about how much conflict exists within the Church that is hidden from public view. Power struggles between different factions and ideological groups within the Church threaten the Church's cohesiveness and perhaps its effectiveness as a political player. Simultaneously, ideological

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 467-470.

<sup>99</sup> Michlic briefly discusses several personalities that are known to be associated with each side in her article. Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 470.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 478.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 479.

discourse can also move the Church toward progressive policies that resonate with Polish society. Because of the closed nature of the Church hierarchy and the consequent difficulty of gathering information, it is unlikely that the Church's inner workings will be revealed in the immediate future.

### Democracy: Friend or Foe?

Of all of the facets of the Church's political activities, the widest agreement exists about the Church's uncomfortable relationship with Polish democracy. The nature of this relationship, according to Michnik, is one of suspicion: "The Church has assumed a position of mistrust toward democracy, while democracy has assumed a position of deep distrust toward the Church."<sup>103</sup> This antagonism originated in the Communist period when Catholics and liberals joined the opposition and created a discourse that contrasted the 'evil' Communist authorities with the 'good' heroes of the opposition.<sup>104</sup> Although this period has been left behind, the Church continues to utilize this antagonistic relationship so that it can "take advantage of all the amenities that the democratic order provides. . . . [a]t the same time, it [the Church] proclaims that the democratic order is bereft of values; hence it attempts to impose upon the democratic order its own system of values."<sup>105</sup> In this way, the Church continues to cast itself as morally superior to other political actors, even while

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<sup>103</sup> Adam Michnik "Church and State in Eastern Europe: The Clean Conscience Trap," *East European Constitutional Review* 7, no. 2 (1998) [online]. Available from <http://www.law.nyu.edu/eeer/vol7num2/feature/cleanconscience.html> Internet: accessed 29 January 2005.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

it attempts to circumvent the rules of democracy so that its enemies do not gain control of government policy; however, continued use of this bipolar characterization stretches beyond the limits of credibility.<sup>106</sup> Simultaneously, the Church refuses to assume any share of the blame for Poland's transitional difficulties. Instead, the Church ascribes the blame for any lingering difficulties to the Communists and the new "liberal" threat.<sup>107</sup> Thus, it appears that the Church's negative interactions with democracy arise not only from its dismay with the results of democratic processes, but could also be the outward manifestation of a concerted strategy which attempts cast the Church in a positive light as compared to its opponents, such that the Church deserves the right to interfere in democratic processes. In any event, the Church's distrust of democracy is clear.

Anderson proceeds a step further, arguing that the Catholic Church has tremendous potential to affect democratization in Poland, mostly because of its rank in society and its substantial resources.<sup>108</sup> At the same time, the Church is unable to completely accept democracy because its opposition to the democratic system entailed a definition of a desirable condition in terms of Roman Catholic values; that is, one where religious principles prevail over social structures.<sup>109</sup> Since, by its very nature, democracy requires

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> John Anderson, "Catholicism and Democratic Consolidation in Spain and Poland," *West European Politics* 26, no. 1 (2003): 151-152.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 152.

accommodation between groups, it is difficult to ensure that a certain set of values is reflected in government policy. This condition is untenable for the Church, since it places Roman Catholic values at risk.<sup>110</sup> Therefore, Church attitudes toward democracy seem mixed: the principles of democracy are utilized to secure the Church's position in society as the religion of the majority but, simultaneously it promotes the circumvention of majority consent on matters concerned with morality.<sup>111</sup> In this sense, the Church is an impediment to the consolidation of democracy because it is unwilling to leave decisions to the vagaries of an elected assembly, which could decide against the Church.

Gilarek attributes the Church's tendency to bisect political relations in an absolute manner and its inconsistent treatment of democratic rules and procedures to a different dimension. According to Gilarek, the Church's approach to contemporary Poland is defined by a dichotomy between the old and the new wherein "new inevitably means worse."<sup>112</sup> By contrasting the current condition of Polish state and society with Polish tradition, the Church treats the modern democratic state as problematic and threatening to the old ways. This attitude, coupled with the Church's hierarchical structure, moral absolutism, and religious dominance, makes the Church look less progressive than religious institutions in other contexts to the extent that the Church could threaten Poland's

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 152-153.

<sup>112</sup> Katarzyna Gilarek, "Coping with the Challenges of Modernity: The Church of England in Great Britain and the Catholic Church in Poland," in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Irena Borowik (Kraków: Nomos, 1999), 202.

democratic restructuring.<sup>113</sup> Commonalities between these two authors' work suggest that the Church has a tendency to simplify its political relations into an 'us versus them' mentality.

Like Gilarek, Mach finds the root of the Church's problems in the past, but the more recent past. Mach attributes much of the Church's difficulty with democracy to its inheritance of a legacy from the communist period that retards its development as a political institution. According to Mach:

the Roman Catholic Church was busy trying to mobilise society against Communism, and . . . did not have a chance to become an established Church with links to government, and . . . enjoyed a lot of support and a position of moral authority because of its political role, without having to influence the state.<sup>114</sup>

In effect, the Roman Catholic Church was able to rely on its prestigious cultural position to initiate mobilization against an unwanted presence and thus never developed a large repertoire of methods of relating to the state. As a result, the Church was not prepared to meet the challenge of contending with other actors who now wanted to take advantage of democratic freedoms to communicate their own demands to the state; instead, the Church relied on the status and authority it had gained during the Communist period to make

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<sup>113</sup> In comparison to the Anglican Church in Great Britain, which has adopted a policy of negotiation with modern forces, the Catholic Church in Poland looks especially rigid in its views as it resists a changing society. *Ibid.*, 202-203.

<sup>114</sup> Mach, "The Roman Catholic Church and Transformation of Social Identity in Eastern and Central Europe," 71.



political gains.<sup>115</sup> These gains have not been achieved without sacrifice; the Church has merely exchanged its unconventional influence over Polish society for conventional political guarantees.<sup>116</sup> In the end, this strategy and its results have negative implications for the Church's ability to adapt to continuing change.<sup>117</sup>

Moreover, the antithetic relations engendered in communist-era politics have also persisted. Mach describes these relations:

The symbolic political discourse of the Church and anti-state dissidents presented society as ideologically polarised into two segments clearly set apart and in permanent conflict: the communist, atheistic state and the Polish, Roman Catholic nation with its Church.<sup>118</sup>

This bipolar division lost validity as political transformation ushered in democracy and pluralism and exposed the hidden fissures within Polish society. Consequently, the Church is no longer the sole resource for citizen advocacy because many groups, both religious and secular, now represent a multitude of interests.<sup>119</sup> In addition, some Poles, who connected with the Church only to express their political opinions, became dissociated from the

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 75-76.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 78-79.

<sup>118</sup> Mach also asserts that this division of society was superficial: "In this clear and coherent picture there was no room for internal divisions in the society such as ethnic or religious minorities, status differences, class and male-female opposition." Zdzisław Mach, "The Roman Catholic Church in Poland and the Dynamics of Social Identity in Polish Society," *Religion and Politics: East-West Contrasts From Contemporary Europe*, eds. Tom Inglis, Zdzisław Mach, and Rafał Mazanek (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2000), 118.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 122.

institution, thereby decreasing the Church's number of adherents.<sup>120</sup> However, the Church appears ignorant of these fundamental changes; it is overly-confident in the security of its power and assumes that it can influence politics and social construction as it did during the Communist period.<sup>121</sup> In this vein, the Church continues to see itself as the defender of Polish society and its best interests, regardless of democratic rules and procedures:

[o]n the one hand it argues that the views and interests of the Catholic majority should be reflected in state law and policies. On the other hand, the Church argues that the principle of majority should not be applied to essential questions such as abortion where religious beliefs are involved.<sup>122</sup>

In this sense, the Church's monumental role in political change during the communist period has impaired its ability to function in democratic politics and blinded it to the realities of a multi-polar system, full of competing interests.

Similarly, Herbert attributes the current status of Church-state relations to the Church's development of a "parallel society" during the Communist period.<sup>123</sup> This may have served the Church well at the time, but it prevented the Church from developing normal relations with the state.<sup>124</sup> That is, the Church, accustomed to getting its way by

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 120-21.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 121-125.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>123</sup> This parallel society, with the Church at its centre, was constructed in opposition to the official communist society desired by Poland's leaders during the communist period. David Herbert, *Religion and Civil Society: Rethinking Public Religion in the Modern World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 227-228.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

appealing to religious symbolism and this parallel society, failed to develop expertise in navigating the subtle nuances inherent to relating with a democratic state. Consequently, the Church is now learning how to conduct relations with a democratically elected state: a new and difficult process. As a natural continuation of this line of argument, Diskin recognizes that the Church is out of touch with the changes that have taken place in the political system: "it appears to have been easier for the church to face a despotic regime lacking any moral base than to face democracy, which it has found threatening and potentially dangerous."<sup>125</sup> Therefore, the Church engages in what Diskin describes as a 'religious Cold War,' which has reduced political relations to a battle between the Catholic Church and its opponents.<sup>126</sup> Accordingly, the Church does not regard democratic rules as applicable to its own goals because some political decisions are related to inflexible Catholic principles and, since Roman Catholicism is the declared religion of a majority of Poles, should therefore be guaranteed, exclusive of the uncertainty of democratic debate and the persuasiveness of opponents.<sup>127</sup> Nonetheless, the Church is capable of compromise on certain issues, notably Poland's membership in the European Union (EU).<sup>128</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>125</sup> Hanna Diskin, *The Seeds of Triumph: Church and State in Gomułka's Poland* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001), 249.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 249-250.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 250.

<sup>128</sup> Diskin argues that the Church's position on EU membership altered considerably since the early 1990s. The Church has moved from its initial state of opposition to support for Poland's inclusion in the European Union because the country's membership is regarded as important to the preservation and promotion of Catholic values in Europe. Ibid., 257-258.

despite its initial stumbles in the democratic system, the Church is showing some signs of adjustment to the new regime;<sup>129</sup> however, the Church's continuation of communist-era conflicts adds a troubling element to Poland's political discourse.

Aside from the dominant description of the Church's attitude presented by the previous authors, "that the Church supports democracy and democratic decision-making processes only as long as the results achieved are in agreement with its position or serve its interests,"<sup>130</sup> another view of the Church's problems with democracy also exists. According to Szawieł, the Church's irritation with the democratic system represents its objection to democratic rules and procedures rather than the idea of democratic government.<sup>131</sup> Szawieł points out that majority rule, or the ability of a majority of citizens to have input into political decisions, downplays the importance of tradition and ignores the processes that modify this principle when it is put into practice.<sup>132</sup> The oversimplification of democracy into nothing more than "appointing governments and reaching binding decisions" is also problematic for the Church's spiritual reverence.<sup>133</sup> The Church presents an alternative view of democracy: "rather than conceiving democracy procedurally, the

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 258-259.

<sup>130</sup> Eberts, 836.

<sup>131</sup> Tadeusz Szawieł, "Religion and the Church in the New Democracy," *Polish Sociological Review* 4, no. 132 (2000): 452.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 453.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 453.

church conceives it as a system for the implementation of the common good”,<sup>134</sup> however, the interpretation of this ‘common good’ is often unspecified, general, and debatable.<sup>135</sup> Furthermore, democracy has also opened up the political arena to an extent that is unprecedented in Polish history, such that the Church must cope with the presence of alternative modes of political expression.<sup>136</sup> Poles have other resources at their disposal which are unconnected to the Church or Church doctrine. Consequently, the Church appears ineffectual; it cannot adjust its methods and policies to the new reality or counter the problems associated with the introduction of market reforms, such as increasing materialism.<sup>137</sup> Overall, “[t]he church’s strategy has been to cope with threats, not to take advantage of opportunities. . . .”<sup>138</sup> This defensive posture lacks the long-term adaptability inherent in a more forward-thinking approach. Thus, the Church’s continuing political relevance is dependent upon the adoption of a positive attitude toward the operation of the system.<sup>139</sup> Otherwise, the Church faces political marginalization.

#### Summary: The Church in Poland

The Church had great expectations for Polish democracy to provide it with the

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 454-456.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 456-458.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 457.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 460.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

means to craft a state that reflects Roman Catholic values. Through the twists and turns of the Church's activities in post-Communist Poland, these many works have painted a picture of the Church that consistently emphasizes the Church's difficulties coping with the political and social changes that have taken place since 1989. Further, the Church, represented publicly by Church officials, has openly stated its disappointment with the outcomes of democratic decision-making in Poland. Although the Church possesses many attributes which make it a significant political actor and it has shown a great ability to influence the direction of policy in Poland, many of its achievements occurred early in the development of Polish democracy and represented incomplete realizations of the Church's goals. Simultaneously, the relationship between society and the Church, traditionally strong, has eroded over the post-Communist period such that the Church is no longer viewed as the embodiment of Polish nationalism nor are its activities viewed with trust and approval. On top of that, the Church's ability to fulfill its religious mission has deteriorated and the institution is challenged by a modest, but important debate over the shape of Church policy and its future course. Finally, for a number of reasons, the Church has experienced a great deal of difficulty adapting to democracy, threatening its long-term viability as a political power. The underlying idea that is consistent throughout these works, despite disagreements over cause and form, is that the Roman Catholic Church in Poland is a powerful, yet troubled institution, unable to cope with its changing environment.

The Church's expectations, intentions, strategies, and activities have been

established by these scholarly works; however, this focus on the Church itself minimizes the effects of context on the Church's options. Few have focused exclusively on the context as it relates to the Church using a substantial explanatory framework. Pursuit of this line of investigation may help to explain why the Church's past, present, and future in Polish politics are unfolding in a particular manner. So, the questions become, how much influence does context have on the Church's political role at any given time and what are the most important components of that context? Discovering the answers requires somewhat of a departure from the literature, geographically and theoretically.

*Independence and Democracy: The Church  
in Contemporary Slovene Politics*

In Slovenia, the Roman Catholic Church received much less attention from academics and scholars. For various reasons, including Slovenia's relatively small size and the dramatic events occurring in the other former Yugoslav republics, few works consider Slovenia's post-communist development. Even fewer specifically consider the Church's role in post-Communist Slovene political development.

The Church's Plans for Independent, Democratic Slovenia

As Slovenia emerged from its relatively nonviolent conflict with Yugoslavia in 1991, becoming both a newly independent state and a newly democratic state, the Church needed to determine its goals and how it would achieve them in the new order. The Church wasted no time in setting itself a lofty goal. According to Velikonja, the Church's

central goal has been to restore itself as a dominant influence in politics and society,<sup>140</sup> much as it had been prior to World War II. To this end, the Church demands action on several contentious moral issues, such as abortion and Church-state separation.<sup>141</sup> At the same time, the Church sculpts its own version of reality, by promoting the idea that it is the purveyor of the only legitimate moral course in modern Slovenia and by depicting itself, as well as its followers as victims of state socialism.<sup>142</sup> In essence, the Church is promoting itself as the embodiment of the Slovene nation, even if there are realities which contradict such a premise; a strategy which Velikonja views as inherently dangerous to Slovenia's development.<sup>143</sup>

Ocvirk adopts a disparate approach to the Church's ambitions in post-communist Slovenia, justifying the Church's calls for special consideration as arising naturally from the Church's historical role and casting those who deny the importance of the Catholic Church as "liberals."<sup>144</sup> He also asserts that the Church has no real interest in interfering with

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<sup>140</sup> Mitja Velikonja, "Historical Roots of Slovenian Christoslavic Mythology," *Religion in Eastern Europe* 19, no. 6 (1999) [online], available from <http://www.georgefox.edu/academics/undergrad/departments/soc-swk/ree/velikonja.html> Internet: accessed 1 March 2005.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ocvirk characterizes "liberals" as intolerant of religion, jealous of the Church's level of legitimacy, and an enemy to democracy; he even goes so far as to cast them as communists. In addition he also states that the Church is kept from assuming any important role because the "liberals" fear the Church's organized power and see the Church as a potential opponent. Drago Ocvirk, "The Problem of Proselytizing in Slovenia," *Religion in Eastern Europe* 17, no. 5 (1997) [online]. Available from <http://www.georgefox.edu/departments/undergrad/soc-swk/ree/OCVIRK2-PRO.html> Internet: accessed 1



politics, except that it must do so to neutralize the “liberal” threat to Slovenia’s future.<sup>145</sup>

In contrast to Velikonja, Ocvirk views a politically active Church in a positive light, associated with the potential to unite society and provide moral guidance.<sup>146</sup> But, does contemporary Slovene society want or need the Church to supply it with the Roman Catholic brand of moral guidance? Interestingly, in both of the preceding works, the Church is portrayed as an ambitious actor, pursuing a significant role in Slovenia’s post-communist development. However, while Velikonja perceives this as an illegitimate phenomenon, Ocvirk sees the Church’s actions as legitimate and commensurate with the Church’s natural role as Slovenia’s protector.

Leadership changes also appear to have a profound effect on the nature and level of the Church’s demands, as well as some of the tactics with which it pursues its goals. Notably, this contrasts with the literature on the Church in Poland, which rarely mentions anything except the consistency of the Church’s demands and tactics. This is not surprising considering that the Church has been under the leadership of Cardinal Glemp for the entirety of the post-communist period. Since 1991, the Slovene Church has been headed by three different archbishops: Alojzij Šuštar, Dr. Franc Rode, and Alojz Uran. Each leader has shown his own distinct style. Smrke pays special attention to Dr. Rode, the

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March 2005.

<sup>145</sup> Ocvirk is a Roman Catholic Priest in Slovenia, so it is not unexpected that he would defend the Church’s actions; however biased his view appears, his argument still represents the converse of the many critical and suspicious views of the Church’s activities.

<sup>146</sup> Ocvirk.

leader of the Slovenian Church since 1997, as one of the main progenitors of the Church's adoption of a new aggressive approach which attempts to recast Slovene history in favour of the Church, insists on a total ban on abortion, and portrays Slovenia as a homogeneous Catholic society.<sup>147</sup> The disparity between the Church's view of itself, its goals, and its means, as compared to those of Slovene society, appears to be one of the central factors which motivates low levels of trust and, alternatively, high levels of distrust toward the Church.<sup>148</sup> Smrke concludes that the Church's present course is highly maladaptive to the circumstances of the Slovenian social environment and will thus ultimately end in failure; modernization is the only chance that the Church has for preserving itself.<sup>149</sup>

Similarly, two recent works, one by Rizman and the other by Klemenčič, also see leadership as a fundamental factor in altering the Church's strategy. Although the Church's aims have remained consistent, "opposition to modernity as such and to secular values,"<sup>150</sup> its approach to realizing these aims has changed. Initially, under the leadership of archbishop Šuštar, who had led the Church during the latter part of the communist period, the Church was much less outspoken in its demands. However, with the ascension of Rode to archbishop in 1997, the stridency of the Church's demands increased and "Slovenia's

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<sup>147</sup> Marjan Smrke, "Trust in the Church and Clergy in Slovenia During the 1990s," in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, Irena Borowik, ed. (Kraków: NOMOS, 1999), 329-330.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 330.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 331.

<sup>150</sup> Rudolf Martin Rizman, "The Church and Religion after Communism," in *Uncertain Path: Democratic Transition and Consolidation in Democratic Slovenia* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2006), 111.

Catholic Church radicalized its antiseccular stances.”<sup>151</sup> This stemmed from the Church’s dissatisfaction with the installation of liberalism, as opposed to Catholicism, as the guiding influence over the development of the Slovene democratic state, as well as the Church’s dissatisfaction with its marginal political role.<sup>152</sup> This period of increased outspokenness appears to have ended with Rode’s departure in 2004. According to Klemenčič, the new archbishop, Alojz Uran, has publicly stated that “he would emphasize the pastoral dimensions of the church, which he considers his most important duty.”<sup>153</sup> Overall, Uran appears to be more moderate than his predecessor and less focused on political activity as a means to realize the Church’s goals. The changing leadership of the Slovene Church appears to have had a profound effect on the aggressiveness of the Church’s political activity, but what is the link between leadership and the Church’s progress in attaining its goals?

### Political and Religious Reality

Iveković argues that the critical change in the Archbishop position from the moderate, Šuštar, to the outspoken Rode resulted in a strengthening of the Church’s position.<sup>154</sup> This leadership change coincided with the weakening of the left and the

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, “Conclusion: Slovenia between Liberalism and Clericalism,” in *Democratic Transition in Slovenia: Value Transformation, Education, and Media*, eds. Sabrina P. Ramet and Danica Fink-Hafner (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2006), 269.

<sup>154</sup> Ivan Iveković, “Nationalism and the Political Use and Abuse of Religion: The Politicization of Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Islam in Yugoslav Successor States,” *Social Compass* 49, no. 4 (2002):

ascension of the centre-right in the government and, during the following period, the church attained “unprecedented concessions in education and extracted from the Constitutional Court a ruling which will allow it to regain its property nationalized by the communists.”<sup>155</sup> However, the Slovene People’s Christian Party, which the Church openly supports, did not attain a significant share of the electorate’s votes in 2000.<sup>156</sup> Iveković is pessimistic about the state’s ability to regain the upper hand in its relationship with the Church because once the Church gains legal privileges, it becomes more difficult to take them away, rather than to deny them in the first place. This places liberals in a perplexing position if they want to reverse the Church’s gains.<sup>157</sup>

Interestingly, Flere’s work, published shortly after Rode’s ascension to archbishop, views the Church’s activities as largely unsuccessful. In post-communist Slovenia, two prominent issues have exacerbated the level of contention between the Church and the state: the return of Church property and the definition of the Church’s role in education.<sup>158</sup> Some of the Church’s confiscated properties have been returned, but the state is

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529-530.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 530.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Sergej Flere, “Church-State Relations in Slovenia in the 1990s,” *Facta Universitatis: Philosophy and Sociology* 2, no. 6 (1999): 23-26 [online]. Available from <http://facta.junis.ni.ac.yu/facta/pas/pas99/pas99-04.pdf> Internet: accessed 18 February 2005: 23-24.

withholding significant holdings because of their necessity to the state for other purposes.<sup>159</sup> In addition, the state retains its reluctance to allow the Church to have any significant input into the education issue, which leaves the issue unsettled, at least to the Church's satisfaction.<sup>160</sup> The Church's inability to secure satisfactory results on these issues leads Flere to conclude that the Roman Catholic Church is a weak institution in Slovenia, especially when compared to bordering countries in which "the role of the Roman Catholic Church is more hegemonic."<sup>161</sup> As a caveat, Flere notes that the Church's position could change with the ascension of Archbishop Franc Rode, who seems determined to pursue policies which would place the Church in a dominant social and political position; however, this has not occurred yet.<sup>162</sup> Although the leadership change from Šuštar to Rode appears to have had positive results for the Church, the reality is more complex and tempered by many different factors.

The complexity of this reality is evident in Flere's subsequent work. First, Flere delineates the Church's rigid stance: "[t]he church is not changing the traditional Catholic product . . . it makes no compromises with postmodern attitudes, instead continuing to insist on traditional values, traditional piety and church authority . . ."<sup>163</sup> This is consistent

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Sergej Flere, "Slovenia: At a Distance from a Perfect Religious Market," *Religion, State & Society* 32, no. 2 (2004): 156.

with previous statements about the Church's stance. Moreover, the interaction between the Church and governing authorities is consistent with the 'Latin pattern', a system in which bipolar relations between Catholicism and liberalism are routine.<sup>164</sup> This forces the Church to adopt an overly conservative stance which is opposed to any potential devaluation of its traditional role in Slovene culture.<sup>165</sup> Opposing 'liberal' parties are often forced to form alliances with Church-oriented parties, who force their preferred policies to be put forward at the expense of other religious denominations.<sup>166</sup> Flere views the continuing negotiations of a comprehensive Concordat between the state and the Vatican as an indication of unequal treatment of religious organizations; the dominant, historical institution, the Roman Catholic Church, is being elevated above other religious organizations through the negotiation of a separate, international agreement.<sup>167</sup> However, despite the Church's privileged position in the religious community, the government has maintained a significant degree of separation between the Church and the state by prohibiting religious interference in public education and forming the Office for Religious Communities.<sup>168</sup> Therefore, the state should not be characterized as open to the Church's demands; rather, the state has continued to resist fulfilling the remainder of the Church's

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 153-154.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 154-155.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 152-153.

agenda. Thus, Flere concludes that, even as the Church maintains its dominant position, it is increasingly affected by religious pluralism and continues to lose ground to alternative religions and social change.<sup>169</sup> In this interpretation, the Church is represented as religiously dominant, but politically under control and, this is in spite of Rode's aggressive leadership during the time.

Črnič and Lesjak also see the Church's dominance as largely confined to the religious realm, but are intensely critical of the state for facilitating the Church's religious dominance. The Roman Catholic Church is indifferent to the presence of new religions insofar as they do not interfere with its own efforts to secure a "special role in Slovene society."<sup>170</sup> However, the Church distinguishes between the relative and absolute equality of religious organizations. It posits that equality between organizations should be based on an assessment of membership and linkage to Slovenia's history.<sup>171</sup> In other words, according to the Catholic Church, all religions are not equal in practice, as in absolute equality; rather, each religion's legal position should be based on a relative judgement of specific features.<sup>172</sup> There is a great deal of evidence to support this view. First, the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the Evangelical Church, which are historically-based

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>170</sup> Aleš Črnič and Gregor Lesjak, "Religious Freedom and Control in Independent Slovenia," *Sociology of Religion* 64, no. 3 (2003): 361.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 362-363.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

Slovenian religious organizations, have attained privileges from the state which allow them to provide clerical service in the armed forces; a benefit which was not granted to any other religious organization.<sup>173</sup> Additionally, although the Church-state agreement, signed in 2001, appears to have been replicated in other agreements with the Lutheran Church, Serbian Orthodox Church, and Pentecostal Church, the language of the other religious agreements is basically the same as in previously existing laws.<sup>174</sup> Moreover, state inactivity in the obligatory registration process for religious communities, such that for long periods of time applicants received no response to their registration requests, also suggests that the state is applying the Church's idea of relative equality.<sup>175</sup> Črnič and Lesjak conclude that the state has departed from adherence to legal and Constitutional principles, dividing religious organizations into a "hierarchy of, first, the 'more equal' dominant Roman Catholic Church, followed by the socially acknowledged 'traditional' Evangelical Church, which is, in turn followed by all other, registered and non-registered, communities."<sup>176</sup> However, the basis of the Church's dominance over other religions is more tenuous than this hierarchy suggests. First, although the Yugoslav state possessed a negative attitude toward religion, Slovenia was generally less oppressive than other

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 363-364.

<sup>174</sup> Aleš Črnič and Gregor Lesjak, "O, Holy Simplicity! Registering a Religion in Slovenia," *Religion, State & Society* 35, no. 1 (2007): 71.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 76-77.

<sup>176</sup> Črnič and Lesjak, "Religious Freedom and Control in Independent Slovenia," 364.



Communist countries and new religious organizations have been growing since the early 1970s, although data on their membership is scarce.<sup>177</sup> Therefore, increases in religiosity during the transition period reflect trends which began during previous eras.<sup>178</sup> This means that gains in religiosity that have appeared in statistical data may have arisen from other religions besides Roman Catholicism. Also, since it is so weak in Slovene society, the Church has been forced to avoid “the powerful rhetoric of being a ‘traditional,’ ‘national,’ or ‘state-Constitutional’ Church . . .”<sup>179</sup> Therefore, although the Church has attained both legal and social dominance in Slovenia relative to other religions, the reasons for this dominance are questionable.

Many of the previous authors’ works suggest that the Church has been confined to dominate the religious sphere, suggesting but not openly stating that the state has made concerted efforts to keep the Church out of politics. Stres and Gergolj attribute the Church’s failure to make political gains to the state’s hostile attitude toward the Church. In his discussion of religious education in Slovenia, Gergolj blames the Communist period for creating confusion about religious practice and discouraging religious teaching to subsequent generations.<sup>180</sup> He also equates the current democratic system with that of the

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 356; 358-359.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 357.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 361.

<sup>180</sup> Stanko Gerjolj, “Modes of Religious Education in Slovenia,” in *Religion During and After Communism*, Miklós Tomka and Paul M. Zulehner, eds. (London: SCM Press, 2000), 82-84.

atheistic Communist state, stating that although the education system excludes religious organizations on the basis of avoiding extensive religious interference in public life, it is simultaneously used to spread “the ideology of the liberal party which has been in power since 1991 . . . ”<sup>181</sup> Thus, rather than blame the democratic system as a whole, Gergolj blames the liberals. This is suggestive of the ‘us versus them’ mentality which was evident in the Polish review.

Stres argues that the Slovenian state is unreasonably antagonistic toward the Roman Catholic Church, especially in its opposition to granting the Church a role in religious education and its refusal to sign an extensive deal with the Vatican.<sup>182</sup> Stres interprets this situation as a fault in the democratic system, especially considering that “[i]f a Slovene is religious, he is a Catholic, save for the border region with Hungary.”<sup>183</sup> At the same time that Stres characterizes the state as a hostile opponent, he acknowledges the state’s role in maintaining Slovenia’s culture,<sup>184</sup> but this is the only praise which the state receives. The outcomes of two issues that have generated the greatest level of contention between the Church and state, namely the return of Church lands confiscated by the communist

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 85-86.

<sup>182</sup> Anton Stres, “The Church in a Democratic State after the Model of Slovenia,” *Religion, State and Society* 28, no. 3 (2000): 291.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 291-292.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 296.

regime and religious education, are particularly unsatisfactory for Stres.<sup>185</sup> This leads Stres to conclude that “[t]he essential difference between the current situation and that under the previous communist regime is only that there is no ban on church activities in the current democratic state.”<sup>186</sup> Stres’s account of events serves as a scathing indictment of the current relationship between the Church and state, which blames the Church’s failure to secure its goals in politics and society on the intransigence of the current political regime.

Cox’s recent work on Slovene politics contains a short discussion of the Church’s political role in post-Communist Slovenia, focusing on the Church’s status and position as defined by the legal and political gains it has made since the transition, as well as the Church’s historical role in Slovenia. Documenting the ups and downs of the Church over the period from 1990 to 2004, Cox notes that as the Church has “regained considerable prominence since 1991.”<sup>187</sup> Notably, it has achieved some major political victories in the restitution of Church property, parochial education, in vitro fertilization, army chaplaincies and, finally, the recent Slovene-Vatican agreement. However, at the same time, these gains have been diminished by the Church’s exclusion from Slovenia’s public education system,

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<sup>185</sup> Stres is particularly adamant that the addendum to the law advocating the return of confiscated lands is unfair to the Church. He notes that “only a small proportion of the church’s property has been returned to it *in natura*, because under the same law the state is not obliged to return property that is currently used for cultural, health or educational purposes.” Although the Church is supposed to receive monetary payments for these non-returns, the fund is inadequate to cover such costs. Stres is also highly critical of democratic procedures, stating that “the Liberal Democratic Party forced through its own model for Slovene education for the whole state,” in spite of the introduction of religious education in other post-Communist states. *Ibid.*, 296-297.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>187</sup> John K. Cox, *Slovenia: Evolving Loyalties* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 125.

the Church's failed campaign against abortion, and the government's failure to return all of the Church's property.<sup>188</sup> Cox also directs a mild criticism toward those who oppose the Slovene-Vatican agreement<sup>189</sup> arguing that "[d]ue to the considerable historical significance of Catholicism in Slovenia, and the persecution of the Church after 1945, such opposition would seem exaggerated."<sup>190</sup> Cox's argument is balanced, discussing both the negatives and positives for the Church and some of the most recent developments in the Church's status; however, the reasons behind the Church's evolving role are not clear.

Two other recent analyses also figure into this emerging picture of the Slovene Church. Klemenčič is unique in the Slovene political literature in that he sees Catholicism as one side of the deepest, defining division in contemporary Slovene politics. Throughout most works on Slovene politics, the Church is always a peripheral figure, briefly mentioned, if at all. However, according to Klemenčič, contemporary Slovene politics is defined by the contention between clericalism and liberalism. Clericalism, which is associated with the Roman Catholic Church and some right wing parties, asks that the "parameters of the state be defined in accordance with the strictures of a particular church . . ."<sup>191</sup> This has far-reaching consequences for the interpretation of law, individual rights, equality, and

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 124-125.

<sup>189</sup> Briefly described by Cox as follows: "defines the legal status of the two independent parties, commits them to follow certain procedures for resolving issues and disputes, and guarantees the status of Catholic schools, charitable institutions, mass media, and pastoral presence as equal to other privately sponsored initiatives." Ibid., 125.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Klemenčič, 277.

tolerance, such that they contravene those of liberalism.<sup>192</sup> Liberalism, represented by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS) and other left-wing parties, seeks to avoid religious influence on state structures. Despite the Church being favoured over other religions in Slovenia, it has had great difficulty impressing its values on Slovene politics, suffering defeats in the areas of media censorship, constitutional construction, religious education, and abortion.<sup>193</sup> Moreover, the Church's political involvement is not supported by most of Slovene society.<sup>194</sup> Thus, it appears that in this "struggle to define the content of the dominant political culture,"<sup>195</sup> liberalism is ahead and clericalism is far behind. However, according to Klemenčič, the contest is far from over and the "ultimate shape of Slovenia's political culture will be defined by the outcome of the contest . . ."<sup>196</sup> This is curious, given that throughout the rest of the book within which Klemenčič's article appears the Church is mentioned sparingly and then, usually only briefly. If the Church were such an important element in Slovene politics, would it not command a larger role in the discussions contained in the rest of the book or, indeed, the rest of the literature?

Rizman, tracking the Church through Slovene history into the present, lays out a picture of the Church which contradicts that painted by Klemenčič. Although the Church

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 277-278.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 271-274.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 270.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 277.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 278.

once held a prominent political role in Slovenia, events during WWII and the early years of the Yugoslav communist regime, altered the Church's status, effectively moving it to the political periphery.<sup>197</sup> According to Rizman, the Church seems destined to remain at the periphery: despite the Church's "claims to be not only a representative but the morally legitimate arbiter of the Slovene nation,"<sup>198</sup> as well as the Church's political activity on issues such as the constitution, abortion, religious education, and confiscated Church property, the Slovene political and social environment fails to support the Church's aspirations.<sup>199</sup> This conclusion is consistent with the literature and it also acts as a perfect summary of the majority of works concerning the Slovene Church. Rizman's work also makes it clear that the conflict between liberal and Catholic values is not as significant as Klemnčič suggests; for the most part, liberal values have prevailed over Catholic values on nearly every occasion. In addition, Rizman's work underscores the importance of context in shaping the Church's role, providing for further investigations of the Slovene context as it relates to the Church.

#### Summary: The Church in Slovenia

Much like its Polish counterpart, the Slovene Church expected that the political changes of the early 1990s would generate political influence for the Church such that the legal, political, and social structures of the new state would reflect Roman Catholic values.

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<sup>197</sup> Rizman, 103-106.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 115-116.

However, as consistently agreed to by numerous authors, the reality that has developed is a disappointment to these goals. The Church remains predominant over other religious organizations, enjoying political and legal favouritism relative to other religious organizations in Slovenia, but little of this dominance extends beyond this area to become broad-based political influence. This is evident in the outcomes of several major issues, namely constitutional construction, religious education, abortion, and Church property repatriation. Furthermore, the Church's relationship with society, often fraught with difficulties in the recent past, is strained. Slovenes' generally ambiguous relationship with religion, combined with their distrust of the Church, makes society's link with the Church tenuous. Overall, the Church appears to operate from a position of weakness in contemporary Slovenia, lacking both the constituency and the capacity to assume a powerful political role.

Even with the detailed analyses provided in many of these scholarly works, the picture of the Slovene Church is much less complete than that of the Polish Church. Certainly, the Slovene Church's intentions, strategies, and activities have been delineated to some extent, but not in any great detail as most works regarding the Slovene Church are general in nature. The paucity of detailed investigations leaves many questions unanswered about the internal workings of the Church as well as the Church's political activities. Even though these matters are not the central concern of this thesis, analysis of additional sources during the course of the investigation will likely clarify some of these unknowns. Additionally, although many authors successfully place the Slovene Church in its context, it

is only ever accomplished in the most general, least detailed of manners. As in the Polish case, the utilization of a framework to examine contextual shaping of the Church's political role, will yield valuable results. This value will increase with the addition of comparative analysis between the Polish and Slovene contexts.

### *Comparative Works*

Comparisons between Poland and Slovenia are relatively rare; no direct comparisons exist beyond the level of religiosity and nationalism. This paucity of directly comparative literature by necessity makes this section the shortest in the review.

The only work which directly compares Poland and Slovenia examines the development of the association between religion and nationalism in the two countries, as well as the structure of this association. Velikonja studies this association using the concept of religio-national mythology, defined as "an organised, coherent and dynamic system or set of different myths, beliefs, stereotypes, symbols and images about ourselves and others, specifically concerned with national and religious issues."<sup>200</sup> Using this concept, Velikonja finds that Roman Catholicism plays a much larger role in the construction of religio-national mythology in Poland than in Slovenia.<sup>201</sup> Specifically, both the Church's and the state's histories, as well as contemporary interpretations of Catholicism's role in preserving the Polish nation, support a strong nationalistic link

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<sup>200</sup> Velikonja, "Slovenian and Polish Religio-National Mythologies: A Comparative Analysis," *Religion, State and Society* 31, no. 3 (2003): 234.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.



between the Roman Catholic Church and Poland; essentially, the Church acts as an arbiter of national identity.<sup>202</sup> In contrast, the very different course of the Church through Slovene history, combined with contemporary interpretations of the Church's relationship with Slovene identity, weaken the link between the Roman Catholic Church and the Slovene nation.<sup>203</sup> For Slovenes, additional factors besides religion came to define what it was to be Slovene, especially language and culture.<sup>204</sup> This disentanglement of Roman Catholicism from nationalism in Slovenia, especially when compared to the strong association between Roman Catholicism and nation in Poland, is intriguing with respect to Velikonja's comparison between the contemporary situation of the two Churches. Although both Churches have made overt efforts to assume a significant role in the political and social development of their respective nations, the success of the Polish Church has greatly surpassed that of the Slovene Church.<sup>205</sup> Even so, the Polish Church's success has not been complete and, like the Slovene Church, it faces a harsh reality. Both Churches "must adapt to new, increasingly differentiated situations and accept the fact that religio-national mythology is only one of many mythological constructions and conceptions in contemporary Slovenian and Polish societies, and that it cannot count on monopoly."<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 235-250.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 235-250.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 250.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 244-245.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid., 251.

Thus, through this comparative analysis, Velikonja repeats a theme that is consistent through the literature: both national Churches cannot remain stagnant, relying on their past to carry them into the future but, instead, they must accommodate the new reality. If they fail, they will become increasingly irrelevant.

### *Political Opportunities and Constraints*

The major theoretical orientation of this study relies on an interpretation of the theory of political opportunity and political opportunity structure (POS) to define and examine the major features of the Church's context. Therefore, this final section of the review examines the origins and development of this theory, as well as the reasons for modifying it for use in this study.

The concept of political opportunity has undergone a number of modifications and clarifications since it first appeared<sup>207</sup> but, it has mostly been utilized in the study of contentious politics, which is defined by Tarrow as collective opposition to the state or "direct challenges."<sup>208</sup> Further, this type of political activity is considered to belong more within the realm of social movements, considered to exist outside of the conventional routes of political access that more organized, embedded entities enjoy in the political process.<sup>209</sup> However, these groups do not act in isolation from the political system of their

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<sup>207</sup> Kriesi provides a detailed account of the evolution of the concept, as does David Meyer. Hanspeter Kriesi, "Political Context and Opportunity," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, eds., David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 69-70; David S. Meyer, "Protest and Political Opportunities," *Annual Review of Sociology* 30 (2004): 126-131.

<sup>208</sup> Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2: 5.

<sup>209</sup> This is spelled out in Snow, Soule, and Kriesi's definition: "social movements can be thought of as collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are a part." David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, "Mapping the Terrain," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, eds., David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 11.

nation, which produces both constraints and opportunities to their activities. Tarrow describes this political opportunity structure (POS):

By political opportunities, I mean consistent - but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national - dimensions of the political struggle that encourage people to engage in contentious politics. By political constraints, I mean factors - like repression, but also like authorities' capacity to present a solid front to insurgents - that discourage contention.<sup>210</sup>

Even though this concept is associated with "structure," this does not mean that opportunities and constraints consist entirely of political structures; nor are they static.<sup>211</sup> The POS at a particular time can be further clarified as "open" or "closed" based upon whether the prevailing system of opportunities and constraints is conducive or obstructive to the penetration of political actors, respectively.<sup>212</sup> Therefore, as a constituent concept of a larger framework, POS provides an explanation for the effects of factors which are in the group's environment and beyond their control - in other words, context.

According to Tarrow, political opportunity is guided by a number of factors, including (1) sudden expansions or breaks in the political system, (2) changeable alliances among political actors, (3) divisions among the political elite, (4) the presence of already-established allies, (5) probability of state repression, (6) structure of and power

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<sup>210</sup> Tarrow, 19-20.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>212</sup> Kriesi, 69-70; David S. Meyer and Douglas R Imig, "Political Opportunity and the Rise and Decline of Interest Group Sectors," *The Social Science Journal* 30, no. 3 (1993): 256-257.

relationships within the state, and (7) state methods of reducing challenges.<sup>213</sup> This list is partially derived from studies of the events which opened the Soviet state to challengers in the late 1980s<sup>214</sup> and is therefore suitable to the study of the transitional contexts of east-central Europe.

Another interpretation shows how features of culture, society, politics, and the international environment fit into the political opportunity concept. The first of these involves the structure of “formal political institutions,” described by the formal power relationships between different levels of the government and the party and electoral systems.<sup>215</sup> Cultural factors enter into the political context by prescribing methods of dealing with contenders to the government and setting up the societal background through which ideas are filtered.<sup>216</sup> For any actor which has a stake in turning society’s opinion in its favour, “political-cultural or symbolic opportunities . . . determine what kind of ideas become visible for the public, resonate with public opinion and are held to be ‘legitimate’ by the audience.”<sup>217</sup> Additional factors can be added to the POS to provide for a more comprehensive picture; this includes significant societal and political cleavages, as well as

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<sup>213</sup> Tarrow, 77-85; Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), 57-58.

<sup>214</sup> Tarrow, , 73-76.

<sup>215</sup> Kriesi, 70-71.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 71-72.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

the nation's international environment.<sup>218</sup> Cleavages are important to the definition between different groups in society, but are not automatically available for exploitation; they must be drawn on by a political actor to assume political salience as well.<sup>219</sup> The international context becomes an increasingly important component of political opportunity because of states' memberships in larger political and economic groupings in the international system.<sup>220</sup> Thus, "[c]hanges in the international context can, by altering political and economic conditions, and/or the perception of those conditions, change the opportunities for activists within a country."<sup>221</sup> From this sampling of the literature it is apparent that the context of an organization, operating within a particular nation-state's political system, is determined not only by the features of that national context, it is also determined by larger elements, which lie beyond the borders of the state in which it is operating.

Since this concept has been used primarily in the study of social movements, its ability to extend beyond that specific type of organization appears somewhat tenuous. Is it feasible to utilize the concepts provided by this framework to study more institutionalized, embedded political actors? Although social movements are considered outsiders in the

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 72-73.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 73; David S. Meyer, "Political Opportunity and Nested Institutions," *Social Movement Studies* 2, no. 1 (2003): 21-22.

<sup>221</sup> Meyer, "Political Opportunity and Nested Institutions," 20.

political system, requiring specific opportunities to articulate their views, and interest organizations are considered insiders, possessing access to a wider range of channels and political actors, the political opportunity framework may be applied to the study of interest organizations as well. This idea is articulated by Meyer and Imig, who consider the utility of bringing interest group and social movement theory together to study the conglomeration of groups which make up a defined interest sector, such as environmentalism or feminism. Although this idea is not explicitly connected to the transference of political opportunity structure from the study of social movements to other types of groups, it does suggest that it is possible and desirable to do so. Moreover, Meyer and Imig's description of the activities of interest groups further suggest that this is a possibility:

Interest groups make history . . . but not in circumstances they choose. Instead, they are aided, encouraged, and/or threatened in their efforts by a number of structural and strategic factors that shape their emergence, development, and demise. It is only by recognizing the contextual constraints on interest group activity that we can begin to understand their successes and failures, the utility and costs of various strategies, and most significantly, the role of organized groups in the larger policy process.<sup>222</sup>

This notion of coupling an interest group's interaction with the political world to its context expands political opportunity structure beyond the realm of the political outsider, who normally lacks access to the system. This has particular relevance to this comparative study of the Roman Catholic Church, a political insider, organized interest group, and

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<sup>222</sup> Meyer and Imig, 253-254.

religious organization.

### *Conclusion*

The multitude of works considered in this review have shed light on a number of issues in general Roman Catholic Church politics, as well as in the specific contexts of Poland and Slovenia. The religion and politics literature suggests that a religious institution is not an ordinary interest group; it possesses a unique set of characteristics that endow it with the power to influence its parishioners, as well as other actors in the political system. Further, among religious institutions, the Roman Catholic Church is uniquely endowed with its own state-like structure and an institutional reach that spans the globe. Such an exceptional interest group demands an analytical approach that is equally exceptional.

Although only Velikonja's work directly compares the two Churches, much of the literature suggests that the Polish Church and the Slovene Church have had divergent experiences with regards to realization of their goals for their countries. It was also apparent throughout that the literature that the Church in each context has pursued a similar primary goal: to imprint Roman Catholicism on the development of state and society. However, the Polish Church has procured many more goals to meet this end than the Slovene Church, particularly in the areas of abortion, religious education, and Church-state relations. Aside from a difference in strategy pursued by different personalities heading each Church, what else can account for this divergent path? The current literature does not answer this question in any great detail, if at all. Moreover, although most of these studies utilize acceptable methodology and sources, few utilize a framework that



could help to systematically explain the disparity between the Church's situation in both countries. For this reason, as well as the Roman Catholic Church's unique features as an institution, the concept of political opportunity structure, drawn from the social movement literature, will be utilized to help construct an analytical framework to analyze the unique context that Poland and Slovenia present to the Church.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS

This thesis focuses on the components of society and politics which form the Roman Catholic Church's context in two countries - Poland and Slovenia. This context plays a crucial role in determining the structure of opportunities and constraints which confront each Church at any time. This means that fluctuations in single or multiple contextual components can have a profound effect on the Church's ability to enter the political process and achieve concrete policy outcomes.

The contemporary situation of each national Church has been influenced by regime change, democratic institution-building, and routine democratic politics. The peculiarities inherent to this process in each country have resulted in a dissimilar structure of political opportunities and constraints, leading to a different role for the Church in each of Poland and Slovenia. Moreover, this structure is composed of factors which are constantly in flux and thus the Church seldom faces a political opportunity structure which remains stable for long. Thus, the Church's role in politics and society is also in flux.

#### *Research Hypotheses*

The substantial amount of literature which has been written about the interaction between religion and politics, and specifically, the role of the Roman Catholic Church as a participant in political change, suggests that the Church may have a substantial role to play in the shaping of the democratic state in post-Communist societies. However, simultaneously, the literature which concerns the Church in Poland and Slovenia suggests

that the Church's political context has an appreciable effect on how the Church is received into the political arena at particular times. Once this idea is connected to the conceptual framework of political opportunity structure (POS), it is evident that a further examination of the Church's context is required to illuminate how context has shaped the Church's access to the political system over the post-Communist period in each country. The totality of the studies considered in chapter 2 suggest that it is important to examine how the components of political opportunity structure change over time and affect the Church's role at various points in the development of each polity. This could serve to illuminate the particular circumstances in which a religious institution is most successful at engaging in a foray into the political arena.

The literature review suggests that the Roman Catholic Church, although plagued by a constantly changing political environment, still had and has many opportunities to gain influence in the political arena. Based on this assessment, the Church in Poland is expected to be in a position of variability; sometimes it has many opportunities to play a significant role, while at other times, the constraints on political action preclude any significant penetration into the political arena. In contrast, the Slovene Church has been locked into a marginal, but stable, political role since the democratic transformation because at virtually every point in the development of the new polity, the constraints on political activity appear to have outweighed the opportunities.

As a result, the following research hypotheses became the central focus of this thesis:

General Research Hypothesis. The political opportunity structure, or the structure of constraints and opportunities created by numerous factors in the context, circumscribes the political space in which the Roman Catholic Church can operate in a country, and, thus, plays a large part in determining the Church's political role in that country.

Specific Research Hypothesis 1. The political opportunity structure in Poland produced an unstable and variable set of opportunities throughout the post-communist period, but the resulting political opportunity structure was generally positive for the Church, providing more openings into politics and placing fewer constraints on the Church's activities. As a result, the Church made significant inroads in realizing its agenda and played an important political role.

Specific Research Hypothesis 2. The political opportunity structure in Slovenia produced a stable and consistent set of opportunities throughout the post-communist period, but the resulting political opportunity structure was generally negative for the Church, providing fewer openings into politics and placing more constraints on the Church's activities. As a result, the Church failed to make significant inroads in realizing its agenda and played a noncrucial political role.

### *Research Design*

#### The Church as a Unit of Analysis

Since the Roman Catholic Church is the main focus of this study, specific limits have been defined to distinguish the institution from other manifestations of Roman Catholicism, mainly single-issue religious groups and other formations which, although

formed under the approval and control of the Vatican,<sup>1</sup> are considered to be outside of the Church's structure. For the purpose of this analysis, the Roman Catholic Church is considered to be composed of the institutional Church only, whose components are hierarchically arranged from the most powerful, the Vatican, to the least powerful, the laity.<sup>2</sup> The specific dimensions of each level are not central to this study. Thus, the Church referred to in this study includes the institutional Church, its leaders, and its adherents only.

#### The Roman Catholic Church as an Interest Group

In this study, the Roman Catholic Church is considered to be an atypical interest group since its political role is shaped by factors which are not included in traditional conceptions of political interests. Since most interest group theory avoids organized religious groupings like the Roman Catholic Church, it is easy to recognize the difficulty which is inherent to the classification of such an organization. This situation is complicated by the disparity between established western democracies, from which most of the theoretical explanations of interest group activity have emerged, and the recently democratized states of eastern Europe, which are grafted onto the remains of the old Communist state. As a result, most western conceptions of interest group theory ignore the unique context in which religious organizations must operate in post-Communist

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<sup>1</sup> Hoeber Rudolph, 253.

<sup>2</sup> Hoeber Rudolph, 17; Matthew Bunson, ed., *2005 Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic Almanac* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2005), 271-272.

Europe, as well as the significance of their presence in some of these states. For instance, the concept of the institutionalized interest group, based upon the study of the American political system, seems to capture some of the Church's characteristics, especially the independence of the hierarchy's decision-making processes from the laity, as well as the substantial resources at the Church's command.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, this conception, although plausible, fails to completely describe the Church because it stresses economic interests over all others. Certainly, the Church is concerned with its resource base, as well as the survival of the institution itself, but its political activities also revolve around its doctrine and teachings, which emerge from its spiritual purpose. This spiritual purpose gives the Church an advantage when organizing sanctioned collective activities; many adherents answer to the Church's connection with a spiritual power and resist arguments that refute the principles of this basic belief.<sup>4</sup> With this in mind, the Church is classified as an interest group according to the guidelines laid out in Warner's study of the Roman Catholic Church in western European politics.

According to Warner, the Roman Catholic Church's political activities relocate it from the realm of a simple religious organization. Its long history of political lobbying and

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<sup>3</sup> This is reflected in Salisbury's conception of corporations as institutionalized interest groups, which possess different structures than member-driven organizations. Robert H. Salisbury, "Interest Representation: The Dominance of Institutions," *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 1 (1984): 67-68.

<sup>4</sup> Ron Aminzade and Elizabeth J. Perry, "The Sacred, Religious, and Secular in Contentious Politics: Blurring Boundaries," in *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics*, Ronald R. Aminzade et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 160-161.

interference have embedded it into modern politics as an uncommon form of the political interest group.<sup>5</sup> Certainly, the rigidity of the Church's doctrine, coupled with its perception of itself as "the ultimate moral authority," distinguishes it from other interests.<sup>6</sup> As a result, democracy represents an obstacle to the Church's moral mission, simply because democracy necessitates a degree of compromise which the Church is hard-pressed to accept.<sup>7</sup> The complexity inherent in straddling the line between religion and politics creates a degree of ambiguity in the attachment of a particular concept or descriptive label to the Church; however, the label of an interest group seems the most appropriate for this study. The Church is simultaneously enmeshed in the political system, like many other organized groups who seek to influence government policies, but also distinguished from these groups by its connection to the spiritual realm. This allows it to pursue multiple causes simultaneously, using the justification provided by the demands of Catholic doctrine and a spiritual connection with a higher power.

### The Context of the Roman Catholic Church

#### *Features Which Define the Context*

Following from the theoretical dispositions of the literature on religion and politics, as well as the political opportunity structure literature, several contextual variables have

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<sup>5</sup> Carolyn M. Warner, *Confessions of an Interest Group: The Catholic Church and Political Parties in Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 7.

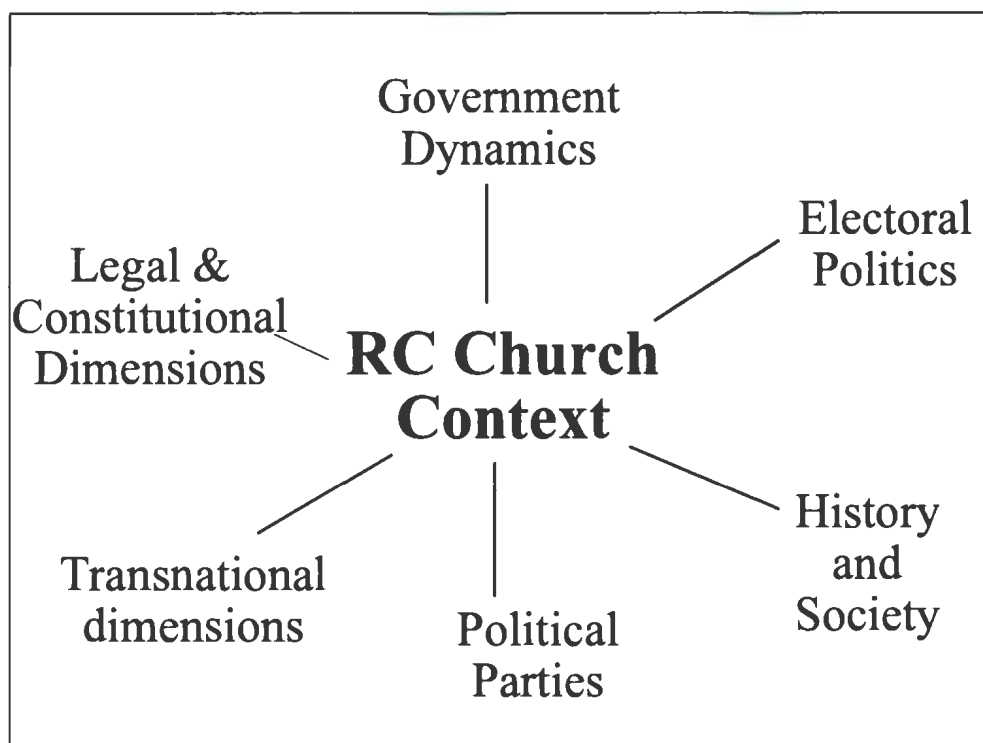
<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

been extracted and modified for this analysis: (1) history and society; (2) political parties; (3) electoral politics; (4) government dynamics; (5) legal and constitutional dimensions; and (6) transnational dimensions. The Roman Catholic Church is also somewhat unique among institutionalized political interests in that it has multiple levels of spiritual and administrative authority at both the national and international level.<sup>8</sup> With these features in mind, the Roman Catholic Church in Poland faces a context which is defined by religious entanglements, a developing political system, and the transnational integration of the state. A basic diagram of the Church's context in this analysis is presented in figure 1. A description of each of these variables, along with the means of qualitatively measuring them follows.

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<sup>8</sup> According to Warner, "national Catholic Churches arose with their own histories, institutional structures, even ideologies, and often have been at odds with the Vatican over maintaining some degree of autonomy." *Ibid.*, 8.





**Figure 1** Components of the Roman Catholic Church's Context

### 1. The Power of Roman Catholicism: History and Society

This variable has been derived from the cultural aspect of political opportunity, which describes “political-cultural or symbolic opportunities that determine what kind of ideas become visible for the public, resonate with public opinion and are held to be ‘legitimate’ by the audience.”<sup>9</sup> As a religious institution, the Church holds a special relationship with its parishioners and the surrounding society that is defined by spiritual beliefs and the Church’s doctrine. Society’s level of openness to the Church will be measured by adherence to the Catholic faith, participation in religious practice, trust in the

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<sup>9</sup> Kriesi, 72.

Church, and approval of a Church political role. These measures are qualitatively examined and compared to determine society's level of openness. If the Church sustains support in society, then its views are likely to be granted legitimacy, meaning that society would be more open to the Church's opinions on issues and its political participation.

Additionally, because of the influence of history on the construction of symbolism and the Church's relationship with society, the Church's history in each country is also important. It is this history which feeds into national associations with Roman Catholicism. For the Roman Catholic Church, the two major historical eras that are important for the construction of nationalistic histories and associations stretch, first, from the beginning of Roman Catholicism up to World War II and, second, through the communist period up to democratization. The use of the Church institution, symbols, and religion to manufacture a nationalism with either a strong or a weak association with Roman Catholicism is strongly dependent on this history.

## 2. Political Parties

Since political party actors and electors have acquired roughly 15 years of experience in developing strategies for electoral contests and choosing among party choices, respectively, it is assumed that both have gained knowledge about the practice of democratic politics. This is similar to the concept of democratic assimilation advanced by Kitschelt et al., which is characterized by "a non-equilibrium process of learning in which political actors employ resources, legacies, and new institutional rules to explore particular

patterns of democratic political interaction.”<sup>10</sup> Therefore, this analysis examines shifts in the number of parties, the composition of party programs, changes in leadership, and different electoral results to arrive at an assessment of the prevailing patterns of political party interaction and major political cleavage structure, as they relate to political parties. This is connected to Kriesi’s conception of “protagonists, antagonists, and bystanders - that is, the configuration of allies (policymakers, public authorities, political parties, interest groups, the media, related movements), the adversaries (public authorities, repressive agents, countermovements) and the not directly involved, but nevertheless attentive audience . . . ”<sup>11</sup> In this case, the focus is on political parties as allies, enemies, and neutrals, as well as other significant political actors which act either for or against the Church.

### 3. Electoral Politics

This variable augments the political party variable in that elections initially determine which parties have power in the Parliamentary process. According to Kriesi, “proportional electoral systems are more easily accessible for emerging political actors than

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<sup>10</sup> This concept is utilized in Kitschelt et al.’s comparative study of the development of party systems in four postcommunist states: Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, and the Czech Republic. It arises from the understanding that institution-building is not the only factor which shapes the development of a party system; political actors also “need sufficient chances to play the game repeatedly before their conduct may be accounted for by equilibrium models.” Herbert Kitschelt, Zdenka Mansfeldova, Radoslaw Markowski, and Gábor Tóka, *Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Cooperation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 12.

<sup>11</sup> Kriesi, 74.

majoritarian or plurality systems.”<sup>12</sup> The Church does not exactly qualify as an “emerging” actor and is thus not as likely to be affected by this phenomenon. As a political actor which can form its own political parties or support chosen political parties, the Church is affected by both the negatives and positives associated with the degree of proportionality in the system. This variable indicates how the particular structure of the electoral process and the consequences of that process affect the Church’s ability to achieve influence. Regardless, a democratic political order provides the Church with “far less certainty that its teachings will be promoted actively in the political order; electoral politics, in fact, may well yield antithetical policies.”<sup>13</sup>

#### 4. Government Dynamics

After elections are completed, parties must attempt to form a governing coalition within the legislature. According to Kriesi, the dynamics of coalition formation are such that “[h]ighly disciplined, single-party government . . . provides limited access and strong capacity to act, whereas multiparty coalitions made up of undisciplined parties . . . are likely to provide multiple access points and to have a limited capacity to act.”<sup>14</sup> In addition, political cleavages, discussed previously, also have an effect on the possibilities for party cooperation in the legislature, especially in these countries, where specific divisions, based upon the past, still exist. Third, the power relationships between the executive and the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel Philpott, “The Catholic Wave,” *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 2 (2004): 44.

<sup>14</sup> Kriesi, 70-71.

legislature are also important.<sup>15</sup> Fourth, the number of levels of government, extending from the national level, affects how interests can influence the political process.<sup>16</sup> This means that in countries with many levels of government, political interests may be able to gain influence more readily.

#### 5. Legal and Constitutional Dimensions

This variable is one of the most stable and enduring in the Church's context. It follows from the idea that the constitution sets up the nature of relations between Church and state, beginning with the degree of separation between the two and ending with restrictions on specific policies and activities which concern the Church. The presence or absence of legal statutes, which further define relations between the Church and the state, also indicate the degree to which the state is open to the Church's influence. Since social movement literature concerns political outsiders to a greater extent than an embedded interest group, the legal and constitutional context is not explicitly mentioned, but it can follow from the idea that the structure of the country's political institutions is important, simply because legal and constitutional measures set up that system and define its components. The measurement of the Church's context in this area will consider portions of the state Constitution which specify the nature of relations between religion and the state and regulate moral issues that are of concern to the Church. In addition, the degree to

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<sup>15</sup> Although Kriesi also includes the judiciary in his conception, it is not included in this instance, simply because it widens the scope of the analysis to an unnecessary degree. *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

which legal statutes regulating the activity of religious organizations provide the Church with an advantage over other groups, as well as the separate negotiation of agreements between the Church and the state, is considered as part of the degree of political openness to the Church.

#### 6. Transnational Dimensions

Many of the former Communist countries of east-central Europe, including Poland and Slovenia, have joined international institutions as they have proceeded through the process of political and economic change. These institutions impose a set of rules for membership, becoming more stringent as the degree of integration among the members of the institution increases.<sup>17</sup> The two countries considered in this analysis have recently joined the EU. Because of the integrative economic and political structure of the organization, as well as the specific demands placed upon member states to conform to a specific set of norms, the political context is considerably altered. This can, in turn affect the state's ability to implement specific policies, which do not conform with these norms, or increase the implementation of specific policies, which conform to the EU's norms, but not necessarily the country's. Membership in this institution is considered as it guides the policies which the state can implement and how this affects the Church's potential for realizing political influence. In addition, it also introduces a greater degree of economic, political, and social influx from the West, which is sometimes considered to be a danger to

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<sup>17</sup> Meyer, "Political Opportunity and Nested Institutions," 23.

the Church's political goals, mainly because the West is associated with the tendency toward secularization of the state.<sup>18</sup>

*Specifying the Nature of the Political Context*

Rather than describing the context, and hence the POS, to be open or closed to the Church over a specific period of time, the relative degree of openness or closure will be considered instead. This is because the context consists of both unstable elements, which are present for a relatively short period of time, and more durable and stable elements, which are present for a relatively long period of time. Therefore, the degree of openness or closure of the context to the Church, in each country, will have a base of reference at the time at which the major political transformation occurred, when the system presented a more obvious level of political opportunity; as each political system consolidated, more durable patterns of political interaction replaced those which were present at the outset, making the process of relating context directly to political influence more complex.

The Utility of Comparative Analysis

The situation of the Polish Roman Catholic Church could stand alone as a single case analysis, intended to illustrate the contextual variables which shape the Church's political position in that particular country; however, it is more instructive to compare the Polish situation to another country which shares some similar features. Comparison is valuable as a mechanism of discovering whether commonalities between different states

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<sup>18</sup> In this instance, secularization refers to a "process by which religious and secular institutions and norms are differentiated into separate spheres." Aminzade and Perry, 156.

lead to similar conclusions about the operation of the Church in those states. It is also valuable to contrast the situations between the two states to discover the reasons for the disparity between the two situations. Finally, it is instructive as to where to place the Church in both Poland and Slovenia, along the continuum that describes the degree of political opportunity for each Church. At its completion, the comparison reveals the contextual variables which have been most influential in conditioning the role of the Roman Catholic Church in these two post-Communist societies.

*Slovenia as a Comparative Model*

One appropriate case for comparison with the Roman Catholic Church's position in Poland is that of the Church in Slovenia. These two situations are suited to comparative analysis for a number of reasons: the predominance of the Roman Catholic faith, systemic transformation, political circumstance, and economic performance.

The religious composition of society in each country is similar; Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion. One of the latest publications about the Catholic Church shows that both Poland and Slovenia are predominantly Roman Catholic: Roman Catholics comprise 96 percent of the population in Poland and 82.6 percent in Slovenia.<sup>19</sup> Although the size of the population differs somewhat between the two countries, this is not an insurmountable problem because the analysis is based on the traditional dominance of each Church rather than the actual size of the Roman Catholic population.

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<sup>19</sup> Bunson, 322; 326.



The profound wave of democratic reform that swept across the Soviet Union and the Communist states of east-central Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s propelled both Poland and Slovenia into a profound systemic transformation. Poland entered its transition from Communist to democratic politics in 1989 after the negotiated settlement of the Round Table. Slovenia arrived at this point at a later time, after it ultimately negotiated its way out of Yugoslavia in 1991, but the change was no less profound. The circumstances of these transitions are strikingly similar, yet remarkably different. Poland, hitherto defined as an independent state within Soviet-controlled eastern Europe, was already structured to function as an independent state. However, Slovenia faced a dual transition from the last vestiges of Tito's Socialist dictatorship, inherited in the fractious Yugoslav federation, to a democratic, independent state. Since the Slovenian state had been designed to function within a federation rather than as an independent state, its transition was wrought with the challenges of extrication from a larger political system and construction of a democratic polity. The complexity of Slovenia's situation as compared to Poland's in the post-Communist era challenges the compatibility of the two cases. Nevertheless, a comparison is still feasible because of the similarity between the path that each country has followed. Despite Poland's previous status as an independent state, it was necessary to enact massive reform of political and economic structures in the country and to establish normal connections to the international community. Post-independence Slovenian politics have been consumed with analogous tasks. Each country has attempted to establish a fully functional democratic system, western-style economic model, and ties to

international institutions. Also, both countries have gained acceptance in the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in recent years, signifying their integration into the larger western community of states. It is this resemblance between the two cases which allows for a comparison between the Roman Catholic Church's context in each country.

Aside from the broad goals of the reform process and similarity of each nation's path, the political development of each country shares similarities that lend credence to the comparison. Assessments of each country's progress in the reform process are consistently higher than those in neighbouring countries of this region. The latest *Nations in Transit*, a publication that provides an assessment of democratic reform in the former Soviet Union and other formerly Communist states,<sup>20</sup> shows the consistency of democratic advancement in each state. Between 1997 and 2004 the quantitative values which assess democratic development have either held steady or continued to show improvement for each state, with both achieving a score of 1.75 in 2004, which places them into the highest strata of states in this region, those achieving impending EU membership.<sup>21</sup> These scores qualify

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<sup>20</sup> Alexander Motyl and Amanda Schnitzer, eds., *Nations in Transit 2004* (New York, Washington, D.C.: Freedom House; Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004), ix.

<sup>21</sup> This score is placed on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 indicating the highest level of improvement and 7 indicating the lowest level of improvement. The "New Democracy Score" is based upon the numerical conglomeration of six factors: electoral process, civil society, independent media, governance, constitutional, legislative, and judicial framework, and corruption. These numbers are generated by a qualitative analysis of each factor, accompanied by a common checklist of questions, and are conducted by the authors and experts on the region. Assessments of change are then assigned a numerical value which is based on the degree of change on that variable since the last report. A detailed description of the method is given in the "Methodology" section of the publication. Ibid., ix - xvii; 26; 420; 560.

both states for the status of consolidated democracy, which is associated with “[c]xistence of best practices that adhere to basic human rights standards, democratic norms, and the rule of law.”<sup>22</sup> Therefore, since each state is at a similar, but not identical, stage of development, the internal and external variables which affect the Church’s context are more comparable.

### *Data Collection*

Data was collected from a mix of primary and secondary sources, which were available from Memorial University’s Queen Elizabeth II Library, the Interlibrary Loan Service, and numerous electronic sources.

Primary sources of Polish data included statistical information from the Polish polling agency, CBOS,<sup>23</sup> the *Polish General Social Survey*,<sup>24</sup> and the *World Values Survey*.<sup>25</sup> Slovene statistical sources were more numerous and readily accessible through the Social Sciences Data Archive (*Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov*), organized by the University of Ljubljana. Comparative data for both countries was available through a statistical data archive at a German university, which provided the full codebook of the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., xvii.

<sup>23</sup> This abbreviation stands for *Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej* [*Public Opinion Research Center*], which makes the results of its public opinion polls available electronically at <http://www.cbos.pl>

<sup>24</sup> This is a comprehensive survey conducted each year, between 1992 and 1999, which assesses hundreds of variables related to Polish social identity, religious attitudes, and religious practice. Unfortunately, only the 1992 to 1994 data is available for unrestricted access. The remaining data is compiled in a prohibitively expensive publication.

<sup>25</sup> Most of the *World Values Survey* data for Poland is accessible through the Memorial University library, although recent years may prove to be inaccessible.

International Social Survey Programme studies of religion in a number of countries around the world in 1991 and 1998. These sources of data provided a method of measuring society's openness to Church participation in politics. Information compiled by both the Polish government and the Roman Catholic Church provided basic statistics about religious affiliation and the structure of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>26</sup> Comparable longitudinal data, which was derived from these primary sources, was analyzed qualitatively because it lacked the detail necessary for quantitative methods. Other primary sources included the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (1997) and the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia (1991), which outlined the constitutional position of the Church in each country. Polish and Slovenian news agencies<sup>27</sup> also served as a source of information about recent political events, particularly the 2005 elections in Poland.

One particularly challenging phase of the analysis involved the translation of statistical data that was necessary for an explanation of the societal context in both countries. Many documents were only available in their native language and required translation into English; a time-consuming exercise that required the acquisition of additional resources, such as dictionaries and grammar references of the Polish and Slovene

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<sup>26</sup> The information provided by the annual statistical publication of the Polish government is derived from the latest census in 2001. Unfortunately, a significant proportion of the government's data, which concerns religion and the Church, is provided by the Roman Catholic Church, rather than a disinterested observer.

<sup>27</sup> This includes electronic news sources which are published on the internet. Since the reliability of internet sources is unpredictable, Polish sources will be confined to reputable news agencies such as the *Warsaw Voice* and a few others which publish in the English language. In addition, the availability of English-language Slovenian news sources was limited and thus, input from these sources is limited in the Slovenian section of the analysis.

languages.<sup>28</sup>

Unfortunately, some of the gaps in the data for each country could not be filled due to financial, time, and language limitations. Certain comprehensive studies, especially those related to Poland, were either unavailable or prohibitively expensive. This was the case for Polish General Social Survey data from 1995 onwards. However, many sources of data, sometimes drawn from secondary sources, have been used to fill the gaps.

Secondary research sources, including books, scholarly articles, and conference papers, drawn from a wide range of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities, served as the principal supporting evidence for this thesis.<sup>29</sup> The arguments and evidence contained in each of these sources were critically assessed to determine the current level of knowledge about the topic, as well as to delineate trends and gaps. In addition, significant theoretical connections were extracted for further analysis in this thesis. Finally, many of the sources were also used to support the arguments in this thesis because these works presented information on the topic that could not be feasibly gained in any other manner.

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<sup>28</sup> Since I completed a B.A. with a major in Russian Language and Literature, I was able to use my familiarity of Slavic languages to perform basic translations using these sources.

<sup>29</sup> A preponderance of these sources are drawn from scholarly publications. Most of the books are written by academics with a clearly stated institutional affiliation or a notable reputation in their area of study. The scholarly journals are dominated by reputable publications: *Religion, State, & Society*, *Social Compass*, *Sociology of Religion*, *Sociological Analysis*, *American Sociological Review*, *Social Forces*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, *Slavic Review*, *East European Constitutional Review*, and *East European Politics and Societies*. Publications such as *Religion in Eastern Europe*, *East European Quarterly*, and *Polish Sociological Review* may have standards which are less rigorous than some of the other journals, but the information which they provide is valuable nonetheless. Finally, conference papers, most of which were available from online academic societies, are also included.

*Organization of the Analysis*

The first section of the analysis concentrates on developments in the Polish and Slovene Church's historical and social context to gauge and compare the power of Roman Catholicism in the construction of political opportunity in each case. Next, the analysis moves on to consider and compare the role of political parties in creating political opportunities for each national Church. As an extension of the pivotal role of political parties in democratic politics, the next section looks at how the structure of the electoral process and the electoral fortunes of various parties in each country affect the Church's political opportunity structure. The fourth section furthers this analysis by looking at and comparing government dynamics, specifically how the necessity of coalition governing has affected the political opportunities available to each Church. The importance of legal and constitutional opportunities and constraints on each national Church merits the devotion of the fifth section to a comparative examination of how these factors affect the political opportunity structure over both the short- and the long-term. Finally, the transnational forces which press upon the state, specifically the EU and other western institutions, and shape its policy choices, are compared in terms of the limits or enhancements that they impose on the political opportunity structure and the Church's ability to influence the development of the state.

Whether the Church was able to make use of the contextual variables which formed the structure of opportunity with which it was presented was not the focus of this analysis. Rather, the analysis focused on how each component of the context, over general periods

of time, affected the degree of political manoeuvrability available to the Church, regardless of whether or not the Church was able to take advantage of the opportunities with which it was presented. This was used to explain why the Roman Catholic Church in each of Poland and Slovenia has experienced variable opportunities and outcomes over the post-communist period, as well as the differences between the Church's political role in each context.

### *Summary*

Utilizing a framework which is based upon the Roman Catholic Church's status as an interest group, as well as an adaptation of the theory of political opportunity structure (POS), this study seeks to explain how fluctuating contextual features affected the political options available to the Church in post-Communist Poland and Slovenia. These options reflect the relative openness or closure of the system to the Church's political influence and thereby determine what the Church was able to accomplish politically. A variety of primary and secondary sources were used to accomplish this task. The end result will provide a comparative explanation of how political opportunity structure affects the Church's political activity and suggest further lines of inquiry.

CHAPTER 4  
THE POLISH AND SLOVENE CHURCHES:  
CONFRONTING A NEW SOCIETY

At the beginning of the 1990s, the Polish Roman Catholic Church was poised to play a leading role in the subsequent development of the democratic regime and an emancipated society. It held this position, certain that it faced a political opportunity structure that opened many avenues of political influence. However, Polish democracy unleashed a set of forces that consistently challenged the Church's right to wield political power, such that, as the decade progressed, the Church's political power was eroded from the peak it had reached in the early 1990s. Essentially, the Church stabilized around a new status quo position, never facing a political opportunity structure that was as open as it had been during the transition, nor as closed as it had been at various points during its history.

The Slovene Roman Catholic Church faced a different situation in the early 1990s: the political and social context created a political opportunity structure that placed the Church into a subordinate position in the development of Slovene democracy and society. The general perception across east-central Europe that religious institutions, particularly the Roman Catholic Church, had played some role in democratic political change accorded the Church some respect and a symbolic role, but little concrete political power. The Church maintained this low level of power, attaining few concessions from either state or society, until 1999, when the Church made some small gains. This trend continued and, by 2005, the Church had reached a higher level of political power than it had enjoyed during



all of the preceding decade. However, these gains are modest compared to those of the Polish Church and the Slovene Church continues to face a political opportunity structure that provides fewer openings into the political arena. Thus, for both Churches, the dynamic interaction between history, society, political parties, electoral politics, government, legal and constitutional structures, and transnational priorities, profoundly influenced the political opportunity structure and hence, the relative openness of each country's system to Church influence.

### *The Power of Roman Catholicism*

The scale of political change and evolution over the last two decades has had far-reaching consequences for Polish and Slovene society. The inundation of new liberal, democratic, and western values has reinforced, even amplified, some preexisting features, and weakened others. Each society's assimilation of these values has altered the Church's context; much as ripples spread across a pond, society's views of the Church ripple across the democratic political landscape. Notable differences are apparent in each Church's histories that have resulted in markedly contrasting nationalistic constructions such that Polish national identity traditionally revolves around the Church, while Slovene national identity revolves around language and culture, subordinating the Church to a less prominent role. These historical features, combined with societies that present remarkably different religious tendencies, but similar hostilities toward Church interference in political processes and issue-oriented politics, create a different set of opportunities and constraints for the Church in each country.

*History in the Construction of National Identity*

Roman Catholicism Through History up to the Communist Period

Poland's tumultuous history, characterized by a succession of foreign invasions and territorial partitions, serves as a definitive element in the formation of Polish identity.<sup>1</sup> Since these invaders often adhered to different religious traditions, Poles defined their nationality such that it would separate them from these rulers according to religious identity.<sup>2</sup> Since a majority of Poles practised Roman Catholicism, it was natural that this faith would form a nationalistic connection to Polish identity. World War II, which was accompanied by ethnic and territorial modifications, along with the circumstances of the Communist period, amplified the association between Polishness and Roman Catholicism.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, "[t]he Catholic narrative of Polish history is far more than a recognition that Roman Catholicism was and is important in Poland: it is an ideologically-loaded conceptual framework that gives specific meaning to the past and helps determine what is remembered and what is forgotten."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the Catholic Church is often assigned a heroic role during periods of foreign domination, regardless of its status as the lone institution available to

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<sup>1</sup>Ewa Nowicka, "Roman Catholicism and the Contents of Polishness," in *New Religious Phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Grzegorz Babiński (Kraków: Nomos, 1997), 91-92; Irena Borowik, "Transformations of Catholicism and Religiosity of Catholics in Poland," in *Religions, Churches, and the Scientific Studies of Religion: Poland and Ukraine*, ed. Irena Borowik (Kraków: NOMOS, 2003), 42.

<sup>2</sup> Nowicka, 91. Borowik, "Transformations of Catholicism in Poland," 42.

<sup>3</sup> Brian Porter "The Catholic Nation: Religion, Identity, and the Narratives of Polish History," *Slavic and East European Journal* 45, no.2 (2001): 292; Nowicka, 92.

<sup>4</sup> Porter, 291.

Poles or its cooperation with foreign powers.<sup>5</sup> Further, the Church promotes historical events which reinforce this association and downplays those which detract from it.<sup>6</sup> For instance, the significant presence of Protestant, Jewish, and Orthodox religious faiths during Poland's history is de-emphasized in favour of Catholic prominence.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the common interpretation of the Church's presence in Poland's history promotes the idea that Poland is a Roman Catholic nation. Although this idea is based on the past, it has implications for the Church, even in the present. It has been interwoven into Poland's political culture over hundreds of years and provides the Church with a justification for its continued presence in Polish politics. Also, this association with national identity can be exploited in situations that revolve around the differentiation of Polishness relative to other nationalities.

The evolution of the Roman Catholic Church over its one thousand years in Slovenia was uneven and lacked the same dominant character of the Church's evolution in Poland. During the Reformation, Protestantism assumed a seminal role in the development of Slovene language and culture with the transcription of the first Slovene-language Bible.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 294-295.

<sup>6</sup> Elżbieta Mach and Zdzisław Mach, "Religious Minorities and Exclusion in Education in Present-Day Poland," in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Irena Borowik (Kraków: Nomos, 1999), 405.

<sup>7</sup> Porter, 291-293.

<sup>8</sup> Mitja Velikonja, "Historical Roots of Slovenian Christoslavic Mythology,"; Jože Pogačnik, "The Cultural Significance of the Protestant Reformation in the Genesis of the South Slavic Nations," *Slovene Studies* 6, no. 1-2 (1984): 103-105, 107-108.

Protestantism also provided the Slovene people with an alternate identity and a different set of beliefs, which ran counter to those of the Church. However, the Church recreated its monopoly during the Counter-Reformation and subsequently assumed a prominent role in political life, using the idea of Catholic integrism as a justification for its dominance.<sup>9</sup> This situation, which lasted until World War II, entailed a substantial amount of political activity which was intended to preserve the Church's influence over the Slovene people.<sup>10</sup> During World War II, the Church made a costly choice, which effectively dissociated the Church from Slovene culture and initiated a culture of distrust around the Church's motives and activities within society. It chose to ally with the occupying forces against the Communist-backed Partisan forces, which were supported by a majority of the Slovene people.<sup>11</sup> The decision continues to mar the Church's reputation, even in the present. As a result, the Church's historical development in Slovenia does not lend credence to a nationalistic association between Slovene identity and Roman Catholicism and the Church's historical position in Slovenia is generally much weaker than it is in Poland. Thus, the Church lacks a nationalistic base from which to justify its political involvement and cannot use this association to exploit situations that require a differentiation of Sloveneness from another nationality; Slovenes have their language and culture to differentiate themselves from

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<sup>9</sup> Velikonja, "Historical Roots of Slovenian Christoslavic Mythology."

<sup>10</sup> Velikonja, "Historical Roots of Slovenian Christoslavic Mythology"; Zdenko Roter, "The Church and Contemporary Slovene History," *Nationalities Papers* 21, no. 1-2 (1993): 71, 74.

<sup>11</sup> Velikonja; Roter, 74.

others.

### The Politics of Resistance and Change: Fomented by the Church or Leaving the Church Behind?

The Communist period, from 1945 to 1989, merits special attention because the events of this time had a direct effect on the political opportunity structure at the start of the democratic political transition and added to the Church's historical association with nationalism. During this time, the Polish Church managed to assume a position between state and society which enhanced its standing among the Polish people and forced the Communists to take the Church seriously as a powerful contender. Communist attempts to diminish the Church's role forced the Church to take political action and unite with Polish society against Communist rule.<sup>12</sup> For this cause, the Church utilized its ties to the Polish nation to capture the grievances of the populace in a religious-nationalistic frame<sup>13</sup> that could be also be described as a civil religion,<sup>14</sup> which was imbued with Catholic symbols,

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<sup>12</sup> Sabrina P. Ramet, *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 99-102

<sup>13</sup> Osa analyzes the Church's use of religious nationalism to fight the Communist state in terms of emphasizing a Catholic Poland versus foreign Communists framing of the situation. Maryjane Osa, "Creating Solidarity, "The Religious Foundations of the Polish Social Movement," *East European Politics and Societies* 11, no. 2 (1997): 352-354.

<sup>14</sup> Morawska utilizes the concept of civil religion, defined as "a set of religiopolitical symbols and rituals . . . [which] address issues of political ethos and legitimacy that are not fused with either the state or church." Ewa Morawska, "Civil Religion Versus State Power in Poland," in *Church-State Relations: Tensions and Transitions*, eds. Thomas Robbins and Roland Robertson (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Inc., 1987), 222.

romanticism, and nationalism.<sup>15</sup> Poland was elevated to martyrdom, destined to share the suffering of Christ, and to seek redemption from its oppression by collectively serving Christianity and opposing the atheistic communist state.<sup>16</sup> This transfer of Church ideas and symbols to the public, political sphere allowed the Church to represent the entirety of Polish society, even if some members of that society did not have strong ties to Roman Catholicism. In this way, the events of the Communist period strengthened the nationalistic association between Roman Catholicism and Polish identity. The Church was also pivotal in the formation of networks and the development of repertoires for the opposition.<sup>17</sup> In particular, the foremost opposition organization in Poland, Solidarity, derived many of the symbols for its struggle from the Roman Catholic faith.<sup>18</sup> The culmination of the Church's role during this period came at the Round Table negotiations of 1989, when the Church served as a third party at the table, balancing between the delegates from Solidarity, determined to reform the regime, and the Communists, reluctant to give up their power in

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<sup>15</sup> Morawska, "Civil Religion Versus State Power in Poland," 224-225; Osa, "Creating Solidarity: The Religious Foundations of the Polish Social Movement," 352-354.

<sup>16</sup> Morawska, "Civil Religion Versus State Power in Poland," 224-229.

<sup>17</sup> For a detailed discussion of the Church's importance in the formation of networks, see Osa (2003). For Church's importance to repertoire (and frame) development see Osa (1997). Maryjane Osa, "Networks in Opposition: Linking Organizations Through Activists in the Polish People's Republic," in *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, eds. Mario Diani and Doug McAdam (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 87-100; Osa, "Creating Solidarity: The Religious Foundations of the Polish Social Movement," 351-359.

<sup>18</sup> Jan Kubik, *The Power of Symbols Against the Symbols of Power: The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of State Socialism in Poland* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 145, 189, 228, 252-254.

the reform process. Throughout the Communist period, the Church had successfully manoeuvred around the state and the opposition movement, carefully choosing issues over which it would agree to or oppose with either the state or the opposition.<sup>19</sup> However, this calculative behaviour did not tarnish its reputation with society. In addition, the state's recognition of the Church's clout prompted the authorities to occasionally court the Church's favour in order to maintain a modicum of control over the Polish people.<sup>20</sup> The Church was able to make itself so indispensable to the legitimation of the system that its presence was required to validate the process of change. As a result, the Church became a viable and powerful 'third-way' in the new system and was unfettered by some of the legacies which haunted the two antagonists; it was a known, relatively virtuous representative held against a background of the distrusted and the unknown. As Poland's champion against the Communist state, the Church could also arouse powerful memories of resistance against an unwanted regime, a further legitimation of its usefulness in the political arena. It was in this powerful position that the Roman Catholic Church emerged from the old Communist regime into the new, democratic system.

In Slovenia, the Church's development during the Communist period reflects its marginalization by the Communist authorities and the Church's retreat to nonpublic life. During the early portion of the Communist period, the Church was in a state of flux; its actions were focused on avoiding Communist persecution, restructuring from within, and

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<sup>19</sup> Herbert, 206.

<sup>20</sup> Diskin, 206.

finding a place in Slovenes' private religious lives.<sup>21</sup> From 1953 onwards, legal provisions guaranteed the Church's existence and the intensity of government persecution declined.<sup>22</sup> However, this did not enhance the Church's ability to move from the political margins and organize an effective opposition to the state. The first indications of organizing around the goal of democratic reform came from alternative groups during the 1970s: punk, environmentalist, human rights, and gay subculture. The members of these organizations were involved in lifestyles or causes that were atypical in Slovene society and not aligned with the Church's teachings, so it is not astonishing that the Church was not involved in these early manifestations of opposition to the regime. During the 1980s, this modest beginning, "conceived as an alternative rather than an opposition,"<sup>23</sup> crystallized into a large-scale collaborative effort, led by the dissident journals *Nova Revija* and *Mladlina*, which was united around democratic reform of the system and, ultimately, against Yugoslav attempts to gain control over the federation.<sup>24</sup> The repressive activities of the central Yugoslav government, which appeared to threaten Slovenia's democratic reform process, allowed for a coupling between democratic concepts and Yugoslav separatism; it

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<sup>21</sup> Velikonja, "Historical Roots of Slovenian Christoslavic Mythology"; France M. Dolinar, "Normalization of Church-State Relations in Yugoslavia, 1945-," *Slovene Studies* 17, no. 1-2 (1995): 27-35; Roter, 71.

<sup>22</sup> Dolinar, 28-30.

<sup>23</sup> Tomaž Mastnak, "Civil Society in Slovenia: From Opposition to Power," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 23, no. 3/4 (1990): 305.

<sup>24</sup> Tatiana Bajuk Senčar, "The Making of History: Discourses of Democracy and Nation in Slovenia," *Slovene Studies* 22, no. 1 (2000): 39-41, 47-50, 57; Erika Harris, *Nationalism and Democratisation: Politics of Slovakia and Slovenia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 157-158.



became increasingly apparent that democratic government could only be realized in Slovenia through sovereignty from the Yugoslav state.<sup>25</sup> An umbrella organization, known as the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR), served as the common voice for the political demands of civil society,<sup>26</sup> but the Church did not join this large-scale effort; rather it formed its own organization, the Commission for Justice and Peace, in 1985, and signed a joint document with the CDHR in 1988 that called for democratic reform of the system.<sup>27</sup> The Catholic organization was somewhat aloof from the media and other civil society organizations, but it explicitly supported action on human rights issues and “encouraged Catholics to participate in peaceful efforts at social change based on humanitarian motives.”<sup>28</sup> In addition, the Church utilized its spiritual resources to hold mass prayers and meditations.<sup>29</sup> However, despite these efforts, the Church’s activities were eclipsed by dominant civil society organizations,<sup>30</sup> which played a much larger role in the initiation of demands for systemic reform.

The Church was destined to play a peripheral role in the systemic transformation not only because of the strength and prominence of civil society organizations, but also

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<sup>25</sup> Harris, 156-158.

<sup>26</sup> Mastnak, 312.

<sup>27</sup> Senčar, 51-52.

<sup>28</sup> Senčar, 51-52.

<sup>29</sup> Senčar, 55.

<sup>30</sup> Velikonja, “Historical Roots of Slovenian Christoslavic Mythology.”

because of one further development that occurred during the late 1980s. As the Yugoslav political structure became increasingly strained by its nationalist components, Slovenia's Communists were forced to choose between Yugoslav and Slovene interests, resulting in a critical choice to align with Slovene reformers and initiate democratic reform.<sup>31</sup> In effect, the democratic transformation became a union between civil society, the League of Socialist Youth (LSY), and the Slovenian League of Communists.<sup>32</sup> Civil society's eventual political alliance with the governing Communists further confined the Church. The Church shared a historical antipathy with the Communists that could not be easily surmounted, even in the pursuit of a common cause. As a result, the alliance between civil society organizations and the Communists blocked the Church from assuming a leading role in the change. Moreover, the degree of polarization between elites was minimal, eliminating any opportunity to align with a particular side to attain political power. This meant that the Church's approval and activity were unnecessary to the legitimization of either the Communists or civil society, who had arrived at their own shared understanding of the essential priorities and tasks for the transformation. Essentially, the politics of systemic change left the Church behind. Since the Church failed to play a prominent role in the reform process, nor was it part of the established political elite, it was in a relatively

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<sup>31</sup> Janko Prunk, "The Origins of an Independent Slovenia," in *Making a New Nation: The Formation of Slovenia*, eds. Danica Fink-Hafner and John Robbins (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1997), 27-28; Charles Bukowski, "Slovenia's Transition to Democracy: Theory and Practice," *East European Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (1999): 74-81; Senčar, 58; Harris 134.

<sup>32</sup> Harris, 134; Bukowski, 73-74; Anton Bebler, "Slovenia's Smooth Transition," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 127-129.

weak position at the end of the Communist period. This contrasts sharply with the Church's position of political and social power in Poland at the same stage of development. Thus, when the political transformation officially started in both countries - that is, when each country's Communist Party lost its monopoly on power - each Church carried a different load of historical baggage from both the distant and recent past. This legacy provided a much lighter load for the Polish Church because it could draw upon recent, positive memories of the Church. In contrast, the Slovene Church carried a much heavier burden from recent memories of its activities: a legacy of betrayal and a marginal role in an era of popular change. In this way, the historical legacy acted as a negative influence on the Church's context in transitional Slovenia. Partly because of this legacy, fewer openings were available to the Church to gain a foothold in the political decision-making processes of the new polity; the Church was largely confined to a symbolic role commensurate with its domination of the religious sphere.

### *Society*

Polish and Slovene society have experienced one of the most rapid and sweeping periods of change in their recent history, as the ideology underlying these polities has been replaced by a completely different one, carrying along with it broad changes in economics, politics, and society. As a religious institution, the Church is particularly vulnerable to the whims of a changing society because its parishioners are drawn from that society. If society, synonymous with the voting public in a democracy, embraces ideas and practices which are not consistent with continued religious beliefs or, more specifically, Catholic

beliefs and practices, the Church loses the power of common religious belief which bonds people to the Church. The Church's survival comes into question without as many Catholics to worship at its churches and to contribute resources to its cause. Just as important, as time goes on, the reasons behind the Church's political involvement become less relevant. The Polish Church, particularly vulnerable because of its traditionally strong links with society, has faced a society that has noticeably changed its position toward the Church over the post-Communist period, becoming less open to the Church's political involvement. Although the Church in Slovenia is similarly vulnerable to the consequences of a declining link with society, its much weaker connection with Slovene society means that the Slovene Church has much less to lose than the Polish Church; it is accustomed to facing a society that has been consistently obstructive toward its political involvement.

### The Church's Religious Dominance

#### *Poland: Roman Catholic Society*

Measures of religious adherence indicate that the Church remains a dominant force in Polish society. Public opinion surveys from different points during the 1990s and up to 2005 demonstrate the continuation of Roman Catholicism's nearly exclusive status, with the proportion of Poles declaring themselves to be Roman Catholic varying between 94 percent and 97 percent. The latest census data from the Polish government indicates that the proportion of Roman Catholics in Poland is actually lower, lying close to 90 percent.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> The Roman Catholic Church has a total of 34,312,707 adherents out of a population of 38,230,000, which, when calculated into a raw percentage is 89.75 percent. Central Statistical Office, "TABL. 35 (151). Selected Religious Denominations in Poland: End of Year," *Statistical Yearbook of the*

However, the Church disputes this figure, placing it at 96 percent.<sup>34</sup> Although there is a small discrepancy between each source, it does not detract from the overwhelming adherence to the Church in Poland; levels of membership in the Church appear to have remained relatively steady over the last 15 years. These overwhelming declarations of adherence to Roman Catholicism coincide with high levels of belief in God (see figure 2), as well as in self-described religiousness (see figure 3). Proportions of the religious and the nonreligious stayed the same over the 1990s, showing only minuscule changes between levels of belief. In addition, regular attendance at Church services is still impressively high, despite a slight shift toward less frequent attendance over time.<sup>35</sup> Conversely, other figures suggest a greater decline in belief and practice over the same time period.<sup>36</sup> This

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*Republic of Poland 2003* (Warsaw: Statistical Publishing Establishment, Republic of Poland, 2003), 128; Central Statistical Office, "TABL. 1 (117). Population Based on Census Data," *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Poland 2003* (Warsaw: Statistical Publishing Establishment, Republic of Poland, 2003), 104.

<sup>34</sup> Bunson, 322.

<sup>35</sup> More than once a week attendance at Church services dropped by nearly 20 percent between 1991 and 1998, while attendance 2 to 3 times a month and several times a year increased by a corresponding percentage. Regular church attendance (once a month or more) still slightly above 70 percent in 1998, while it was 75 percent in 1991. This data was modified to reflect the drop of several choices from the 1998 questionnaire that were present in the 1991 questionnaire; many of the categories which were dropped were low or no response categories in the 1991 survey and readily fit into the categories adopted for the 1998 survey. International Social Survey Programme, "V65.R often attend religious services?" *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online], 85-87; retrieved from Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005 (N=1063); International Social Survey Programme, "V218.R: Religious services - how often," *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online], 182-183; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005 (N=1147).

<sup>36</sup> Evaluations of religious belief and practice from the early 1990s, showed a much higher level of belief and attendance than in 1999. Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), "Religiousness of Poles,"

discrepancy between the data from the early post-Communist period and recent years represents a change in degree over magnitude. Poles are still believers in and practitioners of Roman Catholicism, just at a marginally lower level within the highest range - that is, at the extreme of religious belief and practice - especially when compared to other contexts.<sup>37</sup> Further, recent polling data shows that nearly half of Poles feel "very close" or "close" ties to their church. Although most of the remainder feels a "loose" connection with the Church, only a small number feel "no ties" to their church.<sup>38</sup> The Church's relationship with its parishioners at the local (parish) level shows a similar trend. As table 1 indicates, most respondents possess a discernable, steady attachment to their local parish; this has persisted into the present. The Church's domination of Polish religious society, along with Poles' continuing attachment to the Church, provides the Church with a consistent opportunity to pursue political influence. This is because the connection provided by a common religious faith becomes a resource of shared history and values that is available to the Church during its forays into the political. Just as the Solidarity movement tapped into the common heritage of Roman Catholicism in Poland by utilizing Catholic symbols to

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*Polish Public Opinion* (March 1999): 4 [online]; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/1999/03\\_1999.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/1999/03_1999.pdf) Internet: accessed 29 January 2005.

<sup>37</sup> Borowik, "Transformations of Catholicism and Religiosity of Catholics in Poland," 47-49.

<sup>38</sup> 11.6 percent of Poles have "very close ties" to church, 41.2 percent have "close ties," and only 2.5 percent and 7.0 percent have "no ties at all" or are "not a member of any church," respectively. This data was extracted from a table in Tomka's article which contains data from a 1998 survey. Miklós Tomka, "Religion, Church, State and Civil Society in East-Central Europe," in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Irena Borowik (Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS, 1999), 44.

unite disparate elements of society,<sup>39</sup> the Church has the capacity utilize the shared religious faith of Poles to provide a common ground from which to unite Poles around specific political aims. Therefore, on the most superficial level, the Church appears to exist in a consistently supportive societal context; however, this support becomes selective once political issues are exchanged for religious issues.

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<sup>39</sup> Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 121.

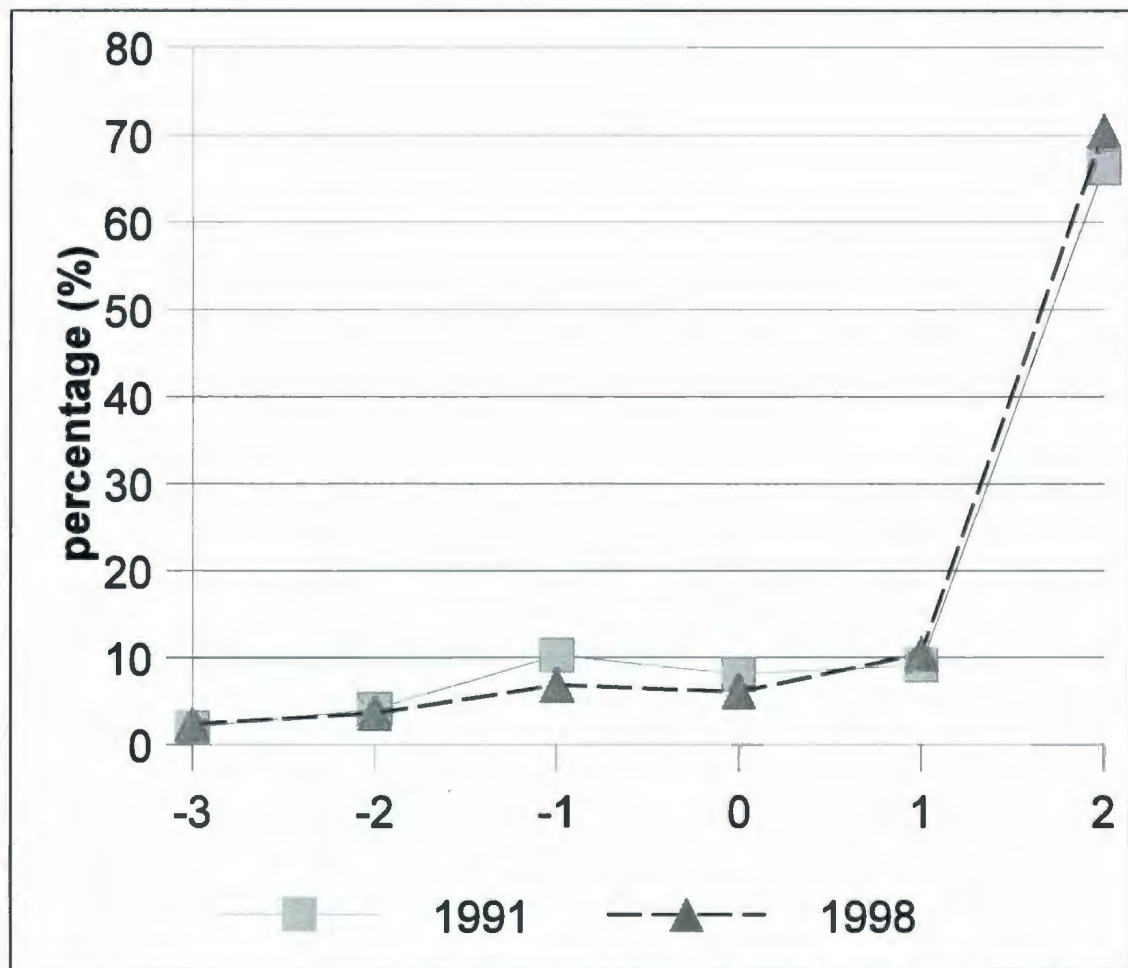


Figure 2. Belief in God in Poland, 1991 and 1998: -3=don't believe; -2=don't know, no way to find out; -1=don't believe in God, but in a higher power; 0=believe at some times, but not others; 1=have doubts, but believe; 2=believe with no doubts about existence.

Sources: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online], 33-34; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online], 52; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.



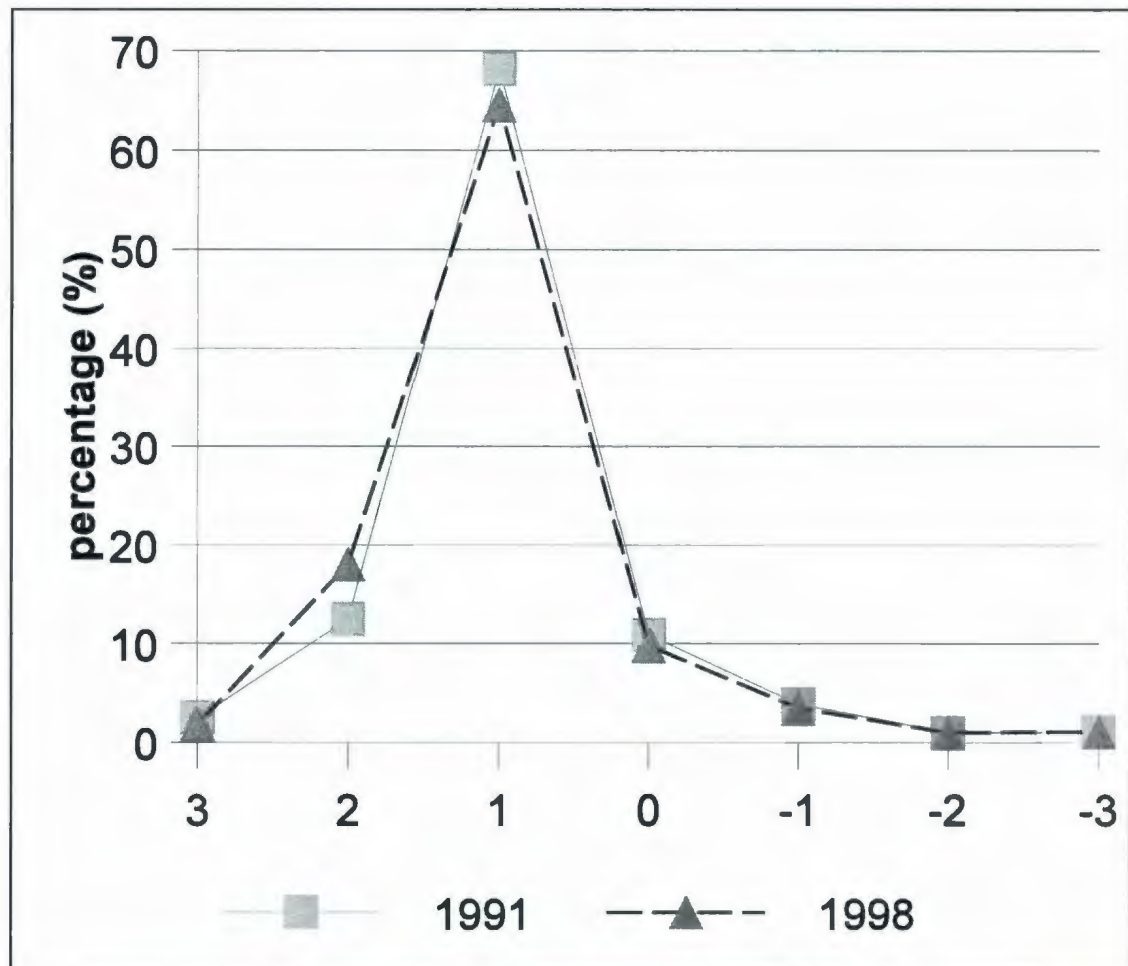


Figure 3. Religiousness in Poland, 1991 and 1998: 3=extremely religious; 2=very religious; 1=somewhat religious; 0=neither religious nor non-religious; -1=somewhat non-religious; -2=very non-religious; -3=extremely non-religious.

Sources: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online], 75-76; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online], 116; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

Table 1. Poles' Feelings of Membership in Their Local Church Parish (percent)

Degree of Membership	Year		
	1994	1999	2005
Definitely yes	38	32	45
Rather yes	41	46	35
Rather not	13	13	11
Definitely not	6	5	7
Difficult to say	2	4	2

Source: Krzysztof Zagórski and Beata Roguska, eds., trans. Kinga Pawłowska, Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), "The Poles' Ties with Their Parish," *Polish Public Opinion* [online] (March 2005): 2, figure; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2005/03\\_2005.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2005/03_2005.pdf) Internet: accessed 15 July 2005; (N=1070, 2005).

Note: The data in this table was extracted from a graphical figure which illustrated the responses to the question, "Generally speaking, do you feel a member of your local Parish, do you feel ties with it?"

Despite Poles' continuing belief in the basic tenets of Christianity and their high rates of religious participation, conformity with the Church's teachings is undergoing a modification toward individualization. This individualization involves the restructuring of individual interpretations and expressions of Church dogma. Instead of following the Church's teachings on certain issues, many Poles rely on their own interpretation of the appropriate course, melding the values of contemporary society with their knowledge of Roman Catholic principles. On almost every issue, ranging from the political to the religious, a majority of Poles express the belief that their views should arise from their own choices, not the Church's; a phenomenon that Borowik calls a "selective acceptance of

dogma.”<sup>40</sup> A CBOS poll from 2001 reveals the scope of this phenomenon, finding that while almost two-thirds of the respondents follow the Church’s teachings, a substantial proportion place their own interpretation on the Church’s teachings, choosing to “do it my own way.”<sup>41</sup> A 2005 analysis shows that this trend has stabilized, as the numbers have remained virtually unchanged since 2001.<sup>42</sup> Borowik contends that this trend is confined to the relatively small middle class,<sup>43</sup> but the aforementioned results suggest otherwise; even though this sector of society has not shown significant growth in recent years, the figures suggest that a large minority of Poles have disconnected their identification with the Church from the need to follow all of the Church’s teachings. In this way, Poles remain connected to the Church, but this connection only provides the basis for individual decision-making; Poles’ final decisions about important issues result from an internal

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<sup>40</sup> This survey from the early 1990s, asks Poles whether “everyone should decide for themselves” or “everyone should be obedient to the Church” for 10 issues: politics, birth control, child rearing, divorce, interruption of pregnancy, form of marital vows (civil or church), extra-marital sex, religious belief and practice, marital infidelity, and fasting. For every issue, a majority of respondents selected “everyone should decide for themselves”, although the magnitude decreased as the issue moved closer to the central tenets of the faith, as in fasting and religious belief and practice. Irena Borowik, “Institutional and Private Religion in Poland 1990-1994,” in *New Religious Phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Grzegorz Babiński (Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS, 1997), 250-251.

<sup>41</sup> In this survey, 40 percent of respondents expressed that they use their own interpretations of Catholicism, rather than the Church’s, to guide their lives. Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), “Religiousness of Poles,” *Polish Public Opinion* [online] (April 2001): 2; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2001/04\\_2001.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2001/04_2001.pdf) Internet: accessed 29 January 2005.

<sup>42</sup> The results of this 2005 poll showed that compliance with the Church’s doctrine was about 58 percent, compared to 39 percent for personalized belief. Krzysztof Zagórski and Beata Roguska, eds., trans. Kinga Pawłowska, Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), “The Poles’ Ties with Their Parish,” *Polish Public Opinion* [online] (March 2005): 2; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2005/03\\_2005.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2005/03_2005.pdf); Internet: accessed 15 July 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Borowik, “Transformations of Catholicism and the Religiosity of Catholics in Poland,” 56-57.

melding of Catholic and contemporary values. The result is that the Church cannot simply dictate its views and expect a willing and obedient society to follow. The processes of opinion-formation are complex, incorporating the liberal notions of freedom of opinion and personal choice, which go against the idea that there is a single, official interpretation of Roman Catholicism's principles. As a result, the views of a majority of Polish society may not always coincide with the wishes of the Church, especially with regard to the issues of democratic state-building. It means that a Pole may be an adherent of the Church without obeying the Church's dictates or putting the Church's views first when making decisions about political issues; in some cases, individual opinion contradicts that prescribed by the Church.<sup>44</sup>

#### *Slovene Detachment from Religion and the Church*

Roman Catholicism is clearly the faith of the majority of Slovenes, with variable polling figures placing the proportion of Roman Catholics into the low 70 percent range.<sup>45</sup> Although the proportion of religious believers increased during the early 1990s, it quickly stabilized around 50 percent (see figure 4) and the religious tend to cluster around the

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<sup>44</sup> Borowik, "Institutional and Private Religion in Poland 1990-1994," 248-252.

<sup>45</sup> The Slovene Public Opinion Survey, conducted each year during the 1990s, shows a movement between a high of 81 percent in 1991 to a low of 69 percent in 1997; however, the proportions fluctuate in 70 percent to 75 percent range for the remaining years. Nikos Toš et al., "v96. Which religious denomination do you belong to, if any?," *Slovenian Public Surveys 1990-1998: Cumulative Codebook* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2004); retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Service Agency Eastern Europe, Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3217; available from [http://www.gesis.org/en/data\\_service/eastern\\_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf](http://www.gesis.org/en/data_service/eastern_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf); Internet; accessed 10 September 2005.

lowest level of “somewhat” religious - those with the loosest ties to their religion (see figure 5). A concurrent stabilization in the proportion of nonreligious suggests that Slovene society has reached a steady state on this measure. Compared to Poland, the levels of adherence to Roman Catholicism in Slovenia are much lower, meaning that the Slovene Church can reach a relatively smaller portion of the population through appeals to common religious identity. The relatively looser ties of Slovene Roman Catholics to their religion, shown in figure 5, also detracts from the Church’s ability to launch political initiatives that rely on this common identity. As far as the central tenets of Christianity and Catholicism are concerned, Slovenes tend to express either disbelief or uncertainty about the existence of God, while only a small minority express absolute faith in God’s existence (see figure 6). Slovenes also display a continuing tendency toward infrequent or non-attendance at religious services, as shown in table 2. Although the proportion of Slovenes who attend Church regularly (once a month or more) increased over the 1990s, the magnitude of this increase was small and a majority of Slovenes continued their habit of attending Church much less frequently or never. Slovenes’ less than strong feelings of linkage to church, displayed in table 3, demonstrate that society is evenly divided among three different attachments to church: strong, weak, and none. Again, since these features suggest less attachment to and participation in the Church than in the Polish case, the resonance of the Church’s political appeals is expected to be much less than in Poland, meaning that the Church’s message is less able to find the common ground necessary to secure society’s support for its political aims.



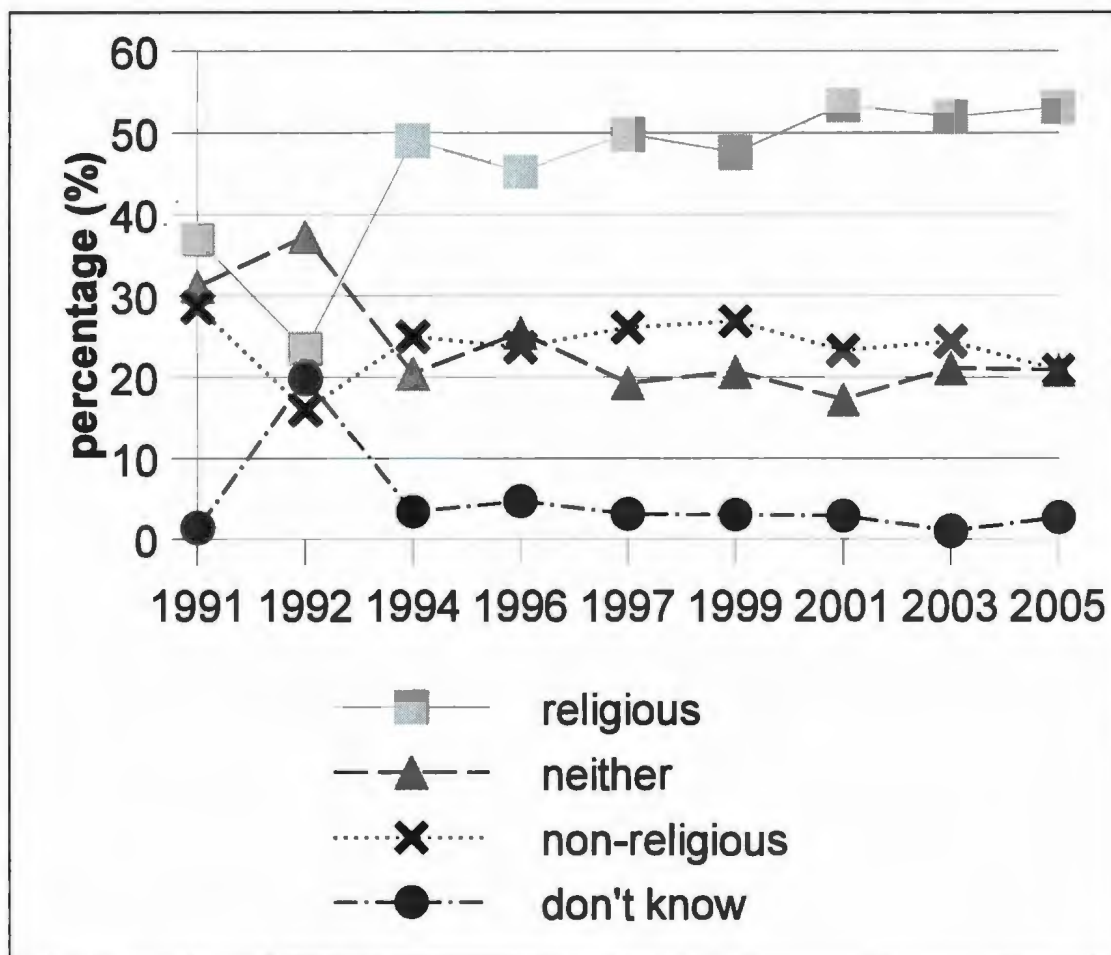


Figure 4. Religiousness in Slovenia, 1991 to 2005.

Sources: Nikos Toš et al., *Slovenian Public Opinion 1990-1998: Cumulative Codebook* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2004), v94; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Service Agency Eastern Europe, Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3217; available from [http://www.gesis.org/en/data\\_service/eastern\\_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf](http://www.gesis.org/en/data_service/eastern_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf) Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1999/4: Stališča o Pridruževanju Evropski Uniji* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 1999/4: Attitudes on Integration in the European Union] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1999), vQ615; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP), University of Ljubljana, 2000, Dataset SJM994; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 6 October 2005; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2001/1: Stališča Slovencev o Pridruževanju Evropski Uniji in Mednarodna Raziskava o Delovnih Aktivnostih* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2001/1: Attitudes toward Integration in the European Union and International Research on Working Activities] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2001), vD9; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP), University of Ljubljana, 2002, Dataset SJM011; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2003/1: Stališča Slovencev o Pridruževanju Evropski Uniji in Mednarodna Raziskava o Delovnih Aktivnostih* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2003/1: Attitudes toward Integration in the European Union and International Research on Working Activities] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2003), v818; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP), Dataset SJM031. Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, 2004; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2005/1: Mednarodna Raziskava Stališča o Delu* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2005/1: International Comparative Study Work Orientation, ISSP] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2005), v730; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP), University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM051; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 30 March 2006.

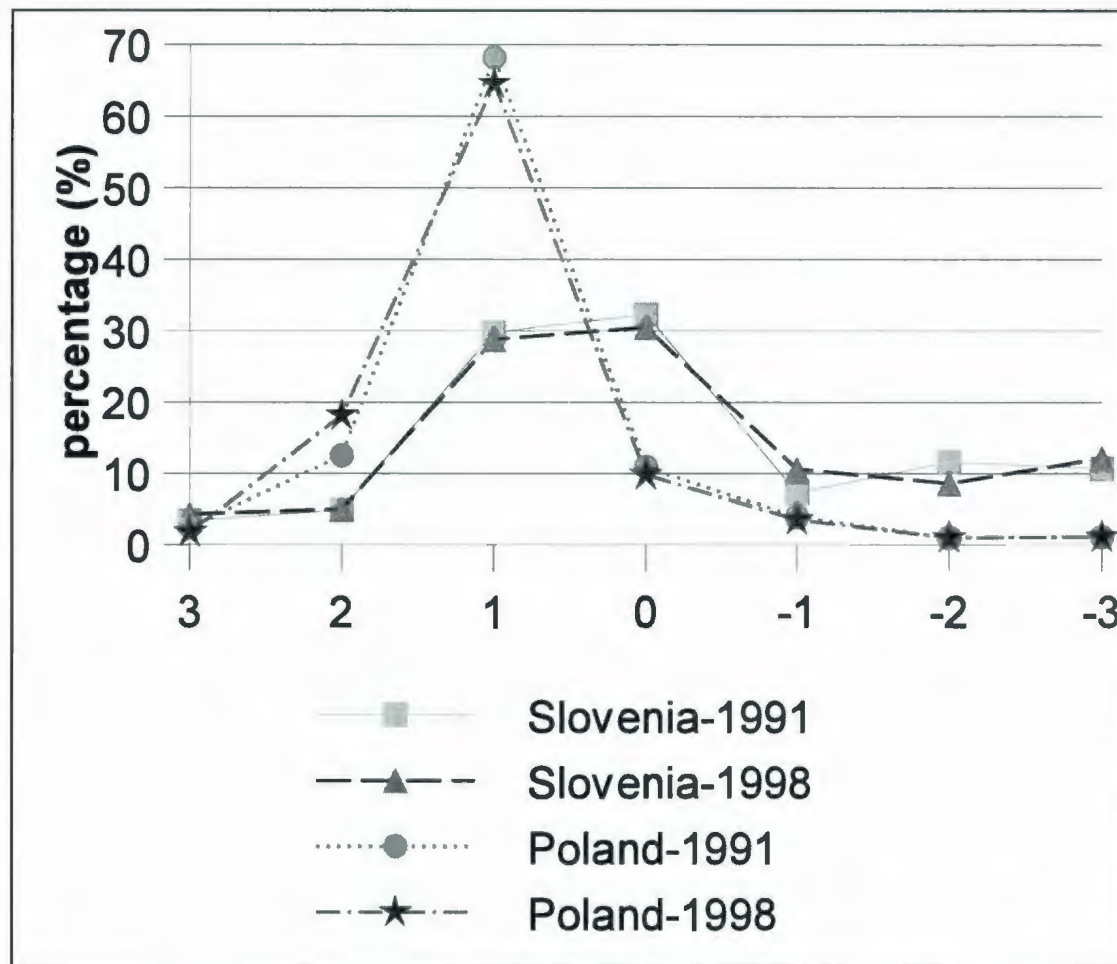


Figure 5. Comparison of Patterns of Religiousness in Poland and Slovenia, 1991 and 1998: 3=extremely religious; 2=very religious; 1=somewhat religious; 0=neither religious nor non-religious; -1=somewhat non-religious; -2=very non-religious; -3=extremely non-religious.

Sources: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1991: Religion I Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

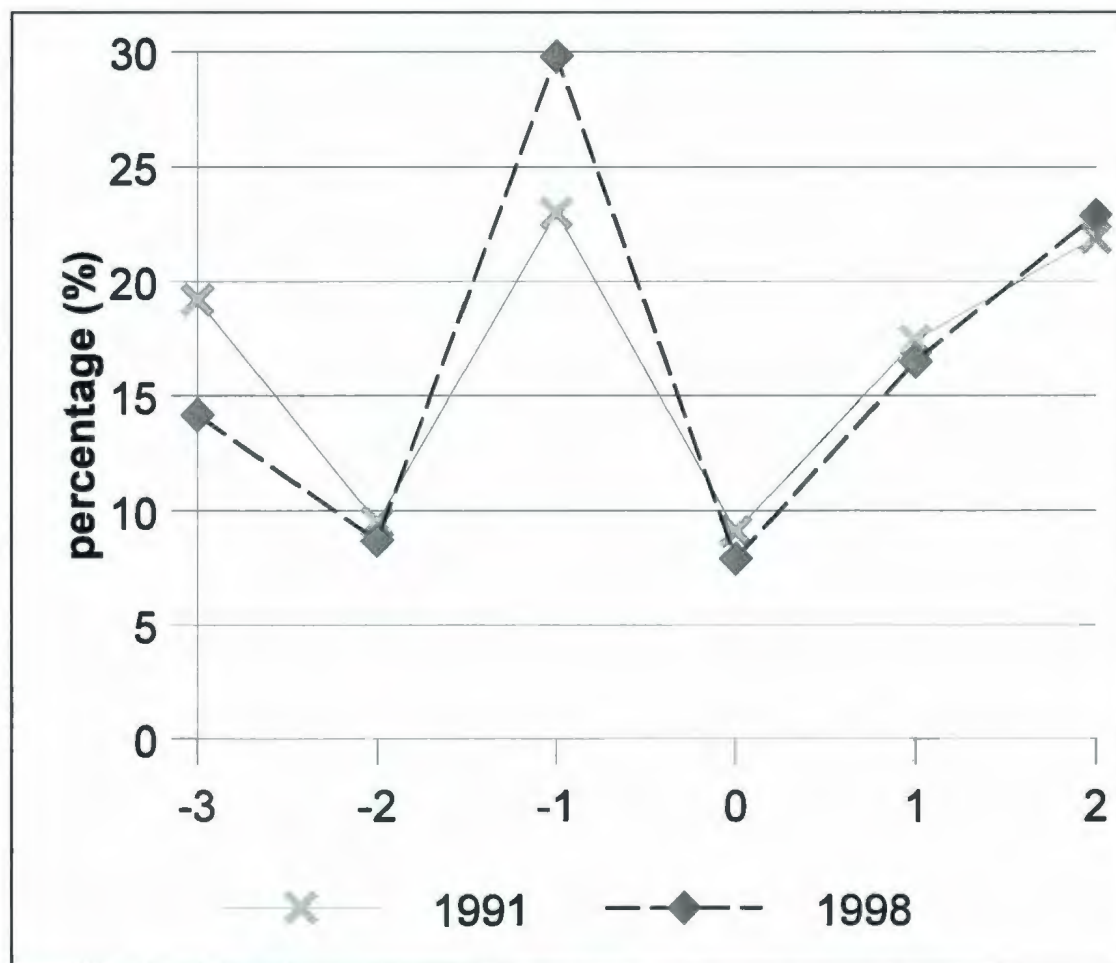


Figure 6. Belief in God in Slovenia, 1991 and 1998: -3=Don't believe; -2=Don't know, there's no way to find out if there is a God; -1=Don't believe in God, but a higher power of some kind; 0=Believe at some times, but not others; 1=Believe, but have doubts; 2=Believe with no doubts.

Sources: International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online], 33-34; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online], 52; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.



Table 2. Attendance at Religious Services in Slovenia (percent)

Frequency	1992	1994	1996	1999	2001	2003	2005	$\bar{x}$
≥ once a week	12.9	15.6	14.6	8.8	12.8	16.1	13.7	14
several times a month	8.4	8.1	8.3	9	6.5	6.1	6.6	7.6
once a month	6	6.9	8	5.2	6.8	6.6	6.4	6.6
several times a year	26.8	36.4	35.4	40.7	39.8	32.1	37.2	36
less frequently	16.7	5.8	9.1	9	7.7	12.9	12.1	11
never	25.6	24.8	22.6	24.5	24.2	24.4	21.9	24
N	923	944	961	1001	925	1073	1002	975

Sources: Niko Toš et al., *Slovenian Public Opinion Surveys 1990-1998: Cumulative Codebook* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2004), v95; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Service Agency Eastern Europe, Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3217; available from [http://www.gesis.org/en/data\\_service/eastern\\_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf](http://www.gesis.org/en/data_service/eastern_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf) Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1999/1 [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2003/1]* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1999), vD7A; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], University of Ljubljana, 2004, Dataset SJM991; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 21 March 2006; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2001/3 [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2001/3]* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2001), v817; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], University of Ljubljana, 2004, Dataset SJM013; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 21 March 2006; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2003/1 [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2003/1]* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2003), v820; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], University of Ljubljana, 2004, Dataset SJM031; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2005/1 [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2005/1]* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2005), v732; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], University of Ljubljana, 2006, Dataset SJM051; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

Table 3. Slovenes' Links to Church, 1998 (percent)

very close ties	3.1
close ties	29.4
loose ties	26.5
no ties at all	4.6
not member of any church	33.3

Source: Miklós Tomka, "Religion, Church, State and Civil Society in East-Central Europe," in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Irena Borowik (Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS, 1999), 44 (N=867).

Just as membership in the Roman Catholic religion is synonymous with neither religious belief nor religious practice, neither is membership synonymous with the application of Church teachings to everyday Slovene life. Rather, society is moving toward greater individualization of religious principles, independent of the Church, as well as the Church's ideas of how Slovenes should live their lives to conform with its teachings. This idea is borne out by SPO polls, conducted over the 1990s, which found that the proportion of respondents who declared that they were "religious in accordance with the teachings of the Church" decreased, while the proportion who declared that they were "religious in my own way" simultaneously increased.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, among the approximately half of Slovenes who subscribe to some level of religious belief, only a small share of them incorporate the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. The remainder rely on their own

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<sup>46</sup> Marjan Smrke, "Religious Dynamics in Slovenia during the 1990s," in *Religion and Social Change in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Miklós Tomka (Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy, 2001), 200.

interpretation of religion, characterized by a “galaxy of diverse beliefs which centre considerably less around the Roman Catholic Church and considerably more around the personal convictions of the individual.”<sup>47</sup> This trend does not bode well for the Slovene Church. Although a similar trend is also apparent in Poland, it is of a much smaller magnitude than in Slovenia. This is perhaps because Slovenes are more advanced along this trend than their Polish counterparts. Overall, the Church’s dominance over the religious sphere provides the Church with a connection to a large proportion of the Slovene population, but this connection lacks the strength of the connection between the Church and Poles, mainly because Slovenes are more dissociated from religious belief, Roman Catholicism, religious practice, and the Roman Catholic Church. In Slovenia, the Church’s messages and demands lack the same strong connection to a pre-existing pool of closely-held beliefs. The salience of wider Church political appeals is therefore reduced, in turn minimizing the Church’s opportunities to attain political influence. Therefore, the openness of this portion of the political opportunity structure has been relatively smaller in Slovenia compared to Poland over the entirety of the post-communist period.

#### Evaluating the Church as a Public Institution: Confidence and Trust

Measures of trust and confidence indicate whether Poles believe that the Church is a reliable institution, based on their assessments of its past and present activity, as well as their expectations of the Church’s future behaviour. When compared to other institutions in Poland, the Church consistently receives the highest ratings of confidence, with the

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 201.

exception of the Polish military, which receives similarly high ratings of confidence; this trend is consistent across all available measures in the post-Communist period, as shown by table 4. This does not mean that trust in the Church is high; rather, even with moderate ratings of trust, the Church surpasses other public institutions because trust in those institutions is generally quite low.<sup>48</sup> Also, table 5 shows that despite some ups and downs over the 1990s, the Church has also consistently been accorded some degree of confidence or trust from a majority of Poles. However, despite these indications of relative strength next to other public institutions, for a small, but consistent proportion of Poles, continuing adherence to the Church and its beliefs does not translate into confidence in the Church as a public institution; a small, but consistent proportion of Poles express a little or no trust in the Church. Additionally, this proportion of the population appears to have grown since the year 2000, but still constitutes a minority of Poles. Thus, even with this change, throughout the post-communist period, the Church has been a bulwark for Polish society. In a national landscape where the political players were constantly changing, the Church represented a consistent, unchanging presence and thus was an institution that Poles could feel confident about. This confidence in the Church represents a consistent, if perhaps declining, opportunity for the Church to become involved in public discourse as a trusted representative of the people, contributing positively to the Church's political opportunity structure. Nevertheless, Poles' trust in the Church may be conditional, especially as the Church advances farther into the domain of the public and the political in the democratic

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<sup>48</sup> Irena Borowik, "Institutional and Private Religion in Poland 1990-1994," 246.

state.

Table 4. Confidence in Selected Public Institutions in Poland, 1992-1994 (Cumulative)

Level of Confidence (Percentage)	Institution		
	Government	Military	Roman Catholic Church
A Great Deal	5.9	34.15	41.73
Only some	40.3	49.53	44.46
Hardly any	48.08	9.4	12.07

Source: Bogdan Cichomski and Zbigniew Sawinski, *Polish General Social Survey, 1992-1994: Cumulative Codebook* [online] (Warsaw: Institute for Social Studies, University of Warsaw, 1994); retrieved from Scholarly Communication Center, Rutgers's University, New Brunswick, NJ; available from <http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/pgss/PGSScb1655.pdf> Internet: accessed 19 February 2005 (N=4914).



Table 5. Poles' Confidence/Trust in the Church, 1991 to 2004

Confidence Level (percentage)	ISSP	PGSS			ISSP	Trust Level (percentage)	CBOS	
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1998		2000	2004
Complete	10.4				13	Trust	47	56
A great deal	22.2	40.6	40.8	43.6	27.2			
Only some	40.7	45.5	43.4	44.2	40.6	Neutral	26	
Hardly any	15.1	11.7	14	10.4	12.5	Distrust	24	35
Don't know	11.5	2.1	1.5	1.6	6.8	Difficult to Say	3	9
N	1063	1647	1649	1609	1147		NA	969

Sources: International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online], 25; retrieved from Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Koeln, Codebook ZA Study 2150; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005 (N=1063); Bogdan Cichomski and Zbigniew Sawinski, *Polish General Social Survey, 1992-1994: Cumulative Codebook* [online] (Warsaw: Institute for Social Studies, University of Warsaw, 1994), v247; retrieved from Scholarly Communications Centre, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.; available from <http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/pgss/PGSScb6155.pdf> Internet: accessed 19 February 2005; International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online], 26; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Koeln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005 (N=1147); Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), "Trust in Public Institutions in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary," *Polish Public Opinion* (November 2000): 1-2 [online]; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2000/11\\_2000.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2000/11_2000.pdf) Internet: accessed 29 January 2005; Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), "Trust in Public Institutions in Central and East European Countries," *Polish Public Opinion* (October 2004): 2-3 [online]; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2004/10\\_2004.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2004/10_2004.pdf) Internet: accessed 29 January 2005.

In contrast to Poles, Slovenes tend to show distrust for the institutional Church, further supporting the previously identified trend of Slovenes' detachment from the institution. As for Poles, decisions of trust act as a "primary summary indicator of appraisals of the past operation and performance of the Roman Catholic Church together

with its clergy, as well as an estimation of the present operations and hopes or fears for the future.<sup>49</sup> In this way, Slovenes' confidence in the church is either an indictment or a vindication of the church's past and present political activities, as well as an index of the public distrust of and declining public expectations of future Church behaviour. First, the Church usually receives lower levels of trust in public opinion surveys than other public institutions.<sup>50</sup> The confidence that is vested in most of these institutions is not especially high, but these institutions still garner more trust than the Church. Also, annual SPO surveys show that, despite a few small fluctuations, Slovenes consistently display the same pattern of general distrust of organized religion, specifically churches and clergy (see figures 7 and 8). This pattern is characterized by a high proportion of respondents expressing little or no trust in either church or church leaders. Further data, presented in table 6, confirms that the Church receives the same level of trust when it is specifically

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<sup>49</sup> Smrke, "Trust in the Church and Clergy in Slovenia during the 1990s," 321.

<sup>50</sup> In the most recent SPO survey from 2005, government received the confidence of 35 percent of Slovenes, the police 39 percent, the justice courts 30 percent, and the church and clergy 22 percent. During the 1990s, SPO surveys consistently documented a similar trend. For example, in 1996 government received the confidence of 28 percent of Slovenes, the police 40 percent, the justice courts 24 percent, and the church and clergy 22 percent. Nikos Toš et al. *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2005/2: Nacionalna in mednarodna varnost (CRP Znanje za varnost in mir) in Mednarodna povolilna raziskava [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2005/2: National and International Security (CPR Knowledge for Security and Peace) and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems]* [online], V209K, V209O, V209N, V209B (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2005); retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM052. Available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 30 March 2006.

Niko Toš et al., *Slovenian Public Opinion Surveys 1990-1998: Cumulative Codebook* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2004), V48, V52, V51, V40; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Service Agency Eastern Europe, Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln. Codebook ZA Study 3217; available from [http://www.gesis.org/en/data\\_service/eastern\\_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf](http://www.gesis.org/en/data_service/eastern_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf) Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Smrke, "Trust in the Church and Clergy in Slovenia during the 1990s," 322.

identified, rather than subsumed under the general term church and clergy, and that according to the retrospective reflections of Slovene respondents subjective feelings of trust in the Church declined in the post-1990 period. This goes along with the trend of increasing distrust and declining trust in the Church over the 1990s that has been identified by at least one other researcher.<sup>51</sup> It should be noted that this trend varied over the late 1990s and early 2000s so that, at certain points, it looked as if the Church's standing was increasing. However, this has not continued into the present because patterns of trust subsequently returned to their previous level and form in 2003 and 2005, characterized by an overwhelming distrust in the Church. As a result, the Church's tenuous connection to Slovene society is further weakened and society's openness to Church appeals is considerably diminished over time as the post-Communist era proceeds. In contrast to Poles, Slovenes tend to distrust the Church, even when held against other institutions. Thus, Slovenes appear to be much less inclined to see the Church as institution that acts in the best interests of the Slovene people. Moreover, Slovenes place some of their confidence in other institutions and, although this confidence is by no means overwhelming, thus, unlike Poles, have alternatives to the Church. This makes the Slovene societal context much less amenable to Church political influence and thereby diminishes the Church's opportunities for political influence, affecting the political opportunity structure for the Church negatively.

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<sup>51</sup> Smrke notices the same trend in his analysis of the same SPO data. Smrke, "Trust in the Church and Clergy in Slovenia during the 1990s," 322.



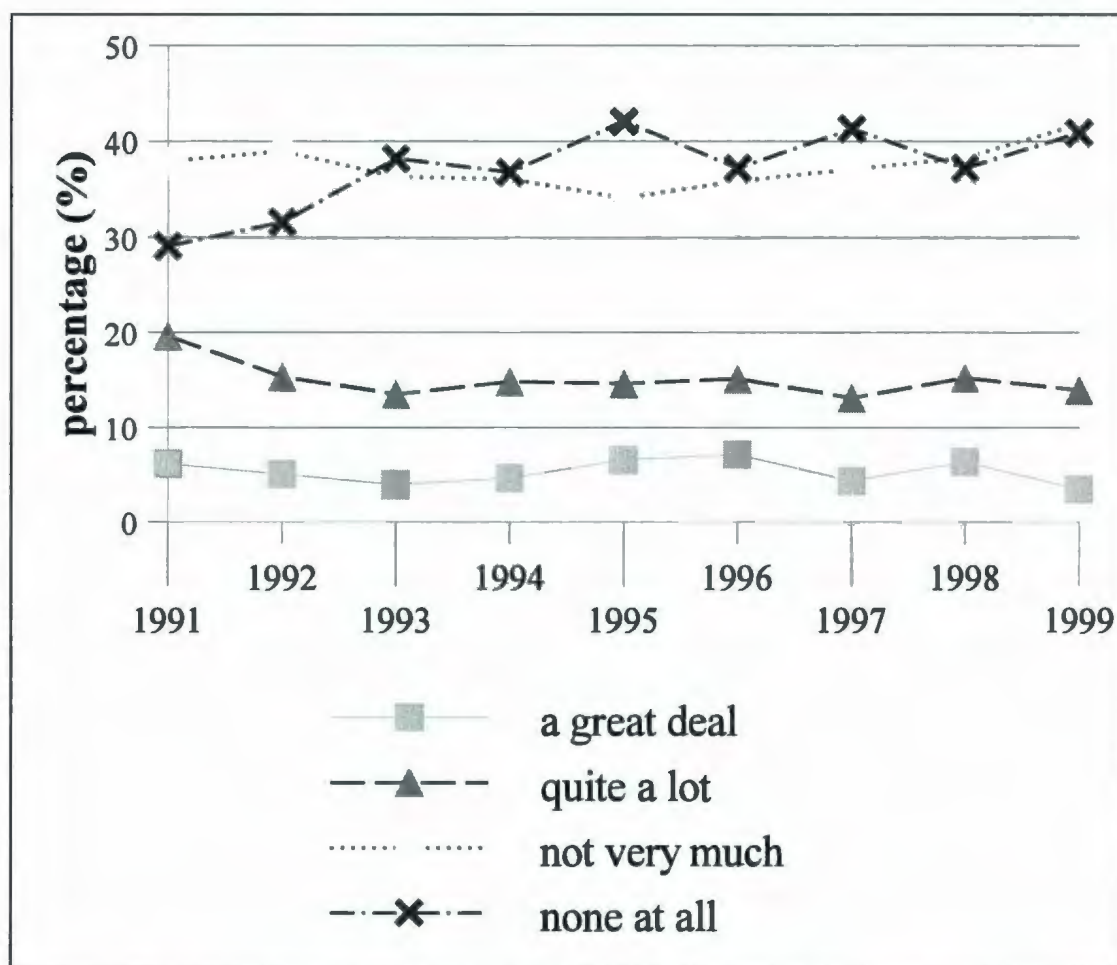


Figure 7. Confidence in Churches and Religious Organizations in Slovenia during the 1990s.

Sources: Niko Toš et al., *Slovenian Public Opinion Surveys 1990-1998: Cumulative Codebook* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2004), v40 [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Service Agency Eastern Europe, Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3217; available from [http://www.gesis.org/en/data\\_service/eastern\\_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf](http://www.gesis.org/en/data_service/eastern_europe/data/codebook/cb3217.pdf) Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Niko Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1999/1: Demokracizacija v Vzhodno-Evropskih Državah (Mednarodna Raziskava) in Nacionalna Varnost [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 1999/1: Democratization in Eastern-European Countries (International Research) and National Security]* [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1999), V138C; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM991, 2000; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

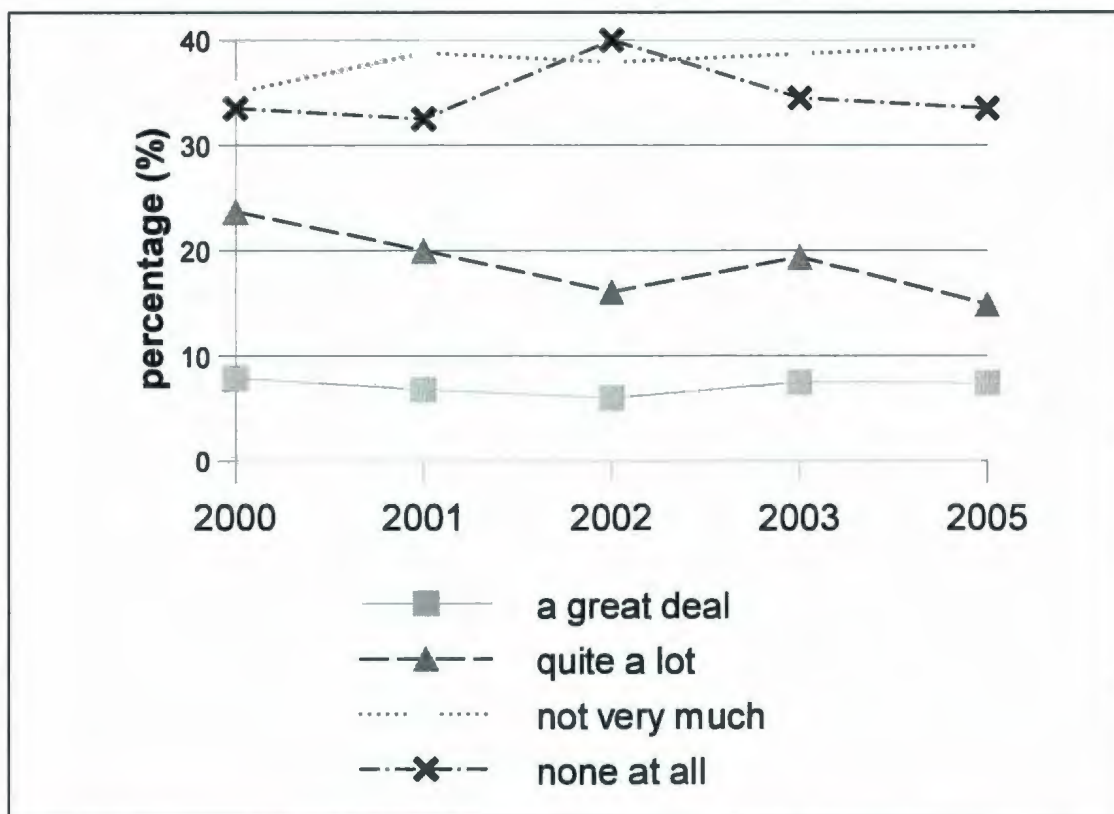


Figure 8. Confidence in Churches and Religious Organizations in Slovenia, 2000 to 2005.

Sources: Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2000/1* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2000/1] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2000), V1\_13B; retrieved from Social Sciences Data Archive, University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM001, 2001; Niko Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2001/1* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2001/1: Attitudes toward Integration in the European Union and International Research on Working Activities] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2001), V1\_18B; retrieved from Social Sciences Data Archive, University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM011, 2002; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2002/1* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2002/1: Attitudes toward Integration in the European Union and NATO] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2002), V203B; retrieved from Social Sciences Data Archive, University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM021, 2002; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2003/1* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2003/1] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2003), V202B; retrieved from Social Sciences Data Archive, University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM031, 2004; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2005/2* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 2005/2: National and International Security (CPR Knowledge for Security and Peace) and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 2005), V209B; retrieved from Social Sciences Data Archive, University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM052, 2006.

Note: The internet address of all sources is listed in the bibliography.

Table 6. Retrospective Reflections on Slovenes' Trust in the Catholic Church and its Officials in 1990 and 1997 Compared

Level of Trust (percent)	Then (1990)	Now (1997)	Change
A great deal	11	8.7	-2.3
Quite a lot	30.5	26.8	-3.7
Not very much	33.8	39.1	5.3
None at all	12.1	15.2	3.1

Source: Toš, Nikos, et al. *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1997/2: Mednarodna Raziskava o Veri Odnosu do Cerkve [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 1997/2: International Research on Religion and Attitudes toward Church]* [online] ( Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1997); retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, 2000, Dataset SJM972; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

Note: Data was extracted from the results of two questions in this survey, one of which asks respondents how much they trust the Church at that time (1997) and how much they trusted the Church about 8 years before that.

## CHAPTER 5

### POLITICIZING THE CHURCH

For the Roman Catholic Church to gain significant opportunities from its sizeable linkage to Polish society, Poles must perceive the Church not only as a legitimate religious and public institution, but also as a legitimate political actor. This means that Poles' openness to the Church as a political actor, indicated by approval of the Church's general activities, its pronouncements on issues, and its power, must be high in order to provide the Church with favourable political opportunities. When Polish society displays the predominant view that the Church's political activities are acceptable and the Church's religious base is secure, the Church is presented with the best social context in which to pursue political activity surrounding its policy goals.

#### *Poland: Resistance to a Political Church*

A distinct trend appears in Poles' assessments of the Church's activities, measured by a series of CBOS polls, conducted several times a year from 1989 to 2005.<sup>1</sup> As demonstrated in figure 9, Poles' opinions of the Church have gone through three distinct phases. As the political transformation began, the Church received the approval of an overwhelming majority of Poles; however, these positive feelings declined over the next few years, reaching an all-time low in 1993. Gradually, over the remainder of the 1990s, society shifted back towards a general position of approval, albeit with a few minor

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<sup>1</sup>The N-values for each survey are not available, but CBOS usually utilizes a randomized, representative sample of approximately 1000 Polish adults.

fluctuations. After this point, around the year 2000, Poles' views of the Church settled into a stable pattern with about two-thirds of Poles generally expressing approval and one-quarter expressing disapproval of the Church. How has this affected the Church?

Although the Church was engaged in some of its most controversial activities during the early 1990s<sup>2</sup> and society's approval of its activities was clearly declining, the Church was only placed in a vulnerable position vis-à-vis society for a brief time in 1993. Since then, the Church has enjoyed the openings in the political system created by society's generally positive views of its activities; however, this situation is alterable. The recent steady state in public opinion hovers around a much lower level than where it began in the early 1990s, indicating that the Church lost some of its credibility with a portion of society over the post-Communist period and that this portion maintains a state of lasting disapproval toward the Church. Nevertheless, based on this measure, Poles appear to generally approve of the Church's activities, unless these activities stray too far into politics. This is borne out by specific measurements of society's attitudes toward the Church's political activities.

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<sup>2</sup> It was during this time that the Church secured considerable influence over education and the restrictive abortion law was introduced.



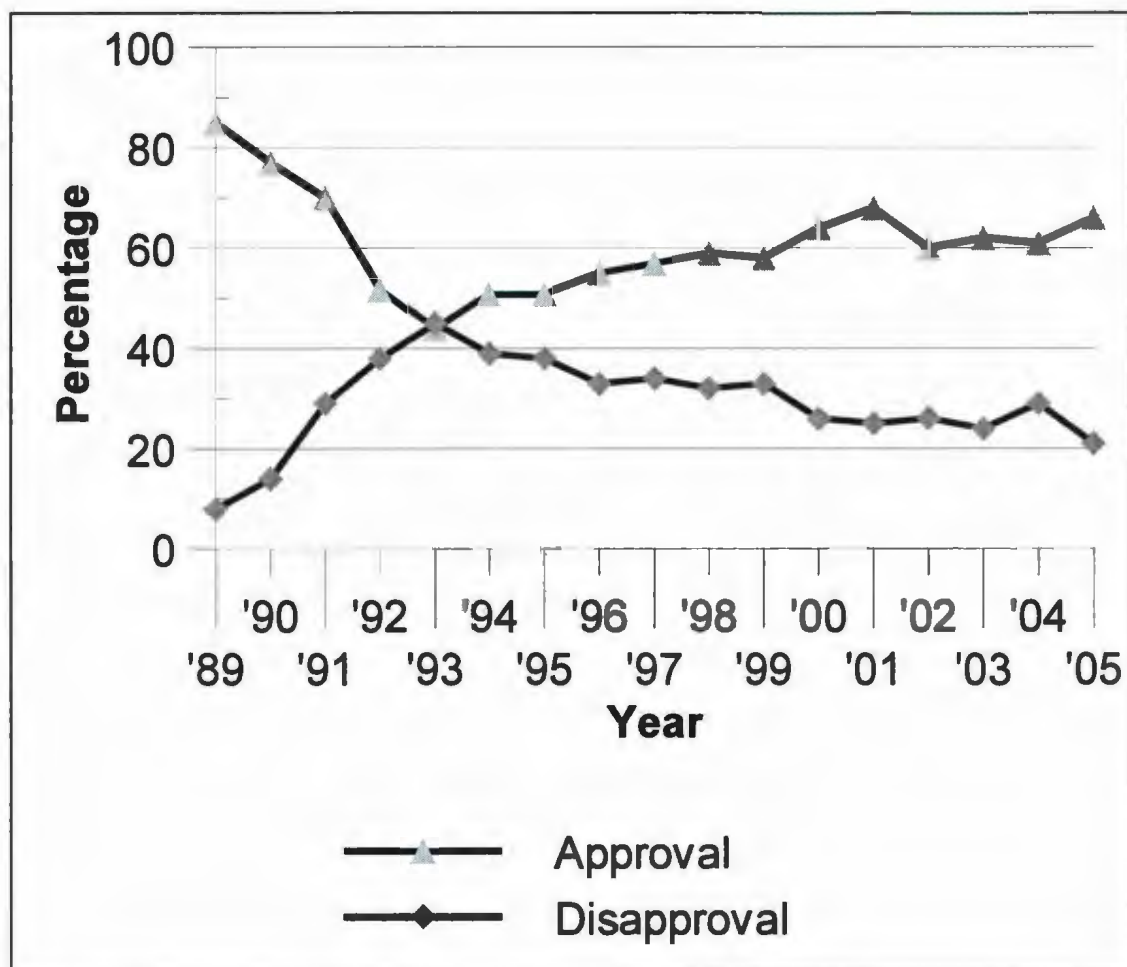


Figure 9. Opinions of the Church's Activities in Poland, 1989 to 2005

Sources: Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), "The Church in Post-Communist Poland," *Polish Public Opinion* (May 1999): 3-4 [online]; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/1999/05\\_1999.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/1999/05_1999.pdf) Internet: accessed 29 January 2005; Michał Wenzel, "Opinie o Działalności Instytucji Publicznych [Opinions about the Work of Public Institutions]," *Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) Report 35* (February 2005): 6 [online]; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005/K\\_35\\_05.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005/K_35_05.PDF) Internet: accessed 13 May 2005. Michał Wenzel, "Opinie o Działalności Instytucji Publicznych [Opinions about the Work of Public Institutions]," *Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) Komunikat z Badań 168* (October 2005): 5 [online]; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005/K\\_168\\_05.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005/K_168_05.PDF) Internet: accessed 21 March 2006.

Note: The data from 1989 to 1998 was extracted from a line graph titled "Change in the Opinions of the Activity of the Church." The data points for each poll conducted during a given year were converted into an average for that year. The data from 1999 to 2005 was extracted from a table titled "Zmiany Opinii o Kościele [Changes in the Opinion of the Church]." For years in which multiple polls were conducted, the individual results from each poll are averaged to arrive at a value for the entire year.

Although the Church exists in a generally positive societal context, its activities are bounded by Poles' perceptions of the legitimacy and credibility of the Church's involvement in the debate surrounding specific issues and in the political process. The Church is confined to a specific domain which concerns social and religious issues, such as the social problems produced by the economy and society, rather than those issues which touch upon the freedoms introduced by democracy, such as the freedom of the media and the independence of the government from the Church (see table 7). The line between these realms is not precisely defined since any issue becomes political when the nation's leaders debate government policy. However, once the Church is specifically connected to a contentious political issue or the political process, Poles overwhelmingly disapprove of Church attempts to influence public opinion, the procedures of the democratic system, and political outcomes. With reference to the specific processes of voting and government decision-making, the data in table 8 suggest that Poles adopted the viewpoint that the Church's influence in these processes was inappropriate as early as 1991 and, over the 1990s, became increasingly opposed to the Church's intervention in these central components of the democratic system. In general, patterns of resistance to the Church's participation in politics have remained stable at very high levels (close to 80 percent) since 1999, as shown by figure 10. Therefore, the trend of public disapproval toward the Church's political intervention follows a similar pattern to that concerning the Church's general activities; society's greater openness to a Church political role in the early 1990s gave way to an overwhelming wave of negative feeling as the 1990s progressed, which

then stabilized at a high level in the late 1990s. This means that society has been greatly opposed to the Church's interference in explicitly political processes for much of the post-communist period. Consequently, the Church's opportunities to enter the democratic political process have been limited by the wishes of Polish society to keep the Church out of these areas. This may be why Church-sponsored political parties have performed so poorly in Polish elections.

Table 7. Acceptability of Church Pronouncements on Selected Issues, 1998 (percent)

unemployment	58.3
growing social differences	58.2
extramarital relations	53.3
abortion	52.8
style and content of the media	33.1
government politics	19.8

Source: Miklós Tomka, "Religion, Church, State and Civil Society," in *Religion and Social Change in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Miklós Tomka (Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS, 2001), 61.

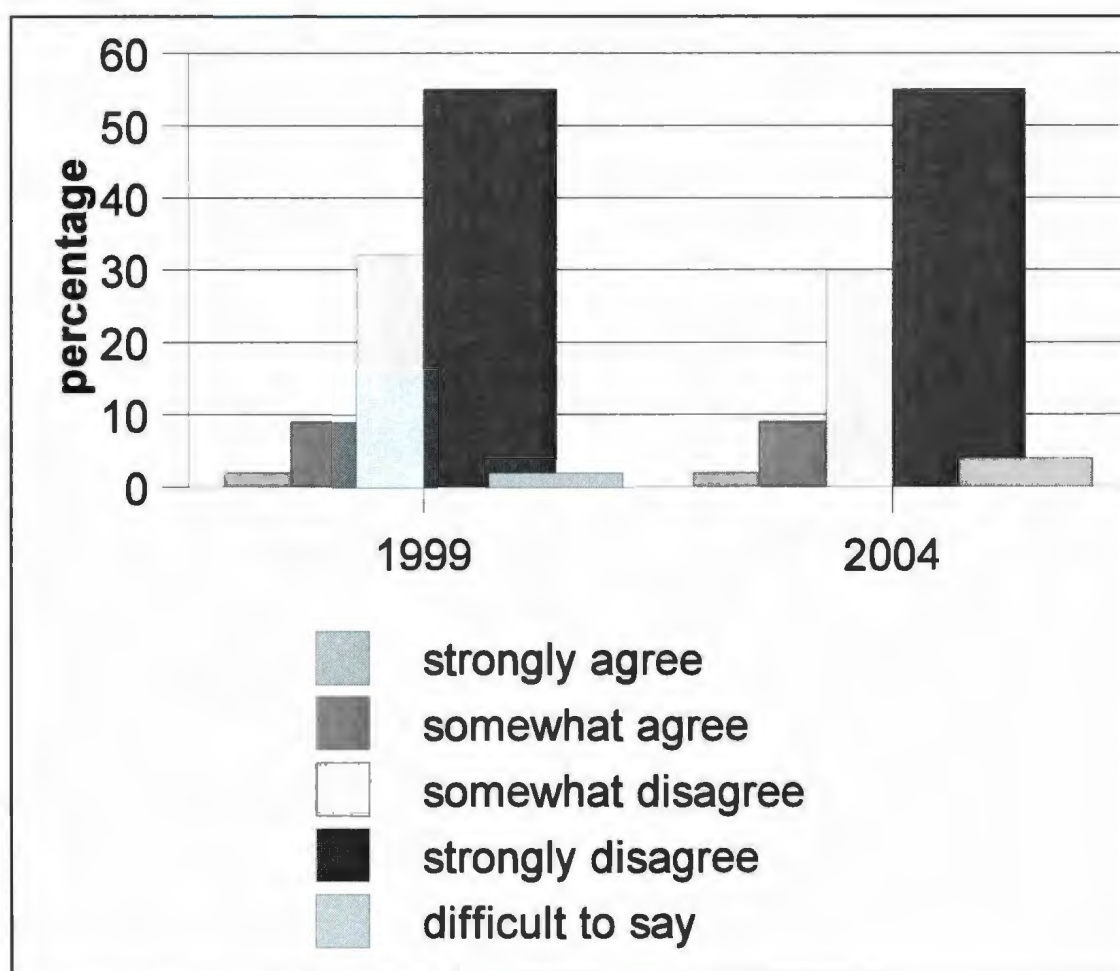
Note: Data extracted from Table 9, "Opinions about the abilities and social expectations from the Catholic Church in ten previously communist countries in East-Central Europe, spring 1998 (percent of valid answers)."



Table 8. Poles' Opinions About the Inappropriateness of Church Influence over Political Processes, 1991 and 1998

Response (percent)	Voting		Government	
	1991	1998	1991	1998
Strongly agree	39.1	48.5	31.7	47.5
Agree	36.9	29.6	39.7	29.5
Neither agree nor disagree	5.9	8.3	10.2	10
Disagree	9.2	9.1	9.8	8.5
Strongly disagree	9	4.6	8.7	4.4

Sources: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.



**Figure 10. The Church Should Have a Voice in Politics in Poland**

Source: Beata Roguska, "Stabilizacja Opinii o Wpływie Kościoła na Życie w Kraju [Stabilisation of the Opinion About the Influence of the Church on Life in Poland]," *Centrum Badań Opinii Społecznej (CBOS) Report 79* (May 2004): 5 [online]; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K\\_079\\_04.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K_079_04.PDF) Internet: accessed 29 January 2005.

Note: The author of this report does not provide the sample sizes for each survey utilized in her analysis; however, the CBOS methodology usually consists of a sample size of approximately 1000, drawn from a randomized, representative sample of the adult population.

The final component of the context which society presents to the Church involves assessing Poles' perceptions of the Church's political power and, based on those perceptions, the direction in which Poles want that power to change. PGSS statistics from the early 1990s, presented in table 9, suggest that Poles were unambiguous in their perception that the Church's power was excessive compared to their own relative ideal of what that power should be; however, these feelings waned somewhat by 1994. As with most of the previous data, condemnations of the Church peak around the year 1993, which has been identified as one of the more politically active for the Church. The culmination of this data confirms that society became increasingly negative toward displays of the Church's political power in the democratic system quickly after the introduction of competitive democracy. However, as the Church's involvement in highly charged political issues changed, did the societal context also change as some of the controversy subsided? Did Polish society become more accepting of the Church's power after 1994? As table 10 shows, a majority of Poles consistently saw the Church as a highly influential actor, while only a tiny proportion see it in the opposite light. Simultaneously, a significant minority of Poles remains dissatisfied with the Church's power, although this proportion does not approach the very high levels of the early 1990s (see table 11). Once the highly charged politics of the early 1990s subsided, society's tolerance for expression of the Church's power rebounded from the low of the early 1990s and stabilized at a level whereby the Church is caught between the division of society into the minority that approves of the Church's power and the large majority that disapproves of the Church's power. This

further confines the openings which are provided to the Church to impress its views on the political process and hence limits the Church's political opportunity structure.

Table 9. Poles' Opinions about Religious Organizations' Level of Power, 1991 to 1998 (percent)

Level of Power	1991	1992	1993	1994	1998
too much	60.5	63.8	64.7	54.6	59.6
right amount	36.5	27.1	26	35.6	36.8
too little	2.9	1.6	2.2	2.4	3.6
N	1063	1647	1649	1609	1147

Sources: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Bogdan Cichomski and Zbigniew Sawinski, *Polish General Social Surveys 1992-1994: Cumulative Codebook* (Warsaw: Institute for Social Studies, University of Warsaw, 1995), v. 345; retrieved from Scholarly Communications Center, Rutgers's University, New Brunswick, NJ; available from <http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/pgss/PGSScb1655.pdf> Internet: accessed 19 February 2005; International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

Note: This data was modified from the original form. Responses for "far too much" and "too much" were additively combined to produce the category "too much." Responses for "far too little" and "too little" were similarly modified to produce the category "too little."

Table 10. Changes in the Perception of the Church's Influence over Polish Affairs, 1999 to 2004 (percent)

Level of Influence	1999	2002	2004
great	68	57	58
neither great nor small	24	31	28
small	6	8	10
difficult to say	2	4	4

Source: Beata Roguska, "Stabilizacja Opinii o Wpływie Kościoła na Życie w Kraju [Stabilisation of the Opinion About the Influence of the Church on Life in Poland]," *Centrum Badań Opinii Społecznej (CBOS) Report 79* (May 2004): 2. [online] Available from [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K\\_079\\_04.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K_079_04.PDF) Accessed: 29 January 2005.

Note: To achieve greater simplicity, the responses "very large" and "large" were combined to form one category of response, "large." The response "small" was arrived at in a similar manner. Although the author does not provide the sample size for each survey, CBOS surveys typically utilize a randomized sample of approximately 1000 adults.

Table 11. Changes in the Desired Level of Church Influence over Polish Affairs, 1999 to 2004 (percent)

Level of Change	1999	2002	2004
more	5	13	12
same	31	38	38
less	61	42	45
difficult to say	4	8	5

Source: Beata Roguska, "Stabilizacja Opinii o Wpływie Kościoła na Życie w Kraju [Stabilisation of the Opinion About the Influence of the Church on Life in Poland]," *Centrum Badań Opinii Społecznej (CBOS) Report 79* (May 2004): 3 [online]. Available from [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K\\_079\\_04.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K_079_04.PDF) Accessed: 29 January 2005.

Note: To achieve greater simplicity, the responses "very large" and "large" were combined to form one category of response, "large." The response "small" was arrived at in a similar manner. Although the author does not provide the sample size for each survey, CBOS surveys typically utilize a randomized sample of approximately 1000 adults.

### *Slovenia: Rejection of a Political Church*

Considering Polish society's high level of resistance to a political Church, it is not surprising that Slovene society is also highly resistant to the Church's involvement in politics. To begin with, Slovenes are not as enthralled with the Church as a religious actor and thus the Church does not possess those critical links with society that allow it to assume a position of authority. Compared to Poles, Slovenes consider the Church's public commentary on a wider range of issues to be inappropriate (see table 12). Even issues which the Church considers to be essential to its moral duties, such as the protection of life and the preservation of marriage, are considered off-limits to the Church by a large majority of Slovenes. Although Poles by no means endorsed the Church's activities in

these areas, a small majority of Poles found these issue areas to be within the limits of the Church's domain. This, combined with a consistent, pronounced rejection of Church attempts to influence voting or government decision-making (see figures 11 and 12), suggests that Slovenes are overwhelmingly opposed to Church interference in the nation's political life. Moreover, Slovenes are cautious about providing churches with more power, indicated by the infinitesimal proportion of poll respondents in table 13 who believe that the Church has too little power, as well as the large minority of Slovenes who believe that churches already have too much power. Slovenes not only view churches, including the Roman Catholic Church, as illegitimate political actors, but also show the tendency to impose strict limits on the reach of their influence over political issues and processes. Also, the general unwillingness to provide religious organizations with more power speaks of a society that is satisfied with keeping the Slovene Church in its place in the religious realm. Polish society, although similarly averse to Church interference in politics (see figures 9 and 10, respectively), provides the Church with more space to act on moral issues, as well as some other issues that have less impact on the political process itself, such as unemployment and social inequality. A direct comparison of the two countries, contained in figures 13 and 14, shows that both societies have typically been highly opposed to Church influence over voting and government, but that Slovenes tend to be more polarized in their disapproval. Therefore, although Poles and Slovenes have been remarkably similar in their outlook about the inappropriateness of the Church's interference in the political process, Slovenes have outright rejected the Church as a political actor and placed

additional constraints on the Church's political activities, further reducing the political opportunities for the Church and closing this important aspect of the political opportunity structure.

Table 12. The Appropriateness of Church Declarations on Specific Issues (percent affirmative responses)

Issue	1997	1998
growing social differences	52.9	52.7
unemployment	37.8	37.5
style and content of the media	29.1	28.6
extramarital relations	29	27.2
abortion	28.2	27
government politics	20.9	21.2

Source: Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1997/2: Mednarodna Raziskava o Veri Odnosu do Cerkve* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 1997/2: International Research on Religion and Attitudes toward Church] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1997), v59, v60, v61, v62, v64, v65; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], University of Ljubljana; Dataset SJM972; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005 (N=1005); Miklós Tomka, "Religion, Church, State and Civil Society in East-Central Europe," in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Irena Borowik (Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS, 1999), 60 (N=867).



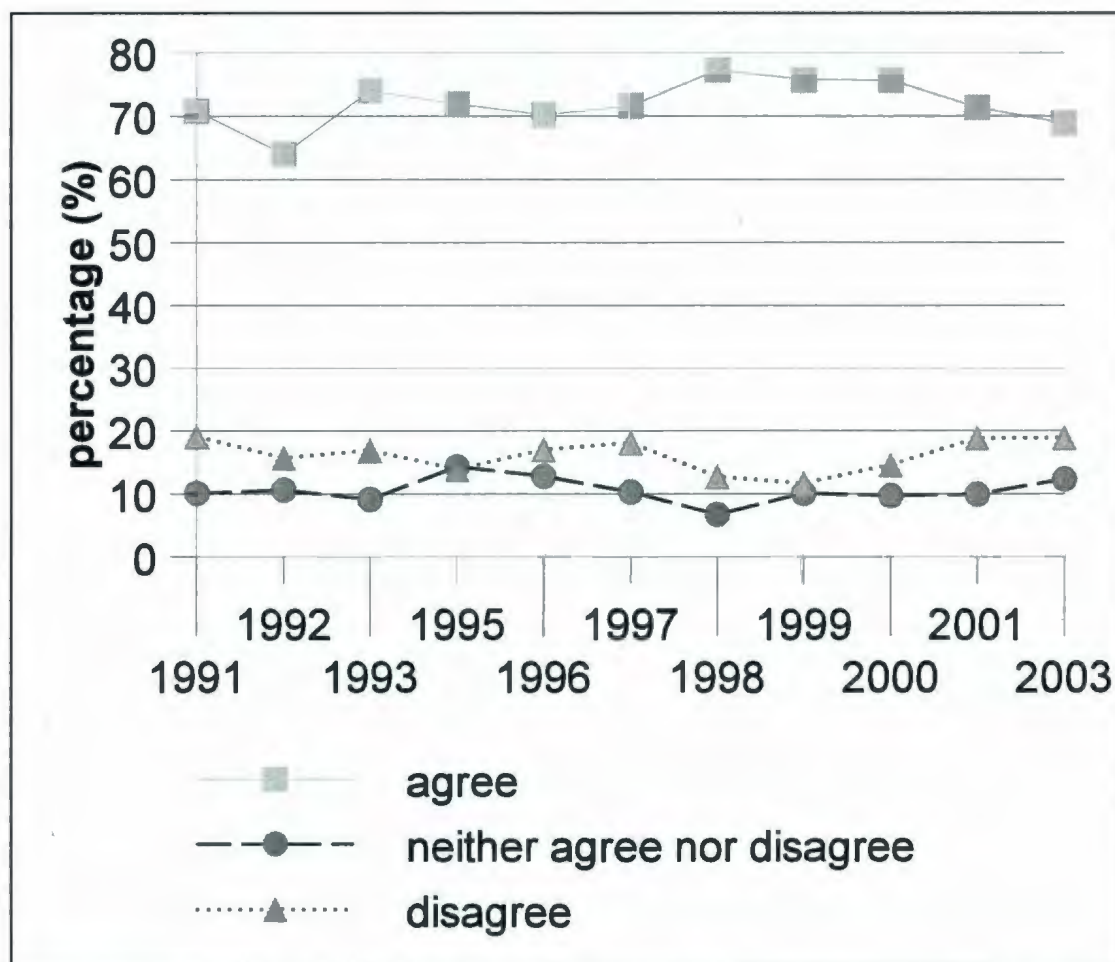


Figure 11. Slovene Opinions on the Inappropriateness of Church Influence on Voting, 1991 to 2003.

Sources: Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1991/2*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1992/3*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1993/1*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1995/1*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1996/1*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1997/2*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1998/1*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1999/3*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2000/1*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2001/2*, *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 2003/1* [all online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003), V410B, V2\_12B, V6\_04B, V3\_25, Q414B, Q236g, R57A, V132, V5\_09B, V2\_36B, V533B; retrieved from Social Sciences Data Archive (ADP), University of Ljubljana; Datasets SJM912, SJM923, SJM931, SJM951, SJM961, SJM972, SJM981, SJM993, SJM001, SJM012, SJM031; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005. See bibliographic entries for additional information on each survey.

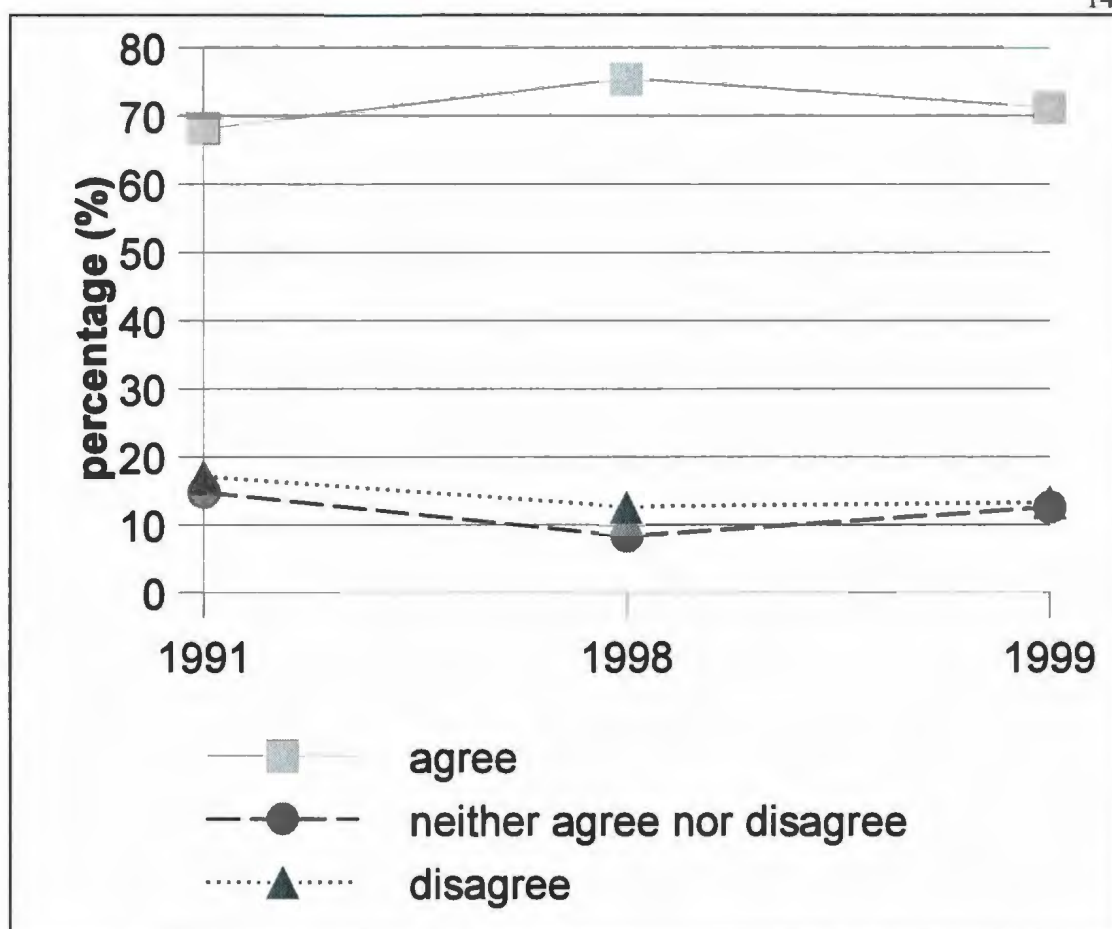


Figure 12. Slovene Opinions on the Inappropriateness of Church Influence on Government Decisions, 1991 to 1999.

Sources: Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1991/2: Slovenska Družba na Prehodu v Demokracijo in Mednarodna Raziskava o Vernosti in Cerkvi* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 1991/2: Slovenian Democratic Transition and International Religion and Church Survey] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1991), V410D; Social Sciences Data Archive, University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM912, 1999; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1998/1: Mednarodna Raziskava o Neenakosti in Religiji* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 1998/1: ISSP 1998 Religion and ISSP 1999 Inequality] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1998), R57B; retrieved from Social Sciences Data Archive, University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM981, 2000; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; Nikos Toš et al., *Slovensko Javno Mnenje 1999/3: Evropska Raziskava Vrednot* [Slovene Public Opinion Survey 1999/3: European Values Survey] [online] (Ljubljana: Public Opinion Research Centre, Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, 1999), V130; retrieved from Social Sciences Data Archive, University of Ljubljana, Dataset SJM993, 2000; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

Table 13. Evaluations of the Power of Churches and Religious Organizations in Slovenia, 1991 and 1998 (percent)

Level of Power	1991	1998
far too much power	4.1	10.4
too much power	22.4	37.1
about the right amount of power	64.6	41.8
too little power	7.9	8.2
far too little power	0.9	2.5

Sources: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

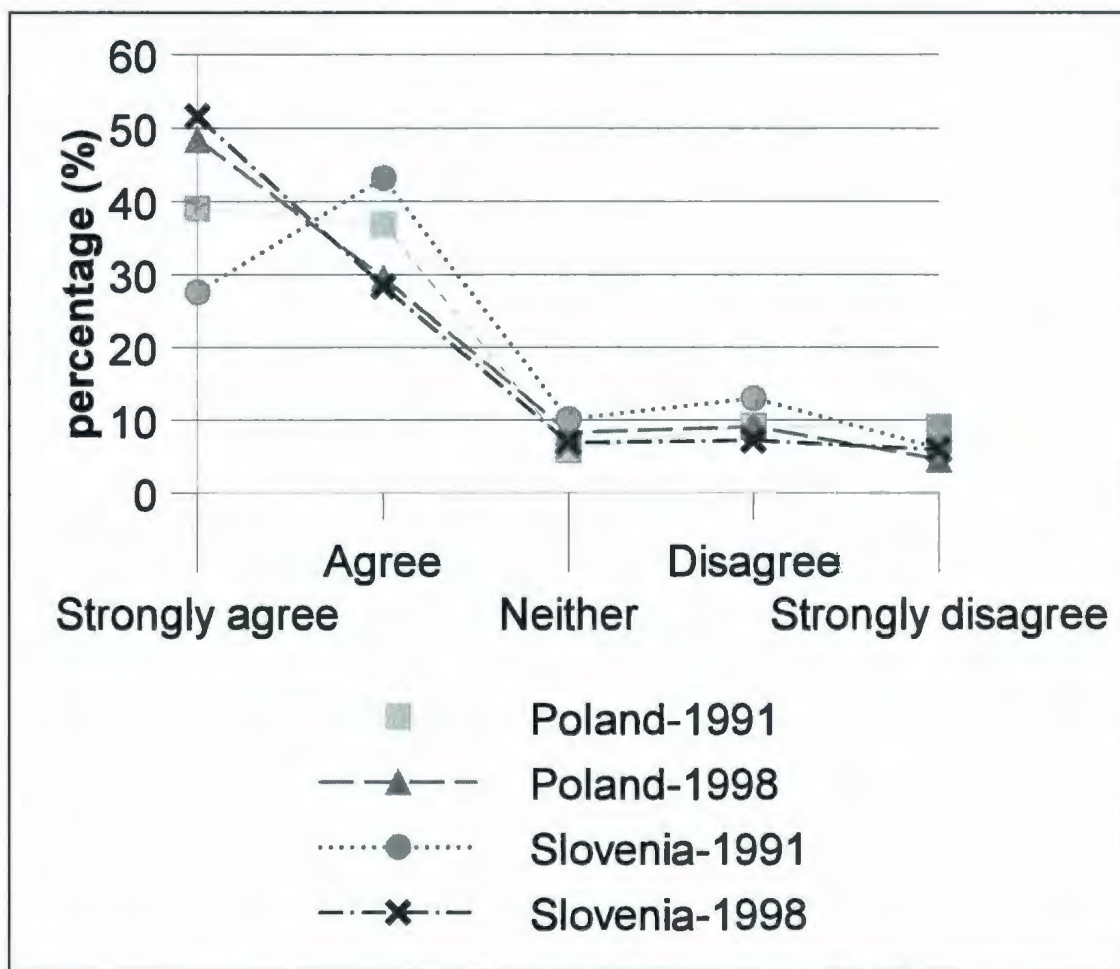


Figure 13. Opposition to Religious Leaders' Influence on the Voting Process in Poland and Slovenia, 1991 and 1998.

Sources: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.

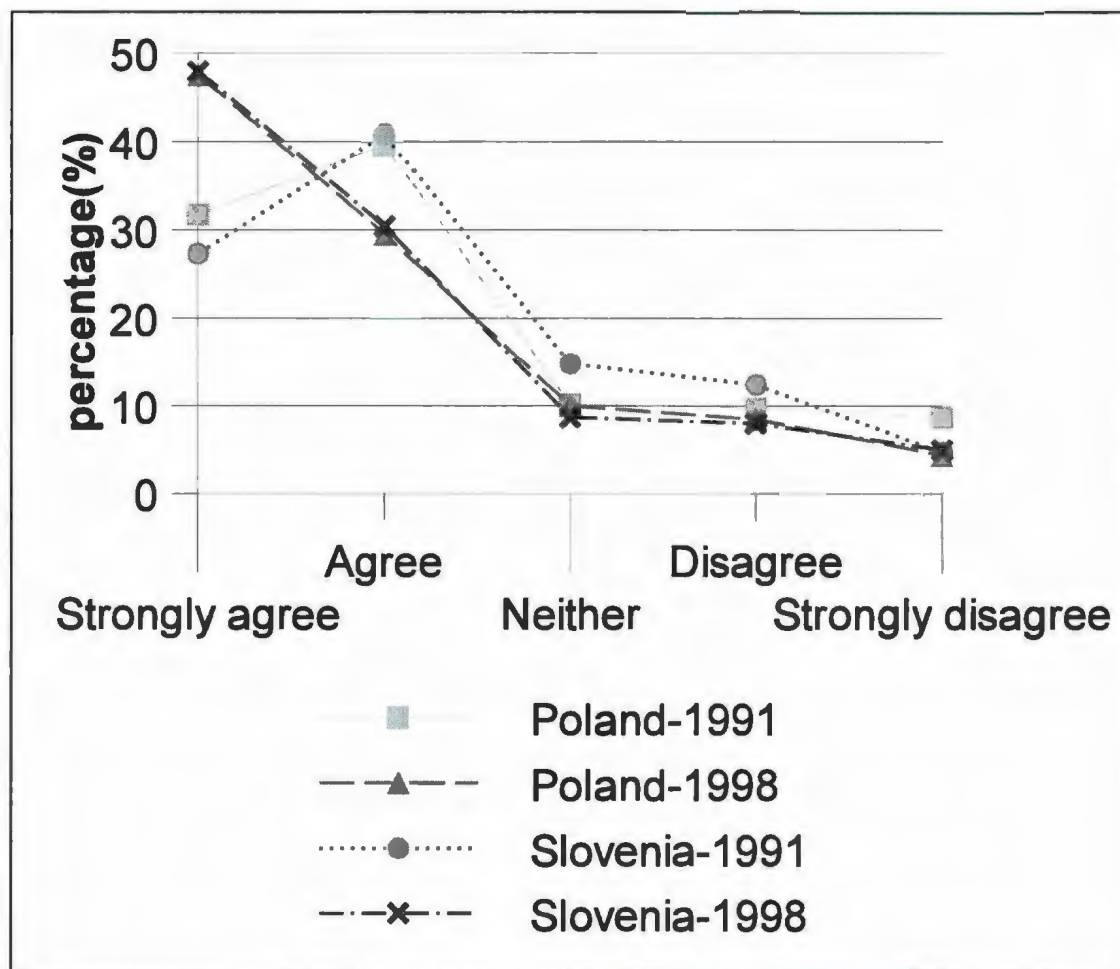


Figure 14. Opposition to Religious Leaders' Influence on Government Decisions in Poland and Slovenia, 1991 and 1998.

Sources: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1991: Religion Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 2150, 1995; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s2150cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005; International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), *ISSP 1998: Religion II Codebook* [online]; retrieved from German Social Science Infrastructure Studies (GESIS), Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln, Codebook ZA Study 3190, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001; available from <http://www.za.uni-koeln.de/data/en/issp/codebooks/s3190cbd.pdf> Internet: accessed 10 September 2005.



### Change of Context? Slovene Society and the Recent Church-State Agreement

The agreement between the Slovene government and the Vatican, known as the Vatican Accord, merits attention because its passage seems to indicate that the unfavourable social context of the 1990s has changed to provide greater opportunity for the Church as a political actor. Polling data from 2001, shortly after the agreement was first signed, reveals several features of Slovene society's relationship with the Church in post-Communist Slovenia. First, 45 percent of respondents were unaware of the details of this agreement.<sup>3</sup> Second, a majority of respondents believed that the negotiation of this agreement was beneficial to Slovenia; however, the margin of this endorsement was quite small at 54.9 percent.<sup>4</sup> A similarly small majority declared that it was not necessary for this agreement to be subjected to a referendum.<sup>5</sup> These features show that a slim majority of Slovenes likely approve of the negotiation of the agreement, hardly strong evidence to support a turnaround in society's consistently negative orientation toward the Church's political involvement. The ambiguous legal framework governing church-state relations throughout the 1990s necessitated a political-legal resolution which would lend some

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<sup>3</sup> Zencel Batagelj, *Sporazum z RKC [Agreement with Roman Catholic Church]* [online] (Ljubljana: CATI-Trženjske, Medijske, Družbene Raziskave in Svetovanje, d.o.o., 2001), VAT1; retrieved from Arhiv Družboslovnih Podatkov (ADP) [Social Sciences Data Archive], Dataset SPORRk01. Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, 2003; available from <http://www.adp.fdv.uni-lj.si/opisi/index> Internet; accessed 11 September 2005. (N=370)

<sup>4</sup> Batagelj, *Sporazum z RKC [Agreement with Roman Catholic Church]* [online], VAT2.

<sup>5</sup> When asked whether the agreement should be judged by the people in a referendum, most respondents (54.1 percent) answered no. Batagelj, *Sporazum z RKC [Agreement with Roman Catholic Church]* [online], VAT3.

stability to the relationship between church and state. Although this agreement empowers the Church by acknowledging that the Church's situation merits formal legal recognition, the other side of this agreement ensures that the Church's behaviour is governed by law. Given the negative orientation which has characterized society up to the time of this agreement and beyond, it is more likely that Slovenes have pragmatically accepted the necessity of a formal arrangement between Church and state which ensures some level of regulation over the Church's behaviour. Slovenes' underwhelming approval for this agreement indicates a cautious acceptance of this method of settling relations between Church and state; respondents in the same survey rejected the idea that this type of agreement should be utilized further in the settlement of specific disputes with the Church.<sup>6</sup> This is consistent with the societal context that the Church continues to face; Slovenes are restrictive in the privileges which they are willing to grant the Church, but not totally inflexible. It is unlikely that Slovenes are willing to let the Church overstep from within specific legal bounds, particularly on overtly political topics. Therefore, the Vatican Accord does not necessarily indicate a new openness to the Church's political influence because all other measures indicate that Slovenes still want the Church confined rather than freed.

*Summary: Linking History, Society, and Politics*

The importance of the Roman Catholic Church through much of Polish history, the nationalistic associations between Polish identity and Roman Catholicism, and the Church's

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<sup>6</sup> Batagelj, *Sporazum z RKC [Agreement with Roman Catholic Church]* [online], VAT4.

significant role in politics during the communist period, all served to prime Polish society to receive and respond to the Church's appeals. Also, Polish society has retained a strong connection to Roman Catholicism and the institutional Church, despite a noticeable trend of increasingly individualized religion. This connection is manifested in Poles' participation in Church ritual and activities, Poles' trust in the Church over virtually all other public institutions, and the leeway Poles have granted the Church to participate in issue-oriented politics. However, Poles seek to limit the extent of the Church's political activities, manifesting strong resistance to the Church's involvement in both electoral politics and government decision-making processes. Consequently, the political opportunity structure that the Church has faced throughout the entirety of the post-communist period has allowed for significant political activity, but only within the limits prescribed by society. When the Church attempted to move beyond those limits, as it did in the early 1990s with its extensive interference in election campaigns and several government decisions, society becomes less open to the Church's political influence. This was especially evident in the drop in approval of the Church to an all-time low that occurred around 1993. Since that time, most measures indicate that the Church managed to recoup much of its lost standing with society and that Church and society have reached a state of equilibrium in their relationship, such that society is open to the Church's political participation within the previously defined limits prescribed by society.

Slovenes, on the other hand, have presented the Church with a stable and constrained political opportunity structure throughout much of the post-communist period



that gave the Church little space to participate in Slovene politics or to expand its power in the democratic state. The Church started out in the democratic system in a weak position, lacking the strong nationalistic ties to Slovene culture and society, as well as the esteem associated with communist-era political activity, that its Polish counterpart enjoyed in its relationship with Slovene society. Additionally, Slovenes possess weaker ties to religion, Roman Catholicism, and the Roman Catholic Church. This is evident in their relative nonreligiousness, low religious participation rates, individualization of religious principles, and general lack of trust in the Church as a public institution. Further, Slovenes proscribe Church political activity on most major political issues, as well as in electoral politics and government decision-making processes. In this way, this skeptical, distanced society has placed stringent limits on the Church, negatively affecting the Church's political opportunity structure. Therefore, although both societies rejected Church involvement in decisions that should be made under the auspices of the democratic system, Polish society helped to create a political opportunity structure that has been much more open to the Church.

## CHAPTER 6

### POLITICAL PARTIES: FRIENDS OR FOES?

The process of post-communist democratization in Poland and Slovenia opened the political arena to a variety of legitimate actors. Among these actors, political parties bear the bulk of the responsibility for translating and representing society's political demands. Because of this role, political parties, as well as their patterns of development and strength, necessarily affect the Church's pursuit of political power. Political parties compete with the Church for influence, but also serve as important access points in the political system, either through direct collaboration or promotion of corresponding principles. Poland and Slovenia's party systems shared several developmental similarities, especially during the early days of democratic development, but different dynamics have shaped the development of each system such that it provides a remarkably different set of opportunities and constraints for the Church.

#### *Crowded Landscape: Parties as Competitors*

##### The Instability of Party Development in Poland

In Poland, the emergence and development of a multitude of parties, spanning the ideological spectrum and representing a variety of interests and issues, impinges on the Church's long-standing role as arbiter between state and society. The Church's representative dominance has been challenged by a broad range of parties, espousing various ideological orientations: post-communist, peasant, social democratic, labour, Christian, populist-national, bourgeois conservative, free-market liberal, and socialist. In

addition, special interest parties such as pensioner and cultural minority parties have also emerged at various times. In 2002, an overtly anti-Church party was even formed,<sup>1</sup> providing citizens with an option dedicated to eliminating the Church's political role. The existence of these parties provides Poles with so many choices that the Church is not necessary for interest articulation; instead, Poles can choose a specific political party to perform that function. However, in practice, these party alternatives often fail to match the Church, lacking the features necessary to become consistent, successful political competitors and to capture the confidence of Polish society.

Political parties' abilities to compete with the Church for the public's loyalty have been diminished by the persistent instability of the party system throughout much of the post-Communist period. One facet of this instability is apparent in the staggering proliferation in the number of political parties: a multitude of political parties were formed around prominent personalities, narrow goals, or in the name of political convenience, without a corresponding recognition of the resources, organization, and skill that are required to maintain a successful political party. As a result, Polish politics failed to develop a core of strong, consistent party contenders for most of the 1990s. Although

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<sup>1</sup> The *Racja Antyklerykalna* Party, led by a former Catholic priest, declared its opposition to the Church's influence over Polish politics, advocating repeal of the Concordat and a number of Church privileges. It was officially registered in 2002, with estimates of the number of members varying between 6,000, from registration documents, and 12,000, from leader's claims. The party's radical stance eventually alienated the SLD (Democratic Left Alliance), which had originally been a supporter during the initial formation of the party. Jerzy Sławomir Mac, "Church & State: A Wild Party," *The Warsaw Voice* (29 September 2002) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/2139> Internet: accessed 30 July 2005.

party development was initially slow,<sup>2</sup> it later gained momentum during the interim between 1989 and 1991.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, in 1991, at the starting point of this analysis, the party system presented Polish voters with an astounding number of choices as over a hundred parties competed for seats in the *Sejm*.<sup>4</sup> This situation improved as the number of political parties shifted downwards over time,<sup>5</sup> suggesting a trend of consolidation in the party system. Moreover, the union of several post-Solidarity parties to form Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) during the mid-90s was thought to indicate a new unity on the right of the political spectrum. This presumption of growing stability in 1997 was based on the idea that the party system had developed a stable core of parties, dominated by two main blocs of the right and the left, respectively, Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) and the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), and augmented by the significant presence of smaller parties, notably the Freedom Union (UW) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL).<sup>6</sup> However,

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<sup>2</sup> This is attributed to the quick timing of the 1989 partially-competitive elections and the strength of Solidarity. Kitschelt et al., 99.

<sup>3</sup> Tomek Grabowski, "The Party that Never Was: The Rise and Fall of the Solidarity Citizens' Committees in Poland," *East European Politics and Societies* 10, no. 2 (1996): 237.

<sup>4</sup> A total of one hundred and eleven parties and groupings competed in the parliamentary elections to fill the four hundred and sixty seats in the lower house, the *Sejm*.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, the number of contenders over successive elections changed dramatically between 1991 and 1993 from a high of 111 to 35. In addition, this trend continued in 1997, when 21 groups contested the elections, and in 2001, when just 14 groups contested the 2001 elections. This information was extracted from table 4.8, which compares the number of contenders on election lists over successive elections in post-Communist countries. Frances Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 90.

<sup>6</sup> Aleks Szczerbiak, "Party Structure and Organizational Development in Post-Communist Poland," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 17, no. 2 (2001): 95; 126; Aleks Szczerbiak, "Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics: Polish Parties' Electoral Strategies and Bases of

this conclusion appears to have been premature because the AWS, composed of dozens of different groups, fragmented over the years 2000 and 2001, producing new parties who, instead of being bound by their political orientation, were compelled to form a common grouping for the upcoming 2001 elections.<sup>7</sup> As expected, this coalition did not hold together after the election, contributing to further fragmentation during the 2001-2005 period. At the same time, the SLD, thought to be one of the few stable parties on the Polish political scene, destabilized as the party was gripped by scandal and suffered the departure of several prominent personalities, producing several new political parties and weakening the remaining core of the SLD.<sup>8</sup> Thus, at the end of 2005, the main parties in Poland, consisting of Law and Justice (PiS), Civic Platform (PO), Self-Defence (SO), the SLD, the League of Polish Families (LPR), and the PSL, have all contended and been successful in more than one election, lending credence to the idea that perhaps the Polish system is developing a stable core of parties; however, "the Polish political scene remains extremely fluid and unstable."<sup>9</sup> The continuing instability of Polish party politics has

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Support," *Europe-Asia Studies* 55, no. 5 (2003): 729.

<sup>7</sup> Aleks Szczerbiak, "Poland's Unexpected Political Earthquake: The September 2001 Parliamentary Election," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 18, no. 3 (2002): 63-64; Frances Millard, "Elections in Poland 2001: Electoral Manipulation and Party Upheaval," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 36 (2003): 75-76.

<sup>8</sup> Aleks Szczerbiak, "'Social Poland' Defeats 'Liberal Poland'? The September-October 2005 Polish Parliamentary and Presidential Elections," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 23, no. 2 (2007): 206-208.

<sup>9</sup> Szczerbiak, "'Social Poland' Defeats 'Liberal Poland'? The September-October 2005 Polish Parliamentary and Presidential Elections," 223-224.

prevented the formation of strong links between constituencies of voters and particular political parties, limiting the ability of the party system to consistently represent the multitude of interests in society.

The sharp contrast between the Church and most of its party competitors is immediately obvious; while most parties struggled to carve out a niche in the new democratic system, the Church remained much as it had for the last century. The lack of unity within political parties and the failure of broader alliances between smaller parties, weakened most parties as competitors to the Church. The bewildering array of choices split the political system to such a degree that the Church continued to appear as one of the few stable, viable, and reliable choices in the new system. In effect, the weakness of the majority of Poland's political parties increased the openings available to the Church to claim that it represented a broader spectrum of Polish society. The Church still faced few rivals that could match it with the same degree of organization, resources, and potential constituency size. A degree of consolidation within the party system has narrowed party options to a manageable level and increased the plausibility of a few parties effectively assuming their articulative and representative functions. It remains to be seen if these parties can successfully navigate the challenges of Polish politics and build successful party structures to become viable, stable, and reliable representatives of the Polish people. Until the party system becomes fully consolidated, the Church will continue to look like the more reliable representative and will consequently receive openings into the political system that positively affect its political opportunity structure.



### The Stability of Party Development in Slovenia

As in Poland, the Slovene political landscape filled up with a diverse assortment of parties, ready to represent various concerns in society. Among the great number of parties which have developed in post-Communist Slovenia, several distinct ideological strands, spanning the spectrum of political belief, are apparent: socialism, religion, nationalism, liberalism, populism, and environmentalism.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, parties have formed as advocates for specific groups in society, such as farmers and retired persons.<sup>11</sup> In general, the party system in Slovenia appears to have been much more stable than the system in Poland over the last 15 years as the Slovene system has gone through "a process of gradual system-development from a nucleus of durable parties."<sup>12</sup> As a result, Slovenia's party system is considered to be among the most developed and stable in the post-Communist region<sup>13</sup> such that, as early as 1993, one observer concluded that "Slovenia's political parties are now more or less comparable to those in continental European countries with a traditional multi-party democracy."<sup>14</sup> Therefore, in the mix of political parties in Slovenia,

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<sup>10</sup> Danica Fink-Hafner, "Development of a Party System," in *Making a New Nation: The Formation of Slovenia*, Danica Fink-Hafner and John R. Robbins, eds. (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1997), 145-148.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>12</sup> Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 143.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>14</sup> Bibić makes two caveats to this observation; "their profiles are not as sharply defined as those in countries with a long liberal democratic tradition and their relationships are far more fluid." Adolf Bibić, "The Emergence of Pluralism in Slovenia," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 26, no. 4 (1993): 384.



it has generally been easier for voters to find a dependable party that already possesses an established record in the country, the democratic system, and the country's Parliament. The Church's presence and stability do not present a remarkable contrast to the state of democratic institutions, so there has been little space for it to step in as Slovenes' representative. Thus, both the variety and effectiveness of Slovenia's political parties have presented a particular challenge for the Church in its quest to gain a share of political power. These political parties occupy the official representative space such that the Church is not needed to assume the representative function for Slovene citizens; these citizens are likely to find a political party that fits their particular interests. Moreover, the nature of the democratic system vests power in parties through the election of their members to the governing bodies of the state. This established presence in the decision-making apparatus of the state gives parties an edge over the Church in influencing the course of the polity. This advantage is enhanced by the parties' consensus around Slovenia's broad policy goals, the development of a number of stable and reliable political parties, a significant slowdown in the entry of new parties,<sup>15</sup> a general trend of consolidation over fragmentation, and the adaptability of the former *nomenklatura*<sup>16</sup> to the democratic political system.

Despite the complications of political transformation and the pace of party formation, the Slovene party system has maintained a paradoxical state of stability, which

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<sup>15</sup> In 1992, the number of party contenders was 26, in 1996, 22, and in 2000, 16. Extracted from table 4.8 in Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 90.

<sup>16</sup> The term *nomenklatura* refers to the elite of the former Communist government.

means that the Church has been dealing with a relatively consistent set of party competitors that have existed since the early 1990s, regularly make it into Parliament, and remain politically active. This has left a reduced space for other interests to take up a significant role linking Slovenes to the democratic state. This consistency and stability represents a sharp contrast to the situation in Poland, where political parties were largely mutable and inconstant. Like Poland, Slovenia was besieged by an explosion of new parties when political competition was legalized; however, these parties were united, at least initially, around the common goal of Slovene independence.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, the degree of fragmentation among Slovenia's parties was initially modest because political expediency required party competitors to cooperate to ensure that Slovenia's separation from Yugoslavia proceeded as smoothly as possible. This consensus has lasted for much of the post-Communist period because the dominance of the centre limits polarization between left and right<sup>18</sup> and a "large degree of overlap [existed] between parties on core values, such as the establishment and consolidation of democracy, the development of a market economy . . . and on major issues such as potential membership in the EU or NATO."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Alenka Krašovec, "Party and State in Democratic Slovenia," in *Party Development and Democratic Change in Post-Communist Europe: The First Decade*, ed. Paul G. Lewis (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 94.

<sup>18</sup> Drago Zajc, "Slovenia," in *The Handbook of Political Change in Eastern Europe*, eds. Sten Berglund, Thomas Hellén, and Frank H. Aarbroten (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 1998), 280.

<sup>19</sup> James Gow and Cathie Carmichael, *Slovenia and the Slovenes: A Small State and the New Europe* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), 156-157. Kuzmanić expresses a similar idea as well, stating that there is a "more or less uniform consensus on almost all key political questions." Tonči Kuzmanić, "Slovenia: From Yugoslavia to the Middle of Nowhere?" in *Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Mary Kaldor and Ivan Vejvoda (London: Pinter,

This made it difficult for the Church to align with a political party or group that shares its particular values because almost all of the parties are striving toward the same goals. They did not need the Church as an ally; this would mean sharing resources and tempering the liberalization of Slovenia. Further, what Millard calls “party tourism,” the defection of individuals from one party to another, which leads to party breakdown and new party formation, has been rare in Slovenia, especially in comparison to other post-Communist countries.<sup>20</sup> Even the fragmentation of DEMOS, which may have been fomented by conflict over the Church,<sup>21</sup> before the 1992 elections failed to disturb the system because “DEMOS had been constructed of identifiable proto-parties and collapsed into its constituent elements.”<sup>22</sup> This meant that when DEMOS disappeared, most of its spinoffs were already recognized parties or groupings. Thus, the Slovene political party scene possessed a host of features which allowed parties to fill the political space created by democratization. In contrast, Polish parties existed in a state of relative upheaval throughout most of the post-communist period, leaving more space for the Church to take advantage of other openings in the political opportunity structure. Until recently, the general state of agreement on Slovenia’s moderate course opened up few opportunities for

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1999), 124.

<sup>20</sup> Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 133.

<sup>21</sup> According to Millard, the split of DEMOS occurred over economic and religious issues, namely the Christian Democrats undue attention toward the Church over other, more important issues. Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 53.

<sup>22</sup> Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 53.

the Church. However, since the year 2000, both the notable growth of the right,<sup>23</sup> and the increasing accentuation of issues such as national identity, religion, and ethnicity to create distinct party identities<sup>24</sup> have moved the Slovene system slightly from its moderate course. This may have opened opportunities for the Church to engage in collaboration with more potential political party allies that are defined by religious, traditionalist themes.

*Political Parties as Collaborators*

Besides acting as competitors in their bid to represent society, political parties can also serve as a valuable resource for the Church, especially when they connect voters to the Church's interests. Conversely, the Church is also a valuable resource for a party seeking legitimation of its ideology or policies. The degree to which the objectives and policy of a political party and the Church coincide determines their compatibility as convenient partners or hostile enemies. Additionally, the ability of compatible and incompatible allies to establish an effective party organization, stable presence in politics, and strong links with the electorate affects the Church's opportunities to have an influence on politics and public policy.

The Weakness of Compatible Allies: The Fragmented, Ineffective Polish Right

The prevailing cleavage structure in Polish politics for much of the post-communist period has largely dictated which part of the political spectrum and which parties are

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<sup>23</sup> In one of the most recent works on Slovenia, Cox notes that the "more conservative elements in the Slovene polity would seem to be on a upswing at the moment, with the center-right undergoing something of a deflation." This is a reaction to the NSi's election to two out of seven seats to the European Parliament in 2004. Cox, 122-123.

<sup>24</sup> Harris, 169.

compatible with the Church. This cleavage structure, described as “a historical-cultural one, framed by a combination of attitudes toward the communist past and moral and cultural values, particularly the role of the Catholic Church in public life, and closely linked to levels of religiosity,”<sup>25</sup> has continued to define where both parties and voters place themselves on the political spectrum.<sup>26</sup> Thus, a number of parties on Poland’s right, which tend to have links to the opposition movement of the 1980s, show the greatest ideological compatibility with the Church and support Church-oriented policies; that is, the Polish right typically lends more credence to religious demands.<sup>27</sup> However, most parties on the right have failed to become coherent political parties because they are “divided to and beyond the point of being self-defeating.”<sup>28</sup> As a result, most parties of the right have failed to become part of the political system’s select, stable core of political parties, representing ineffective political choices for Polish voters and unreliable allies for the Church. Thus, although great potential has been realized by the Church’s association with the right, the openings spawned by an association with these allies are tempered by the right’s failure to spawn consistent, durable parties.

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<sup>25</sup> Szczerbiak, “‘Social Poland’ Defeats ‘Liberal Poland’? The September-October 2005 Polish Parliamentary and Presidential Elections,” 219.

<sup>26</sup> Kitschelt et al., 232, 252-254, 276-277; Radoslaw Markowski, “Party System Institutionalization in New Democracies: Poland - A Trend-Setter with No Followers,” in *Party Development and Democratic Change in Post-Communist Europe: The First Decade*, Paul G. Lewis, ed. (London; Portland: Frank Cass, 2001), 68; Szczerbiak, “‘Social Poland’ Defeats ‘Liberal Poland’? The September-October 2005 Polish Parliamentary and Presidential Elections,” 219.

<sup>27</sup> Kitschelt et al., 233.

<sup>28</sup> Marjorie Castle and Ray Taras, *Democracy in Poland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002), 133.

Initially, during the heady days of the Polish transition and the interim government of 1989, Solidarity appeared to be the dominant force shaping Poland's political future, but this dominance dissipated as prominent personalities and constituent groupings within the alliance fought amongst themselves for dominance.<sup>29</sup> This formation, which contained a number of pro-Church groups and leaders, was also the Church's closest supporter. After Solidarity's fragmentation, several key post-Solidarity political groupings emerged to support the preservation of Catholic identity and morality in Poland, notably the various parties subsumed under the Church-sponsored banner of Catholic Electoral Action (WAK).<sup>30</sup> The ZChN, which was affiliated with WAK, became a component of two coalition governments in the 1991-1993 legislature. During this time, when the Church's rightist allies held a position of power within the governing coalition, the Church experienced some of its greatest gains. This included the signing of the Concordat and the passage of a highly restrictive abortion law. However, the opportunities of this time were not to last; during the period from 1993 to 1997, the right became highly fragmented, beset by conflict, party breakdown, and leadership struggles.<sup>31</sup> Reacting to the threat posed by the SLD, several parties of the right managed to come together to form AWS for the 1997 elections,

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<sup>29</sup> Grabowski, 241-247; Marian Grzybowski, "Poland," in *The Handbook of Political Change in Eastern Europe*, eds. Sten Berglund, Tomas Hellén, and Frank H. Aarebrot (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1998), 160-161.

<sup>30</sup> During the 1991 elections, Church officials openly endorsed specific candidates and parties in their parishes, including Catholic Electoral Action. Mirella Eberts and Peter Torok, "The Catholic Church and Post-Communist Elections in Hungary and Poland Compared," in *Religion and Social Change in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Miklós Tomka (Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS, 2001), 136-137.

<sup>31</sup> Castle and Taras, 133-134.

but “the basis on which they came together was a negative one, there was little programmatic coherence, and the constituent entities were unwilling to sink their own putative identities into a single political party.”<sup>32</sup> As a result, this grand coalition of rightist parties succumbed to the same fate as Solidarity, breaking down and, ultimately, breaking up into two main successors Solidarity Electoral Action - Right (AWSP) and Law and Justice (PiS) who competed in the 2001 elections. Although PiS persisted to fight another election in 2005, AWSP, forged from several different groupings who refused to submerge their individuality into a common entity,<sup>33</sup> suffered the same fate as its predecessors. Thus, during this period, stretching from 1989 to 2001, the Polish right, although attaining electoral success in the 1991 and 1997, failed to produce much in the way of cohesive, stable parties. Even those brief periods of success provided the Church with numerous openings into politics and the governing coalition, but the lack of a consistent, identifiable party ally kept the Church no doubt diminished certain openings that would have enhanced the political opportunities available at particular times.

The situation of the right, and thus of the Church in its search for a party ally appears to have taken a turn for the better since 2001. When the SLD, the bedrock party of the left and the entire political system, experienced its own course of scandal and fragmentation in 2003, a significant opportunity opened for the right to ascend to prominence, but only if it could coalesce to form some coherent parties in time for the next

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<sup>32</sup> Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 266.

<sup>33</sup> Millard, “Elections in Poland 2001: Electoral Manipulation and Party Upheaval,” 76.



election in 2005. Several viable parties, which had all been contenders in the 2001 elections, were able to take advantage of voter disillusionment with the tarnished SLD: PO, PiS, and LPR. Among these parties, PiS and LPR shared the most values with Church officials. The LPR, the latest incarnation of the Christian-national sector, is the Church's most natural ally because of its Christian-Catholic orientation.<sup>34</sup> However, the party's interests do not completely coincide with those of the Church as the LPR is not supportive of Poland's integration with the EU,<sup>35</sup> a policy with which the Church became closely associated during the late 1990s. PiS also had the potential to create an atmosphere that was conducive to the realization of the Church's goals. This is because "PiS represents a much more traditional viewpoint, retains a Christian Democratic spirit and clearly distances itself from liberal fundamentalism in the economy by supporting some kinds of state assistance for less affluent citizens."<sup>36</sup> In addition, PiS's tendency toward virulent anti-communism<sup>37</sup> suggests a commonality with the Church which is unmistakable; the Church has maintained its position as a vocal opponent of the communist successor parties and the legacies of communism throughout the post-Communist period. The ascendancy of these

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<sup>34</sup> The LPR opposes same-sex relationships and endorses Catholic morality in public life. Marcin Mierzejewski, "Swinging Right," *The Warsaw Voice* (4 November 2004) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/index.phtml?pg=druk&a=6984>; Internet: accessed 21 August 2005.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> PiS's distrust of the former communists is evident in their radical motion to criminalize the SLD in late 2004. In addition, according to Mierzejewski, "PiS politicians have never concealed their hostility for the post-communist left, which they see as a corrupt, criminal, and even secret police-like organization." Marcin Mierzejewski, "Polar Divide," *The Warsaw Voice* (24 November 2004) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/view/7092>; Internet: accessed 10 October 2005.



two parties has once again created more opportunities for the Church to attain influence in the party arena and enhanced the Church's political opportunity structure. However, it is questionable whether these parties can contain the forces which have ripped apart previous incarnations of the right. The very recent period of PiS pre-eminence under the leadership of the controversial Kaczynski twins, Lech as President and Jaroslav as Prime Minister, witnessed the introduction of measures that were so beneficial to the Church as to prompt suggestions that a violation of the of the principles of the Church-State relationship took place.<sup>38</sup>

#### Consistent, Dependable Allies: The Slovene Right

One advantage of the Slovene party system's stability has been the availability of several small, well-established, consistent parties as potential political allies for the Church. As in Poland, these parties generally lie toward the right side of the political spectrum and have shown problems forming larger political groupings to challenge the immensely successful Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LDS) in the nation's elections.<sup>39</sup> The most notable pro-Church parties in Slovenia have been the Slovene Christian Democrats (SKD), the Slovene People's Party (SLS) and, more recently, the Social Democratic Party of Slovenia (SDS) and the New Slovenia-People's Christian Party (NSi). The SKD, the largest constituent of the DEMOS coalition during the early 1990s, was a party of the

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<sup>38</sup> Wojciech Sadurski, "The Constitutional Order," in *Democracy in Poland 2005 - 2007*, eds. Lena Kolarska-Bobinska, Jacek Kucharczyk, and Jaroslav Zbieranek (Warsaw: Institute of Public Affairs, 2008), 21.

<sup>39</sup> Attempts to form 'Coalition Slovenia' in 2000 were successful for the election, but quickly fell apart in the wake of defections, breakdowns, and mergers. Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 148-149.

centre-right that managed to contest and attain success in each post-communist election in Slovenia. Because of its identity as a Christian party, the SKD, “support traditional values and defend the position of the Catholic Church in society, as well as urging the reintroduction of religious education in schools.”<sup>40</sup> The SLS, similar to the SKD in outlook, also resides at the centre-right of the political spectrum.<sup>41</sup> Both the SKD and the SLS “embrace in many ways the legacy of the old clericals”;<sup>42</sup> however, an attempted union between the two parties to form a larger unit, SLS + SKD, during the late 1990s, was largely a failure because of the party’s participation in the brief, yet unpopular, rightist coalition government of 2000 and the defection of a crucial leader, Lojze Peterle, to the NSi.<sup>43</sup> The Social Democratic Party of Slovenia (SDS), originally left of center when it was known as SDSS, had, by 2000, turned to the right, adopting populist appeals in party rhetoric.<sup>44</sup> By 2004, the party changed its name yet again, becoming the Slovene Democratic Party (SDS). Regardless of its name, this political party has successfully competed in each of Slovenia’s four post-Communist elections, winning seats each time, and in the last election in 2004, winning the most seats of any party (see appendix B for full results). This party, noted for its propensity toward an increased role for the Roman

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<sup>40</sup> Zajc, “Slovenia,” 281.

<sup>41</sup> Cox, 119.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.; Bebler, 133-134.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.; Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 148.

Catholic Church,<sup>45</sup> is one of the Church's best chances to enhance its political opportunity structure and expand its political influence. The NSi, a recent entrant into the party arena (2000), has rapidly become a formidable political force, winning seats in the two elections in which it participated, and becoming part of the new governing coalition of the right in 2004. This Church-supported party,<sup>46</sup> along with the other Church-oriented parties of the right serve as important allies for the Church in its quest to influence Slovene politics. The relatively stable, consistent presence of these parties, especially as compared to the instability Poland's right, gives these parties a favourable profile with Slovenia's electorate. This means that the parties successfully present themselves as a plausible alternative to the LDS because they seem more likely to be able to provide stable, effective government. Moreover, as constituents of governing coalitions, they possess the potential to change government policy and provide openings for the Church. Thus, the Slovene Church, steeped in a political system that has consistently provided more stable, appealing allies on the right, has enjoyed more potential openings in this component of the political opportunity structure than in Poland; however, voters' choices ultimately determined how effective these openings would be for the Church's goals.

### *Political Parties as Opponents*

#### Serious Challenger: The Former Communists Reincarnate Themselves in the SLD

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<sup>45</sup> Rizman refers to this proclivity in his discussion of the possibilities emerging from an SDS-led coalition, specifically pondering whether leader Janša will be able to resist the urge "to increase the influence of the Catholic Church in vital social spheres (education, in particular)..." Rizman, 75.

<sup>46</sup> The formation of this party received "the strong and visible support of the most influential dignitaries in the Catholic Church." Rizman, 73. Also, in the 2000 election this party was openly supported by the Church. Iveković, 530.

Although the fragmentation of many parties has limited their effectiveness in the political system, the Communist successor party, the SdRP, and its party alliance, the SLD, which became the SLD party in 1999, demonstrated a formidable ability to compete successfully in Polish politics. From 1993 to 2001, the effects of the SLD's success were readily apparent, as the SLD made gains in popular vote at each election,<sup>47</sup> even as the Church actively discouraged voters from supporting these ex-Communists. The SLD made a tremendous breakthrough in 1993, launching the party into a dominant role in the political system, capturing the allegiance of Poles holding anti-clerical and pro-Church views alike, and becoming the only party which could be described as a party of "broad appeal," able to span the Communist/anti-Communist divide: "SLD politicians had gotten so much public respect that even if the public still thought communism was bad, the SLD seemed not only far from that past but also comparatively more sane and rational than those who were not 'tainted' by communist pasts."<sup>48</sup> Despite their past, the former Communists of the SdRP demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt to the realities of democracy and to use the system to their advantage. This task which required a remarkable level of political insight, skill, and persistence; these qualities were lacking in most other party competitors. Although the SdRP started from a shaky ideological foundation, the party's break with the past was clear in its adoption of the new symbols of

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<sup>47</sup> The SLD's percentage of the popular vote increased as follows: 1991, 12 percent; 1993, 20.4 percent; 1997, 27.1 percent; 2001, 41.0 percent.

<sup>48</sup> Jane Leftwich Curry, "Poland's Ex-Communists: From Pariahs to Establishment Players," in *The Left Transformed in Post-Communist Societies: The Cases of East-Central Europe, Russia, and Ukraine*, eds. Jane Leftwich Curry and Joan Barth Urban (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 32.

social democracy and its reformist stance.<sup>49</sup> Simultaneously, the party retained resources, supporters, and organizational skills from the old organization that allowed members to build a strong party.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the party's estrangement from other parties and fellow parliamentarians isolated its members, effectively instilling a party unity that is rare in other Polish parties.<sup>51</sup> In addition, the SdRP's effective control over the SLD also enhanced the party's cohesion.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, the SLD was able to rival the Church in terms of organizational capacity and resources: maintaining a considerable reach across Polish territory, a core of dedicated supporters, and a relatively sturdy resource base. Most of all, as the party held onto its traditional support base, it also gained new supporters by becoming a party of 'broad appeal', avoiding overtly 'Communist' policies, recruiting low-profile candidates for important posts, and gaining the support of the disillusioned electorate.<sup>53</sup> In effect, the ex-Communists of the SdRP and the SLD became representatives of the democratic system, shedding their history of past resistance to democratic change as easily as a second skin, while the Church remained mired in a past in which its power was defined by its opposition to an unpopular government that no longer existed.

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<sup>49</sup> Anna M. Grymala-Busse, *Redeeming the Communist Past: The Regeneration of Communist Parties in East Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 105-107; 161.

<sup>50</sup> Curry, 26; Castle and Raymond Taras, *Consolidating Democracy in Poland* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 125-127.

<sup>51</sup> Curry, 26, 35-36; Grymala-Busse, 250-251.

<sup>52</sup> Curry, 50.

<sup>53</sup> Curry, 30-31.

The SLD retained at least one ideological feature from the Communist period which has, at times, represented a constraint on the Church's activities; the party's unmistakably secular stance<sup>54</sup> questions the legitimacy of the Church's political power and it also competes with the Church's moral stance on policy issues. During the 1990s, relative to other parties, the SLD showed the most pronounced opposition to the Church's political power.<sup>55</sup> For the 1993 election, the SLD's opposition to the Church's power was presented as an objection to the Church's religious dominance, the anti-abortion law, and the circumstances surrounding the negotiation of the Concordat because these items infringed on the rights of other religions and women and interfered with the jurisdiction of the Polish state.<sup>56</sup> Even though ideology pulled the SLD toward a position of opposition to the Church as a political power, the party's pragmatism provided openings for the Church because the SLD needed to maintain its broad appeal and its reputation as a reasonable actor to ensure future electoral success. This lent a great deal of flexibility to party's dealings with the Church; leaders were careful to choose the issues over which they would engage in conflict with the Church's moral absolutism. Abortion was one issue over which the SLD uncompromisingly opposed the Church's position, particularly the Church-

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<sup>54</sup> The party is a firm advocate of the separation between Church and state. Curry, 30.

<sup>55</sup> Poland's parties presented a large spread on this particular issue with the ZChN sanctioning the Church's influence the most, many parties lying in between the two extreme views, such as KPN, PSL, and UD, and the SLD showing the most disregard for the Church's influence. Kitschelt et al., 319.

<sup>56</sup> Curry, 40. Also, certain elements within the SLD continued to object to the Church's power as late as 2003, advocating a strict separation between Church and state. Witold Żygulski, "Trouble at the Top," *The Warsaw Voice* (3 April 2003) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/index.phtml?pg=druk&a=1879> Internet: accessed 11 March 2005.

influenced, restrictive anti-abortion law of 1993.<sup>57</sup> However, SLD leaders' reputations for logic and pragmatism were not entirely unearned; the SLD treaded lightly around the issue of the Church, simply because most Poles and therefore voters were still officially Roman Catholic. Thus, on occasion, the SLD attempted to appease the Church and its followers by cooperating with the Church. For instance, during its first term in government, it reached out to religious believers by allowing the Christian Social Union (UChS) into the SLD alliance; whether this move was motivated by strategic considerations, namely appealing to devout Catholic voters to broaden the party's support, or genuine policy changes, is debatable.<sup>58</sup> SLD leaders also made moves toward including the Church in political discussions during the meetings of the joint Government-Episcopal committee around the same time.<sup>59</sup> Since both the SLD and the Church supported Poland's integration with the European Union, cooperation was necessary during the final stages of accession, when the SLD was the main governing party. Thus, even though the SLD's policy position advocated separation between Church and state and the SLD acted as a constraint on Church encroachment into the political arena, the tempering of this policy reduced the SLD's opposition to the Church's influence when its pragmatism overrode ideology and provided openings in the political opportunity structure.

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<sup>57</sup> Refer to article on opposition to abortion here.

<sup>58</sup> Potocki presents his skepticism of this move, focusing on the suspicions of political opponents and Church representatives. Andrzej Potocki, UW Spokesman, "SLD-Church Rapprochement: That New-Found Religion," *The Warsaw Voice* (14 April 1996) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.html/89/> Internet: accessed 4 February 2005.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Despite the SLD's success for most of the post-Communist period, its measure as a competitor to the Church has undergone significant modification in recent years. Corruption, internal squabbling, and electoral defeat, have combined to compromise the image of professionalism and stability which contributed to the SLD's success. Its term in office from 2001 to 2005 was rocked by political scandals and allegations of corruption, many of which arose from the legacies of Communist period. The SLD was also damaged by the breakaway formation of a new political party, Polish Social Democracy (SDPL), in 2004, just as the party faced its lowest rankings in public opinion polls.<sup>60</sup> Since the 2005 elections, when the SLD garnered the lowest percentage of popular votes in its history,<sup>61</sup> the SLD has held the status of opposition party, holding fewer seats than at any time since the early 1990s. The weakness of the SLD has released some of the constraints which this powerful political party imposed on the Church; the SLD has less influence over the development of the polity. Since the SLD's downfall is concurrent with the rise of several parties of the right, notably Church-friendly PiS and the Catholic LPR, the Church's opportunity to influence policy has likely increased, while constraints on its political activity have likely decreased. However, whether this drop in the SLD's fortunes signals a permanent decline for the party is questionable as it seems that a significant portion of its constituency neglected to vote in the last election, the party retains the strong

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<sup>60</sup> "Regrouping the Left Camp," The Warsaw Voice (26 May 2004) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/index.phtml?pg=druk&a=539> Internet: accessed 21 August 2005.

<sup>61</sup> The SLD only received the support of just over 11 percent of those who voted in the 2005 elections to the Sejm.



organizational capacity that made it a successful party during the previous 15 years, and the Polish party scene continues to be unstable.<sup>62</sup> If the SLD manages to rebound from this low period, it may once again represent a threat to the Church's power.

#### Continuity in Power: Slovenia's Liberal Democrats

The Liberal Democratic Party of Slovenia (LDS), arguably Slovenia's most successful party competitor, as well as one of the Church's greatest detractors, originated from the Communist *nomenklatura*, much as the Church's leading party competitor in Poland. Like the former Communists in many east-central European countries, including Poland, many of the Slovene Communists were able to transform themselves into democratic parties relatively quickly, but the former Communists in Slovenia had an extra edge; they became partners in the change, rather than persisting as opponents.<sup>63</sup> As a result, they were incorporated into the new system from the beginning and were able to take advantage of the resources which they inherited from the previous party apparatus in their transformation into a democratic, competitive political party.<sup>64</sup> Among the two main descendants of the former Communist apparatus, the ZLSD and the LDS, the LDS, which originated from the League of Socialist Youth (LSY), has undoubtedly been the more successful of the two. The Slovene LDS is equated with the Polish SLD as the one of the

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<sup>62</sup> Szczerbiak, "'Social Poland' Defeats 'Liberal Poland'?", 222-224.

<sup>63</sup> Alenka Krašovec, "Party and State in Democratic Slovenia," in *Party Development and Democratic Change in Post-Communist Europe: The First Decade*, ed. Paul G. Lewis (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 94; Harris, 169.

<sup>64</sup> Krašovec, 94; Cox, 118.

two major Communist-successor parties that “established themselves as pivotal players.”<sup>65</sup>

The constant leadership of Janez Drnovšek from 1992-2002, the LDS’s superior organization, and the LDS’s pursuit of a centrist policy, firmly established the LDS as Slovenia’s main party.<sup>66</sup> The LDS’s platform encompasses the broad values of “preserving social justice and social harmony in Slovenia while also . . . securing the new sovereign state, promoting the growth of both democracy and market-based economic restructuring, and pursuing integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions such as the EU and NATO.”<sup>67</sup> Significantly, the LDS has also been firmly secularist in its stance, seeking a strict separation between church and state. Thus, from 1992 to 2004, when the LDS formed the primary party in government coalitions on a nearly continuous basis, the Church faced a constrained political opportunity structure that provided few openings to further the Church’s agenda. This is not to suggest that the Church was unable to achieve any concessions during that time, but the few openings that were offered were small and resulted in insignificant gains for the Church. For instance, the tug of war over religious education, which has been strung out over most of the post-communist period, has only resulted in the concession to provide an optional course, ‘Religions and Ethics’, to secondary school students.<sup>68</sup> Because of the constitutional separation between church and

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<sup>65</sup> Millard, *Parties, Elections, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 111.

<sup>66</sup> Cox, 117 - 118.

<sup>67</sup> Cox, 118.

<sup>68</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, “Conclusion: Slovenia between Liberalism and Clericalism,” in *Democratic Transition in Slovenia: Value Transformation, Education, and Media*, eds. Sabrina P. Ramet and Danica Fink-Hafner (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2006), 272.

state, this course cannot be used as a vehicle to introduce explicitly Roman Catholic education into the schools, without constitutional modifications, a seemingly unlikely prospect.<sup>69</sup>

A decline in the fortunes of the LDS after leader Drnovšek's departure for the Presidency in 2002 has become a political boon for actors on both the right and the left of the political spectrum. First, after the departure of Drnovšek as leader in 2002, the party moved from its centre-left position further to the left, making the party less palatable to Slovene voters. At the same time, the center was taken over by the ZLSD and the SDS.<sup>70</sup> This effectively trapped the LDS in its new, less popular leftist orientation. Also, after its many years in power, Slovenes became increasingly dissatisfied with indications of corruption in the LDS. For the LDS, these changes resulted in electoral defeat to the forces of the right in 2004. Since then, the LDS has shown great difficulty adapting itself to the requirements of its opposition role.<sup>71</sup> In this situation of LDS decline and centre-right ascendancy, the Church stands to benefit from a more open political opportunity structure than it has faced since Slovene independence and the brief period of rightist

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<sup>69</sup> Klemenčič, "Conclusion: Slovenia between Liberalism and Clericalism," 272-273.

<sup>70</sup> Fink-Hafner pondered the possible negative consequences of losing Drnovšek after the 2002 elections, including fears about an LDS monopoly over the two highest offices in the country, those of President and Prime Minister. Danica-Fink Hafner, "Slovenia," *European Journal of Political Research* 42 (2003): 1083-1084.

<sup>71</sup> Leadership changes to reposition the party only happened a full year after the time of the electoral defeat. Danica Fink-Hafner, "Slovenia," *European Journal of Political Research* 45 (2006): 1263. Also, the President, and former leader of the LDS, Drnovšek, engaged in conflict with parliament as he plunged into the role of opposition; a role which the LDS was failing to fulfill. Danica Fink-Hafner, "Slovenia," *European Journal of Political Research* 46 (2007): 1111.

coalition government in 2000. Finally, Church-friendly politicians are dominant in party politics, setting up a situation that could be filled with opportunities to increase the Church's role in Slovene political and social life. However, the ability of these parties to function effectively as electoral contenders and parliamentary representatives remains to be seen.

### *Summary*

The relative instability of Polish party politics as compared to Slovene party politics has played a role in shaping the political opportunity structure in each country. The instability of Polish parties has acted as both an advantage and a disadvantage for the Church, facilitating the image of the Church as a comparatively stable, reliable representative of the Polish people but, simultaneously, limiting the effectiveness of potential political party allies and access to political openings created by affiliation with political parties. Conversely, for the Slovene Church, the stability of the party scene provided little means to differentiate between political parties and the Church as representatives of Slovenes but, simultaneously expanded the number of stable, effective political party allies available to the Church. Thus, the Slovene Church was confined to work through political party allies to gain access to parliament, whereas the Polish Church, independently powerful as a representative and lacking stable party allies, could sometimes forgo the necessity of working through its party allies to gain access to government. However, in both cases, the rejuvenation of former Communist *nomenklatura* to form the most stable and effective parties in the political party arena has, at times, limited both Church's abilities to gain openings in party and

government politics. For the Slovene Church, the consistency of the LDS acted as a formidable constraint on its political activities until recently. The Polish Church has not been similarly limited because of the alternation in the fortunes of the SDL, but has also seen recent changes in party politics which may create new openings for the Church. Thus, because of the multitude of political party elements contributing to the political opportunity structure, no single element was able to exclusively constrain or expand the Church's political opportunities at any point in time. Further, these opportunities, based on political parties, are modified by the electoral process and government dynamics in each country.

## CHAPTER 7

### ELECTORAL POLITICS: CHANGING THE FORTUNES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

As the forum for political choice in a democracy, elections determine the winners and losers among political parties. In this way, citizens' choices at the ballot box, in interaction with the structure of the electoral system, translate into seats and power in the legislature and thereby into the chance to influence the direction of government policy. Thus, the fate of the Church's allies, as well as its opponents, in the electoral arena necessarily affect the Church's political opportunity structure by determining which parties gained the potential to influence policy. Furthermore, elections also provided the Church with a forum for its own ambitions, either as a party supporter or as a third-party influence.

Since the Round Table of 1989 and the first partially-free elections of the same year, Poles have had multiple opportunities to vote in competitive democratic elections.<sup>1</sup> The results of elections to the Sejm, from 1991 to 2005, are provided in Appendix A. Polish elections displayed two consistent, interrelated trends: minority winners and alternating party turnover. In every election to the Sejm, the party or electoral coalition winning the highest number of seats failed to attain a majority, meaning that the winning party was required to put together a coalition with one or more other parties to form a government. Also, a trend of alternation was apparent in the switch between rightist

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<sup>1</sup> Elections to the *Sejm*, the lower chamber of the Parliament, and the Senate, the upper chamber in Parliament, were held simultaneously in 1991, 1993, 1997, 2001, and 2005. Poles also elected their President in 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005. Other opportunities to vote, at the local level, also took place in 1990, 1994, 1998, and 2002.

parties and the SLD as winners of successive electoral contests.

Slovenes have also had multiple opportunities to vote in fully democratic elections since the processes of democratization and independence gained full momentum during 1990 and 1991.<sup>2</sup> The full results of the elections to the *Državni Zbor* (National Assembly) are provided in Appendix B. It should be noted that the first post-communist elections of 1990 have been minimized in this analysis because Slovenia was not yet an independent state. As in Poland, these electoral contests produced winning parties with only a minority of seats in National Assembly. However, the identity of the winning party was consistent over all of the elections between 1992 and 2000. This sharply contrasts with the pattern of alternation that became the norm in the Polish system. Consequently, the Slovene system possessed an element of continuity between elections that is similar to that of western European systems; the winner of the previous election, which was also the current governing party, usually tended to have the upper hand in subsequent elections.<sup>3</sup>

#### *A Work in Progress: The Effects of Ongoing Electoral Reform*

The list proportional electoral system, which was chosen to allocate seats among electoral contenders to both Poland's *Sejm* and Slovenia's National Assembly, introduces

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<sup>2</sup> Elections for the National Assembly (*Državni Zbor*) were held in 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2004. Also, elections for the Presidency were held in 1992, 1997, and 2002. The founding elections of the intermediate between the old system and the new were held in 1990 for both the National Assembly and the Presidency.

<sup>3</sup> This refers to Millard's conclusions about the effects of incumbency, which were mentioned Chapter 4. Essentially, Millard contrasts the typical situation of electoral turnover in eastern Europe with the edge that is conferred by incumbency in western Europe. Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 276.

another element of volatility into the political opportunity structure. This is because the formula used in each election affects how voters' preferences are translated into seats in the legislature and, depending on the threshold of popular votes that is required to gain a seat, changes the number and composition of parties in the legislature. Thus, a lower threshold means that seats are divided among a greater number of parties in the legislature.

Conversely, a higher threshold disproportionately benefits parties with a larger support base over those with a smaller support base, allowing fewer parties into the legislature. In this way, as the proportional formula and thresholds are modified to find the proper balance between effective representation and chaos, political parties find themselves in a different situation as popular appeal translates into seats. For the Church, the fate of its party allies and opponents in the proportional system determines the openings that the Church receives to influence the legislature.

The proportional system in Poland has undergone frequent modification during the post-communist era, both to reduce fragmentation of seats among numerous small parties and to manipulate the winners and losers in the electoral process. The proportional formula for Poland's first elections in 1991<sup>4</sup> introduced a high degree of proportionality into the electoral contest, giving all parties a chance to gain seats in the legislature.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> No threshold existed for parties or alliances in single-member districts, but a 5 percent threshold was in place for the national list. Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 86.

<sup>5</sup> Taras, 191; Castle and Taras., 97; Richard Rose and Neil Munro, *Elections and Parties in New European Democracies* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2003), 228.



However, this resulted in a fragmented legislature; with seats divided between twenty-nine different parties, finding the common ground to build effective and stable coalitions was nearly impossible. To preclude the degree of fragmentation which had beset the legislature after the 1991 elections, the formula for the 1993 elections<sup>6</sup> raised the threshold for parties and coalitions to enter the legislature, altered districts, and changed the seat allocation formula.<sup>7</sup> This alteration accounts for some of the contrast between 1993 legislature and the one which preceded it: the number of parties and groupings in the *Sejm* dropped from an unwieldy twenty-nine to a mere six. This blocked several parties from the *Sejm*, including rightist parties WAK 'Fatherland' and Solidarity, which each fell just below the minimum threshold.<sup>8</sup> The same formula prevailed in the 1997 elections,<sup>9</sup> producing a *Sejm* composed of only five parties.<sup>10</sup> Further modifications to the electoral law in 2001 once again changed the formula for awarding seats to parties in the *Sejm*, allowing for greater proportionality.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the number of parties in the *Sejm* increased to six,<sup>12</sup> including

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<sup>6</sup> The threshold for single-member districts was set at 5 percent for parties and 8 percent for alliances, while the threshold for groupings on the national list was set at 8 percent. Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 86. Rose and Munro, 228-229; Taras, 195.

<sup>7</sup> Grzybowski, 170.

<sup>8</sup> Taras, 195.

<sup>9</sup> Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 86.

<sup>10</sup> This excludes the seats set aside for representation of the German Minority.

<sup>11</sup> The main thrust of the law altered the threshold for parties on the national list, the formula used to distribute seats, and the size of districts. Rose and Munro, 229; Millard, "Elections in Poland 2001: electoral manipulation and party upheaval," 70-71.

<sup>12</sup> Excluding the seats reserved for the German minority.

three new political formations. Thus, it seemed that some of the progress of the 1990s had been undone. This formula also prevailed for the 2005 election, the more recent electoral contest considered in this study, producing a *Sejm* which was once again divided between the same six parties who had gained seats in the previous election. Electoral reform, specifically altering the proportionality of the system, has changed the political context for Polish parties and their fortunes over the duration of the post-communist period. As the system was modified to minimize the number of parties entering the legislature, political parties with smaller bases of support were shut out of the legislature and thus, the main milieu of policymaking. Since the political right was often highly fragmented, the Church's main party allies, with the exception of 1997, experienced great difficulty attaining the share of seats necessary to gain power in the legislature. Thus, for the Church, continuing reform of the electoral system and its effects on the Church's fragmented party allies, often altered the political opportunity structure so that it did not favour the Church.

The rules of proportional representation evolved differently in Slovenia, with the threshold for a seat set at 3 percent for the first two post-independence elections in 1992 and 1996 and raised to 4 percent in 2000.<sup>13</sup> Also, seats are distributed in the legislature using an altogether different formula in Slovenia.<sup>14</sup> Although a large number of electoral formations ran in the 1992 elections, there were fewer winners than in Poland's first post-

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<sup>13</sup> Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 89.

<sup>14</sup> Millard provides a full account of how candidates are elected on an individual and party basis in his discussion of post-Communist politics. Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 93-94.

communist election; only eight parties made it into the legislature compared to twenty-nine in Poland. Thus, the degree of fragmentation produced by party politics and the electoral system was less than that in Poland. Also, though far from calm, government coalitions were generally more stable in Slovenia. Correspondingly, a desire to change the system in order to reduce fragmentation and to increase the effectiveness of government was not widely shared in Slovenia. Despite the apparent effectiveness of the proportional system in the 1992 elections, its appropriateness was questioned by political elites. In 1996, the Social Democrats (SDS), with the support of a citizen petition, demanded a referendum on the issue of reforming the electoral system to exchange a new two-round majoritarian system for the existing proportional system.<sup>15</sup> This initiative, which was not favoured by other parties, ultimately failed, but during the intervening time, it provoked controversy, confusion, and changes to the proportional system, such that the constitutional article governing the elections was changed.<sup>16</sup> This formula prevailed for the 2004 national election, the more recent electoral contest considered in this study. Nevertheless, the proportional representation system has continued to admit a similar number of parties and groupings to the legislature.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the identity of these parties has remained fairly

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<sup>15</sup> Andrej Auersperger Matic, "Electoral Reform as a Constitutional Dilemma," *East European Constitutional Review* 9, no. 3 (2000): 77-78.

<sup>16</sup> Finally, in 2000, the crisis was resolved by a change in Art. 80 of the constitution such that the "National Assembly is elected under a system of proportional representation with a 4 percent threshold, and with the further addition that voters ought to have the decisive role in choosing among individual candidates presented by party lists." Matic, 80.

<sup>17</sup> Seven in 1996, eight in 2000, and eight in 2004.

consistent, with few new party formations exceeding the threshold to enter parliament. For the Church, this stability meant that its allies predictably made it into the legislature such that they had the opportunity to push Church policies. Reform of the Polish proportional system narrowed the number of party contenders attaining success, but party and electoral politics failed to generate the same stability in party identities. Thus, generally, proportional representation has provided a greater measure of stability to the political opportunity structure in Slovenia than in Poland.

*Election Trends: Winners and Losers in the Electoral Arena*

Following from the effects of proportionality, shifts within party politics, and changes in society's political preferences, electoral politics reveal trends in party politics and society that affect the Church's political opportunity structure. With each successive election in post-communist Poland and Slovenia, the Church has been challenged by the conformation of winners and losers and the trends that underlie these results.

*Poland: A Trend of Continuous Change*

In 1991, the sheer popularity of the Solidarity movement, the adaptation required by the former Communists, and open electoral rules ensured that the remnants of Solidarity would dominate this electoral contest. Further, the Polish electorate, new to democratic politics, did not possess links with the developing political parties.<sup>18</sup> As a result, this election produced a highly fragmented Sejm, dominated by former Solidarity groupings,

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<sup>18</sup> Jack Bielasiak, "Poland," in *Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture, and Society since 1939*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 148.

but also containing a large number of small parties. The 1993 election results reflected the rapid adaptation of the former Communists to the new political reality, as well as their ability to utilize resources, both inherited and otherwise, to project a new image that was entirely compatible with the democratic system. Thus, the Polish electorate, seeking reliable political representatives, turned to the former communists, marking another new phase in Polish politics - the acceptance of the former communists as full participants in the democratic system.<sup>19</sup> The elections of 1997 heralded another political swing, fitting into a growing trend of alternation between right and left at successive elections. It also appeared that, because electoral victory materialized for a declining number and diversity of parties and groups, the system was becoming more stable.<sup>20</sup> The union of several post-Solidarity parties to form Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) and its subsequent victory in the 1997 elections, supported this nearly unanimous observation of growing stability.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, the two major blocs, the AWS and the SLD, who represented the traditional bipolar

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<sup>19</sup> Bielasiak, 153; Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 88.

<sup>20</sup> Szczerbiak, "Poland's Unexpected Political Earthquake: The September 2001 Parliamentary Election," 42.

<sup>21</sup> This stability was characterized by the dominance of two main blocs, Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) and Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), and the significant presence of the Freedom Union (UW) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL). Aleks Szczerbiak, 95; 126. Aleks Szczerbiak, "Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics: Polish Parties' Electoral Strategies and Bases of Support," 729. However, Millard does not see things the same way describing the main developments leading up to the 1997 elections as a "renewed polarization of the Polish political scene. . ." Frances Millard, *Polish Politics and Society* (London: Routledge, 1999), 78.

division that was carried from the Communist period into post-communist politics,<sup>22</sup> seemed to indicate a growing trend of consolidation on both the right and the left of the political spectrum.

The 2001 elections to the Sejm constituted another political alteration. The outgoing governing coalition, a mix of post-Solidarity groups (AWSP and UW), was virtually wiped out, while the post-communist SLD, along with a coalition of various smaller parties, achieved electoral victory, but not with a majority.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, the rest of the party landscape altered drastically as four new or previously marginal parties gained seats in the Sejm.<sup>24</sup> Previous predictions of increasing party system stability were swept away by the realization that instability seems to be the rule, rather than the exception, in Polish politics. The former AWS government, which had tried to forestall the almost

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<sup>22</sup> Szczerbiak, "Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics: Polish Parties' Electoral Strategies and Bases of Support," 729; Castle and Taras, 115; Kitschelt et al., 231. This division is described by Szczerbiak as "attitudes towards the communist past and different approaches to moral and cultural issues such as religion and the role of the Church (or, more broadly, 'Christian values') in public life. . ." Aleks Szczerbiak, "The Impact of the 1998 Local Elections on the Emerging Polish Party System," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 15, no. 3 (1999): 97.

<sup>23</sup> Szczerbiak, "Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics: Polish Parties's Electoral Strategies and Bases of Support," 729-730; Szczerbiak, "Poland's Unexpected Political Earthquake: The September 2001 Parliamentary Election," 50-51; Frances Millard, "Elections in Poland 2001: Electoral Manipulation and Party Upheaval," 71-73.

<sup>24</sup> Aside from the SLD, smaller parties managed to cross the popular vote thresholds required for representation in the Sejm: Civic Platform (PO), Law and Justice Party (PiS), League of Polish Families (LPR), Samoobrona (SO), and Polish Peasant Party (PSL). At least three of these parties had been formed in the immediate period before the election, and SO had been a marginal actor through most of the 1990s. Szczerbiak, "Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics: Polish Parties's Electoral Strategies and Bases of Support," 730-731; Szczerbiak, "Poland's Unexpected Political Earthquake: The September 2001 Parliamentary Election," 50-51; Frances Millard, "Elections in Poland 2001: Electoral Manipulation and Party Upheaval," 72-76.

certain victory of the SLD by tampering with the rules of the electoral process prior to the election,<sup>25</sup> learned the high political cost of electioneering; their attempt to prevent the SLD from winning the majority of seats not only failed, but their party met with ignominious defeat in the process, demonstrating once again that the Polish right was unable to unite as a stable and effective political unit. Moreover, this election was a high point for the SLD, proof that it had managed to craft itself into an efficient democratic party<sup>26</sup> and that it had “won over voters who previously might previously have been considered out of bounds for a formation that was based on the successor to the communist party and whose electorate had previously been defined primarily in terms of their attitudes toward the past and moral-cultural issues.”<sup>27</sup> This seemed to indicate that the previously dominant Communist/anti-Communist and religious-secular divisions were giving way to socioeconomic divisions instead.<sup>28</sup>

Recent electoral results indicate yet another sharp turn for the Polish political system. In 2005, elections carried the conservative right forces Law and Justice (PiS) and

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<sup>25</sup> Millard recounts the fairly blatant attempts of the outgoing Solidarity (AWS) administration to tamper with the electoral rules so as to minimize the predicted electoral victory of the SLD. Millard, “Elections in Poland 2001: Electoral Manipulation and Party Upheaval,” 69-71.

<sup>26</sup> Millard, “Elections in Poland 2001: Electoral Manipulation and Party Upheaval,” 85; Szczerbiak, “Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics: Polish Parties’ Electoral Strategies and Bases of Support,” 731; 735.

<sup>27</sup> Szczerbiak, “Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics: Polish Parties’ Electoral Strategies and Bases of Support,” 735.

<sup>28</sup> Millard, “Elections in Poland 2001: Electoral Manipulation and Party Upheaval,” 71; Szczerbiak, “Poland’s Unexpected Political Earthquake: The September 2001 Parliamentary Election,” 71.

Civic Platform (PO) to the forefront of Polish politics and removed the communist-successor party, the SLD, from power. Self-Defense (SO), which had attained a dramatic result in the 2001 election, but was largely dismissed as a permanent or relevant political force, came in at third place in terms of popular vote and seats, indicating that despite its radical politics, it is a viable presence in Polish politics. Significantly, the only continuous, dominant presence in Polish politics, the seemingly unshakable post-Communist Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), which had been relatively successful in every election since 1993, had an abysmal result, especially when considered next to the party's 216 seats in the *Sejm* in 2001. Finally, the League of Polish Families (LPR), which is known for its conservative stance on moral issues,<sup>29</sup> attained a fifth place showing in the *Sejm*.<sup>30</sup>

Presidential elections, held on 9 October 2005, also marked a victory for the right as PO's Donald Tusk and PiS's Alexander Kaczyński faced each other in the second round, held on

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<sup>29</sup> According to Mierzejewski, LPR "politicians pose as the only defenders of traditional values and social order. . ." Mierzejewski, "Swinging Right."

<sup>30</sup> Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza. *Wybory do Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej Zarządzone na Dzień: Wyniki Wyborów 25 Września 2005 [Elections to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland: Election Results 25 September 2005]* [online] (Warsawa: Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, 2005); available from <http://www.wybory2005.pkw.gov.pl/SJM/PL/WYN/M/index.htm> Internet: accessed 29 September 2005.



October 23.<sup>31</sup> Kaczyński emerged victorious,<sup>32</sup> cementing PiS as Poland's ruling party for the foreseeable future. These dramatic results, especially the competition between the elections main rivals, PO and PiS, seem to indicate a shift from the traditional communist-opposition divide, which defined Polish politics in previous post-communist elections, to a social-liberal divide.<sup>33</sup> However, low voter turnouts and the past adaptability of the SLD,<sup>34</sup> as well as the general volatility that has characterized Polish politics for much of the post-communist period, lend uncertainty as to the longevity of this change and the long-term effects on the Church's political opportunity structure.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Tusk garnered 36.33 percent of the vote, while Kaczyński garnered 33.10 percent of the vote. Since neither obtained a majority of the vote, a second round was mandated to decide between these candidates. National Electoral Commission, *Presidential Election of the Republic of Poland Ordered on the Day of 9 October 2005: Voting Results* (Warsaw: Government of the Republic of Poland, 2005)[online]; available from <http://www.prezydent2005.pkw.gov.pl/PZT/EN/WYN/W/index.htm>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2005; Poland-Elections 2005-Press Center, "Tusk with 36.33 pct, Lech Kaczynski with 33.10 pct enter election runoff, PKW," *Polish Press Agency* (10 October 2002) [online]; available from <http://www.elections.pap.pl/cgi-bin/news.pl?did=761&lang=en&subid=27&id=2>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2005.

<sup>32</sup> Kaczyński garnered 54.04 percent of the vote in the runoff against his opponent Tusk. National Electoral Commission, *Presidential Election of the Republic of Poland Repeat Ballot at the Day of 23 October 2005: Voting Results* (Warsaw: Government of the Republic of Poland, 2005) [online]; available from <http://www.prezydent2005.pkw.gov.pl/PZT/EN/WYN/W/index.htm> Internet; accessed 24 November 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Szczerbiak, "'Social Poland' Defeats 'Liberal Poland'? The September-October 2005 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections," 211; 224; Krzysztof Jasiewicz and Agnieszka Jasiewicz-Betkiewicz, "Poland," *European Journal of Political Research* 45 (2006): 1245-1246.

<sup>34</sup> Szczerbiak, "'Social Poland' Defeats 'Liberal Poland'? The September-October 2005 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections," 225-226.

<sup>35</sup> Within two years (2007) Poles were once again back at the polls, reducing the PiS to second in the share of legislative seats and taking away their governing power, removing the LPR and SO from the legislature, and vaulting the PO to governing power. In addition, the SLD, now subsumed under a new electoral coalition, Left and Democrats (LiD), continued as a reduced presence in the legislature.

Despite a significant amount of instability, threads of consistency are woven through Poland's post-communist elections. First, a continual cycling between parties of the left and right became a dominant feature between elections. The implications of this trend are obvious for the Church; as its allies on the right and opponents on the left alternated in their dominance of the electoral process, the Church's political opportunity structure became less favourable. Thus, after the 1991, 1997, and 2005 elections, the Church faced a favourable political opportunity structure. These openings in the political structure decline after the SLD victories in the 1993 and 2001 elections. Also, by implication, the Church could not depend on its allies to exist from election to election lending a degree of uncertainty to its relations with party allies. Finally, the consistent presence of both PiS and the LPR in both of the more recent elections promised the Church an opening into the legislature and, as of 2005, into the governing coalition, greatly enhancing the Church's political opportunity structure. Overall, the electoral process provided significant, but variable opportunities for the Church throughout the post-communist period.

#### Slovenia: A Trend of Consistency

In Slovenia's first post-communist elections of 1992, the fragmentation of the party scene and the large number of parties and groupings contesting the elections was reflected in the election results but, as previously noted, the level of fragmentation did not approach that of the Polish scene after its first elections in 1991. Also, this election instituted a trend of Liberal Democratic (LDS) dominance in Slovene politics that would not be broken until

the 2004 elections, reflecting both adaptative abilities of the former communists and the consistency of their political participation throughout the transition.<sup>36</sup> The 1996 elections continued the trend of LDS dominance and brought back many of the same party players who were present in the previous parliament.<sup>37</sup> Thus, it appeared that, whereas incumbency was a liability in Poland, it became an asset in Slovenia, at least for a majority of its political parties. A brief flirtation with a rightist coalition government, initiated by the newly united Slovene People's Party and the Christian Democrats (SLS + SKD) bringing the LDS government down, resulted in an electoral backlash against these parties in the subsequent year 2000 elections.<sup>38</sup> This brought the LDS back to power with the largest share of the popular vote and seats that it had attained in any post-communist election. It also allowed two new parties to gain representation in the legislature: the Party of Young People of Slovenia (SMS) and the New Slovenia-Christian People's Party (NSi). The identities of the remaining political parties were continuous with the last election.

The 2004 elections, however, brought about a significant alteration in Slovene politics. The LDS, mired in scandals and corruption, suffering from a leadership change,

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<sup>36</sup> "As in most of the other former communist countries of eastern Europe, former members of the *nomenklatura* played a prominent role in Slovenia in the 1990s. In places like Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, these people returned to political life, whereas in Slovenia they had never left it." Cox, 123.

<sup>37</sup> The Green Party disappeared, while a new party Democratic Party of Retired Persons of Slovenia (DeSUS) gained seats in the National Assembly.

<sup>38</sup> Danica Fink-Hafner and Sabrina P. Ramet, "Slovenia since 1988: Building Democracy and Liberalism," in *Democratic Transition in Slovenia: Value Transformation, Education, and Media*, eds. Sabrina P. Ramet and Danica Fink-Hafner (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006), 36 - 38.

and displaced from the political centre, failed to dominate the elections, dropping to second place with 23 seats - its lowest showing since 1992. Also, the rejuvenated, right-leaning Slovene Democratic Party (SDS) attained dominance in the elections. Even though the results of the more recent elections represented a significant change, much stayed the same. All of the parties which attained seats had been elected in the previous election and most of them had attained seats in every post-independence election. Thus, the political party players remained the same. Moreover, despite its failure in these elections, the LDS still attained more seats than it had in 1992 when it was able to form a coalition government. The LDS is far from political oblivion, suggesting that if it can adapt, it can once again become dominant in Slovene politics.

The overall consistency of the electoral process and the election results contrasts markedly with the Polish situation, which has been subject to a greater degree of instability. The stability of Slovene party and electoral politics has provided a certain amount of security for the Church when it aligns with party allies. The Church's main party allies, namely the Christian Democrats, maintaining a constant party presence in each election, made it into the legislature each time. Thus, the Church could remain fairly confident that, barring disaster, it would still have a party ally in the legislature after the next election. This provided the Church with consistent openings into legislative politics and, sometimes, coalition politics if one of its party allies made it into the governing coalition. This was a positive benefit to the political opportunity structure. At the same time, the consistent dominance of the LDS diminished these openings because of its secularist orientation, but

did not eradicate them entirely. The election results of 2004 may widen these openings as it brought the centre-right to political prominence, thereby enhancing the Church's political opportunity structure.

*Elections as a Venue for the Church to Influence Democratic Choice*

Although elections are focused on political parties, they also present an opportunity for third parties, such as the Church, to use their own resources to try to influence society's party preferences and hence their voting choices. The evidence indicates that the Church in Poland has extensively participated in the electoral process to further its political agenda; however, the Church in Slovenia shows little evidence of the same degree of electoral involvement. The political opportunity structure in Poland, becoming less favourable to Church interference over the course of post-communist elections, gradually restricted the openings available to the Church to interfere in electoral politics and, hence, the Church's political involvement declined. However, in Slovenia, the political opportunity structure was never favourable enough for the Church to engage in outright interference in elections.

In Poland, the Church's opportunity was highest in the partially-free elections of

1989 because both Solidarity and the public supported the Church's involvement. As a result, the Church was able to become intensively involved in the campaign:

Parishes throughout the country were turned into campaign headquarters for Solidarity, and priests took part in selecting the opposition candidates. Those attending church services were instructed whom to vote for and why. As a result, clergymen became de facto campaign spokespersons for individual candidates.<sup>39</sup>

However, once democratic changes were instituted, this context would change such that fewer opportunities existed for the Church to engage in this kind of influence over the electoral process. Thus, by the time of the first fully democratic elections in 1991, the Church was facing a polity that was less open to its influence. Although the Church assumed an official stance of non-interference,<sup>40</sup> it attempted many of the same tactics which it had used in the 1989 contest: issuing directives about preferred candidates and parties, as well as using Church services as a venue for influencing parishioners on how to vote.<sup>41</sup> The reception to the Church's activities was much less enthusiastic than on previous occasions as Poles failed to support the party that the Church was comfortable with, Catholic Electoral Action (WAK), and showed greater support for the parties that the Church maligned during the campaign, such as the UD and the SLD.<sup>42</sup> By 1993, things had changed such that the Church was restricted to reminding Poles' about considering

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<sup>39</sup> Mirella Eberts and Peter Torok, "The Catholic Church and Post-Communist Elections in Hungary and Poland Compared," in *Religion and Social Change in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Miklós Tomka (Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS, 2001), 134.

<sup>40</sup> As Chan notes, "in every election, the Episcopate announced that it would not back any particular parties or candidates." Kenneth Ka-Lok Chan, "The Religious Base of Politics in Post-Communist Poland," in *Religion and Mass Electoral Behaviour in Europe*, eds. David Broughton and Hans-Martien ten Napel (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>41</sup> Eberts and Torok, 136-137.

<sup>42</sup> Eberts and Torok, 137.

Christian values when making their electoral choices,<sup>43</sup> although the slant of these comments left “no doubt that the Catholic Church hierarchy was warning people against the SLD.”<sup>44</sup> This toning down of the Church’s electoral activities is concurrent with the previously described declines in society’s openness to the Church’s influence over the voting process. In 1995, the Church once again waded carefully into the Presidential election campaign to prevent Aleksander Kwaśniewski, a former member of the Communist *nomenklatura*, from winning over Lech Wałęsa, the former leader of Solidarity. Most of the Church’s activism was unofficial, emerging from individual members of the clergy, who encouraged their parishioners to vote for the correct candidate.<sup>45</sup> Again, the context was not open to this kind of political interference and, despite the Church’s efforts, Kwaśniewski won. The Church’s cautious engagement in the election process in 1997, restricted its role to once again encouraging voters to consider Catholic values and the nation’s past in their decisions.<sup>46</sup> This approach fit with the constraints which the system had placed on its influence in the electoral process.

In the 2001 elections, the threat of an SLD victory forced the Church to abandon some of its previous care and use the pulpits of local Churches to attempt to influence

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<sup>43</sup> Eberts and Torok, 137-138; Anna Sabbat-Swidlicka, “The Polish Elections: The Church, the Right, and the Left,” RFE/RL Research Report 2, no. 40 (1993): 26-27.

<sup>44</sup> Sabbat-Swidlicka, “The Polish Elections,” 29.

<sup>45</sup> Eberts and Torok, 140-141.

<sup>46</sup> Eberts and Torok, 142-143.



voters.<sup>47</sup> As the large SLD victory indicates, these attempts to deter voters were largely unsuccessful. By 2005, the Church appeared to have learned that its interference often created undesirable results. Although the Church was clearly compatible with conservative and Christian parties, it did not overtly support any parties or candidates, keeping itself out of the electoral fray.<sup>48</sup> Also, “moral and cultural issues such as church-state relations and abortion were almost entirely absent from this campaign, even though they had played such an emotive and significant role in Polish elections during the 1990s.”<sup>49</sup> Thus, the absence of some of the Church’s critical concerns constrained the Church’s ability to engage in the election debate and may have signaled a shift of Polish politics away from the secular-religious debate. Almost immediately after the introduction of the first fully competitive elections in 1991, it became clear that the Church’s opening to have influence over the electoral process was rapidly diminishing. Neither the majority of the public nor other political actors needed or wanted the Church to tell Poles how to vote; democracy demanded that Poles make their own choices and that parties make a stand on their own. Consequently, Church intervention in the election process has come to be viewed as inappropriate, beyond the Church’s domain or, at worst, undemocratic. Overall, this aspect

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<sup>47</sup> A letter, drawn up by the Episcopate and read in churches, asked Catholics to consider anti-abortion stances and the communist heritage of the candidate parties in their voting decisions. Szczerbiak, “Poland’s Unexpected Political Earthquake: The September 2001 Parliamentary Election,” 53-54.

<sup>48</sup> Szczerbiak, “‘Social Poland’ Defeats ‘Liberal Poland’? The September-October Polish Parliamentary and Presidential Elections,” 213.

<sup>49</sup> Szczerbiak, “‘Social Poland’ Defeats ‘Liberal Poland’? The September-October Polish Parliamentary and Presidential Elections,” 213.

of political opportunity structure has become increasingly closed to the Church.

In Slovenia, the political opportunity structure never provided the same degree of openings for Church interference in elections. From the time of the first election in 1992 the Church was barred from the electoral process by the views of Slovene society and the development of stable, proven political party alternatives. First, the Slovene public rejected the Church's interference in the political process, considering it the domain of legitimate political actors. Also, the political party scene, although initially somewhat chaotic, contained a number of familiar elite personalities and parties that had been active during Slovenia's transition to democracy and independence. This sharply contrasts with the Polish case, where political party politics remained unconsolidated for most of the 1990s and the SLD remained the most familiar and unforgettable progenitors in the communist transition, allowing the Church find more openings in the political opportunity structure to participate in electoral politics.

## CHAPTER 8

### GOVERNMENT DYNAMICS: THE ART OF COALITION GOVERNMENT

The vagaries of both the Polish and Slovene political party systems and electoral processes consistently produce winning parties lacking a majority of seats in the legislature. This makes pacts between parliamentary parties necessary to form a government and to gain the majority required for the passage of legislation. The formation of a coalition government requires compromise with other political parties, some of whom may be ideologically incompatible. Thus, usually, coalition agreements provide for policy concessions to the minor coalition partners and the division of executive posts between the participating parties. The function of a coalition is tied into its ability to function as cohesive unit. Thus, even a minor coalition partner can broker a deal with the other coalition partners which makes general cooperation contingent on the coalition's endorsement of a deeply-held policy; in effect, exchanging support for the continuing survival of the coalition government for a particular policy goal. However, wide disagreements about policy and personality conflicts between actors can lead to the disintegration of a coalition. Thus, coalition partners must tread lightly around each other in the pursuit of their distinct policy aims. These features of coalition government-building in both countries variably affected the Church's political opportunity structure, depending on the orientation and relative power of each of the parties involved in the governing coalition.

### *The Instability of Coalition Governments in Poland*

Over the last 15 years, Poland has been governed by a series of coalition governments, consisting of various parties and led by a variety of Prime Ministers. The composition of these coalitions is presented in table 14. These coalitions are often characteristically unstable, vulnerable to the slightest perturbation in the relationship among coalitions partners or divisions within the constituent parties. The instability of coalition government in Poland is related to the availability of compatible party allies which is limited by the origins of each party during the Communist era, the complexity of issue orientations held by each party, and each party's propensity to cooperate with another party.<sup>1</sup> The communist/anti-communist division is so pervasive that it continues to define relations between parties, making coalitions between the communist and opposition successor parties highly unlikely, irrespective of other factors.<sup>2</sup> Even when Communist- and Solidarity-successor parties show ideological compatibility on some dimensions,<sup>3</sup> they remain divided by their history and are unable to cooperate to achieve a common goal.<sup>4</sup> In

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<sup>1</sup> Kitschelt et al., 348-349.

<sup>2</sup> Kitschelt et al., 355;34; George Sanford, *Democratic Government in Poland: Constitutional Politics since 1989* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 198; Castle and Taras, 115.

<sup>3</sup> In Kitschelt et al.'s study, the SLD and Solidarity were relatively close to each other on policy dimensions such as the welfare state and market economics. Kitschelt et al., 245.

<sup>4</sup> Taras's complex representation of the party system in the early 1990s also shows this historical divide, among others, but it is no longer a dimension considered in Castle and Taras's representation of parties in 2001, although close inspection reveals that a similar axes can be drawn in this diagram as well. Taras, 182; Castle and Taras, 114.

addition, the ambitions of party elites also preclude cooperation with the competition.<sup>5</sup>

Even when parties subscribe to similar policy programs, close competition for the same policy space proscribes an alliance, thereby narrowing coalition possibilities.<sup>6</sup> Because of these conditions, the task of building and maintaining a stable coalition has preoccupied every post-communist government in Poland. This limits the ability of any individual coalition partner to attain a pervasive influence over government policy; however, it also provides smaller parties with the opportunity to use their cooperation under the auspices of the coalition to influence specific policies. Thus, the Church as an ally of specific political parties, is subject to the limitations and opportunities of this coalition-dominated system.

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<sup>5</sup> Kitschelt et al., 364.

<sup>6</sup> Kitschelt et al., 364.

Table 14. Government Coalitions in Poland, 1993 to 2006

Parliamentary Term	Coalitions	Coalition Configurations	Number of Prime Ministers	Identity and Term of Prime Ministers
1991 - 1993	3	PC, ZChN, PL, PSL (91-92); PSL(June/July 92); UD, KLD, ZChN, PSL (92-93)	3	Jan Olszewski, 91-92; Waldemar Pawlak, 92; Hanna Suchocka, 92-93
1993 - 1997	1	SLD, PSL	3	Waldemar Pawlak, 93-95; Józef Oleksy, 95-96; Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, 96-97
1997 - 2001	1	AWS, UW	1	Jerzy Buzek, 97-2001
2001 - 2005	2	SLD-UP, PSL (2001-2003); SLD-UP (2003-2005)	2	Leszek Miller, 2001- 2004; Marek Belka, 2004- 2005
2005 -	1	PiS, SO, LPR	2	Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, 2005- 2006; Jarosław Kaczyński 2006-

Sources: Herbert Kitschelt, Zdenka Mansfeldova, Radosław Markowski, and Gábor Tóka, *Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Cooperation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 11-13; Raymond Taras, "Voters, Parties, and Leaders," in *Transition to Democracy in Poland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Richard F. Staar (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 69; Marjorie Castle and Ray Taras, *Democracy in Poland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002), 202; Krzysztof Jasiewicz and Agnieszka Jasiewicz-Betkiewicz, "Poland," *European Journal of Political Research* 46 (2007): 1064-1065.

The period between 1991 and 1993 ranks as one of the most tumultuous in post-communist Polish politics, defined by the formation of three different coalitions and the selection of three different Prime Ministers. The highly fractured *Sejm* produced by the 1991 elections, along with the ambitions of the President, former Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa, made the construction of a stable government almost inconceivable.<sup>7</sup> The legislature was divided between so many parties and groupings that the stability and

<sup>7</sup> Grzybowski, 168-169; Kitschelt et al., 376.

function of government were compromised.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the SLD and UD, which held the greatest number of seats, respectively, were precluded from forming a government because other parties considered partnership with them unpalatable or unacceptable.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, controversy over Church-oriented policies, such as religious education, anti-abortion laws, and media restrictions, emerging from the Christian National Union (ZChN) and several other parties, split the *Sejm* along several party different party lines and further threatened the stability of the coalition government.<sup>10</sup> Despite this upheaval, the Church benefitted from its allies in the ZChN, as well as the other parties in the coalition, achieving gains in religious education, a severely restrictive abortion law, and the negotiation of the Concordat. Thus, this period, although problematic for Polish political development, proved to be beneficial for the Church, providing a political opportunity structure that gave the Church openings into the heart of the democratic state. The political opportunities created by the legislature would seldom be this favourable again.

The SLD's rise to power in the 1993 elections and its formation of a coalition government with the PSL, drastically altered the political opportunity structure for the Church. First, the SLD successfully overcame the challenge of finding a coalition partner that was not put off by its communist heritage. Also, despite the sometimes strained relations between the coalition partners, the interference of President Lech Wałęsa, and

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<sup>8</sup> Castle and Taras, 97-98.

<sup>9</sup> The SLD's connection to the former PZPR divided it from other parties and the UD's disputes with the other post-Solidarity parties divided it from potential allies in the *Sejm*. Millard, *Polish Politics and Society*, 20.

<sup>10</sup> Bielsiak, 149-150.

three changes in leadership, the coalition managed to survive for the duration of the four-year term; however, the Church's role became a major issue of contention within the coalition.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the careful balancing act required of the secularist SLD to maintain this coalition with the traditionalist PSL created some openings in the political opportunity structure such that the Church could still play a role in political discourse, such as that which it played in negotiations over the constitution,<sup>12</sup> but these openings failed to rival those of the 1991-1993 period. It was during this time that the SLD managed to replace the restrictive anti-abortion law with a less restrictive alternative, a signal of the less favourable political opportunity structure during this period of SLD-led coalition government.

A return to government by post-Solidarity elements once again favoured the Church. The allocation of seats in the post-1997 Sejm favoured the AWS, but this electoral coalition was still left with the task of finding a coalition partner. Cohesiveness was a problem for the AWS from the time of its formation; however, the drive to defeat the SLD in the elections kept the constituent parties together.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, "gaining power did not cement unity from such disparate groupings."<sup>14</sup> Conflict was rife between the constituent parties and leading personalities, as well as within ministries, such that this

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<sup>11</sup> Grzybowksi, 153-154.

<sup>12</sup> Although the Church did not get most of what it wanted from the Constitution, it still managed to polarize the debate and leave its imprint on the document, which passed in the *Sejm* in 1997. Millard, *Polish Politics and Society*, 131-139.

<sup>13</sup> Bielasia, 154-155.

<sup>14</sup> Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 266.



coalition government experienced great difficulty passing legislation and carrying out its normal functions.<sup>15</sup> Thus, a political change that appeared to be positive for the Church's political opportunity structure turned out to be less than satisfactory because of the dynamics of constructing and maintaining a coalition government from such a disparate and conflictual group of parties and personalities. The Church's only notable gain during this period was the passage of the Concordat in 1998, very early in the term of this government.

From 2001 to 2005, the SLD once again governed Poland, but maintaining cohesion within the SLD-UP, as well as between the SLD and its coalition partner, PSL, was extremely difficult as political scandals linked to corruption and de-communization rocked the party and questioned the legitimacy of many of its leaders. By 2003, the PSL was no longer part of the coalition and the SLD's hold on government was dependent on loose affiliations with small parties and independent deputies. Under the strains of unpopular policies and declining public approval, a breakaway party, Social Democracy of Poland (SDPL) formed in 2004, taking a large number of deputies with it and requiring the formation of a government under a new prime minister.<sup>16</sup> By the time elections took place in 2005, this coalition government had almost completely self-destructed. Because of the lack of cohesiveness in this largely secular political formation, the Church's political opportunity structure was not negatively affected. In many ways, it was positively affected by the disarray of its main opponents because these opponents were severely limited in

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<sup>15</sup> Millard, *Polish Politics and Society*, 27-30.

<sup>16</sup> Szczerbiak, "'Social Poland' Defeats 'Liberal Poland'?: The September-October 2005 Polish Parliamentary and Presidential Elections," 207-208.

what they could accomplish by their own difficulties. For instance, although the SLD tried to reintroduce the abortion issue onto the political agenda,<sup>17</sup> its efforts failed because of the disunity in its coalition government. It also opened the door for a change in government that could prove beneficial to the Church.

After the 2005 elections, it was widely expected that PiS and PO, previously described as “natural allies,”<sup>18</sup> would be forced to reconcile a number of policy differences to govern as a coalition.<sup>19</sup> However, this possibility quickly evaporated once PiS’s candidate for President, Lech Kaczyński, emerged the victor in the second round of elections, and the process of forming the next Parliament began.<sup>20</sup> PiS, the largest party in the Sejm, signed a “Stabilization Pact” with SO and the LPR, which provided certain concessions to these parties in exchange for their support in the legislature;<sup>21</sup> however, this

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<sup>17</sup> The SLD’s attempts initiate debate on 1993’s anti-abortion law in late 2004, but it failed. Mierzejewski, “Swinging Right.”

<sup>18</sup> This adage was applied after poll results, which put both parties in the lead for the next year’s elections, demanded a critical evaluation of the possibility that the combination of their results would result in a viable government. Radosław Markowski, Polish Academy of Science and Warsaw School of Social Psychology, “Calling a Coalition,” *The Warsaw Voice* (13 October 2004) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/view/6738> Internet: accessed 10 October 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Jasiewicz and Jasiwicz-Betkiewicz, 1243.

<sup>20</sup> A controversy quickly developed over the choice of Speaker and Deputy Speakers in the Sejm, which failed to include a member from PO, but included the controversial leader of Self-Defense, Andrzej Lepper, who had already been removed from the Deputy Speaker position during the previous term for unparliamentary behaviour. After this, the Self-Defense leader declared his openness to negotiating a coalition agreement with PiS, and effectively raised suspicions that PiS had another coalition agreement in the works besides the expected agreement with PO. Witold Żygulski, “Tug o’ War,” *The Warsaw Voice* (2 November 2005) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/view/9780> Internet: accessed 2 November 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Witold Żygulski, “Pact Up and Ready to Go?” *The Warsaw Voice* (15 March 2006) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/view/10840> Internet: accessed 15 March 2006.

agreement failed to provide any long-term stabilization in Parliament. Barely three months into the new Sejm, conflict erupted between PiS and its partners over PiS's unwillingness to go far enough in policy concessions and their partners "confrontational and disloyal attitude"; this crisis threatened to bring down the government and force new elections.<sup>22</sup> Although this did not happen and the coalition remained intact, leadership changed and a new prime minister was selected in mid-2006. The coalition's troubles did not end there as disagreements and scandals continued throughout the rest of the year, constantly challenging the stability and longevity of this government.

Despite the instability of the current coalition government, this political alteration is a potential boon for the realization of many of the Church's goals. The right, in the form of a coalition involving two right wing parties, PiS and LPR, are in control of the Sejm, the Senate, and the Presidency for the first time since Solidarity's failure in 1993. Thus, the degree of policy unity between each level of government may be unprecedented, at least compared to other periods in the post-Communist era. Also, the influence of the presence of the Catholic League of Polish Families (LPR), with its pro-Church policies, has promised to help advance deeply held Church priorities. Also, PiS, as a conservative party with a Christian Democratic bent, seems likely to support these types of policies. Consequently, the Church appears to be facing a more open political opportunity structure than it has since the 1991-1993 period.

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<sup>22</sup> Żygulski, "Pact Up and Ready to Go?"; Witold Żygulski, "Spring Elections Unrealistic," *The Warsaw Voice* (29 March 2006) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/view/10970> Internet: accessed 10 April 2006.

*Perfecting the Art of Coalition Government in Slovenia*

Contention and controversy have not been absent from Slovene politics over the last 14 years, but trends of stability and consolidation run through the dynamics of most of Slovenia's post-communist coalition governments (see table 15 for a breakdown of these governments), representing a marked contrast to the Polish situation. Despite this reliance on relatively heterogeneous, multiparty coalitions, Slovene politics has not been characterized as volatile; rather, parties' recognition and acceptance of the realities of coalition governing maintained a relative equilibrium within coalitions.<sup>23</sup> This is related to experimentation with different sizes and conformations of coalitions during the early period of Slovene independence,<sup>24</sup> forcing actors to learn how to function in this type of political system. In addition, the formation and function of coalition governments have been regularized.<sup>25</sup> This stability may have had certain costs,<sup>26</sup> but it has allowed Slovenia to progress and mature as a democratic state. Several factors secured this stability and presented a complex set of opportunities and constraints for the Church: the management of coalition government and continuity in the governing party for much of the post-

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<sup>23</sup> Fink-Hafner, "Development of a Party System," 150-151.

<sup>24</sup> Zajc notes that everything from large coalitions of many parties to smaller coalitions of few parties was tried in the early period of government. Drago Zajc, "The Changing Political System," in *Making a New Nation: The Formation of Slovenia*, eds. Danica Fink-Hafner and John R. Robbins (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1997), 167-168.

<sup>25</sup> According to Cox, the coalition partners receive a share of the fifteen cabinet posts and are essential to the passage of government legislation. Cox, 120.

<sup>26</sup> One concern, expressed by Gow and Carmichael, is that "Slovenia had a political system that offered underlying stability and progress, but at the price of superficial fragility and latent problems of stagnation." Gow and Carmichael, 167.

communist period.

Table 15. Government Coalitions in Slovenia, 1990 to 2006

Parliamentary Term	Coalitions	Coalition Configurations	Prime Ministers	Identity Prime Ministers
1990-1992 (pre-independence)	1	[DEMOS Coalition] SKD, SDSS, SKZ, SDZ, LS, SDP, ZSMS-LS, ZLSD, ZS	1	Lojze Peterle
1992-1996	2	SDSS, SSS, LDS, DS, ZLSD, SDZ (92); LDS, ZLSD, SKD, SDS (92-96)	1	Janez Drnovšek
1996-2000	3	LDS, ZLSD, SKD, SDS (96); LDS, SLS, DeSUS (97-2000); NSi, SLS + SKD, SDS (2000)	2	Janez Drnovšek (1996-2000); Andrej Bajuk (2000)
2000-2004	2	LDS, ZLSD, SLS + SKD (2000 - 2002); LDS, ZLSD, SLS (2002-2004)	2	Janez Drnovšek (2000-2002); Anton Rop (2002-2004)
2004 -	1	SDS, NSi, SLS, DeSUS	1	Janez Janša

Sources: Government of the Republic of Slovenia, "Government: Former Governments," [online]; available from <http://www.gov.si/vrs/index.php?lng=eng&vie=cnt&gr1=prdVld&gr2=prjVld> Internet: accessed 15 March 2006; Government of the Republic of Slovenia, "Government: Coalition," [online]; available from <http://www.gov.si/vrs/index.php?lng=eng&vie=cnt&gr1=prdVld&gr2=clt> Internet: accessed 15 March 2006.

For most of the twelve years between 1992 and 2004, the LDS was a consistently dominant member of every governing coalition, except for the rightist coalition which unsuccessfully governed for several months in 2000. The key to party's success was its ability to form coalitions with unexpected, seemingly incompatible parties on both sides of the political spectrum. This ability has been conditioned by the configuration of Slovenia's party system:

There is a manifest ideological confrontation between left-wing and right-wing parties in Slovenia, but so far it has been curtailed by the existence of a strong political centre. Indeed, electoral data testify to a relatively even strength of the three main party 'families': left, centre, and right. Given this pattern, Slovene political parties have been prepared to choose from a wide variety of coalition partners.<sup>27</sup>

The LDS, straddling a position at the centre-left of the political spectrum, was in the perfect position to take advantage of this feature of Slovene party politics. This does not mean that these coalitions maintained perfect cohesion throughout their term, but the skills of the coalition partners prevented problems within coalitions from degenerating to the point that another election would have to take place.

After the 1992 elections, the LDS formed a broad coalition with a party of the right, the Christian Democrats and a party of the left, the United List of Social Democrats (ZLSD), which would have been a recipe for dissension and instability in many formerly Communist countries, including Poland; however, this coalition government survived for three years. This coalition's survival and success were dependent on containing dissension within the ranks of the coalition and keeping conflict from spilling into the legislature, where opposition parties would be able to exploit the weaknesses of the coalition to score political points.<sup>28</sup> The main factor which finally shook this coalition government was the defection of the Christian Democrats (SKD) to form a party group known as 'the Spring Parties', which was committed to joining forces to attain the largest share of seats in the

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<sup>27</sup> Zajc, "Slovenia," 280.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 285.

legislature in the upcoming elections.<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, the main point of departure for the SKD was dissatisfaction with the LDS's continuing secular stance and its inability to attain concessions on religion.<sup>30</sup> Despite this attempt to unseat the LDS, the party accomplished another feat of coalition-building again after the 1996 elections, bringing together a coalition with the centre-right SLS and the small, issue-oriented Democratic Party of Retired Persons ( DeSUS). During 1997, under pressure from the Church and other parties, Prime Minister Drnovšek agreed to include the Church in the denationalization process and thus allow for the return of Church properties; however, the agreement was stalled by the upper house of parliament, the National Assembly.<sup>31</sup> This concession to the Church revealed an opening in the political opportunity structure at this point in time; this was a notably a rare event during Drnovšek's tenure as leader of the LDS.

A brief break in LDS coalition government occurred in the year 2000 after a coalition of rightist parties, composed of the Social Democratic Party (SDS) and the merged Slovene People's Party-Slovene Christian Democrats (SLS + SKD), formed a majority and deposed the SLD-led coalition. Having "pushed forcefully for the imposition of the (Catholic) catechism in state-run schools and for the restitution of ecclesiastical property,"<sup>32</sup> this coalition clearly provided openings for the Church. As a result, the

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<sup>29</sup> Harris, 164.

<sup>30</sup> One of the major points of contention concerned government's refusal to revert back to the Church, property that had been confiscated by the communists. Gow and Carmichael, 159.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>32</sup> Iveković, 530.



Church made gains in religious education and in the return of nationalized property. However, unfortunately for the Church, the tenure of this government would not last long, failing to impress Slovenes with either its dissension, policy, or leaders. The LDS, returned to power in the 2000 election, once again managed to form a coalition government with the leftist ZLSD and the rightist SLS+SKD. This coalition lasted until 2002 when Drnovšek, leader of the LDS and Prime Minister since 1992, left the parliamentary caucus to successfully run for President. The new leader of the LDS, Rop, constructed another coalition with the ZLSD and the SLS that managed to hold together until just before the election of 2004. However, Rop failed to impress voters as he took the party further to the left of the political spectrum, destroying the advantage that the LDS had enjoyed from its position at the centre-left.

Government from the 2004 elections onward marks a distinct alteration in Slovene politics with the ascendancy of the centre-right and the right to form the government. The electoral victory of the Slovene Democratic Party (SDS) led to its coalition with New Slovenia-Christian Democrats (NSi), the Slovene People's Party (SLS), and DeSUS. Although this coalition has been challenged by controversy and dissension, it managed to survive. The ideological bent of this coalition favoured the Church and thus created openings in the political opportunity structure for the Church. This was evident in this government's passage of a new Law on Religious Freedom in late 2006, which met with resistance from the National Council because it appeared to violate the constitutional principle of separation between church and state and it appeared to favour the Roman



Catholic Church above other religions.<sup>33</sup>

The regularization of coalition government in Slovenia has acted as both a positive and a negative for the Church. LDS's successful dominance over coalition governments during the first 12 years of Slovene independence, combined with leader Drnovšek's ability to manage these diverse coalitions, acted as a constraint on the Church's political opportunity structure. However, this negative effect was tempered by the inclusion of pro-Church parties in many of these coalition governments. For instance, the LDS has been forced to ally with parties that have strong ties to nationalism and thus, favour the continued presence of the Church as an element of Slovene identity and culture. The Slovene People's Party (SLS) is one such political partner.<sup>34</sup> Also, most of the post-independence coalitions, including the current coalition government, have included the Christian Democrats as a minor party. The Christian Democrats actively pushed the governing coalition to adopt measures that were beneficial to the Church, opening the door for increased Church influence over government policy. The recent ascent of a rightist coalition promises to provide more openings for the Church and to enhance its political opportunity structure. Thus, like the Polish Church, the Slovene Church has faced a political opportunity structure created in a context of coalition government, with its political fortunes dependent on the priorities of the dominant coalition party, the stability of each coalition, and the priorities of minor coalition partners. However, the Polish Church

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<sup>33</sup> Fink-Hafner, "Slovenia," (2007): 1110.

<sup>34</sup> Flere, "Slovenia: At a Distance from a Perfect Religious Market," 154.

enjoyed many more openings to influence policy because the alternating nature of coalitions between right and left allowed the Church to make significant gains during periods of rightist coalition government. In contrast, the stable dominance of a single political party, the LDS, over Slovenia's coalition governments for much of the post-independence period, combined with the broad nature of these coalitions, limited openings for the Slovene Church such that it experienced a much reduced political opportunity structure. The only redeeming element for the Slovene Church was the presence of Church-oriented parties in these coalitions who sometimes successfully managed to wring openings for the Church out of their coalition partners.

## CHAPTER 9

### LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS:

#### EXCHANGING DIVINE LAW FOR HUMAN LAW

For the newly democratic Polish and Slovene states, the replacement of the constitutional and legal structure of the old communist system with a more appropriate constitutional and legal structure, which reflected the new democratic political reality, was a national priority. The content and character of the changes to the constitutional and legal structure of the state would have far-reaching implications, laying the groundwork for the structure of state institutions, as well as political interactions in the democratic system. This area of change became an important venue for the Church to push its agenda to cement Roman Catholic values at the very heart of the nation. However, each national Church differed in the degree to which the state constitutions served their values and created a favourable political opportunity structure for the Church. Also, the legal regulation of religious communities has differentially affected each national Church in its quest to maintain its religious dominance in the country.

#### *The Polish Church: Security in the Polish Constitution*

The process of constructing a post-Communist Constitution which discarded the strictures of the Communist regime and inaugurated the principles of the democratic system occupied the Polish society and government for most of the first post-Communist decade. Until 1992, political institutions were governed by a combination of the Constitution of the

Communist Polish People's Republic and the Round Table settlement.<sup>1</sup> The 'Little Constitution,'<sup>2</sup> passed in 1992, displaced the Communist Constitution, but a number of Communist-era laws remained in force, regulating political relations in Poland until 1997, when the final Constitution was passed by parliament and plebiscite.<sup>3</sup> This marked the end of a contentious period in Polish politics, characterized by conflict between competing interests, difficult negotiations, and political compromise. The main conflicts revolved around arrangements of institutional power<sup>4</sup> and competing visions of contemporary Poland.<sup>5</sup> The Church's present and future political context were globally affected by the Constitution's main functions: specifying the basic structure of the Polish state and its political system, shaping the course of relations between the Church and the state, and placing limits on certain policy developments. It was also imperative for the Church that the Catholic-Christian aspect of Polish culture receive formal recognition, along with the

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<sup>1</sup> Jacek Kurczewski, "Parliament and the Political Class in the Constitutional Reconstruction of Poland: Two Constitutions in One," *International Sociology* 18, no. 1 (2003): 163-165.

<sup>2</sup> This assemblage of democratic and communist rules was put in place out of necessity, to provide a legal basis for the Polish state until a new Constitution, reflective of Poland's new political reality, could be drawn up.

<sup>3</sup> Sanford, 88; Ewa Letowska, "A Constitution of Possibilities," *East European Constitutional Review* 6, no. 2/3 (1997) [online]; available from <http://www.law.nyu.edu/eeer/vol6num2/feature/possibilities.html> Internet: accessed 29 January 2005; Kurczewski, 166-171.

<sup>4</sup> Sanford, 87-91; Kurczewski, 167-171.

<sup>5</sup> Pawel Spiewak, "The Battle for a Constitution," *East European Constitutional Review* 6, no. 2-3 (1997) [online]; available from <http://www.law.nyu.edu/eeer/vol6num2/deature/battle.html> Internet: accessed 29 January 2005.

Church's moral and spiritual authority.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the Church's lofty goals,<sup>7</sup> formed around these priorities, were subject to the vagaries of the context that existed over the course of the negotiations. Therefore, the successive development of each version of constitutional law, the course of the constitutional debate, and the ultimate form of the Constitution, acted and continue to act as powerful components of the Church's context in post-Communist Poland.

### Separating Church and State

As the new Constitution developed over 1990s, interim arrangements played a strong role in the Church's context. As an ad hoc, temporary arrangement, the "Little Constitution" was a combination of old and new; democratic institutions and freedoms were patched onto the old Communist-era Constitution to ensure that the system could operate while a new, comprehensive Constitution was prepared. These interim rules provided a relatively open context to the Church because even though many Communist-era rules were retained, they were not always enforced, and the new, unrefined nature of the new system lent a certain fluidity to the application of its rules. In this situation, the

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<sup>6</sup> Michal Pietrzak, "Church and State in Poland," in *Law and Religion in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Silvio Ferrari, W. Cole Durham, Jr., assoc. ed. Elizabeth A. Sewell (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 219; Kurczewski, 170-171; Anna Sabbat-Swidlicka, "Church and State in Poland," *RFE/RL Research Report* 2, no. 14 (1993): 48; Millard, *Polish Politics and Society*, 137-139.

<sup>7</sup> A sample of the Church's main demands: "a clear reference to God in the Preamble"; "prominent reference to the role of the church in Polish history"; Constitution not declared to be "the highest law in the land"; "ban abortion from the point of conception"; "declare marriage open only to relationships between a man and woman"; and abstain from using "any constitutional language requiring a 'separation' of church and state in democratic Poland." Timothy A. Byrnes, "The Challenge of Pluralism: The Catholic Church in Democratic Poland," 30-31.

Church had a wide opening into the political arena because the precise nature of Church and state relations was part of the debate and thus plagued with some uncertainty. Once the 1997 Constitution defined the relationship between Church and state as separate, meaning that “internal law of religious denominations has no effect on the state order, aside from a few exceptions, and, at the same time, state law has no effect on strictly religious questions and does not govern the structure of the churches and denominational organizations,”<sup>8</sup> this situation changed slightly. Certainly, the constitutional separation between Church and state is not absolute, especially because the Church is granted input into some policy areas; rather, it is pliable.<sup>9</sup> However, this does not allow the Church to step beyond certain limits in the policy-making process.

#### Setting the Church Apart from Others: The Concordat

The most significant aspect of the Constitution distinguishes the Roman Catholic Church's relations with the state from those of other religions in the country and enhances the Church's possibilities for interacting with the political system. Whereas other religious organizations' legal status is defined in a general clause which affirms “respect for their autonomy and the mutual independence of each in its own sphere. . .,”<sup>10</sup> the Church's status

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<sup>8</sup> Pietrzak, 223.

<sup>9</sup> Pietrzak, 223.

<sup>10</sup> Republic of Poland, *The Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1997* [online] (Warsaw: Sejm of the Republic of Poland, 1997), Article 25, clause 3; As published in Dziennik Ustaw no. 48, item 483; available from <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/english/konstytucja/kon1.htm> Internet: accessed 23 January 2005.

is separated into a specific clause. This clause declares that “[t]he relations between the Republic of Poland and the Roman Catholic Church shall be determined by international treaty concluded with the Holy See, and by statute.”<sup>11</sup> This means that the Roman Catholic Church is accorded the status of both an international institution and an internal religious organization; a dual persona which shapes the opportunities afforded to the Church for action in the political realm.

As an international institution, the Church can negotiate agreements with the Polish government that have the status of an international treaty between the Vatican (Holy See) and the Polish state. The negotiation of a Concordat became a political imperative after temporary arrangements were reached with the Church in 1989;<sup>12</sup> ultimately, this course was intended to provide guidelines in Church-state relations. Once the agreement was signed with the Holy See, under dubious circumstances,<sup>13</sup> it was difficult for subsequent governments to address specific areas of concern about the Concordat’s implications for

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<sup>11</sup> *Constitution of the Republic of Poland*, Article 25, clause 4.

<sup>12</sup> Millard, 135.

<sup>13</sup> The Concordat was signed by the Suchocka government after Parliament had been dismissed in preparation for elections; some left-wing politicians point out that this contravenes the role of the democratically elected legislature. Piotr Zaremba, “By Invitation: No More Excuses,” *The Warsaw Voice* (6 July 1997) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/12557> Internet: accessed 21 August 2005; Kuba Śpiewak, “Strangling on the Concordat,” *The Warsaw Voice* (2 June 1996) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/137> Internet: accessed 30 July 2005; Adam Szostkiewicz, “By Invitation: Concordat for the Constitution?” *The Warsaw Voice* (20 April 1997) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/12524> Internet: accessed 30 July 2005.

the power of the Church relative to the state and other religious groups.<sup>14</sup> After 1998, when the Concordat was passed by Parliament, it became inextricably linked to the legal foundation of the Polish state, the Constitution, and also carried the obligations of an international treaty. Since “regulations contained in international treaties have direct force of law unless their effectiveness is made subject to enactment of an appropriate law,”<sup>15</sup> the state is obliged to abide by the Concordat’s provisions without breaking faith with the other signatory, the Holy See. Also, the Concordat’s linkage to the Constitution obliges the state to abide by the agreement in its domestic policy as well. This means that the Church maintains some ability to influence Polish society and politics over the long-term, regardless of the nuances of the remainder of the political context at a particular time. As such, the Church has a relatively durable, long-term opening into the political system; a consistent opportunity to have some influence, at least on specific issues. Although the level of this opportunity and the influence associated with it is not entirely stable or independent from the remainder of the system, it represents an ever-present, potential way to seek engagement in political decision-making processes. Therefore, the linkage of the Concordat to the Constitution and the state’s international obligations has provided the Church with a relatively durable opening into the political system once the agreement was passed. However, in exchange for this stable opening into the political system the

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<sup>14</sup> Millard provides a general description of the conflict surrounding the passage of the Concordat, while Zaremba mentions specific concerns of the left-wing politicians prior to Concordat’s passage. Millard, *Polish Politics and Society*, 135-137; Zaremba, *op. cit.*

<sup>15</sup> Pietrzak, 221.



Concordat also acts as a limitation on the Church because “a concordat acknowledges that temporal rulers have the power to deny the Catholic Church its demands.”<sup>16</sup> In effect, the Church has made itself subject to earthly laws and placed itself under the domain of the state.

The Concordat provides the Church with assured input into a number of sensitive areas, including religious education and marriage.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, future development of these issues has to include the Church because of the Church’s legal status in these areas. This guarantees that the Church maintains the continuing ability to engage in political debate on these issues; it has the opportunity to become involved. For instance, the opportunity provided by the Constitution has proven to be somewhat durable in relation to the issue of abortion. The Church places particular emphasis on its conception of human life and absolute opposition to abortion.<sup>18</sup> Although the Constitution fails to prohibit abortion, it pledges to protect human life,<sup>19</sup> leaving an opening for refinements to the definition of “human life. A future interpretation of this term which temporally defines life’s beginning at conception could be used to block abortion at any stage of pregnancy,

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<sup>16</sup> Warner, 159.

<sup>17</sup> Millard, *Polish Politics and Society*, 136; Castle and Taras., 143-144.

<sup>18</sup> Millard, 133; Andrzej Kulczycki, “Abortion Policy in Postcommunist Europe: The Conflict in Poland,” *Population and Development Review* 21, no. 3 (1995): 472, 485-486; Patrick J. Flood, “Abortion and the Right to Life in Post-Communist Eastern Europe and Russia,” *East European Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (2002): 197.

<sup>19</sup> Article 38 states that the “Republic of Poland shall ensure the legal protection of the life of every human being,” *Constitution of the Republic of Poland*, Article 38.

under any circumstances. Such an opening presents a continuing opportunity for the Church to have influence over this issue.

The Constitution also introduces an indirect opening for the Church's continuing influence in this policy area. The saga of abortion regulation involves a momentous alteration from freedom<sup>20</sup> to restriction, contrary to the opening of freedoms in other areas with democratic change. Efforts to institute a complete ban were evident as early as 1989, but did not succeed until 1993, when a moderately restrictive anti-abortion bill became law.<sup>21</sup> Subsequent attempts to replace this law to allow for greater freedom of access to the procedure have failed. The only liberalized bill to successfully pass the hurdles of Parliamentary approval was challenged and declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Tribunal in 1997.<sup>22</sup> One of the reasons that this law was struck down was a basic incompatibility with the Constitutional declaration concerning the sanctity of human life; the Tribunal chose to define human life as beginning at fertilization, rather than at birth.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> This refers to the legalization of abortion during the Communist period (1956). Flood, 195; Iwona A. Czerwińska, "Abortion in Poland: Underground but Undeniable," *The Warsaw Voice* (15 July 2001) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/1693> Internet: accessed 21 August 2005.

<sup>21</sup> The 1993 law prohibits abortion in all cases except those in which "the life or health of the mother is threatened, in the event of serious damage to the fetus or when pregnancy is the result of a crime." It also provides for punishment of the physician who performs the procedure under prohibited circumstances. Czerwińska.

<sup>22</sup> A less prohibitive law was passed by Parliament in 1996, which took account of the state of affairs in a woman's life. Małgorzata Bąkowska, "Abortion Law: End of an Acrimonious Debate," *The Warsaw Voice* (3 November 1996) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/270> Internet: accessed 30 July 2005; Flood, 199-200; Czerwińska..

<sup>23</sup> Czerwińska.

Another attempt to replace this law with a more liberal one in 2004 also met with social and political resistance.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, because of the opening in the Constitution on the definition of human life, it is difficult to remove restrictions on abortion which are contrary to the Church's wishes. Surmounting the barrier of Church-inspired resistance to abortion is particularly difficult for challengers because as the law remains in place society becomes accustomed to the norms provided by its provisions and is persuaded by the messages of morality that the Church has used to define the debate.<sup>25</sup> This suggests that because of the moral dimensions of the abortion question, it is particularly difficult to gain the momentum to enact any sort of change to the current status quo situation (the 1993 law). This means that the Church has a relatively durable opportunity to influence abortion policy in Poland.

#### The Durability of Constitutional Arrangements

Considering the controversy and disagreement which surrounded the passage of the 1997 Constitution and the enormity of the political mediation required to produce each

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<sup>24</sup> Marta Rawicz, "Controversy: The Abortion Question," *The Warsaw Voice* (13 October 2004) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/6726> Internet: accessed 21 August 2005.

<sup>25</sup> A CBOS survey report notes that on the legal question of abortion, Poles are not overwhelmingly in favor of absolute restriction nor absolute freedom and generally favor a plebiscite on the issue. However, when a similar question is asked which emphasizes the moral dimension of the issue, only a minority of Poles favor a referendum on the issue. Also, Jelen and Wilcox suggest that public opinion has moved toward the Church's position since the introduction of the 1993 law. Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), "Attitudes Towards abortion after the Verdict of the Constitutional Tribunal," *Polish Public Opinion* (August 1997): 3-4 [online]; available from [http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/1997/08\\_1997.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/1997/08_1997.pdf) Internet: accessed 21 August 2005; Ted Jelen and Clyde Wilcox, "Continuity and Change in Attitudes Toward Abortion: Poland and the United States," *2004 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*, 18-19 [online]; Held in Chicago, 2-5 September 2004; available from <http://www.apsanet.org> Internet: accessed 5 February 2005.

article,<sup>26</sup> the incentive to tamper with these arrangements is relatively low. Perhaps this is why no political actor has made a serious attempt to do so since the Constitution was passed.<sup>27</sup> However, this does not mean that the Constitution cannot or will not be modified because mechanisms exist to amend the document. Two mechanisms exist to amend the Constitution. Judicial interpretation refines some of the articles as they are applied in practice.<sup>28</sup> However, the largest blockage to changes in the Constitutional text is the process required to modify the Constitution. Article 235 outlines the formula for amendment and specifies which legislative branches may initiate the process, sets time limits on each phase, and describes the degree of consensus required to pass an amendment.<sup>29</sup> The initial recommendation must emerge from the President, the Senate, or one-fifth of the Sejm's members.<sup>30</sup> Legislative approval requires two-thirds of the votes with at least half of the members in the Sejm, while Senate approval requires an absolute majority with at least half of the members present.<sup>31</sup> In addition, modifications to specific sections of the Constitution which lay out the structure of the state, deal with personal freedoms and rights, and outline the procedure for changes must also be approved through

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<sup>26</sup> Letowska.; Spiewak, "The Battle for a Constitution"; Sanford, 90-91.

<sup>27</sup> Kurczewski, 178.

<sup>28</sup> Kurczewski, 177-178.

<sup>29</sup> *Constitution of the Republic of Poland*, Article 235.

<sup>30</sup> *Constitution of the Republic of Poland*, Article 235, clause 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Constitution of the Republic of Poland*, Article 235, clause 4.

a majority vote in a referendum.<sup>32</sup> The article which sets out parameters for relations between religious organizations and the state is subject to both of the preceding amendment procedures. The implication is that any modification to these regulations would require a consensus between Parliament and society about the necessity for change, as well as the form of the required change. Even though the longevity of the current Constitution is not assured,<sup>33</sup> it is a document of hard-fought accommodation, which did not win approval easily. In the often fractious Polish political system, this degree of consensus is difficult, but not impossible to achieve.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the possibility of altering the Church's position remains open, but the movement for such a change would have to acquire a great deal of momentum before this political Pandora's box would be re-opened.<sup>35</sup> In the post-1997 legal context, the Church has been empowered by the Constitution, insofar as it is considered to be an important religious actor which deserves to have guaranteed input into some expressly political issues such as education, marriage, and property restitution. This provides the Church with a relatively constant opening into that

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<sup>32</sup> Includes Chapter I - The Republic, Chapter II - The Freedoms, Rights and Obligations of Persons and Citizens, and Chapter XII - Amending the Constitution. *Constitution of the Republic of Poland*, Article 235, clause 6.

<sup>33</sup> Spiewak.

<sup>34</sup> It should be noted that although the 1997 Constitution passed through the Sejm with a large majority of approval, society's endorsement was far from strong, with only a minority of citizens turning out to vote, accepting the Constitution with a small margin of approval. Sanford, 90-91.

<sup>35</sup> The PiS and the other right-wing populist parties which gained the upper hand in government following the 2005 national elections promised the inauguration of a new "4<sup>th</sup> Republic" in Poland. The parties were unable to deliver on this promise of major constitutional change.

prevails over time.

### Laws and Regulations

Aside from the special privileges accorded to the Church by the Concordat, the Church is also subject to many of the same regulations as other religious organizations. Since the Church has its own special agreement with the state, these laws and regulations serve the purpose of regulating other religious actors and ensuring that all religions adhere to a common set of principles, consistent with the nature of Polish society. For instance, legislation provides for religious' organizations right to exist and perform certain activities, dependent on registration with the state.<sup>36</sup> However, these laws now privilege Christian religions over others, altering the availability of registration and hence legal status to non-Christian groups.<sup>37</sup> This favours traditional Christian religions, especially the dominant Roman Catholic Church, by limiting the rights of new religious competitors. Combined with the Church's special agreement with the state, this trend provides the Church with a competitive advantage over other religions; it has a greater opportunity to influence government policy.

### *Slovenia: Subjugating the Church to the Democratic Polity*

The legal position of the Church in Slovenia evolved slowly over the post-Communist period, marked only by significant achievements after the late 1990s. This pattern of late development, after the Constitution was ratified in 1991, meant that the

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<sup>36</sup> Pietrzak, 224-225.

<sup>37</sup> This change was made in 1998. Pietrzak, 225.

Slovene Church was in a different position from the Polish Church during the 1990s; the Slovene Church was reliant on official regulations and unofficial favoritism to create openings into the political system. However, the situation of the Slovene Church altered to become similar, but not equivalent to that of the Polish Church; from 1999 onwards, the Church gained special recognition of its status, through various means, but not with the scope provided to the Polish Church.

#### The Constitution: Closing Out the Church

Constitutional structures are not favourable to the Slovene Church because of the pattern of development of the Slovene Constitution. A significant amount of constitutional development took place over the course of the late 1980s, allowing for the retention of many features of the old Constitution to be brought into the new Constitution.<sup>38</sup> Also, Slovene elites were compelled to craft a complete Constitution over a relatively short period of time to facilitate the extrication of Slovenia from the Yugoslav federal structure.<sup>39</sup> This extrication entailed simultaneous processes of eradicating the undesirable vestiges of Communism, as well as building the foundation of a new, independent state that had not previously existed.<sup>40</sup> Thus, in contrast to Poland, Slovenia's constitutional process was one

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<sup>38</sup> Miro Cerar, "Slovenia: From Elite Consensus to Democratic Consolidation," in *Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe, vol. 1, Institutional Engineering*, ed. Jan Zielonka, Oxford Studies in Democratization, ed. Laurence Whitehead (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 379-381.

<sup>39</sup> Cerar, 378, 387-388.

<sup>40</sup> Constitutional construction was important to Slovenia because it demonstrated that Slovenia was a legitimate independent state, founded on democratic principles and thereby facilitated the process of international recognition. Cerar, 388.

of national definition rather than national redefinition. Slovenes also faced time pressures that demanded a speedy constitutional drafting process, while time pressures were not so outstanding for Poles.<sup>41</sup> As a result, Slovenia's Constitution outlines the basic structure of the state, but leaves several areas open to legislative additions at a later date.<sup>42</sup> This early pattern of development was negative for the Church because it curtailed debate and necessitated compromise, limiting the extent to which the Church could become involved in crafting the Constitution. Also, since the Church was in a weak power position at this time, political contenders had more control over the process. Even though the Constitution was filled with gaps, these did not exist on many issues which are integral to the Church. In this way, the Church's opportunities to act on these issues are reduced, at least as long as this Constitution remains in force.

The Slovene Constitution firmly draws the line between the realms of state and

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<sup>41</sup> The main reason for this is that the legitimacy of Slovenia's claim to be an independent state was not immediately accepted by the international community. Although Poland existed under the shadow of Soviet Communism for decades, it had still existed as a legitimate, independent state.

<sup>42</sup> One notable feature that is outlined in the Constitution is the electoral system. Cerar, 381, 387-391.



church.<sup>43</sup> This means that in Slovenia religious communities<sup>44</sup> are private institutions, subordinate to Slovene law. This article is subject to modification in Constitutional Court rulings and government legislation, but this has not been apparent since the document's ratification.<sup>45</sup> The Constitution also limits the Church's opportunities to influence policy on the abortion issue. This is accomplished through the inclusion of a clause titled Freedom of Choice in Childbearing,<sup>46</sup> which effectively makes abortion a constitutionally-protected right.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, another clause concerning Slovenia's respect for human life explicitly proscribes capital punishment,<sup>48</sup> restricting potential application of the clause to abortion.

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<sup>43</sup> Article 7 of the Slovenian Constitution states that "The state and religious communities shall be separate." Republic of Slovenia, Constitutional Court, *Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia of 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1991* [online], sec. I, art. 7; available from [http://www.us-rs.si/en/index.php?sv\\_path=6,17&itlang=\\_L1](http://www.us-rs.si/en/index.php?sv_path=6,17&itlang=_L1) Internet; accessed 29 August 2005; Lovro Sturm, "Church-State Relations and the Legal Status of Religious Communities in Slovenia," *Brigham-Young University Law Review*, no. 2 (2004) [online]; available from [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3736/is\\_200401/ai\\_n9352357.html](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3736/is_200401/ai_n9352357.html); Internet; accessed 26 March 2005; Lovro Šturm, "Church and State in Slovenia," in *Law and Religion in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Silvio Ferrari, W. Cole Durham, Jr., assoc. ed. Elizabeth A Sewell (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 335-337.

<sup>44</sup> In Slovene legal parlance, churches and religious denominations are referred to as religious communities.

<sup>45</sup> Sturm, "Church-State Relations and the Legal Status of Religious Communities in Slovenia"; Šturm, "Church and State in Slovenia," 335-337.

<sup>46</sup> This article states the following: "Everyone shall be free to decide whether to bear children. The state shall guarantee the opportunities for exercising this freedom and shall create such condition as will enable parents to decide to bear children." Republic of Slovenia, Constitutional Court, *Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia*, sec. II, art. 55.

<sup>47</sup> Even though the inclusion of this clause provoked considerable controversy among the parties involved in drafting and approving the Constitution, the Constitution made it through with this clause intact. Cerar, 393.

<sup>48</sup> Republic of Slovenia, Constitutional Court, *Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia*, sec. II, art. 17.

In effect, the first article ensures that the government's laws and activities conform with Slovenes' right to choose whether or not to have children. It follows that the state must provide a means to access this freedom, demonstrated by the wording "guarantee the opportunities" and "shall create such conditions." The second article ensures that abortion rights do not conflict with Slovenia's respect for life by limiting protection of human life to the area of capital punishment. Therefore, it is difficult for the Church to mount a challenge to abortion because the definition of "human life" is restricted to after birth. This has effectively restricted the Church's opportunities to act on this issue because new legal measures against abortion would be required to pass the overview process of the Constitutional Court;<sup>49</sup> the firm legal foundation of the right to abortion is such that little room is allowed for substantial restrictions. Another option, that of Constitutional amendment, is highly complex, requiring consensus between politicians, society, and the Church, as well as passage through the legislature with a two-third majority vote and public approval through majority support in a referendum.<sup>50</sup> Thus, in order for this route to work, both Parliament and society must agree with the Church's stance on the issue, as well as the Church's legitimacy in prescribing moral policy. As is shown in previous sections of

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<sup>49</sup> This institution is set up to provide an overview of numerous state activities and their consistency with the Constitution. Republic of Slovenia, Constitutional Court, *Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia*, sec. VIII., art. 160. In practice, this Court is part of the evolution of the Slovene Constitution because it rules on matters that are not always written into the Constitutional text; it also bases its rulings on the underlying elements of the Constitution and sometimes rules on overtly political issues. Cerar, 398-400.

<sup>50</sup> Republic of Slovenia, Constitutional Court, *Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia*, sec. IX, art. 168 - 171.

this analysis, the Church's social and political context has not been conducive to the Church's political activity. Also, the difficulty in taking away a Constitutionally-guaranteed freedom and replacing with a guaranteed restriction cannot be overestimated.

The constitutions of each state present a different set of opportunities and constraints for the Church. The Churches in Poland and Slovenia are similarly limited by the separation of Church and state, which compels them to pursue their political agendas as an organized interest, in competition with other interests in the democratic system. However, this is where the similarity ends. The Slovene Constitution does not recognize the Church as a special interest in either the religious or political spheres, whereas in the Polish Constitution, the Church is granted a separate agreement to define relations between the Church and the state. Constitutional guarantees of abortion rights in Slovenia, arrived at early in the post-Communist period, constrained the Church from further action on this matter. The absence of this protection from the Polish Constitution, as well as the lengthy process of arriving at the Constitution's final form, benefitted the Church such that it gained a relatively wide window of opportunity to act on the issue of abortion. This opportunity allowed the Church to influence the system to produce a law that restricted abortion and restrained opponents from changing this situation.

#### Unofficial Privilege: The Stipulations of the Religious Communities Act

The legal boundaries of religious communities are ambiguously defined in Slovene

law. The Legal Status of Religious Communities Act,<sup>51</sup> which was inherited from the Communist system, continues to regulate religious activity, even though it contains major flaws.<sup>52</sup> The Act neither defines a “religious community” nor specifies the nature of the registration process for these communities.<sup>53</sup> As a result, the Office for Religious Communities,<sup>54</sup> which carries out the registration process, is granted considerable discretionary powers when making decisions about applicants. Complaints about the Office have grown in recent years, particularly with regard to holdups in the registration process and inequitable treatment of religious communities.<sup>55</sup> This led the Human Rights Ombudsman to conclude that the Office is “not performing or performing badly certain tasks entrusted to it by law and by its founding acts.”<sup>56</sup> Following this conclusion, the Ombudsman recommended that the government force the Office to carry out its duties in a timely manner.<sup>57</sup> Although the Office resumed registering religious communities after these

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<sup>51</sup> Subsequently referred to as the Religious Communities Act.

<sup>52</sup> Črnič and Lesjak, 352; Šturm, “Church and State in Slovenia,” 333.

<sup>53</sup> Šturm, “Church and State in Slovenia,” 337-339.

<sup>54</sup> This branch of the government is responsible for recording the presence and activities of religious communities in Slovenia. Republic of Slovenia, Public Relations and Media Office, “Religious Communities in Slovenia,” [online]; available from <http://www.uvi.si/eng/calendar/events/pope/information/religious-communities> Internet: accessed 7 March 2005.

<sup>55</sup> Matjaž Hanžek, Human Rights Ombudsman, Republic of Slovenia “Constitutional Rights: Religious Communities,” *Annual Report 2003* [online] (Ljubljana: Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, Republic of Slovenia, 22 March 2004), 19-20; available from [http://www.varuh-rs.si/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pdf/lp/vcp\\_lp\\_2003\\_eng.pdf](http://www.varuh-rs.si/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/lp/vcp_lp_2003_eng.pdf) Internet: accessed 22 March 2006.

<sup>56</sup> Hanžek, *Annual Report 2003*, 20.

<sup>57</sup> Hanžek, *Annual Report 2003*, 20.

complaints,<sup>58</sup> it continued to favour certain religions over others in registration and funding decisions.<sup>59</sup> In addition, despite government intentions to replace the Act on Religious Communities with a new, more comprehensive law since 1998,<sup>60</sup> this event has not yet taken place.<sup>61</sup> As long as the Religious Communities Act remains unreformed and the Office of Religious Communities retains such a high degree of discretion over the application of its authority, the Roman Catholic Church is endowed with an advantage over other religions. While other religions struggle with the Office's application of the outdated Act, the Church can rely on its traditional presence in Slovenia, substantial resources, and separate agreement with Church and state to cement its place in Slovene society and politics.

#### Distinguishing the Church from Others: The Vatican Accord

Until recently, Slovene law did not provide for specific relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Slovene state; however, as early as 1992, the process of

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<sup>58</sup> Hanžek, *Annual Report 2003*, 20.

<sup>59</sup> Matjaž Hanžek, Human Rights Ombudsman, Republic of Slovenia, "Selected Cases: Allocating State Support to Religious Communities without Criteria," *Annual Report 2004* [online] (Ljubljana: Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, Republic of Slovenia, July 2005), 25-26; available from [http://www.varuh-rs.si/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pdf/lp/vcp\\_lp\\_2004\\_eng.pdf](http://www.varuh-rs.si/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/lp/vcp_lp_2004_eng.pdf) Internet: accessed 21 March 2006.

<sup>60</sup> Although two different versions of new religious legislation exist, the necessity of passing EU-compliant legislation has put reform of the Religious Communities Act on low on the Parliamentary agenda. Črnic and Lesjak, 353.

<sup>61</sup> Hanžek, *Annual Report 2004*, 25-26.

mapping out relations between the two began.<sup>62</sup> A breakthrough occurred in 1999 when Church and state negotiated a tentative agreement. Once this was in place, the negotiation process proceeded up the Church's hierarchy to the Holy See in 2001, when the Vatican Accord came into being.<sup>63</sup> Numerous concerns about this agreement delayed ratification until the Constitutional Court completed an evaluation of its consistency with Slovene law. Despite concerns that the agreement allowed the Church to step outside of the limits imposed by the Constitution, the Court concluded that "the Catholic Church can operate in line with canon law in areas such as public schools and marriage, as long as the operations are not in opposition to Slovenia's law."<sup>64</sup> Parliamentary approval of this Accord in early 2004<sup>65</sup> appears to open up opportunities for the Church's pursuit of its moral agenda. The agreement accomplishes a number of essential tasks:

defines the legal status of the two independent parties, commits them to follow certain procedures for resolving disputes, and guarantees the status of Catholic schools, charitable institutions, mass media, and pastoral presence as equal to other

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<sup>62</sup> Relations between Church and state were formalized in the Mixed Committee, which consisted of representatives of the Church and the government, charged with the responsibility of finding resolutions to problems between the Church and state. Črnic and Lesjak, 362.

<sup>63</sup> "Slovenia-Vatican: Vatican Agreement Finally Wrapped Up," *Slovenia News* 5 (3 February 2004) [online]; available from <http://slonews.sta.si/index.php?id=1853&s=71> Internet: accessed 30 August 2005; "Constitutional Watch: Slovenia," *East European Constitutional Review* 11, no. 1-2 (2002) [online]; available from [http://www.law.nyu.edu/cecr/vol11num1\\_2/constitutionwatch/slovenia](http://www.law.nyu.edu/cecr/vol11num1_2/constitutionwatch/slovenia) Internet: accessed 15 March 2006.

<sup>64</sup> "Vatican Accord Constitutional," *Slovenia News* 43 (2 December 2003) [online]; available from <http://slonews.sta.si/index.php?id=16081s=63> Internet: accessed 30 August 2005.

<sup>65</sup> Despite opposition to the agreement, arising from possible Church encroachment on the public realm the agreement received a decisive 44 to 12 vote in the National Assembly. "Slovenia-Vatican: Vatican Agreement Finally Wrapped Up."

privately sponsored initiatives.<sup>66</sup>

Furthermore, this Accord was signed with the Holy See rather than the Slovene component of the Church, forcing the state to deal with an institution that is simultaneously national, governed by Slovene law, and transnational, governed by Slovenia's pledge to adhere to international treaties above its own laws.<sup>67</sup> Although the Constitutional Court has stipulated that the agreement must conform with Slovene law, the potential exists for relations between the Church and the state that supercede national law.

The Vatican Accord places the Church into a new position in the Slovene legal context, such that its relations with the state have been formalized separately from other religious communities. This provides the Church with a number of opportunities for influence in Slovenia's future development, but the formality of this arrangement also constrains the Church in a number of ways. For instance, Slovenia's education system is decidedly secular in both its outlook and curriculum. The Education Act does not allow religious education in public schools - only the teaching of a general, non-confessional religion course.<sup>68</sup> At the same time, the establishment of private schools is permissible, but

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<sup>66</sup> Cox, 125.

<sup>67</sup> Flere, "Slovenia: At a Distance from a Perfect Religious Market," 154.

<sup>68</sup> Republic of Slovenia, Public Relations and Media Office, "Religious Communities in Slovenia: The State and Religious Communities in the Republic of Slovenia," [online]; available from <http://www.gov.si/uvs/ang/StateAndReligiousCommunities.htm> Internet: accessed 7 March 2005; Šturm, "Church and State in Slovenia," 341; Tatjana Rakar, "The Role of the Roman Catholic Church in the Service Provision of Education in Slovenia and Hungary," *Social Compass* 52, no. 1 (2005): 85, 91.

only under strict conditions of state financing and oversight.<sup>69</sup> In effect, the Church has been excluded from shaping public education by government strictures which are designed to be consistent with the secular character of the Slovene state.<sup>70</sup> The Vatican agreement grants the Church special privileges in education through its acknowledgment of the Church's right to establish its own schools.<sup>71</sup> Does this threaten the separation between private, Catholic schools and public, non-confessional schools? Not necessarily. As a registered religious community, the Church was able to operate its own private schools before the Vatican Accord was ever approved.<sup>72</sup> The Accord formalizes this arrangement and guarantees that it can continue, but it does not extend the Church's rights into public education. The Church's greatest opening into education policy comes in the creation of a

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<sup>69</sup> Financing is contingent upon the availability of private schools in the surrounding locality, as well as a number of other criteria. Also, the curriculum of the private school is subject to specific standards to ensure equivalence. Rakar, 85-86.

<sup>70</sup> According to Rakar, the state considers the Church's private education facilities as complements to public schools, not replacements. Rakar, 91.

<sup>71</sup> The Church's guarantees in education are laid out in the Constitutional Court's recitation of Article 10 of the agreement: "The Catholic Church shall have in conformity with the legislation of the Republic of Slovenia and in accordance with canon law the right to establish and administer schools of all kinds and levels, student dormitories and other educational and upbringing institutions. The State shall support the institutions determined in the previous article under the same conditions as it supports other private institutions of the same kind. The status of students and boarders of these institutions shall be equal to the status of boarders in public institutions." Republic of Slovenia, Constitutional Court, "The Review of Article 10.1 of the Agreement," *Case Law Rm-1/02: Agreement between the Republic of Slovenia and the Holy See on Legal Issues* (19 November 2003): B.-V., para. 46 [online]; available from <http://www.odlocitve.us-rs.si/urs/us-odl.nsf/o/D0F5859E5E94B706C1256FC400520199> Internet: accessed 22 March 2006.

<sup>72</sup> State law allows religious communities to establish partially state-funded, private schools. Republic of Slovenia, Public Relations and Media Office, "Religious Communities in Slovenia: The State and Religious Communities in the Republic of Slovenia"; Rakar, 85-86.



process which deals with further issues between Church and state.<sup>73</sup> This provides the Church with an opportunity to move beyond the confines prescribed by the Accord. Still, the language of the Accord and the Court's interpretation of its legality suggest that this opportunity has limits, specifically those in Constitution and law which specify that the state is separate from religion. Within this interpretation, the state can respect the Church's right to establish its own schools without changing legislation and allowing the Church into public education. The situation with the media is equally ambiguous for the Church because under Slovene law, all religious communities are granted publishing rights.<sup>74</sup> With respect to the other matters in this agreement, the Accord represents a positive development in the Church's legal context because the Church can build on its guarantees in these areas to attain some influence. Most of all, the Accord introduces an element of certainty into Church-state relations which had not previously existed. Now that there is a formal framework for future relations, disputes between Church and state have the possibility of achieving a formal resolution. For the Church, this represents an opening because the Church can force the state through this dispute-resolution process over a specific issue. At the same time, the Church is held to specific mechanisms when its

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<sup>73</sup> According to the Constitutional Court review of the agreement, clause 14 contains this guarantee: "The Republic of Slovenia and the Holy See shall through diplomatic channels resolve potential disagreements which might occur in the interpretation or application of these Agreement provisions. The Republic of Slovenia and the Holy See shall further continue to discuss the open issues that are not part of this Agreement, in order to resolve such by agreement." Republic of Slovenia, Constitutional Court, "The Review of Art. 14.2 of the Agreement," *Case Law Rm-1/02: Agreement between the Republic of Slovenia and the Holy See on Legal Issues*, B.-VI., para. 50. **Need access info.**

<sup>74</sup> Republic of Slovenia, Public Relations and Media Office, "Religious Communities in Slovenia: The State and Religious Communities in the Republic of Slovenia."

activities contravene Slovene policy or law; this acts as a constraint on the Church by forcing the Church to respond to state demands about Church behaviour.

The ratification of the Vatican Accord, especially after a long period of contention about Church-state relations, indicates a wider change in the Church's context, directed toward regularizing relations with religious communities via legal agreements. This change was evident in the initial negotiations surrounding the Vatican Accord in 1999 and throughout the process leading up to its approval in 2004. It proceeded further with the negotiation of a similar agreement with the Evangelical Church in 2000.<sup>75</sup> In the same year, both the Roman Catholic and Evangelical churches also procured guarantees of their presence in the Slovene Army.<sup>76</sup> Even so, these churches did not maintain an exclusive status in this realm, as the Law on Defense was subsequently changed to create a multi-religious chaplaincy to minister to soldiers.<sup>77</sup> On the surface, the state's negotiation of a legal agreement with one other religion suggests that accommodation with religious organizations has become a dominant thread in government policy. An alternative interpretation, which takes into account the traditional status of the Catholic and Evangelical churches, shows that the priorities of this policy lie with specific religious

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<sup>75</sup> Šturm, "Church and State in Slovenia," 351; Črnic and Lesjak, 363; Republic of Slovenia, "Religious Communities in Slovenia, The State and Religious Communities in Slovenia."

<sup>76</sup> This was likely connected to Slovenia's efforts to conform with NATO policy and secure accession to the organization. Črnic and Lesjak, 363-364.

<sup>77</sup> The faiths included in this Army chaplaincy are Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Muslim. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Slovenia: Status of Religious Freedom," *International Religious Freedom Report 2003* [online]; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2003/24433.htm> Internet: accessed 21 March 2006.

organizations over other organizations. In either context, the Church's opportunities to influence policy have increased over previous post-Communist times.

### *Summary*

The opportunities provided by the legal context in Slovenia arise mainly from the realm of legislation and treaties, while the constraints arise from the Slovene Constitution. In effect, the Slovene Church lacked a solid base upon which to build future opportunities, and was thus more dependent on the whims of Parliamentary politics to provide openings in the political opportunity structure. As a result, the Church did not attain any special legal status that distinguished it from other religions until the negotiations of the Vatican Accord began; this agreement served as the signal of an opening and also created an opening for the Church. This pattern contrasts with the contributions of the legal context to the political opportunity structure of the Polish Church. The Polish Church's opportunities arose mainly from its special status in the Constitution and the consequent negotiation of a Concordat governing Church-state relations. For the Polish Church, legal regulations governing religious organizations have been irrelevant. Also, the Polish Church's legal context was open from the very early in the transition, even though neither the Constitution nor the Concordat were approved until 1997 and 1998, respectively, simply because of the expectation that the Church would require special relations with the state, over and above other religions. Therefore, based on these legal and constitutional measures and the relatively durable openings that they create, the Polish Church has generally faced and continues to face a positive political opportunity structure. In contrast,

the Slovene Church, granted few openings by its legal and constitutional arrangements with the state, has added few durable openings to its political opportunity structure.

## CHAPTER 10

### TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSIONS: JOINING THE WEST

A multitude of factors that are external to the state shape the context of an individual state and thereby affect the state's specification of and capacity to achieve policy priorities. Throughout much of post-communist Europe, the reform of economic, social, and political structures was intended to bring these states closer to the prosperity enjoyed by western European states. Thus, even in states where political actors remained divided by their specific views on democratic reform, a state of general agreement existed about the "return to Europe"<sup>1</sup> This dynamic pushed both Poland and Slovenia to form a closer relationship to western Europe by seeking admission to major pan-European institutions. The process of each country's accession to and participation in the European Union (EU) is representative of the scope of this change, requiring a multitude of internal, state-level changes in order to successfully mesh with the larger structure of the EU. Thus, to a certain degree, membership in this larger international organization has bounded state policy within a realm of what is acceptable to the larger institution and its member states.

#### *Impetus to Join*

The Polish impetus to join western institutions has its foundations in Poland's identity as a nation of the western world, as opposed to the eastern world.<sup>2</sup> Poles' image

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<sup>1</sup> Millard, *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, 255.

<sup>2</sup> Piotr Mazurkiewicz, "Catholic Church in Poland in the Face of the Integration Process," in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Irena Borowik (Kraków: NOMOS, 1999), 236-237.

of their nation was defined by its power to separate them from their eastern neighbours, namely Russia, which was considered to be “barbarian, primitive, oppressive and evil.”<sup>3</sup> In contrast, Poland was defined by its place on the threshold of ‘the good’ - western civilization, the heart of Christianity and democracy.<sup>4</sup> This construction of Polish identity persisted and was amplified by dissidents and the Church during the Communist era such that the Polish nation became synonymous with heroism and sacrifice, protecting its western brethren from the scourge of atheistic Communism.<sup>5</sup> Thus, once the Polish nation was freed from the Communist government, re-joining Europe (and rejecting Russia) became an immediate priority, evident in the declaration of the ‘return to Europe.’<sup>6</sup> Consensus is rare in Polish politics; however, a relative consensus existed among society, major political parties, government, and the Church, about joining western Europe and the EU, even if some expressed reservations about the potential consequences of this move. Society’s positive orientation toward the West and EU accession soured somewhat when the disparity between Poles’ image of their nation as a defender of the West and western Europe’s contrary image of Poland as a peripheral country became apparent,<sup>7</sup> but most of

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<sup>3</sup> Zdzisław Mach, “Polish National Culture and its Shifting Centres,” *Centre for European Studies: Online Academic Papers* [online] (Kraków: Jagiellonian University, 2000), 3; available from <http://www.ces.uj.edu.pl/mach/national.htm> Internet: accessed 1 February 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Mach, “Polish National Culture and its Shifting Centres,” 3.

<sup>5</sup> Mach, “Polish National Culture and its Shifting Centres,” 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> Mach, “Polish National Culture and its Shifting Centres,” 10; Mazurkiewicz, 236-237.

<sup>7</sup> Mach, “Polish National Culture and its Shifting Centres,” 11-12.

society appeared to hold onto the idea that joining the EU was essential for national prosperity.<sup>8</sup> Also, most major political parties agreed on the necessity of joining the EU, with the exception of the Catholic LPR and the nationalist SO, who polarized the debate over the EU in the early part of this decade.<sup>9</sup> Despite a short diversion to EU-opposition during the mid-1990s, the Church also officially supported the EU accession process for much of the post-communist period,<sup>10</sup> as well as during the EU accession referendum. Thus, for most of the post-communist period, the Polish national image and a national political consensus amongst almost all major political players supported the Euro-western accession process.

Like many other former Communist countries in Europe, including Poland, Slovenia also pursued integration with the West. For Slovenia, already geographically, economically, and culturally close to western Europe, further opening the country to western ideas and institutions merely continues the nation's natural and preestablished course. Over the course of Slovenia's affiliation with the Yugoslav state, Slovene national identity evolved to become centered around the idea that Slovenia is a western, central European nation, "grounded in traditions understood to be western, and not Balkan (or

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<sup>8</sup> A majority of the population continued to support Poland's accession to the EU. This evident in the results of the EU Accession referendum of 2003, reported by Jasiewicz, in which "yes" votes ranged from 63 to 85 percent in Poland's various regions. Krzysztof Jasiewicz, "Knocking on Europe's Door: Voting Behaviour in the EU Accession Referendum in Poland," *Problems of Post-Communism* 51, no. 5 (2004): 37.

<sup>9</sup> Jasiewicz, "Knocking on Europe's Door: Voting Behaviour in the EU Accession Referendum in Poland," 34-35.

<sup>10</sup> Mazurkiewicz., 248-251.

even East European)."<sup>11</sup> Its submersion within the Yugoslav state was considered to be antithetical because of Slovenia's greater similarity to western Europe, as opposed to the Balkans.<sup>12</sup> In post-Communist Slovenia, "anything having to do with the Balkans, Yugoslavia, and Slavism is an impossibility," while the construction of greater ties with the rest of Europe is a main priority.<sup>13</sup> According to Toš, the similarity between Slovenes and western Europeans on various value measurements confirms that "Slovenes are Europeans."<sup>14</sup> Thus, for many Slovenes, adopting western ideas and attaining membership in western institutions are additional steps in the realization of Slovenia's essential position as a European nation. Thus, Slovenes share a common desire with Poles to be part of the West - to 'Return to Europe.'

This social consensus has been accompanied by political consensus. Slovenia's main political parties shared a consensus around the desirability of joining Europe and its main institution, the EU<sup>15</sup>; left and center parties tended to base their approval on

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<sup>11</sup> Patrick Hyder Patterson, "On the Edge of Reason: The Boundaries of Balkanism in Slovenian, Austrian, and Italian Discourse," *Slavic Review* 62, no. 1 (2003): 110,114.

<sup>12</sup> Lene Hansen, "Slovenian Identity: State-Building on the Balkan Border," *Alternatives* 21 (1996): 484.

<sup>13</sup> Hansen, 473, 485, 490.

<sup>14</sup> Republic of Slovenia, Public Relations and Media Office. :Niko Toš: Slovenes are Europeans," *Slovenia News* (30 November 2004) [online]; available from <http://www.uvi.si/eng/slovenia/publications/slovenia-news/1460/1462/index.text.html>; accessed 10 January 2006.

<sup>15</sup> The only opponent was the Slovene National Party, which failed to sign an all-party parliamentary agreement in 1997 stating consensus on the issue. Danica Fink-Hafner, "Slovenia," *European Journal of Political Research* 43 (2004): 1132.



Slovenia's European identity, while right parties tended to approve of the process as necessary to Slovenia's development, but also wanted to protect Slovenia's unique identity.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, concerns about the process of Europeanization do not detract from the consensus that joining European institutions was the "only viable option for the country."<sup>17</sup> The dominant political party for most of the post-Communist period, notably the LDS, controlled the process and shaped political discussions about becoming part of Europe; this same party subscribed to Slovenia's European identity.<sup>18</sup> The consensus has been so wide-ranging that it also includes the Church: Church officials, specifically on the Commission for Justice and Peace, openly stated that "a decision for EU and NATO membership was the only choice for Slovenia's future."<sup>19</sup> This is no surprise, given the international Church's favourable view of European integration. However, even as the Church shares the dominant positive view of European membership that exists in the Slovene polity, the forces which accompany this integration into the West have the potential to limit the sovereignty of the Slovene state and to alter the opportunities for the

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<sup>16</sup> Z. Šabič and M. Brglez, "The National Identity of Post-Communist Small States in the Process of Accession to the European Union: The Case of Slovenia," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 35 (2002): 72-75.

<sup>17</sup> Harris, 198.

<sup>18</sup> The LDP in particular, Slovenia's leading party until the 2004 elections, placed its "trust in the democratic community of European nations, where national interests will be defended through dialogue rather than power." Šabič and Brglez, 73.

<sup>19</sup> "Constitutional Watch - Slovenia," *East European Constitutional Review* 11, no. 3 (2002) [online]; available from <http://www.law.nyu.edu/eccr/vol11num3/constitutionwatch/slovenia.html> Internet: accessed 15 March 2006.

Church to influence Slovenia's political development.

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## CHAPTER 11

### CONCLUSION

The democratization of eastern Europe and the return of religious freedom in the early 1990s presented the Roman Catholic Church with an opportunity to assume a role in constructing the moral and political foundation of Catholic-dominated politics in post-Communist Europe; however, the opportunities provided by the democratic polity proved to be much more complex than initial appearances suggested.

This thesis sought to disentangle this complexity and determine the main factors influencing the opportunities that were available to the Church to imprint its moral agenda on two Roman Catholic-dominated countries, Poland and Slovenia, during their first fifteen years of post-communist democratic development. Using the concept of political opportunity structure, the Church's context was divided into several components: history and society, political parties, electoral politics, government dynamics, legal and constitutional features, and transnational influences. The use of this concept and the specific division of the components relied upon the assumption that although the Church's religious functions make it somewhat unique among interest groups, the Church still operates much like many interest groups; that is, that the Church seeks to effect political change by engaging society, politicians, and the government. A variety of primary and secondary sources were used to delineate and compare the evolution of the political opportunity structure which the Church faced in each country, as well as to compare the effects of a political opportunity structure on the Church's ability to realize its moral



agenda in each country. The results of this analysis were expected to support the idea that the Polish Church benefitted from a political opportunity structure that provided more opportunities and erected fewer obstacles to the realization of its agenda, as compared to the relatively weaker Slovene Church, which often faced a detrimental political opportunity structure that erected many obstacles and provided few opportunities for the Church's influence.

#### *Summary of the Analysis*

The importance of the Roman Catholic Church through much of Polish history, the nationalistic associations between Polish identity and Roman Catholicism, and the Church's significant role in politics during the communist period, all served to prime Polish society to receive and respond to the Church's appeals. In contrast, the Slovene Church started out in the democratic system in a weak position, lacking the strong nationalistic ties to Slovene culture and society, as well as the esteem associated with communist-era political activity, that its Polish counterpart enjoyed in its relationship with Polish society. Also, Polish society retained a strong connection to Roman Catholicism and the institutional Church, despite a noticeable trend of increasingly individualized religion. At the same time, Slovenes possessed weaker ties to religion, Roman Catholicism, and the Roman Catholic Church. Consequently, although Polish society provided the Church with a relatively broad set of political openings that allowed for significant political activity, a skeptical, distanced Slovene society placed stringent limits on the Church, negatively affecting the Church's political opportunity structure.

The relative instability of Polish politics as compared to Slovene politics significantly altered the political opportunity structure in each country. First, the instability of Polish parties acted as both an advantage and a disadvantage for the Church, facilitating the image of the Church as a comparatively stable, reliable representative of the Polish people but, simultaneously, limiting the effectiveness of potential political party allies and access to political openings created by affiliation with political parties. Conversely, the stability of the Slovene party scene provided little means to differentiate between political parties and the Church as representatives of Slovenes but, simultaneously expanded the number of stable, effective political party allies available to the Church. Thus, the Slovene Church was confined to working through political party allies to gain access to parliament, whereas the Polish Church, independently powerful as a representative and lacking stable party allies, could sometimes forgo the necessity of working through its party allies to gain access to government. Electoral contests in Poland often served to further fragment the Polish party system and produced divided legislatures with relatively unstable coalitions. This meant that the fortunes of the Church varied according to the shifts in power of their main allies and antagonists. Moreover, the rejuvenation of the former *nomenklatura* to form the most stable and effective party in the political arena for much of the post-communist period, negatively affected the availability of political openings in both countries. The Polish Church, although sometimes limited by the instability of the Polish system, benefitted from its early gains and its continued presence as a pillar of Polish culture. In contrast, the Slovene Church, faced a party and electoral system, as well as a

government structure, that consolidated relatively quickly. Electoral and party politics were dominated by a stable core of parties. Although no single party garnered a majority of the votes, the Slovene system produced legislatures that were paradoxically stable, composed of coalitions that incorporated disparate partners. These elements of the democratic system, combined with the Church's relatively modest value to society, served to consistently limit the Slovene Church and provided few openings for political influence.

The legal and constitutional structures which were erected by each state and the relative gains that the Church was able to achieve within these structures further highlights the disparity between the situations. In Slovenia, the Church's main opportunities arose mainly from the realm of legislation and treaties, while the constraints arose from the Slovene Constitution. In effect, the Slovene Church lacked a solid base upon which to build future opportunities, and was thus more dependent on the whims of Parliamentary politics to provide openings in the political opportunity structure. As a result, the Church did not attain any special legal status that distinguished it from other religions until the negotiations of the Vatican Accord began; this agreement served as the signal of an opening and also created an opening for the Church. This pattern contrasts with the contributions of the legal context to the political opportunity structure of the Polish Church. The Polish Church's opportunities arose mainly from its special status in the Constitution and the consequent negotiation of a Concordat governing Church-state relations. For the Polish Church, legal regulations governing religious organizations have been irrelevant. Also, the Polish Church's legal context was open from the very early in the

transition, even though neither the Constitution nor the Concordat was approved until 1997 and 1998, respectively, simply because of the expectation that the Church would require special relations with the state, over and above other religions. Therefore, based on these legal and constitutional measures and the relatively durable openings that they create, the Polish Church has generally faced a more open set of political opportunities. In contrast, the Slovene Church, granted few openings by its legal and constitutional arrangements with the state, added few durable openings to its political opportunity structure.

Finally, as each country participated in the international community and pursued membership in international institutions, they reduced the number of openings available to the Church at that time and, potentially, in the future. In both countries, a pragmatic political consensus between most major political players placed Poland and Slovenia on the path to integration with western Europe. The Church, caught up in this current of change, became an active, public supporter of EU integration in Poland, but stayed largely on the sidelines in Slovenia. For the Polish Church, this pragmatic move seemed to result in a significant victory for its traditionalist views with the inclusion of a moral protection clause in Poland's treaty of accession with the EU. Conversely, the Slovene Church, a consistently marginal player in Slovene politics, maintained that position throughout much of the debate and accession process, regardless of its views on EU integration and gained little from the process. Although political openings in each country dictated a disparate level of participation for each Church in the integration process, EU membership carries similar implications for both Churches. By circumscribing member states to act within a

particular range of secularist values and norms, the EU could narrow political opportunities for each Church to imprint its traditionalist orientations on national policy. As society changes to accommodate the new values that permeate the European community, government decision-makers and society will have the option of incorporating secularist values into their own legislation over the traditionalist values of the Church. Because of its relatively higher status in its national political and social realms, the Polish Church has a great deal to lose from such a trend and could find itself left with few openings into the political realm in the future. However, the pre-existing incorporation of secular and liberal values in Slovenia, as well as the Slovene Church's relatively weaker position, means that very little will likely change for the Slovene Church; its opportunities will continue to be restricted.

### *Conclusions and Implications*

This broad analysis of the Roman Catholic Church in the two homologous, yet different, contexts of Poland and Slovenia, utilizing the theoretical concept of political opportunity structure, led to a number of conclusions about the Church's development in these young democratic states. First, the role of political opportunity structure, and more broadly, context should not be underestimated in its influence on the options available to the Church in the circumstances particular to different times and places in each polity's development. Also, historical and social factors played an important role in setting up the foundation of the political context, providing the Church with legitimacy and further openings during times of political change. Moreover, the Church's active participation in

claim-making activities and political agitation, both during the communist regime and the process of negotiation and change, made a substantial difference in making political opportunities available in the new regime. Finally, although this analysis chose to focus on context over leadership, the skill and insightfulness of leaders play an important role in recognizing and availing of political opportunities, as well as recognizing and overcoming obstacles.

In each country, the Roman Catholic Church found that political activity was complicated by the emergence of a multipolar, democratic system in the place of a unipolar, communist state. The initial openings created by the changeover between communism and democracy represented the best opportunity for each Church to embed itself into the developing political system. Although this was the time of maximal openness in the political opportunity structure, the Church in each country faced remarkably contrasting opportunities to become an important political actor in the regime. The Polish Church, embedded in Polish life by its historical standing and religious role, was also an active participant in communist and transition-era politics. This meant that the Church had already laid the groundwork for a continuing political role in democratic politics. In contrast, the Slovene Church, burdened with an unfavourable history, diminished religious role, and insignificant political participation, did not possess the groundwork to assume a similar political role. Moreover, rapid coalescence among the major political players largely shut the Slovene Church out of politics. Consequently, the Polish Church enjoyed the greatest initial benefit from the maximal opportunity engendered in the transition period

and was able to secure a number of political gains, while the Slovene Church languished in relative obscurity. This divergence suggests that the upset created by political change is not sufficient to create the openings required for a dominant religious organization to assume a major role in subsequent political development. It appears that active political participation in the period leading up to the major systemic change, along with a solid standing with society and political leaders, was also required to create a favourable and open political opportunity structure for the Church.

Once the structures of the democratic state were formed and the time of greatest openness had passed, the political opportunity structure varied within the limits circumscribed by the democratic system. The relatively volatile nature of Polish politics, combined with a religiously adherent, yet somewhat skeptical, society presented the Polish Church with a political opportunity structure that was often variable. However, except in a few specific instances, this variability generally favoured the Church and, as a result, it continued to enjoy a relatively open political structure and hence continued to build on earlier gains. The Slovene Church faced a remarkably different context than its Polish counterpart. The relatively stable political system and the openly skeptical Slovene society presented few openings to the Church to attain a significant influence in politics and, aside from a few state concessions in the early 2000s, the Church was shut out of politics. As both Poland and Slovenia increasingly integrate with transnational institutions such as the EU, the situation of each national Church appears destined to change. The influx of western and secular ideas represents a threat to the Church's religiously-based claims to an

important role in Polish social life and politics, compromising the favourable political opportunity structure that the Church became accustomed to for most of the last 15 years. Even though the Slovene Church has much less to lose from this influx, as Slovene society is much more secular than Polish society, it faces further marginalization from the mainstream of social and political life in Slovenia and even fewer opportunities to gain political influence.

The elements of context captured in the concept of political opportunity structure successfully explained the differential development of each Church's political power over the last 15 years of democratic politics in each of Poland and Slovenia, but that political opportunity structure does not represent all of the factors that are involved in making political claims. The factor of leadership was deliberately set aside in this analysis in favour of political context and political opportunity structure, departing from much of the existing literature, which predominantly focused on actors as progenitors of political change. However, this was not intended to imply that actors were not important in the process of political mobilization, but that context was important in shaping the options that were available to leaders as they made strategic choices. Skillful and insightful leadership was vitally important to take advantage of available political opportunities, increase existing opportunities, and construct new opportunities. Additionally, political opportunity structure is tied to the concepts of repertoire and framing. These concepts emphasize the importance of leadership in creating and refining repertoires for activity, as well as framing important issues such that they will resonate with the intended audience. Thus, the



elucidation of the political opportunity structure does not define the entirety of the determining factors in the system, but it does define the limits within which actors in the political system must maneuver in order to pursue their political agenda.

#### *Directions for Further Study*

The adaptation of the concept of political opportunity structure to compare the contextual variables which affected the political roles of the Polish and Slovene Roman Catholic Church was a novel approach to the problem of explaining how the Church's influence evolved in these two post-communist countries. Since this approach provided a plausible explanation of how context has affected each Church, it merits further application to the study of the Roman Catholic Church and, perhaps, other religious organizations, in additional contexts that have undergone such profound political changes. In addition, other concepts, linked to political opportunity structure in the literature, could be used to define some of the other factors that affect an organization's ability to realize its political agenda. This includes, but is not limited to, an organization's ability to construct effective frames, utilize repertoires, and employ mobilizing structures that take advantage of openings or attempt to overcome obstacles in the political opportunity structure. The wide spectrum of possibilities for further application and elucidation of this approach promises to provide a wealth of new and unique perspectives on religious organizations as they interact with the political system of their nation.

#### *Becoming a Full Member*

Long before Poland attained membership in the EU in 2004, the state was required

to bring its economic and political system in line with the conditions of candidacy and membership. Thus, long before Poland was even considered for membership in the institution, the EU was influencing the shape of political development in the country because the government directed its policies toward meeting the conditions of accession. These priorities consumed the process of national construction which was taking place, confining most of the political agenda in the country to the discussion of specific issues and goals. As political discussion became increasingly circumscribed to EU-accession issues, openings to pursue contrary views to these national priorities or to discuss different issues lessened, placing constraints on most political actors, including the Church, in the realization of their own policy goals. However, despite these constraints, numerous openings provided by other factors forming the political opportunity structure provided the Church with the chance to take part in and gain from the EU accession process.

The generally pro-western attitude of politicians and society, the pace of the accession process, and the Church's cultivation of a western European identity constrained the Church to follow a pro-EU policy; however, these factors also provided an opportunity for the Church to have a role in shaping Poland's place in the EU. This opportunity stemmed from the government's need to shore up policy against nationalist challengers to EU accession, creating a significant opportunity for the Church to play a role in navigating Poland's course into the EU. At the same time, the Church expected Poland to act as an example to other EU members that would prove that Christian, specifically Catholic, morality and values were compatible with democratic institutions. As a result of this

alliance, the Church became a prominent partner in the accession process, officially declaring its support for the process and its desire to overcome the obstacle of European secularism to bring Polish Christian values back to Europe.<sup>1</sup> However, the Church's trepidations about the influence of European secular values on Poland temper this support with a "conditional" quality.<sup>2</sup> During the course of the accession process, the Church participated in discussions surrounding the development of common values underpinning the EU,<sup>3</sup> as well as the general pro-EU campaign. The Church also encouraged Poles to vote in the accession referendum, held in 2003.<sup>4</sup> The Church's greatest victory to date was the inclusion of a declaration in the Treaty of Accession that protects Poland's right to enact legislation on moral questions, specifically the "protection of human life."<sup>5</sup> Thus, because Poland is one of the few states in Europe that places strict limits on the practice of

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<sup>1</sup> Marcin Mierzejewski, "Integration Approval," *The Warsaw Voice* [online] (2 December 2001); available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/1818/> Internet: accessed 11 March 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Mirella Eberts, "The Blessed Union? The Roman Catholic Church and Poland's Accession to the EU," *Redefining Europe: Federalism & the Union of European Democracies* [online], Fifth Scholarly Panel: European Civil Society and Cooperation; Congress Held in Prague, Czech Republic 26-30 March 2004 ;Available from <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/AUD/s5.htm> Internet: accessed 25 January 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Witold Żygulski, "Valuing Integration," *The Warsaw Voice* (19 May 2002) [online]; available from <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/archiwum.phtml/1987/> Internet: accessed 11 March 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Jasiewicz, 37.

<sup>5</sup> The full text of this Declaration states that "[T]he Government of the Republic of Poland understands that nothing in the provisions of the Treaty on the European Union, of the Treaties establishing the European Communities and the provisions of treaties amending or supplementing those treaties prevents the Polish State in regulating questions of moral significance, as well as those related to the protection of human life." Republic of Slovenia, National Assembly, "EU Law - Basic Documents of Primary Legislation: The Treaty of Accession," *Official Gazette RS-MP* 3 (2004): 3003 [online] (L. Declarations of the Republic of Poland: Declaration 39); Available from <http://www.uradni-list.si/priloge/2004011/EPenHkaz> Internet: accessed 19 March 2006.

abortion,<sup>6</sup> this article ensures that the state retains its sovereignty to legislate on abortion, helping to protect the Church-approved law from outside interference. Despite these openings and victories for the Church, the Church's association with such an overtly political issue may place a long-term burden on the Church if Poland's accession to the EU fails to produce the expected benefits for Poles. The Church's strong linkage to the EU accession process "means that the Church will be co-responsible for the social costs of integration."<sup>7</sup> Thereby, the Church faces the risk of losing its considerable hold over society and political leaders, compromising its future opportunities and the generally favourable political opportunity structure that it has faced for much of the post-communist period.

Like Poland, Slovenia was forced to compromise with the stringent membership criteria set by the larger structure of the EU; winning membership in the EU was not without cost, complication, or compromise. During Slovenia's accession to the EU the political priorities of government and the legislative process were similarly compromised. First, the passage of EU-mandated legislation became a priority, perhaps at the expense of democratic debate and other significant issues.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, if the amendment of

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<sup>6</sup> "Constitutional Watch: Poland," *East European Constitutional Review* 11/12, no. 4/1 (2002/2003) [online]; Available from [http://www.law.nyu.edu/eecr/vol11\\_12num4\\_1/constitutionwatch/poland](http://www.law.nyu.edu/eecr/vol11_12num4_1/constitutionwatch/poland) Internet: accessed 15 March 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Janusz Mucha and Marek S. Szczepański, "Polish Society in the Perspective of its Integration with the European Union," *East European Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2002): 495-496.

<sup>8</sup> The process of passing legislation was often hastened by limiting political debate about legislation.

Constitutional Article 68 is any indication, the process of qualifying for accession effected significant turns in government policy. The Constitutional restrictions on foreign ownership that were contained in Article 68 were inconsistent with EU rules and thus had to be amended in specific ways to reflect those rules. Since joining the EU was of major political importance, this article was hastily amended to comply with EU standards, even though other countries at a similar stage in the process were able to negotiate extended periods to phase-in the new regulations and despite concerns about how these changes would affect the development of Slovenia's economy.<sup>9</sup> Not only has the EU imposed a large list of demands on this young democratic state, but also, surrounding states, intent on obtaining some concession from this aspiring member, have dangled membership approval over Slovenia, contingent upon certain bilateral agreements. Thus, pressure on the state has come at both the multilateral and bilateral levels.<sup>10</sup> For instance, both Italy and Austria successfully used Slovenia's overarching goal of EU accession to settle their own issues with Slovenia, alternately blocking or stalling the accession process and making their approval for EU membership contingent on Slovenia's settlement of bilateral issues.<sup>11</sup> This

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<sup>9</sup> This article in Slovenia's 1991 Constitution basically barred foreigners from owning land in Slovenia, except in specific cases. Nina Bandelj, "Negotiating Global, Regional, and National Forces: Foreign Investment in Slovenia," *East European Politics and Societies* 18, no. 3 (2004): 464-469.

<sup>10</sup> Zlatko Šabič, "Slovenia and the European Union: A Different Kind of Two-Level Game," in *Norms and Nannies: The Impact of International Organizations on the Central and East European States*, ed. Ronald H. Linden (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 93, 100.

<sup>11</sup> Šabič's argument provides an extensive discussion of the Italy and Austria's manipulation of the approval process to settle a variety of issues left over from previous eras, as far back as World War II. Šabič, "Slovenia and the European Union," 104-113.

amplified the effects of EU-dominance on the national agenda and forced the state to add more items to their list of policy priorities; essentially, the concerns of outside interests altered Slovenia's domestic political agenda. This meant that opportunities to deal with issues unrelated to the EU accession became narrowed as a significant amount of time on the Parliamentary agenda concerned EU accession issues. For the Church, which sought remedies to several outstanding issues, this represented a constraint; the Church would have to wait until Slovenia was finished with meeting the conditions of accession to see any resolution in its relationship with the state. Also, the Slovene government never obtained any concessions in its treaty agreement with the EU that would allow it to maintain its legislative powers in areas of public morality as had the Polish government.<sup>12</sup> This appears to further confine the Church to its marginal role in Slovene politics and reduces the Slovene government's ability to independently enact legislation that would be consistent with the Church's values about public morality.

Both recent additions to the EU, Poland and Slovenia continue to face similar challenges. Attaining membership was only a small part of the membership process for Poland and Slovenia. Now that both countries are members, their priorities will shift, but not away from the EU. Rather, politics will focus on successfully integrating with the EU and deriving benefits from membership in the organization. Also, their new roles as

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<sup>12</sup> The main concessions in the EU treaty that the Slovene government obtained related to its power over the regional division of its territory and the protection of an indigenous honey bee. Republic of Slovenia, National Assembly, "EU Law - Basic Documents of Primary Legislation: The Treaty of Accession."

members of the EU circumscribe the range of policies and activities that are available to these two states because they must now exist within the limits of norms and expectations of this political and economic union. This means that as a condition of membership, both Polish and Slovene laws should subscribe to both written and unwritten norms of the European community of which it is now a part. It follows that both the Polish and Slovene governments must consider both foreign and domestic policy carefully to comply with the norms of the EU. This further opens each country to the influence of the liberal values and norms which dominate much of western Europe. This liberal influence, which runs contrary to the Church's traditionalist values, represents a significant threat to the Church in its crusade for political power. As each state is pulled further and further into the western European fold and the range of policy options is subscribed by western liberal values, can the Church wield political influence over major issues and morally guide their respective nations? In Slovenia, liberal values have been dominant for some time and the Church is both politically and culturally weak. Thus, the main threat to the Church is that it will have even fewer opportunities to regain some of the influence that it lost decades ago. However, as a dominant political power, the Polish Church has much more to lose. The increasing influence of liberal values on government policy threatens the Church's ability to impress Roman Catholic values on the Polish state, as well as its efforts to maintain Poland as a stronghold of traditional Roman Catholicism. Thus, it seems that the Church's choice to support EU integration in Poland, while providing temporary influence over government policy, could ultimately reduce the Church's opportunities for influence over the

development of the Polish state.

### *Summary*

A pragmatic political consensus between most major political players placed both Poland and Slovenia on the path to integration with western Europe. The Church, caught up in this current of change, became an active, public supporter of EU integration in Poland, but stayed largely on the sidelines in Slovenia. For the Polish Church, this pragmatic move seemed to result in a significant victory for its traditionalist views with the inclusion of a moral protection clause in Poland's treaty of accession with the EU. Conversely, the Slovene Church, a consistently marginal player in Slovene politics, maintained that position throughout much of the debate and accession process, regardless of its views on EU integration and gained little to nothing from the process. The differing roles and results for each Church are another reflection of the disparate political opportunity structures that exist for the Church in each country; that is, it underscores the relatively prominent place of the Polish Church as opposed to the Slovene Church in their respective national political discourses. Although EU integration demonstrates this disparity, it has the potential to result in similar consequences for both Churches by circumscribing member states within a particular range of secularist values and norms, thereby narrowing political opportunities to imprint the Church's traditionalist orientations on national policy. Because of its relatively higher status in its national political and social realms, the Polish Church has a great deal to lose from the infiltration of secularism. Even with the moral protection clause, which gives the state the right to independently legislate



about moral issues, the Church's traditionalist values are not protected. As society changes to accommodate the new values that permeate the European community, government decision-makers and society also have the option of incorporating those values into their own legislation over the traditionalist values of the Church. The pre-existing incorporation of secular and liberal values in Slovenia, as well as the Slovene Church's relatively weaker position, means that very little will likely change for the Slovene Church; its opportunities will continue to be restricted around specific issues.

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APPENDIX A

REPUBLIC OF POLAND:  
SELECTED ELECTION RESULTS, 1991-2005



Table 1  
Election Results to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on 27 October 1991

Election Committees		Results	
in Polish	in English	Percentage of Vote*	Elected Deputies
Unia Demokratyczna	Democratic Union	12.3	62
Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (SLD)	Democratic Left Alliance	12	60
Wyborcza Akcja Katolicka	Catholic Electoral Action	8.7	49
Porozumienie Obywatelskie Centrum	Center Alliance	8.7	44
Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe "Sojusz Programowy"	Polish Peasant Party	8.7	48
Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej	Confederation Independent Poland	7.5	46
Kongres Liberalno-Demokratyczny	Liberal Democratic Congress	7.5	37
Ruch Ludowy "Porozumienie Ludowe"	Peasant Alliance	5.5	28
Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy "Solidarność"	Solidarity	5.1	27
Polska Partia Przyjaciół Piwa	Polish Beer-Lovers' Party	3.3	16
Chrześcijańska Demokracja	Christian Democracy	2.4	5
Unia Polityki Realnej	Real Politics Union	2.3	3
Solidarność Pracy	Union of Labour	2.1	4
Stronnictwo Demokratyczne	Democratic Party	1.4	1
Mniejszość Niemiecka	German Minority	1.2	7
Partia Chrześcijańskich Demokratów	Christian Democratic Party	1.1	4
Partia "X"	Party X	0.5	3
Ruch Demokratyczno-Społeczny		0.5	1



Election Committees		Results	
Ludowe Porozumienie Wyborcze "Piast"		0.4	1
Autonomia Śląska	Movement for Autonomy of Silesia	0.4	2
Krakowska Koalicja Soliarności z Prezydentem	Krakov Coalition of Solidarity and the President	0.2	1
Związek Podhalański		0.2	1
Polski Związek Zachodni		0.2	4
Wielkopolska Polsce		0.2	1
Jedność Ludowa (woj. bygoskie)		0.2	1
Prawosławni		0.1	1
Solidarność "80"	Solidarity "80"	0.1	1
Unia Wielkopolan Okręgu Leszczyńskiego		0.1	1
Sojusz Kobiet Przeciwko Trudnościom Życia		0	1
Total			460

Source: Republic of Poland, Główny Urząd Statystyczny [Central Statistical Office]. "TABL. 3(103). Wyniki Wyborów do Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej Według Komitetów Wyborczych w Dniu 27 X 1991 R.," in *Rocznik Statystyczny 1993* [Statistical Yearbook 1993], 66. Warszawa: Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 1993.

Table 2  
Election Results to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, 19 September 1993

Election Committees		Results	
in Polish	in English	Percentage of Vote*	Elected Deputies
Sojusz Leicy Demokratycznej (SLD)	Democratic Left Alliance	20.4	171
Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL)	Polish Peasant Party	15.4	132
Unia Demokratyczna	Democratic Union	10.6	74
Unia Pracy	Union of Labour	7.3	41
Katolicki Komitet Wyborczy "Ojczyzna"	Catholic Election Committee "Homeland"	6.4	--
Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej	Confederation of Independent Poland	5.8	22
Bezpartyjny Blok Wspierania Reform	Non-Party Reform Bloc BBWR	5.4	16
Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy "Solidarność"	Solidarity	4.9	--
Porozumienie Centrum	Center Alliance	4.4	--
Kongres Liberalno-Demokratyczny	Liberal Democratic Congress	4	--
Unia Polityki Realnej	Real Politics Union	3.2	--
Samoobrona-Leppera	Self-Defense	2.8	--
Partia "X"	Party X	2.7	--
Towarzystwa Społeczno-Kulturalne Mniejszości Niemieckiej	German Minority	0.6	3
Pozostałe		6.1	1
Total			460

Source: Republic of Poland, Główny Urząd Statystyczny [Central Statistical Office]. "TABL. 3(112). Wyniki Wyborów do Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej Według Komitetów Wyborczych w Dniu 19 IX 1993 R.," in *Rocznik Statystyczny 1994* [Statistical Yearbook 1994], 77. Warszawa: Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 1994.

Table 3  
Election Results to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, 21 September 1997

Election Committees		Results		
in Polish	in English	Percentage of Vote*	Number of Votes ( 1000s)	Elected Deputies
Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność (AWS)	Solidarity Electoral Action	33.83	44274	201
Sojusz Leicy Demokratycznej (SLD)	Democratic Left Alliance	27.13	35512	164
Unia Wolności (UW)	Freedom Union	13.37	17495	60
Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL)	Polish Peasant Party	7.31	9562	27
Ruch Odbudowy Polski ROP	Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland (ROP)	5.56	7271	6
Unia Pracy	Union of Labour	4.78	6206	--
Krajowa Partia Emerytów i Rencistów (KPEiR)	National Pensioners' and Retired Persons' Party - KPEiR	2.18	2848	--
Unia Przwicy Rzeczpospolitej	Right Wing Union of the Republic of Poland	2.03	2663	--
Krajowe Porozumienie Emerytów i Rencistów	National Pensioners' and Retired Persons' Alliance	1.63	2128	--
Blok dla Polski	Bloc for Poland	1.37	1784	--
Mniejszość Niemiecka na Śląsku Opolskim	Śląsk Opolski German Minority	0.39	510	2
Pozostałe	Other	0.49	629	--
Total			130882	460

\*Data not provided by source; manual calculation required from the number of votes cast for each committee divided by the total number of votes cast, multiplied by 100.

Source: Republic of Poland, Central Statistical Office. "TABL. 2(48). Results of the Election to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on 21 IX 1997, by Election Committees," in *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Poland 1998*, 38-39. Warsaw: Central Statistical Office, 1998.

Table 4  
Election Results to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on 23 September 2001

Election Committees		Results	
in Polish	in English	Percentage of Vote	Elected Deputies
Sojusz Leicy Demokratycznej (SLD)-Unia Pracy	Democratic Left Alliance-Labour Union	41.04	216
Platforma Obywatelska	Civic Platform	12.68	65
Samboobrona Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej	Self-defense of the Republic of Poland	10.2	53
"Prawo i Sprawiedliwość"	"Law and Justice"	9.5	44
Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe	Polish Peasant Party	8.98	42
Liga Polskich Rodzin	League of Polish Families	7.87	38
Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność Prawicy	Solidarity Election Action Right Wing	5.6	--
Unia Wolności	Freedom Union	3.1	--
"Mniejszość Niemiecka"	"German Minority"	0.36	2
Pozostale	Others	0.66	--
Total		100	460

Source: Republic of Poland, Central Statistical Office. "TABL. 2(49). Results of the Election to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on 23 IX 2001, by Election Committees," in *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Poland 2004*, 128-129. Warsaw: Central Statistical Office, 2004.

Table 5  
Election Results to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, 25 September 2005

Election Committees		Results	
in Polish	in English	Percentage of Vote*	Elected Deputies
Prawa Sprawiedliwość (PiS)	Law and Justice	26.99	155
Platforma Obywatelska (PO)	Civic Platform	24.14	133
Samobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (SO)	Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland	11.41	56
Sojusz Leicy Demokratycznej (SLD)	Democratic Left Alliance	11.31	55
Liga Polskich Rodzin (LPR)	League of Polish Families	7.97	34
Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL)	Polish Peasant Party	6.96	25
Socialdemokracja Polskiej (SDPL)	Social Democracy of Poland	3.89	0
Partia Demokratyczna-jedynakraci.pl	Democratic Party	2.45	0
"Mniejszości Niemieckiej Śląska"	German Minority	0.05	2
Total			460

Source: Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza. *Wybory do Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej Zarządzone na Dzień: Wyniki Wyborów 25 Września 2005* [Elections to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland: Election Results 25 September 2005] [online]. Warszawa: Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, 2005. Available from <http://www.wybory2005.pkw.gov.pl/SJM/PL/WYN/M/index.htm> Internet: accessed 29 September 2005.

Note: Although a greater number of electoral committees took part in the electoral contest, this table has been limited to display only the top 8 parties, by popular vote, as well as all those who attained seats in the Sejm.

Table 6  
Election Results to the Senate of the Republic of Poland on 25 September 2005

Election Committees		
in Polish	in English	Elected Deputies
Prawa Sprawiedliwość (PiS)	Law and Justice	49
Platforma Obywatelska (PO)	Civic Platform	34
Liga Polskich Rodzin (LPR)	League of Polish Families	7
Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (SO)	Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland	3
Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL)	Polish Peasant Party	2
Nowy Senat 2005		1
Kazimierza Juliana Kutza		1
Wyborców prof. Mariana Milka		1
Wyborców Macieja Płażyskiego		1
Wyborców Bogdana Borusewicza		1
Total		100

Source: Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza. *Wybory do Senatu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej Zarządzone na Dzień: Wyniki Wyborów 25 Września 2005* [Elections to the Senate of the Republic of Poland: Election Results 25 September 2005] [online]. Warszawa: Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, 2005. Available from <http://www.wybory2005.pkw.gov.pl/SJM/PL/WYN/M/index.htm> Internet: accessed 29 September 2005.



APPENDIX B

REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA:  
SELECTED ELECTION RESULTS, 1992-2004

Table 1  
National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 1992 Election Results

List of Candidates		Results	
in Slovenian	in English	Percentage of Vote	Elected Deputies
Liberalno-demokratska stranka (LDS)	Liberal Democratic Party	23.5	22
Slovenski krščanski demokrati (SKD)	Slovenian Christian Democrats	14.5	15
Združena lista (ZLSD)	The United List	13.6	14
Slovenska nacionalna stranka (SNS)	Slovenian National Party	10	12
Slovenska ljudska stranka(SLS)	Slovenian People's Party	8.7	10
Demokratska stranka(DEMOKRATI)	Democratic Party	5	6
Zeleni Slovenije (ZELENI)	The Green Party	3.7	5
Socialdemokratska stranka Sloveije(SDSS)	Social Democratic Party of Slovenia	3.3	4
Italijanska narodna skupnost	Italian national community representative*	—	1
Madžarska narodna skupnost	Hungarian national community representative*	—	1
Total		---	90

\*These seats are held for each nationality and elected by majority vote.

Source: Republic of Slovenia, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia "5.2 National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 1992 elections," *Statistical Yearbook 2004* [online]. Available from [http://www.stat.si/letopis/2004/05\\_04/05-02-04.htm?jezik=en](http://www.stat.si/letopis/2004/05_04/05-02-04.htm?jezik=en) Internet: accessed 18 August 2005.



Table 2  
National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 1996 Election Results

List of Candidates		Results	
in Slovenian	in English	Percentage of Vote	Elected Deputies
Liberalna demokratska Slovenije (LDS)	Liberal Democrats of Slovenia	27.01	25
Slovenska ljudska stranka (SLS)	Slovenian People's Party	19.38	19
Socialdemokratska stranka Slovenije (SDS)	Social Democratic Party of Slovenia	16.13	16
Slovenski krščanski demokrati (SKD)	Slovenian Christian Democrats	9.62	10
Združena lista socialnih demokratov (ZLSD)	The United List of Social Democrats	9.03	9
Demokratska stranka upokoencev Slovenije (DeSUS)	Democratic Party of Retired Persons of Slovenia	4.32	5
Slovenska nacionalna stranka (SNS)	Slovenian National Party	3.22	4
Italijanska narodna skupnost	Italian national community representative*	—	1
Madžarska narodna skupnost	Hungarian national community representative*	—	1
Total		---	90

\*These seats are reserved for each nationality and elected by majority vote.

Source: Republic of Slovenia, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, "5.3 National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 1996 elections," *Statistical Yearbook 2004* [online]. Available from [http://www.stat.si/letopis/2004/05\\_04/05-03-04.htm?jezik=en](http://www.stat.si/letopis/2004/05_04/05-03-04.htm?jezik=en) Internet: accessed 18 August 2005.

Table 3  
National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 2000 Election Results

List of Candidates		Results	
in English	in Slovenian	Percentage of Vote	Elected Deputies
Liberalna demokratska Slovenije (LDS)	Liberal Democrats of Slovenia	36.21	34
Socialdemokratska stranka Slovenije (SDS)	Social Democratic Party of Slovenia	15.8	14
Združena lista socialnih demokratov (ZLSD)	The United List of Social Democrats	12.07	11
SLS + SKD Slovenska ljudska stranka (SLS+SKD)	Slovenian People's Party	9.53	9
Nova Slovenija - krščanska ljudska stranka (NSi)	New Slovenia - Christian People's Party	8.77	8
Demokratska stranka upokoencev Slovenije (DeSUS)	Democratic Party of Retired Persons of Slovenia	5.16	4
Slovenska nacionalna stranka (SNS)	Slovenian National Party	4.38	4
Stranka mladih Slovenije (SMS)	Party of Young People of Slovenia	4.33	4
Italijanska narodna skupnost	Italian national community representative*	—	1
Madžarska narodna skupnost	Hungarian national community representative*	—	1
Total		---	90

\*These seats are reserved for each nationality and elected by majority vote.

Source: Republic of Slovenia, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia "5.4 National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 1996 elections," *Statistical Yearbook 2004* [online]. Available from [http://www.stat.si/letopis/2004/05\\_04/05-04-04.htm?jezik=en](http://www.stat.si/letopis/2004/05_04/05-04-04.htm?jezik=en) Internet: accessed 18 August 2005.

Table 4  
National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 2004 Election Results

List of Candidates		Results	
in Slovenian	in English	Percentage of Vote	Elected Deputies
Slovenska demokratska stranka (SDS)	Slovenian Democratic Party	29.08	29
Liberalna demokracija Slovenije (LDS)	Liberal Democracy of Slovenia	22.08	23
Združena lista socialnih demokratov (ZLS)	The United List of Social Democrats	10.17	10
Nova Slovenija - Krščanska ljudska stranka (NSi)	New Slovenia - Christian People's Party	9.09	9
Slovenska ljudska stranka (SLS)	Slovenian People's Party	6.82	7
Slovenska nacionalna stranka (SNS)	Slovenian National Party	6.27	6
Demokratska stranka upokojencev Slovenije (DeSUS)	Democratic Party of Retired Persons of Slovenia	4.04	4
Italijanska narodna skupnost	Italian national community representative*	—	1
Madžarska narodna skupnost	Hungarian national community representative*	—	1
Total		---	90

\*These seats are reserved for each nationality and elected by majority vote.

Source: Republic of Slovenia, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia "5.5 National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 1996 elections," *Statistical Yearbook 2004* [online]. Available from [http://www.stat.si/letopis/2004/05\\_04/05-05-04.htm?jezik=en](http://www.stat.si/letopis/2004/05_04/05-05-04.htm?jezik=en) Internet: accessed 18 August 2005.









