BETWEEN CATECHISM AND REVOLUTION:
POLAND, FRANCE, AND THE STORY OF CATHOLICISM AND SOCIALISM IN
EUROPE, 1878-1958

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ABSTRACT

This work examines European Catholicism’s response to socialism between 1878 and 1958 through the specific experience of Polish and French thinkers and activists. Central to the interaction between Catholicism and socialism in *fin-de-siècle* and 20th-century Europe was the goal of social justice declared by both Catholics and socialists. These two forces thus competed to address what had become popularly known by the second half of the 19th century as the “social question”: what to do about the growing masses of working poor emerging throughout Europe as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution.

The key figures who emerged within the Catholic universe as capable of making or breaking the Catholic response to the social question were individuals operating at the crossroads of intellectual and sociopolitical activism, from Rev. Władysław Kornilowicz, to Jacques Maritain, to Emmanuel Mounier, to Tadeusz Mazowiecki. What Marxists termed to be the “intellectual vanguard” preparing the groundwork for a dictatorship of the proletariat had its counterpart in a range of Catholic activists who operated in a space defined by both catechism and revolution. Within this space, the activists pursued a range of projects with the declared intent of saving the souls of Europe’s working poor by either converting or “Christianizing” the continent’s socialist enterprises.

As the 20th century advanced, the laity increasingly assumed control over the Catholic vanguard, forming its own horizontal linkages across national boundaries independently of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In so doing, the Catholic vanguard rewrote the ground-rules of how Catholicism functioned, intellectually, institutionally, and socially. These initiatives – encompassing face-to-face dialogue as well as guerrilla warfare, academic philosophy as well as high-circulation press, mainstream politics as well as radical peace activism – trained one eye on
the official line dictated by the Holy See while experimenting with new forms of Catholic apologiste. Therein lay the bedrock of Catholicism’s place in the modern world, forged as a response to the social question that integrated, to varying degrees, both tradition and revolution: a new catechism that could speak to an industrialized world.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The first ingredient of a successful academic project is a supportive home institution. I have been fortunate to enjoy an IIE Fulbright Fellowship to Warsaw University (2005-2006) and a Chateaubriand Fellowship to Sciences Po (2009-2010), but it is above all the generosity and vibrant intellectual climate of the Department of History at Princeton University – and the University’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences more generally – that made this dissertation possible.

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From my standpoint, there are two other honorary members of my dissertation committee, who – I hope – while physically absent from the defense will have been there with me in spirit. Neither is an academic historian, but both have indelibly shaped the way that I, as a historian, approach the past and its inhabitants. The first is my late maternal grandfather Henryk Piotr Kosk, whom life never afforded the opportunity to pursue his dream of an academic career in history. Quite simply, he taught me to care about the past, to ask questions, to investigate answers, to distinguish the essential from the trivial, and to approach historical inquiry with both passion and a sense of humor.

The second is Adam Michnik. His 1977 book Kościół, Lewica, Dialog (published in English as The Church and the Left) inspired this project. In the spring of 2007, he and I shared an office for three months in Princeton; we spent about 12 hours a day together during this time, and I will never be the same for having had it. On some level, Adam reinforced lessons that my grandfather had taught me earlier: a passion for the past, an obsession with politics, and an appreciation of fine whiskey. To this, however, he added a deep concern for understanding why historical actors did what they did, what motivated them, and how they expressed their thoughts and motivations; this concern now, I hope, marks my own approach to practicing the history of ideas. Finally, Adam Michnik reminded me that contemporary historical actors were and remain human beings, not abstractions or caricatures to be treated glibly or condescendingly. It is to him that I owe my sense of obligation to reconstruct loyally and honestly as many dimensions as I can of the people whom I study.

I would neither have gone to graduate school nor entered this particular field of study if not for my undergraduate History advisor, Norman M. Naimark. He and Katherine R. Jolluck helped me to focus my interests, clean up my writing, and get my foot in the door of the
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Among nearby colleagues, Atina Grossmann gave me my start in undergraduate teaching at the Cooper Union and has been a wonderful source of support ever since. Samuel Moyn has been kind enough to discuss my work and the broader questions of Catholic history now for several years running, with invaluable insight. The late Tony Judt took a great interest in this project and offered crucial feedback on several shorter texts anticipating the dissertation, and he pushed me to shop around what would become my first French-language academic article. Emily Greble was kind enough to integrate me into the first run of the New York City Kruzhok seminar, where everyone present provided tremendously helpful feedback. Giuliana Chamedes read part of the present work in draft form and posed key questions. I have also benefited from an ongoing conversation with James Chappel about Catholicism in 20th-century Europe.

In France, I have had two mentors who have given freely of their time and support. I had the great fortune of meeting Jean-Dominique Durand and Marc Lazar while still an undergraduate studying abroad in Paris. Jean-Dominique Durand has since invited me to present my work at conferences and to join collaborative projects based out of Lyon and Rome, while Marc Lazar offered invaluable assistance as my tutor at Sciences Po for the duration of my Chateaubriand Fellowship. Nicolas Bauquet and Lukáš Macek helped me to feel at home at Sciences Po by inviting me to teach in their respective programs.

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In the course of six years of research and writing, I have spent thousands of hours interviewing and getting to know historical actors. On some level, this intimate knowledge of still-living players from the past may challenge my objectivity, yet it has also offered me unparalleled insight into the how’s and why’s of the past. There are questions about personalities, motivations, and priorities that I could never have answered if not for personal insight that I was then able to triangulate against other interview accounts and written documentation. Much of the material from this oral history did not make it into the present work, but I promise that it will not go unreferenced for long. For their time and their willingness to lay bare their own lives, I thank Wacław Auleytner, Władysław Bartoszewski, Ryszard Bender, Rev. Adam Boniecki, Halina
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writing since I was in elementary school; one of the things of which I am most proud in life thus far is that the volume of critical comments from her has decreased steadily the older I have gotten. My father’s tremendous compassion balances with a meticulousness and attention to detail that have kept me learning from him my whole life. This dissertation is as much theirs as mine.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AK = Armia Krajowa
CCIF = Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français
CDU = Christliche Demokratische Union
CÉA = Commissariat à l’Énergie Atomique
CPSU = Communist Party of the Soviet Union
FRG = Federal Republic of Germany
GDR = German Democratic Republic
GKK = Główna Komisja Księży
HE = His Eminence
ILCIP = International Liaison Committee of Intellectuals for Peace
JAC = Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne
JÉC = Jeunesse Étudiante Chrétienne
JOC = Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne
KIK = Kluby Inteligencji Katolickiej
KN = Konfederacja Narodu
KUL = Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski
MBP = Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego
MCP = Mouvement Chrétien de la Paix
MIAP = Mouvement International d’Action pour la Paix
MP = Member of Parliament
MRP = Mouvement Républicain Populaire
NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEI = Nouvelles Équipes Internationales
OKPIK = Ogólnopolski Klub Postępowej Inteligencji Katolickiej
ONR = Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny
PAKS = Porozumienie Akademickich Katolickich Stowarzyszeń
PCF = Parti Communiste Français
PKOP = Polski Komitet Obrońców Pokoju
PKWN = Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego
PPR = Polska Partia Robotnicza
PZPR = Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza
SFIO = Section Française de l’Internationale Ouvrière
SKMA = Stowarzyszenie Katolickiej Młodzieży Akademickiej
SP = Stronnictwo Pracy
STO = Service du Travail Obligatoire
TUR = Towarzystwo Uniwersytetu Robotniczego
UCP = Union des Chrétiens Progressistes
UK = United Kingdom
US = United States
USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WTK = Wrocławski Tygodnik Katolicki
ZBoWiD = Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację
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Bibliography

Biographical Glossary
Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the people.

--Karl Marx, 1843

So-called Christian personalism constitutes a collection of mendacious slogans, which, under the appearance of care for human dignity and the rights of man, have the task of offering a theoretical justification for all of the dirtiest political practices of imperialism and its servant, the Vatican, as well as foundations for the most reactionary political doctrines.

--Leszek Kołakowski, 1953

Our approach to socialism had as its starting point a moral motivation. We were attracted by the socialist tradition of social rebellion, or, to put it another way, by the social question, understood as the need for the transformation of society. We felt that the road to socialism would develop in such a way as to open up to personalist values. This was the basis of our involvement and the standard by which we judged the unfolding events.

--Tadeusz Mazowiecki, 1970

Socialism considers the individual person simply as an element, a molecule within the social organism, so that the good of the individual is completely subordinated to the functioning of the socioeconomic mechanism. Socialism likewise maintains that the good of the individual can be realized without reference to his free choice, to the unique and exclusive responsibility which he exercises in the face of good or evil. Man is thus reduced to a series of social relationships, and the concept of the person as the autonomous subject of moral decision disappears, the very subject whose decisions build the social order. From this mistaken conception of the person there arise both a distortion of law, which defines the sphere of the exercise of freedom, and an opposition to private property. A person who is deprived of something he can call “his own,” and of the possibility of earning a living through his own initiative, comes to depend on the social machine and on those who control it. This makes it much more difficult for him to recognize his dignity as a person, and hinders progress towards the building up of an authentic human community. In contrast, from the Christian vision of the human person there necessarily follows a correct picture of society.

--Karol Wojtyła, John Paul II, 1991

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2 Leszek Kołakowski, “Neotomizm w walce z postępem nauk i z prawami człowieka,” *Nowe Drogi*, 1/1953, p. 68-81, at p. 72. All translations provided throughout the present work – from French, German, Italian, and Polish – are my own, unless otherwise noted.


INTRODUCTION

John Paul also seemed to sense that, precisely by being a vigorous pastor, he could have an impact on the politics of nations. He understood communism, and communists, from the inside. He had measured its vulnerabilities in the crucial sphere of the human spirit. He was determined to lead, out of a deep sense of vocational responsibility and a deep conviction that God had put him where he was precisely so that he could say, again and again, ‘Be not afraid!’ [...] Thirteen million Poles heard John Paul speak the hitherto unspeakable during nine stunning days in June 1979. Neither they, nor the system which falsely claimed to govern in their name, would be the same again.

--George Weigel, 1992

We have all heard the story that it was John Paul II – in the name of the Roman Catholic Church and Catholicism more generally – who triggered the series of events that ultimately ended the Cold War and brought down the Iron Curtain that had cut Europe in half since the end of the Second World War. This narrative of Catholicism’s role in the collapse of state socialism has had vocal exponents on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean: among non-religious as well as religious Poles, and among the late pontiff’s many American neo-conservative friends, of whom the above-quoted George Weigel is but one prominent example. As the story goes, John Paul II, iconic and personally seminal as he was to socialism’s discredit and ultimate defeat, was but the capstone of a much deeper Catholic groundswell, at once pious and ready for war, almost as though the Cold War were a latter-day crusade. In Weigel’s parlance, Catholicism was a “resistance church,” committed universally, uniformly, and unequivocally to the intellectual, spiritual, and geopolitical extinction of socialism.

Many have accepted this story uncritically; they are, however, wrong. True – the Holy See, the traditional seat of doctrinal power and institutional authority in the Catholic Church, has

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6 The most recent articulation of this story is in John O’Sullivan, The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister: Three Who Changed the World (Washington: Regnery, 2006).
7 See also, for example, Richard John Neuhaus, “John Paul the Great,” New York Post, 4 April 2005.
officially declared opposition to socialism and some of its particular variants – most notably, Marxist “Communism” – since the revolutions of 1848. Nonetheless, however authoritarian the bishops of Rome have been, the Holy See is not the sum-total of Catholicism. Hence my preferred use of the term “Catholicism” over the “Catholic Church” in this work – emphasis on Catholicism underscores that I am discussing ideas, practices, and people outside as well as inside the institutional hierarchy, looking for horizontal linkages across the Catholic world.

Indeed, the problem with the “resistance church” story is that it ignores many of the facets of Catholicism that cannot be pigeon-holed into a vertically oriented story of the hierarchy. Moreover, it neglects the very conditions that gave rise to socialism in the first place: the reality of the overwhelming social, political, and intellectual transformation of everyday life in the wake of the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries.

It is easy to speak of a “resistance church” when one looks only at the writings of bishops, cardinals, and theologians hermetically cut off from the working masses of Catholic faithful and from the regular priests and lay activists living among them. The idea of a “resistance church” thus presupposes a certain political endgame that was, in fact, anything but clear for most of the history of Catholicism’s interaction with socialism. It also confines Catholicism and all of its constituents to a purely reactive role, suggesting that Catholicism in the

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9 Present already in the form of Catholic lay brotherhoods in early modern Europe, such horizontal “linkages” reflected contacts and action coordinated by priests willing to act independently of the hierarchy as well as a wide variety of laymen pooling their own resources and initiative. The ultimate legitimation of this type of activism within Catholicism came at the end of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) with the promulgation of the 1965 pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. On the evolution of Catholic doctrine with respect to the laity, see Paul Lakeland, *The Liberation of the Laity: In Search of an Accountable Church* (New York: Continuum, 2003).

modern world has done nothing but “resist.” This is, of course, a claim with which any number of anti-religious commentators would agree in a heartbeat. Unfortunately for them, and for the originators of the “resistance church” story, the historical reality is far more complex.

The goal of the present work is to illuminate these complexities by approaching the relationship between Catholicism and socialism from the other side: that of affinities and dialogues, of catechesis and syncretism. The point is not to proceed from one extreme to the other: to suggest that the Catholic Church was a “collaborationist church” would be absurd, as analytically self-limiting a thesis as the “resistance church” narrative, if not more so. Rather, my goal is to show, first, that, even though Catholicism’s response to socialism began with papal condemnations (which have since continued), key facets of this response have consisted of considered study, emulation, and even cooperation; and, second, that this response has made Catholicism one of the key organizing forces of European politics and society in the 20th century. Central to this response was the goal of social justice declared by both Catholics and socialists. Catholics differentiated themselves from their socialist counterparts by arguing, among others, that the dignity of an individual human person was inextricably linked to a philosophical and theological valuing of the fruits of his labor as his own. For the Catholics in our story, there was no better way to offset modernity’s alienation of man from himself and his work than by reminding him that work was what made him a man in God’s image.

The story of Catholicism and socialism is one of the central threads of a historiographical hydra often identified as the history of “Catholicism in the modern world.”11 The analytical challenge lies in understanding Catholicism’s own negotiation of the push-and-pull at any given

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11 This commonly used phrase is, in effect, a paraphrasal of the subtitle of the 1965 pastoral constitution Gaudium et Spes, subtitled “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.” On Catholicism and modernity, see, for example, Darrell Jodock, ed, Catholicism Contending with Modernity: Roman Catholic Modernism and Anti-modernism in Historical Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
moment between past and present, between tradition and adaptation, between the historical and the contemporary. Catholicism was confined to the darker corners of Carl Schorske’s presentation of the modernity of \textit{fin-de-siècle} Vienna, yet his classic definition of individuals acting in the modern world “not \textit{out} of the past, indeed scarcely \textit{against} the past, but in independence of the past” illuminates the fundamental dilemma of the modern Catholic as well: how much weight to give to the past, and how much to the present?\textsuperscript{12}

This dilemma concerned Europe above all. Catholic overseas missions – including the rapidly industrializing United States – had always taken a backseat in the Catholic world to events on the continent that is home to the Roman pontiff. It is Europe’s geopolitical and social conditions above all that frame the Catholic Church’s ability to carry out its wider mission of global evangelization.\textsuperscript{13} For this reason, although the implications of this story go to Catholicism’s place in the wider world, the present work is confined geographically to the European continent. Indeed, the idea of “Europe” plays a significant role in our story as a key point of contestation between Catholics and socialists, for it was the European continent that became their principal field of battle. This confrontation has profoundly structured European political and social relations since the \textit{fin-de-siècle}, at both national and transnational levels.\textsuperscript{14} As Paul Hanebrink has suggested, “In a time of political instability and revolutionary fear, religion


\textsuperscript{13} This is a key thesis of, among others, Diarmaid MacCulloch, \textit{Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years} (New York: Viking, 2010).

\textsuperscript{14} See, for example, Tom Buchanan and Martin Conway, eds, \textit{Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918-1965} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).
helped to define the threat to both nation and European civilization. In turn, it could suggest the salvation of both.\textsuperscript{15}

In this work, I highlight a variety of Catholic attempts to turn anxiety about the modern world into its salvation. Some of these might have been quite predictable to a third-party observer looking forward from 1848, 1870, or 1891, while others would have been quite shocking. The framing context for all was what had become popularly known throughout Europe by the second half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century as the “social question”: namely, what to do about the growing masses of working poor emerging throughout Europe as a consequence of migration to the cities and to newly emerging company towns.\textsuperscript{16} These were the sites of the new “proletariat,” which congregated in the vicinities of factories, mines, and shipyards. Their concentration, their destitution, and their lack of immediate perspectives for a better future spawned much of the vocabulary of the modern social sciences, including the narrative of “secularization.”\textsuperscript{17}

It was the threat of attrition of the faithful – their ranks thinned by excruciatingly long hours, by the disintegration of the family unit, and by new radical ideologies competing with the faith-based worldview – that most concerned the Holy See and its episcopates across the


\textsuperscript{17} The three classic, enormously insightful accounts of the secularization of Christian Europe are Owen Chadwick, The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century: the Gifford Lectures in the University of Edinburgh for 1973-4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Hugh McLeod, Secularization in Western Europe, 1848-1914 (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000); René Rémond, Religion and Society in Modern Europe, trans. Antonia Nevill (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999). Unfortunately, with the exception of a few pages in Rémond’s study, all of these authors sidestep Eastern Europe, in which religion’s struggle against officially atheist socialist establishments of necessity altered the dynamics of secularization. On secularism and secularization in the post-Yalta space, the most insightful analysis still comes from Adam Michnik’s 1977 study Kościół, Lewica, Dialog, in which Michnik’s understanding of secularization paradoxically comes from the French Catholic journalist and philosopher Jean-Marie Domenach, a key player in our story. With respect to the meaning of the very notion of “secularization” in socialist Poland, Michnik wrote, “The Polish People’s Republic is not a democratic and secular state; it has surrendered to the idea of a totalitarian state. The necessary condition for its secularization is the abolition of its totalitarian political structure. A secular state is a state in which the Christian is not compelled ‘to make the terrible choice between God and Caesar.’” Adam Michnik, The Church and the Left, trans. and ed. David Ost (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 141.
European continent. In the Church’s own terms, this was a pastoral problem, in other words, an ominous portent of Catholicism’s declining ability to carry out its mission of conversion and ministry to souls in need of salvation. In practical terms, this was also a demographic problem, with the potential for weakening the Catholic Church’s social, political, and economic position in a continent undergoing rapid transformation amidst the decline of empires and the growth of nation-states.

Underlying the practical dangers of the social problem was a separate intellectual quandary spanning the fields of philosophy and theology, in other words, the conceptual universe that provided Catholicism with the ground rules and vocabulary to carry out its pastoral mission to the world. The “social question” was thus as much, if not more, an intellectual as a social or political problem. The key figures who emerged within the Catholic universe as capable of making or breaking the Catholic response to the social question were individuals operating at the crossroads of intellectual and sociopolitical activism. In this respect, they followed in the footsteps of their counterparts in the radical movements that emerged to compete with the Catholic worldview, particularly socialism in its many variants, from the utopian to the Stalinist.

What Marxists termed to be the “intellectual vanguard” preparing the groundwork for proletarian revolution found its counterpart in a range of Catholic activists responding to the social question who, while diverging widely in the degree of their radicalism and political involvement, shared a common pursuit of social justice. The self-assigned task of this Catholic “vanguard” of thinkers and activists – some men and women of the cloth, some of the laity – was also one of preparation: not for revolution – though some welcomed socialist revolution, seeking

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to marry it with Catholic ethics and theology — but for conversion and the practice of lived faith. As the 20th century advanced, the laity increasingly assumed control over this vanguard, growing farther and farther apart from the hierarchy and forming its own horizontal linkages across national boundaries. The lay vanguard of European Catholicism thus created transnational networks of like-minded activists across Europe, rewriting the ground-rules of how Catholicism functioned intellectually, institutionally, and socially.

Whether they subscribed to social Catholicism or attempted to develop a Catholic-socialist syncretism, they all struggled with how to balance the national question and the social question, in other words, an exclusionary national-chauvinist (and frequently anti-semitic) impulse with a universalistic pursuit of social justice. Along the way, a range of philosophical and theological theses broadly grouped under the heading of Catholic personalism emerged: social Catholics and Catholic-socialist syncretists alike found in personalism’s grounding in the pre-modern rationalism of Thomas Aquinas a comforting alternative to the all-encompassing secularism of Enlightenment modernity. Therein lay the bedrock of Catholicism’s place in the

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20 The three most outspoken movements advocating this type of synthesis were concentrated around progressive Catholic journals: in France, La Quinzaine (1950-1955); in Poland, Dziś i Jutro (1945-1956); in the United States, The Catholic Worker (1933-). The second of these constitutes the central figure of the entire second half of the present work. The most significant scholarly works to date on these journals and their affiliated movements are, respectively, Yvon Tranvouez, Catholiques et communistes : la crise du progressisme chrétien, 1950-1955 (Paris: Cerf, 2000); Mikolaj Stanisław Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader: The Life and Politics of Bolesław Piasecki, 1915-1979,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 2004; Anne Klejment and Nancy L. Roberts, eds, American Catholic Pacifism: The Influence of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement (Westport: Praeger, 1996).

21 Ariel Colonomos has elegantly defended the idea that Catholic NGOs form transnational networks of political and social action, and the same is true in the case of the subjects of this work, despite the lesser formality (in most cases) of the ties established between the Poles and the Western Europeans. Ariel Colonomos, Églises en réseaux : trajectoires politiques entre Europe et Amérique (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2000).

22 The fin-de-siècle Polish socialist movement faced a similar struggle: see especially Timothy Snyder, Nationalism, Marxism, and Modern Central Europe: a biography of Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz, 1872-1905 (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1997). Meanwhile, the most successful new mass-political organization to debut in fin-de-siècle partitioned Poland – National Democracy – opted unequivocally and enthusiastically for national chauvinism and anti-semitism: on the genesis of national-chauvinism in partitioned Poland, see especially Brian Porter, When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-century Poland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
modern world, forged as a response to the social question that integrated, to varying degrees, both tradition and revolution: a new catechism that could speak to an industrialized world.

**Geography and Chronology**

Catholicism was in flux throughout Europe in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. The newly unified German and Italian states saw the creation of novel forms of social apostolate. Mainz Bishop Wilhelm von Ketteler’s organized project of Catholic evangelization, which found its chief opponent in Otto von Bismarck’s Kulturkampf, and Italy’s Opera dei Congressi both offered industrial laborers a paternalistic, employer-centered, top-down alternative to organization in socialist party cells, labor unions, and internationals. Created independently of the Holy See, these German and Italian initiatives nonetheless amounted to little more than forerunners of the Catholic Action movement inaugurated under papal patronage in 1922, easily integrated into the disciplined vertical hierarchy of the institutional Church.

Meanwhile, the present work is concerned with a different category of activism, premised on horizontal linkages within and across national boundaries. The paternalistic models promoted by Ketteler and Italian activists like Giuseppe Toniolo for their respective nation-states were organic responses to a combination of social and political contingencies: the Industrial Revolution and the creation of unified, centralized nation-states between 1860 and 1870. Nonetheless, at heart, both sets of initiatives grew out of a medieval model of social organization that was at once corporatist, paternalist, and voluntarist. In other words, charity and discipline were the core precepts of these projects, not revolution nor even justice.

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24 See, for example, Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe*, p. 169-188.
For justice and revolution, it is necessary to look to two other European Catholic worlds, defined respectively by the French and Polish languages. Although these worlds, too, had their own medievally inspired initiatives in the fin-de-siècle – like Léon Harmel’s cercles d’ouvriers in France and Rev. Stanisław Stojałowski’s kółka robotnicze in Galician Poland – both would, over the next 80 years, witness the emergence of new revolutionary initiatives. These enterprises – from Sillon to Dziś i Jutro – while training one eye on the official line dictated by the Holy See, experimented with novel forms of Catholic apostolate. This vanguard is what made possible an evolving set of Catholic responses to the social question that developed in parallel with events in Europe, especially the dramatic expansion of socialism’s position on the continent in the 20th century.

A clarification is in order regarding the boundaries of the “French” and “Polish” Catholic worlds. Between 1795 and 1918, Poland as a territorial entity did not exist, partitioned as it had been into Austrian, Prussian, and Russian zones. In the years when there was no independent Polish state, European exile diasporas were often as important as activists in “historically” Polish territory in promoting Polish intellectual, social, and political agendas. Meanwhile, French-speaking Belgium and Switzerland formed seminal auxiliary spaces of Catholic thought and activism whose conversations with Paris were as important – if not more so – than participation in their respective national conversations with their Dutch-speaking or German-speaking counterparts. Throughout this work, my use of the terms “Poland” and “France” thus reflects a certain analytical short-hand that should not be mistaken for geographical imprecision.
Industrialized as France was by the fin-de-siècle, it could compare with neither England nor Germany in this respect. Polish territory – in Habsburg-, Hohenzollern-, and Romanov-controlled partitions alike – suffered initially from dramatic industrial underdevelopment in comparison with any of the aforementioned countries. By the beginning of the 20th century, Warsaw, Kraków, and certain parts of Silesia had seen the arrival of industrial production, but on most of the territory it was agrarian feudalism, not urban agglomeration and alienation, that starved the poor. Socialism thereby also carried less purchase among the poor inhabiting Polish territory than in France, Germany, or England, yet its activists compensated for Poland’s demographic singularities by making the questions of national liberation and the nation’s place in Europe more central in Polish socialist debates.

Following the Revolution of 1905-1907 in the Russian-controlled “Kingdom of Poland,” key socialists became more amenable to dialogue with the new Catholic vanguard, a tendency that spread to the other partitions of Poland. Meanwhile, ongoing debates regarding the separation of Church and State in the French Third Republic in the wake of the social fragmentation wrought by the Dreyfus Affair bore fruit in the form of the laïcité laws of 1904-1905. These, in turn, forced a radical re-imagining of Catholic thought and activism both within the Francophone world and at a European level. A certain simultaneity of nationally specific events thus facilitated a close relationship between the Polish-language and French-language Catholic worlds.

28 On the social and political consequences of these laws for Catholics, see, for example, Caroline Ford, Creating the Nation in Provincial France: Religion and Political Identity in Brittany (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
This relationship was not new. Larry Wolff has illuminated the late-18th-century French fascination with Polish and Russian territory that involved a certain avant la lettre “orientalization” of those territories.\(^{29}\) It is to Voltaire, the Count de Ségur, and others that Wolff has thus accorded a large measure of responsibility for inventing “Eastern Europe” as a separate cultural and political space born of the “maps in the minds” of Western European travelers.\(^{30}\) As Frenchmen imagined their superiority over exotic, even barbaric, Poles and Russians, the elites among these latter nations learned French and longed to expand their respective national cultural geographies to include Paris. Following the failed insurrection of 1830, Adam Mickiewicz and his fellow Polish Romantic messianists landed in Orleanist France, where they not only were not shunned for their patriotism, but indeed found a vibrant milieu of outside-the-box Catholic fellow-travelers like Félicité de Lamennais and Charles de Montalembert, with their short-lived journal *L’Avenir*.\(^{31}\) The social question was not yet on the table for these thinkers and activists, who came together around the question of national liberation: indeed, it was Montalembert, not Mickiewicz, who came up with the image of Poland as “Christ of nations” for which the Polish Romantics are best remembered.\(^{32}\)

Multiple factors converged in the fin-de-siècle to bring the French and Polish Catholic worlds back into conversation with a degree of vibrancy previously unseen. The first factor


involved the creation of a unified German nation-state at the end of the Franco-Prussian War – including Alsace and Lorraine, seized from France – which left the French with a deep-seated collective antipathy toward Germany that matched long-standing anti-German sentiment among Poles, particularly in the Prussian and Russian partitions. The second factor involved the election to the papacy in 1878 of Leo XIII. The next year, the new pope launched a campaign to build new Catholic centers of higher learning in Belgium, France, Italy, and Switzerland devoted to the thought of Thomas Aquinas. These centers attracted well-educated, young aspiring priests from as far away as the partitions of Poland, and these young priests encountered fellow young Polish students in Paris and elsewhere forming nodes of exile socialist activism launched following the 1889 announcement of the Second International.33

These were the beginnings of transnational Catholic networks of intellectual exchange that eventually evolved into networks of social and political activism.34 The Francophone thinkers and activists would remain the focus of attention until World War II, but this was no longer a world in which Frenchmen could unilaterally invent an “Eastern Europe” whose inhabitants remained subaltern. In the Franco-Polish Catholic exchanges that coalesced out of the fin-de-siècle confrontation between Catholicism and socialism, the Eastern Europeans not only began to “speak,” but indeed to instruct their Western European counterparts. Paradoxically, though the Iron Curtain emerged in the midst of these processes of exchange, it would only underscore for social Catholics and Catholic-socialist syncretists both East and West the importance of not reverting to Enlightenment-era orientalization.

34 Here I follow particularly the understanding of a transnational network of religious activism applied in Colonomos, Églises en réseaux.
The chronology of the present work follows logically from this geographical demarcation, though its start and endpoints correspond to the respective start and finish of two separate pontificates: Leo XIII, 1878-1903; and Pius XII, 1939-1958. The point of departure for the present work is 1878, the year of the election to the papacy of Leo XIII. Unlike his predecessor Pius IX, who never recovered from fear instilled in him by the revolutions of 1848, Leo recognized the need for Catholicism to define for itself its place in modern Europe. It was he who revived the thought of Thomas Aquinas in Catholic teaching, and with the 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* he launched the call for a Catholic answer to the social question. These were the two key contexts framing Catholicism’s confrontation with socialism.35

This work covers in succession the *fin-de-siècle*, the interwar era, World War II, the pre-Stalinist establishment of state socialism in postwar Poland, and finally Stalinism. The work concludes by reflecting on the transformations wrought by the years 1956-1958, the former benchmark bringing de-Stalinization in the Soviet space, the latter – on the one hand, the fall of the French Fourth Republic, bound up in dynamics of decolonization and European integration, and – on the other – the end of the pontificate of Pius XII, a pope considered by many European Catholic vanguard activists to have been “the Stalin of the Church” presiding over a “police regime of betrayal.”36

The sense among Catholic thinkers and activists of a postwar entrapment between competing Stalinisms – one Catholic, one socialist – constraining their ability to pursue both catechism and revolution deeply structured their post-World War II positions on Catholicism’s place in the modern world. On the one hand, it drove them to reject both absolutes,

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experimenting instead with novel solutions to the social question involving Catholic and socialist elements alike; on the other, it undercut the integrity of their ethical commitments as Catholics, creating a certain retrograde permissiveness toward exclusionary nationalism, political repression, and even the imprisonment and torture in Eastern Europe of high officers of their own institutional Church. With the passing of political Stalinism in the Soviet Bloc in 1956 and the genuinely bellicose “resistance church” of Pius XII with his death in 1958, Catholic thinkers and activists across Europe would move – at least, until the elevation of John Paul II to the papal throne 20 years later – beyond the Catholic obsession with socialism that reached its political high water-mark with the “lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII.”

The present work therefore encompasses two distinct periods separated by the introduction of state socialism in Eastern Europe: 1878-1944, when socialism remained on the political sidelines; and 1944-1958, when French and Polish Catholics alike confronted the fact that Poland, along with the rest of the territory “liberated” from German occupation by the Red Army, had become the province of state socialism.

It may seem as though I am pegging the chronology of a work that puts East and West into conversation more to one side – specifically, Poland – than the other. However, as Tony Judt has put it, “The postwar establishment of totalitarian governments in Budapest, Warsaw, Berlin, and Prague, with its attendant repression, persecution, and social upheaval, placed the moral dilemma of Marxist practice at the center of the Western intellectual agenda.” In a work devoted to Catholicism and socialism in Europe, it should therefore come as no surprise that the chronology is marked by first the promise and then the discredit of state socialism as a means of organizing politics and society on the European continent.

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In the context of our story, the years 1956-1958 brought also the end of Catholic-socialist syncretism as a *bien-pensant* ideology. Catholics who had supported Stalinism did not disappear, but they were forced to rethink completely their understanding of socialism as a really existing force in the world.\(^{39}\) Meanwhile, social Catholics and other vanguard activists who had opposed state socialism found redemption in Stalinism’s definitive discredit. The path from 1878 to 1958 was a long, meandering road with many forks: 1956-1958 marked a dead-end for naïvely optimistic Catholic-socialist dialogue, which, in Poland, would henceforth detach itself from Marxism entirely and state socialism in particular, beginning instead to break new ground on Catholicism’s behalf.\(^{40}\)

**Methodology and Terminology**

The work offered here is difficult to table under the heading of any one methodology. It is indebted to several historiographies and to a number of other disciplines, particularly religious studies and sociology. Extensive portions of this story employ the methods of the history of ideas, counterbalanced with attention to social, political, and religious causes and consequences. Other parts of the work focus more on institutions. It became clear as my research advanced that, in the absence of any historical sociology of the interaction between Catholicism and socialism over the entire period covered in this work, rigorous definitions would be necessary from the outset for my analytical categories.

This is a story of ideas, of the people who articulated them in writing, and of the people who attempted to bring those ideas to life through concrete social and political initiatives. These

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\(^{39}\) Tadeusz Mazowiecki is a key example: see his quotation among the quotations referenced at the opening of this volume.

\(^{40}\) Adam Michnik’s 1977 *Kościół, Lewica, Dialog* constitutes the intellectual pinnacle of this post-1956 story, a call for cooperation between revisionist post-Marxist socialists and syncretist progressive Catholics that laid an intellectual foundation for what three years later would become an actual group of social and political advisors to Lech Wałęsa, newly chosen head of the nascent Solidarity trade union movement. See Michnik, *The Church and the Left*. 

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last two groups often overlapped, but just as often they did not. As a result, I tend to refer collectively to “thinkers and activists” in the general analysis, specifying in the case of particular individuals or movements who falls into which category (and when). This is a departure from standard practice among historians of ideas, who tend to frame their analysis around “intellectuals.” There are two reasons why I have chosen not to do so.

First, there is a linguistic problem that arises in dealing with transnational questions. In Poland, one rarely and only pejoratively uses the term *intelektualiści* (intellectuals), with the preferred term being *inteligencja* (intelligentsia), shared etymologically with the Russian language despite a distinctly different national tradition. Meanwhile, the French term *intellectuels* nominally translates into English as “intellectuals,” but the French term carries cultural and political baggage of which the English term is free. Jerzy Jedlicki is correct to observe that the difference between *intellectuels* and *inteligencja*, for example, is a function of “differences of social structure” separating France and Poland, but it is also more than that.

Present usage of the term *inteligencja* in Polish dates back at least to Karol Libelt’s 1844 invocation of the term to describe men who stood at the helm of the nation in virtue of their “higher degree of enlightenment.” At a time when Poland was partitioned and stateless, steering the nation had a Romantic-revolutionary connotation that lasted well into the period of Soviet-socialist domination of Poland. Only now, in the first decades of the 21st century, does

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one see a proliferation of sociological works in Polish decrying the disappearance of the *inteligencja* in Poland and its replacement with an American-style “middle class.”

Likewise, the term *intellectuels* in its present usage in French dates back, as Christophe Charle has demonstrated, to the *fin-de-siècle*, specifically, the Dreyfus Affair. Étienne Fouilloux, Claude Langlois, and Hervé Serry have all shown that the emergence of the *intellectuel catholique* as a sociological figure in France was, in turn, a reaction to the Dreyfusard model of the republican *intellectuel engagé*. In other words, the terms *intellectuels* and *inteligencja* represent strong, nationally defined historical singularities that preclude the terms from being used interchangeably in any critical study that deals with both the Polish and the French worlds.

There is a second reason why I by and large avoid using the term “intellectual” as well as its French and Polish variants. Namely, the 20th century saw an exponential expansion of the social and political functions of the intellectual, from a well-educated public advocate publishing occasional commentary on current affairs, to someone whose cultural position automatically made him a potential powerbroker. In World War II France, as Tony Judt has put it, this entailed dismissing the “dilemma between ‘being’ and ‘doing,’” for “accepting as one’s own the

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meaning given to a collective action offered certainty in place of doubt.”

Only a few years later, in postwar Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe, a socialist intellectual could, as Marci Shore has put it, wield with one stroke of the pen “unprecedented power over life and death.”

There are, in other words, several layers of dynamics in play in the story of intellectuals in 20th-century Europe, and I want to avoid confusing the core narrative of this work by bracketing those dynamics wherever possible. The virtue of the term “activist,” in particular, is that it comes from my actors: while many of the French players in this story did indeed refer to themselves as *intellectuels catholiques* – in these cases, I generally refer to them by the same term – virtually all of the Poles self-identified as *dzialacze katolicey* (Catholic activists). This category is thus both organically linked to the story itself and free of potential problems of cultural and linguistic translation.

While bidding *adieu* to the “intellectuals” and the “intelligentsia,” I do not, however, wish to neglect the fruitful sociological models of intergenerational transmission of knowledge, values, and self-identification tied to the study of those groups. The notion of “generations” that I employ here follows from Karl Mannheim’s classic argument with respect to the need to look beyond biology to shared “sociology of knowledge” as the basis for any periodization of “generations.” In turn, the specific notion of a collective, consciousness-defining “generational event” comes from Lewis S. Feuer’s work on student activists. Michel Winock has provided significant insight into generational events defining successive waves of intellectuals in 20th-

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century French history. For our purposes, the most obvious among such generational events would be the Dreyfus Affair in France, the Revolution of 1905-1907 in partitioned Poland, Józef Piłsudski’s May 1926 coup d’État in Poland, and the world wars in both France and Poland. Other generational events will become apparent in the course of our story.

Meanwhile, the categories of political and ideological analysis relevant to our story are manifold and often difficult to reconcile. For the sake of consistency, utopian socialism, Marxism, Marxist-Leninism, Marxist-Leninist-Stalinism, Communism, Bolshevism, Stalinism, and really existing socialism all, for the purposes of the present work, are treated not as incommensurable singularities but rather as variations or offshoots of “socialism.” At the level of ideas, after all, these movements, ideologies, and political systems share a common genealogy. Cold War historiography has made it difficult to reconcile criticism of “Communism” as a Soviet-directed political movement with the fact that individuals actually living in Poland after 1945 tended to describe themselves as living under “socialism.”

The dynamics of the interaction of Catholicism and socialism have not escaped previous study: indeed, most of the groups and some of the individuals who play a role in the present work have their own historians. Few of these works have even alluded to the transnational story of the interaction of Catholicism and socialism, but all have offered some terminology to describe that interaction. These attempts began already in the fin-de-siècle, when cutting-edge

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52 Meanwhile, the self-described “Socialist” parties of postwar Western Europe – when they appear in this work – are noted with an upper-case S, with the same being true for self-described “Communist” parties.
53 This is a key premise of both classic intellectual histories of Marxism: Kołakowski, Main Currents of Marxism; Andrzej Walicki, Marxism and the Leap to the Kingdom of Freedom: The Rise and Fall of the Communist Utopia (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).
54 Some of the key positions in this field to whom this work will refer are Philippe Chenaux, L’Église catholique et le communisme en Europe, 1917-1989 : de Lénine à Jean-Paul II (Paris: Cerf, 2009); Gerd-Rainer Horn, Western European Liberation Theology: The First Wave (1924-1959) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader”; Brian Porter-Szücs, Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland (Oxford:
social-Catholic thinkers such as Francesco Nitti (1868-1953) and Father Antonin-Dalmace Sertillanges (1863-1948) penned treatises with titles such as *Socialismo cattolico* (1891) and *Socialisme et christianisme* (1905). These were thinkers advocating voluntarist, non-paternalist Catholic efforts to organize the working poor and alleviate their destitution through face-to-face ministry and charity.

While open to learning from socialism’s tactical successes, these Catholics were anything but socialists. Unfortunately, Nitti’s “Catholic socialism” terminology gained purchase among his followers, leaving some Catholics using the term “social Catholicism” to describe the Catholic response to the social question, with others using “Catholic socialism” to mean precisely the same thing. Remarkably, few historians of Catholicism have remarked on this confusion.

For the interwar, wartime, and postwar periods – with particular emphasis on the postwar – several related vocabularies have emerged to describe Catholic thought and activism that not only borrowed from socialism but indeed actively flirted with it. In his many writings on *Esprit* and Emmanuel Mounier, John Hellman has advanced the term “Catholic Left.” In a recent spin on this term, Gerd-Rainer Horn has advocated “left Catholicism.” Adam Michnik goes even further, describing the Catholic, post-World War II *Dziś i Jutro/PAX* movement as flat-out

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56 In fact, the only study that has explicitly noted and tried to make sense of this crossing of wires is still Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Les débuts du catholicisme social en France (1820-1870)* (Paris: PUF, 1951).


“totalitarian” for its uncritical support of state socialism, Stalinist and otherwise.59 However, for a network of movements of which many identified themselves – to borrow Emmanuel Mounier’s term – as “neither right nor left,” these categories fall prey to overdetermination by political outcomes.60

The most productive solution to this quandary seems to be a functionally, rather than politically, oriented classification scheme. For example, Émile Poulat’s term “intransigentism” is useful because it refers to Catholic activism anywhere along the traditional Left-Right political spectrum that crosses over from a Catholic answer to the social question into ideologized political action.61 The term is particularly important given that Poulat intended it to filter out the national question in order to assess more effectively the degree of a given Catholic activist’s commitment to action on the social question. For Catholic thinkers and activists in whose case nationalism trumps the pursuit of social justice, I rely on the traditional classification of “integralism” or “integral nationalism” (from the original French intégrisme).

The one politically oriented term that I retain is “progressive Catholicism” – used to describe Catholic thought and activism openly allied with Communist socialism – because the term comes from one of this work’s principal actors, the French Catholic activist André Mandouze (1916-2006). A close analysis of the term’s original text and context accompanies its first usage in the work.

59 Michnik, The Church and the Left, p. 176.
Social Catholicism, Catholic Personalism, Catholic-Socialist Syncretism

The three major analytical categories deployed in our story are social Catholicism, Catholic personalism, and Catholic-socialist syncretism. All are problematic in certain respects, yet all are essential to understanding the story in question. Catholic hagiographies or textual commentaries of the Church’s “social teaching” tradition are legion, but there is only one English-language scholarly history of social Catholicism. Paul Misner defines the term as referring to “Catholic responses to economic modernization in particular, hence to the industrialization process and its consequences in the social classes.” Misner, however, begins his story of social Catholicism not with Leo XIII, but with the early 19th century, subdividing his principal category somewhat haphazardly into “Catholic pioneers in social analysis,” “corporatism,” “paternalism,” early “Christian Democracy,” and “social-charitable Catholicism.” As Misner puts it – with Leo XIII’s 1891 Rerum Novarum in mind – “papal pronouncements do not take place in a vacuum.”

For the purposes of our story, it needs to be crystal-clear that most of what Misner presents in his account falls outside the boundaries of “social Catholicism” stricto sensu. Lamennais and Montalembert may be relevant to a deeper genealogy of Christian Democracy, but theirs is a story of liberal ultramontanism, barely identifiable even as “nascent social Catholicism.” To avoid losing the analytical integrity of “social Catholicism” as a category, I restrict its usage in this work to responses to Leo XIII’s formal 1891 call to the Catholic faithful to answer the social question. Naturally, these responses were neither uniform, nor static, nor restricted to the fin-de-siècle, so what is most important is to understand that social Catholicism

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63 Misner, Social Catholicism in Europe, p. 2.
after 1891 moved away from corporatism and paternalism to an emphasis on ministry, mission, and dialogue, placing a premium on face-to-face contact above all. Some social Catholics were more inclined toward Misner’s social-charitable Catholicism, yet what made them social Catholics was a new emphasis on individual, personal ministry expressed in thought and action.

One of the most prominent fin-de-siècle French converts to Catholicism, Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), developed the first of the Catholic personalisms to supplement basic social-Catholic ministry. The term “personalism” has a long and diverse history. Maritain himself wrote sardonically in 1947, “There are at least a dozen personalist doctrines, which at times have nothing more in common than the term ‘person.’” The very first usage of the term has been attributed to F.D.E. Schleiermacher’s 1799 Über die Religion, while Walt Whitman may have been the first to use the term in English, equating personalism in 1868 in Democratic Vistas with “the pride and centripetal isolation of a human being in himself, – Identity.” The first work in French to use the term was Charles Renouvier’s 1903 Le Personnalisme, in which personalism represented – as it would for Maritain two decades later – an intermediary position between anarchism and Marxist socialism. For Renouvier, the person was a strictly secular response to a multiplicity of modernities. It was Maritain, however, who reconnected a systematic philosophy of the “human person” to the authoritative pre-modern Catholic source on

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the “person,” as on so many other questions: the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas.

Maritain’s Thomist personalism became, for many social Catholics of the interwar, wartime, and postwar years, an essential component of their evolving social-Catholic ideologies.⁶⁷

Just as Maritain’s personalism became deeply intertwined with social Catholicism, the “revolutionary and communitarian” personalism developed by Maritain’s erstwhile disciple, Emmanuel Mounier (1905-1950), served as the basis for almost all Catholic-socialist syncretism. This category is my own, and I consider “progressive Catholicism” – defined by political alliance with a socialist establishment – to be a subset of it. The term is intended to be literal: going beyond the study of or dialogue with socialism to a syncretic incorporation of socialist tenets into an essentially Catholic worldview. Personalism thus lent itself to multiple masters, political and otherwise. Indeed, in our story, we will see it take many forms that would have made Thomas Aquinas spin in his grave: national personalisms, anti-semitic personalisms, and even Stalinist personalisms.

The cornerstone of this story is the understanding that the Catholic answer to the social question was built upon personal dialogues intended to reinforce the Catholic mission of preaching the Word of God in an effort to save as many souls as possible. The goal was conversion, and the method was a new approach to catechism. Coined in the context of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) that spearheaded the Catholic Counter-Reformation, the word “catechism” traditionally refers to a document designed to “faithfully and systematically present the teaching of Sacred Scripture, the living Tradition in the Church and the authentic Magisterium, as well as the spiritual heritage of the Fathers, Doctors, and saints of the Church, to allow for a better knowledge of the Christian mystery and for enlivening the faith of the People

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of God.”\(^{68}\) In other words, the catechism was a reference document for catechetical instructors shepherding their catechumens – tutees in the study of the faith – through that process (catechesis).

Rev. Władysław Korniłowicz (1884-1946), a key figure in our story and the Polish pioneer of the post-1891 social-Catholic catechism, took a novel approach to the core tenet of the Trent Council’s Roman Catechism: “teachers must not imagine that a single kind of soul has been entrusted to them, and that consequently it is lawful to teach and form equally all the faithful in true piety with one and the same method! [...] Those who are called to the ministry of preaching must suit their words to the maturity and understanding of their hearers, as they hand on the teaching of the mysteries of faith and the rules of moral conduct.”\(^{69}\) It is thanks to his understanding of the necessarily personal dialogue at the heart of catechism that Korniłowicz was able to approach the social question so successfully, accumulating over the course of three decades of ministry several hundred socialist catechumens who, in turn, shared his approach with their working-class constituencies.\(^{70}\) The catechetical process was crucial to the interaction between Catholicism and socialism at every step of the way, even in the darkest years of Stalinism, when former catechumens worked to prepare their own alternative to Catholic-socialist syncretism.\(^{71}\)

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71 The most thorough published self-reflection on one of these catechumens’ paths come from the prominent Catholic and socialist writer Jerzy Zawieyski, Droga katechumena (Warszawa: Biblioteka WIĘZI, 1971).
An Overview by Chapter

The present work is organized chronologically and thematically, consisting of a total of 10 chapters. Broadly speaking, it covers two periods: 1878-1944 and 1944-1958. The first four chapters cover the former period, while the latter six cover the era of state socialism’s establishment in Eastern Europe through the onset of de-Stalinization in 1956 and the respective deaths of Pius XII and the French Fourth Republic in 1958. Each chapter examines the dynamics of Catholicism and socialism through the specific experience of Polish and French Catholic thinkers and activists. Although each chapter covers both East and West, it is first and foremost the Polish side of events that structures the narrative.

Chapter 1 explores the fin-de-siècle, beginning with the election of Leo XIII to the papacy in 1878 and continuing through the advent of the Great War. It tells the story of the Catholic call to answer the social question and the resultant pioneering of a new social-Catholic catechism intended to enable a new generation of activist priests to minister effectively to socialists through extensive personal dialogue. The chapter touches on integral nationalism and older exclusionary approaches to social ministry, but its focus is on two specific milieux inspired by the 1891 encyclical Rerum Novarum: the Ethical Circle, a ground-breaking small group in the Kingdom of Poland that sent many of its young members to Fribourg and Louvain to study Thomas Aquinas; and the milieu growing up around one specific Ethical Circle member, Rev. Korniłowicz, who, on his return from Fribourg, became the most successful pioneer and practitioner of the new social-Catholic catechism. Inspired by the spiritual travails of the disillusioned socialist Stanisław Brzozowski (1878-1911), Korniłowicz ministered successfully to several generations of socialists and built a center of reflection on the social question at Laski, outside Warsaw.
Chapter 2 deals with the interwar period. Continuing the study of catechumens, it focuses on a prominent French fin-de-siècle convert to Catholicism who became one of the faith’s defining interwar intellectual influences: Jacques Maritain. Maritain’s reception in Poland, particularly by the emerging student activist network of Odrodzenie, gave social Catholics another ideological anchor for their activism: Thomist personalism. Maritain’s personal struggle with integral nationalism – and the story of his former mentor, Action Française leader Charles Maurras (1868-1952) – also deeply touched a variety of Polish Catholic milieux, including the National Democrats, Poland’s own integralists. The interwar era saw the emergence of the first homegrown Polish personalisms, many of which could not, however, shake the exclusionary nationalist legacy of 123 years of Polish statelessness. Thus, despite the advent of the human person in interwar Catholic thought as Catholicism’s trump card over socialism, the national question continued to distract interwar Catholic activists from their commitment to addressing the social question.

Chapter 3 takes a closer look at three key cases of French Catholic-socialist interaction in the 1930s, setting up a subsequent discussion of their foundational significance for transnational Catholic activism on the social question. The first concerns a serious attempt by the French Communist Party in the second half of the 1930s – the so-called main tendue, or outstretched hand – to bring Catholic workers into its ranks by advertising the putative compatibility of Catholicism and socialism. The second case was the nouvelle théologie, inspired by Dominican Fathers Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895-1990) and Yves Congar (1904-1995), who, beginning in the 1930s, publicly demanded a Catholic theology of labor that would enable more effective ministry to the industrial proletariat. Finally, there was Emmanuel Mounier, an erstwhile disciple of Maritain and founder of a school of Catholic thought known as “revolutionary and
communitarian personalism. Mounier’s journal *Esprit*, founded in 1932, promoted cooperation across political and religious lines in the interest of preparing a revolution against the “established disorder” of Western capitalism. Mounier offered a powerful new answer to the social question that straddled Catholicism and socialism, and the confluence of his publications with the *main tendue* and the *nouvelle théologie* opened the door for a new path from social Catholicism to personalist-inspired Catholic-socialist syncretism.

Chapter 4 focuses on French and Polish Catholic resistance during World War II. The writings of both Maritain and Mounier – especially the latter – animated clandestine discussion circles among underground youth resisters in France’s Lyon-based Témoignage Chrétien movement. In Poland, the poet Czesław Miłosz (1911-2004) translated a major tract by Maritain. Several clandestine movements of dramatically different ideological profiles – from the socialists of Płomienie, to the conservatives of Szare Szeregi, to the national-chauvinists of Konfederacja Narodu – fell under the spell of Mounier’s writings, circulated in clandestine translation throughout the war. Seminal also in both France and Poland was the resistance organized by Christian Democratic groups, who overcame their interwar marginality to set themselves up as potentially major players in the immediate postwar order.

Chapter 5 sets the stage for deeper analysis of this emerging order, focusing above all on Poland and its unprecedented situation as an overwhelmingly Catholic country in the process of adaptation to revolutionary state socialism. With Poland now firmly in the Soviet geopolitical sphere of influence, a Soviet-sponsored socialist establishment emerged already in 1944. Initially, it seemed as though Christian Democrats and other “non-fascists” might be permitted to share in public life. It soon became clear, however, that the field of play was circumscribed for both the institutional Catholic Church and lay and clerical activists operating autonomously. In a
world in which state socialism seemed to be progressively eliminating Catholicism’s maneuvering room – with Christian Democratic activists landing in prison or in exile by 1948 – an alternative model of Catholic activism developed. This new model was contingent on unswerving approbation of and loyalty to the socialist establishment: its pioneer was the journal *Dziś i Jutro*, run by ex-fascists but dedicated to articulating a serious philosophy of Catholic-socialist syncretism.

Chapter 6 presents three Catholic weekly journals that emerged in Poland in 1945, as well as the decisive influence on the fate of their activism – and Catholic activism more generally – of the May 1946 visit to Poland by Emmanuel Mounier. Mounier’s fascination with postwar Poland’s “great experiment” led him to push a Catholic-socialist advocacy on his Polish counterparts. As a result, he alienated his most long-standing supporters – the former activists of the interwar Odrodzenie movement – and pushed his journal *Esprit* into a lasting ideological and institutional partnership with the milieu of the *Dziś i Jutro* weekly. The story of this chapter is thus one of a confrontation of three distinctly different tendencies in postwar Catholic activism – a strong, legalistic social Catholicism (*Tygodnik Warszawski/Tygodnik Powszechny*); a principled, *raison d’État*-driven personalism (*Tygodnik Powszechny/Znak*); and a pro-regime Catholic-socialist syncretism (*Dziś i Jutro*) – the last of which gained an enormous advantage thanks to simultaneous support from the Polish socialist establishment on the one hand and on the other from *Esprit*, the iconic milieu of the French Catholic vanguard.

Chapter 7 examines closely the activism and advocacies of the *Dziś i Jutro* milieu between 1945 and 1948, focusing on their development – in conversation with like-minded French Catholic activists – of a “progressive Catholicism.” This was a brand of Catholic-socialist syncretism that not only permitted, but indeed insisted on active cooperation with the ruling
socialist establishment. *Dziś i Jutro* focused on issues in which it could use Mounier’s revolutionary personalism to attempt principled justifications of Polish socialist policies ranging from agricultural collectivization to global peace efforts. Particularly central was the question of the “Recovered Territories” taken from Germany and accorded to Poland by the Allied leaders assembled at Potsdam in 1945. The question of the “Recovered Territories” also provided a shared anti-German framework for deeper cooperation with postwar French pioneers of Catholic-socialist syncretism. While acknowledging the cynicism and lust for power guiding the policies of many of *Dziś i Jutro*’s leadership – particularly its founder, the interwar ex-fascist icon Bolesław Piasecki (1915-1979) – this chapter takes seriously the complex, well-informed ideology and philosophy that the movement’s younger generation set forth between 1945 and 1948. The chapter closes with a detailed examination of the August 1948 Congress of Intellectuals in Defense of Peace, which launched *Dziś i Jutro* in the global peace activism that became its principal point of commonality with both the Polish socialist establishment and French progressive Catholicism.

Chapter 8 explores the many roads of intellectual and sociopolitical partnership with Catholic activists in Western Europe opened to *Dziś i Jutro* by its commitments to the global peace movement. With the advent of Stalinism in Poland in 1948, the continued pursuit of Catholic-socialist syncretism required considerable ideological flexibility on the part of both the Polish progressive Catholics and their enthusiastic Francophone partners, including *Esprit*, *Pax Christi*, *La Quinzaine*, the Jesuit-run Action Populaire, and the Belgian Christian peace movement. *Dziś i Jutro*’s principal young ideologue, Wojciech Kętrzyński (1916-1983), undertook a project of transforming these informal contacts into a systematic “Catholic-socialist international” modeled on the developing Western European Christian Democrats’ Nouvelles
Équipes Internationales. This international was well on its way to success until a hard turn in Polish Stalinism against the institutional Church led to a groundswell of dissent among the youngest generation of Dziś i Jutro activists, Stalinist personalists whom I describe as the movement’s “Young Turks.” Their informal leader later became a key Polish dissident, Solidarity advisor, and prime minister: Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927-).

Chapter 9 tells the story of the implosion of the privileged position of the Dziś i Jutro movement (now renamed PAX) in Polish and European Catholic activism. Despite the Stalinist establishment’s show trial of the bishop of Kielce and arrest of the cardinal-primate of Poland, PAX maintained its credibility among its Catholic-socialist-syncretist partners in Francophone Western Europe. However, it was the Young Turks, who had carried the bulk of PAX’s water for supporting the establishment’s imprisonment of Catholic bishops, who proceeded to withdraw from the movement. Their departure converged with a severe miscalculation by Bolesław Piasecki as to the Holy See’s interest in his movement. At the worst moment for European progressive Catholicism, he chose to promote abroad his new theology of Catholic-socialist syncretism, and that promotional campaign cost the Dziś i Jutro weekly its livelihood. A serious reflection on the ideological and intellectual content of PAX’s advocacy reveals that it was only between 1953 and 1955 that it lost the last bien-pensant, principled advocates of Catholic-socialist syncretism. This discredit, moreover, cost all of the French groups that had partnered with PAX.

Chapter 10 leaves the discredited PAX and returns to several groups of Catholic thinkers and activists who had sat out the worst of Stalinism, some of their own volition, some forcibly silenced. Jerzy Zawieyski (1902-1969), the last of Rev. Korniłowicz’s socialist catechumens, emerged with the decline of PAX as a Korniłowicz-like spiritual father to both social Catholics
and disillusioned Catholic-socialist syncretists, including PAX’s former Young Turk henchmen. Zawieyski’s informal constitution of an ecumenical milieu of lay activists coincided with an attack from abroad on PAX that carved out space for a new movement spearheaded by Zawieyski. Amidst the de-Stalinizing Polish “October revolution” of 1956, the new “Catholic Intelligentsia Club” movement pushed PAX to the sidelines and launched a new model of Catholic activism on the social question.
CHAPTER 1
The Social Question and the National Question:
Activist Priests, Revolutionary Fallout, and Catechism in the Fin-de-siècle

It is surely undeniable that, when a man engages in remunerative labor, the impelling reason and motive of his work is to obtain property, and thereafter to hold it as his very own. [...] Socialists, therefore, by endeavoring to transfer the possessions of individuals to the community at large, strike at the interests of every wage-earner, since they would deprive him of the liberty of disposing of his wages, and thereby of all hope and possibility of increasing his resources and of bettering his condition in life.

- Leo XIII, 1891

No, I will never again go to Poland. Nothing there but churches and priests, lords and priests. Nothing. They’ve pulled the peasant down, and all they do is yell: Fatherland. [...] They’ve hung icons all over: the Virgin Mary of Częstochowa and of Ostrabrama, the Queen of Poland. She looks down from on high as they beat the peasant while he prays; while blood runs from his mouth, he kneels and beats his chest.

- Stanisław Brzozowski, 1908

The Polish and French stories of the interaction between Catholicism and socialism in the fin-de-siècle differ wildly, yet at the same time they manifest critical commonalities and linkages. French Catholics and socialists alike rejected core assumptions of Third Republic political culture, yet both sides participated in republican political life, whether through early Christian democratic formations or the Section Française de l’Internationale Ouvrière (SFIO, French Section of the Workers’ International). Polish socialists and Catholics alike – despite

74 Caroline Ford’s description of rural Breton Catholics’ acceptance of the republican political forum – the 19 August 1902 crowd in Finistère protesting the state-mandated closure of a Catholic girls’ school with the cry “Vivent les sœurs ! À bas Combes ! Vive la République !” – aligns perfectly, for example, with Tony Judt’s description of how, in rural Provence, “Voting for the candidate of the SFIO became as much a part of local culture as attending church.” See Ford, Creating the Nation in Provincial France, p. 145; Tony Judt, Socialism in Provence, 1871-1914: a Study in the Origins of the Modern French Left (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 300. The SFIO was France’s Socialist party from 1905 to 1969.
the Catholic hierarchy’s efforts to the contrary—protested at the occupation of Polish territory by three partitioning empires: Austria-Hungary, Prussian Germany, and Russia. Polish socialists—whether more Marxist-internationalist, like Rosa Luxemburg; Marxist-nationalist, like Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz; or writing their own socialisms, like Edward Abramowski and Stanisław Brzozowski—functioned in an international activist space geared toward both keeping them mobile and maximizing their chances of avoiding time in imperial prison. In their international travels, they rubbed shoulders constantly with French counterparts such as Jean Jaurès, Léon Jogiche, and Alexandre Millerand.

Like French and Polish socialists, Polish Catholic activists in the fin-de-siècle developed their own long-term transnational contacts and partnerships. Poland had a long-standing affinity for Catholic France, expressed most vividly in the 19th century by the safe harbor provided for Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz and his national-messianist cohort by Charles de Montalembert, Félicité de Lamennais, and other prominent French Catholic activists. By the 1890s, however, ground-breaking developments in fin-de-siècle Catholicism had created a new space for mutual interest and interaction by Polish Catholics and their Francophone counterparts in Belgium, France, and Switzerland.

The genesis of this intellectual space lay in the Thomist renewal ushered in by Leo XIII immediately on his elevation to the pontificate in 1878. A renewed sensitivity to the teachings of Thomas Aquinas, in turn, led the fin-de-siècle pope to take a serious look at the plight of

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75 I have in mind here particularly Gregory XVI’s encyclical Cum Primum (1832) and Pius X’s apostolic letter to the Polish bishops Poloniae Populum (1905), both of which condemned the respective national uprisings as disruptions of the civic order imposed in the Kingdom of Poland by the Russian tsar. On the “hierarchy’s accommodation” of the partitioning imperial powers, see Blobaum, “The Revolution of 1905-1907 and the Crisis of Polish Catholicism,” esp. p. 669-670.

76 See, for example, Snyder, Nationalism, Marxism, and Modern Central Europe, esp. p. 28-116.

77 See Bordet, Pologne, Lamennais et ses amis.
Europe’s industrial and agrarian working poor. Growing social inequalities within the world of European Catholicism had threatened to fracture the Catholic world already under Pius IX, who chose simply to suppress movements of reform and revolution without treating their root cause. In contrast, Leo XIII handed down in 1891 a thoughtful encyclical entitled *Rerum Novarum*; this was his call for European Catholicism to take seriously the worldly pursuit of social justice, to reduce the growing chasm between rich and poor in Europe by addressing the “social question.”

Interwoven with the story of the Catholic answer to Leo XIII’s call was the question of the fate of nations in an imperial Europe destabilized by social transformation. The “national question,” too, had its putatively Catholic answers – putative, because existing entirely outside the Catholic theological universe defined by the Holy See – in the form of “integral nationalism,” a structural mold for sociopolitical ideologies positing an essential intertwining of religious faith with exclusionary nationalism. French and Polish Catholic integralist movements developed in parallel from the 1890s onward, and, given their immediate amenability to mass-political mobilization, they accelerated the response by socialists on the one hand and non-integralist Catholics on the other. These nationalist forces and their detractors formed the backdrop for the creation of a social-Catholic activist “vanguard” responding to the Holy See while also operating autonomously of it.

The *fin-de-siècle* “Thomist renewal” yielded increased travel from the partitioned territory of Poland to France, Belgium, and Switzerland by accomplished young Poles with an interest in understanding the philosophical and theological underpinnings of their faith. Their travels, experiences, and agendas were conditioned, however – like those of their socialist counterparts – by the social and political aftershocks of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and its

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78 See the first half of Wallace, *Leo XIII and the Rise of Socialism.*
Polish theater (active 1905-1907) in particular. Although this revolution’s direct social and political consequences covered only the Russian partition of Poland – the so-called Kingdom of Poland – they indirectly affected also Galicia (the Austrian partition) and Prussian Poland (Silesia, Pomerania, and Greater Poland).

While the socialist movement suffered severe post-revolutionary repression, Catholic activists found themselves with an unprecedented freedom of mobility between the partitions. Moreover, the Revolution actually increased popular access to political participation in the Kingdom of Poland by means of elections to the Russian imperial Duma. In this way, political culture converged – and direct cross-partition linkages followed – with Galicia and Prussian Poland, in which political participation had already been more accessible to subject populations.

And these social and political transformations were playing out in parallel with France’s 1904-1905 crisis of laïcité, a post-Dreyfusard set of decrees on Church-State separation by which the French Third Republic choked off most Catholic participation not only in republican politics, but in the public sphere itself.

The dual benchmarks of 1891 and 1905 thus framed a unique story of West-East, Francophone-Polish exchange resulting in a radical re-imagining of the possibilities of Catholic activism. On the one hand, a few independent corporatist, paternalist charitable initiatives launched at mid-century by French and Italian industrialists – what Paul Misner has described as “social-charitable Catholicism” – seemed to find affirmation in Rerum Novarum. On the other,

79 As Anna Żarnowska has observed, “The most essential element introduced by the Revolution [of 1905] to the political culture of society in the Polish Kingdom was the democratization of political life, a dramatic expansion of the circle of people not only hungry for political knowledge but also actively involved in political life.” Anna Żarnowska, “Rewolucja 1905-1907 a kultura polityczna społeczeństwa Królestwa Polskiego,” in Tadeusz Wolsza and Anna Żarnowska, eds, Społeczeństwo i polityka: dorastanie do demokracji: kultura polityczna w Królestwie Polskim na początku XX wieku (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG, 1993), p. 1, translated and quoted at Porter, When Nationalism Began to Hate, p. 3. On the periodization of the Polish theater of the Revolution of 1905, see Robert E. Blobaum, Rewolucja: Russian Poland, 1904-1907 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Blobaum, “The Revolution of 1905-1907 and the Crisis of Polish Catholicism.”
the weak, quasi-medieval form in which these initiatives interpreted the social question – neglecting the dignity and subjecthood of the individual workers in need of charity – lent them to co-optation by the newly strengthened, mass-mobilizing hand of integralism. Thus, at the very moment that Leo XIII was pushing European Catholicism to confront the social injustice of both the Industrial Revolution and persistent agrarian feudalism, self-proclaimed Catholic integral nationalists threatened to hijack the social question and subordinate it to their ethnically and politically framed “national question.”

What at once saved social Catholicism from total co-optation and strengthened Catholicism as a missionary force in Europe was an experimental approach taken by a handful of Catholic activists, mostly priests, with a few members of the laity taking initiative as well. This social-Catholic vanguard – focused not, as paternalist social-Catholics had been, on social peace, but rather on a case-by-case approach of dialogue and re-conversion to a re-imagined Catholic faith – created a new catechism. A lived experience of dialogue rather than a dry text to be studied and memorized, the social-Catholic catechism allowed its exponents to learn from socialists and to attempt to work with them rather than waging war on them or lumping them in with an imagined category of “national enemies.” This approach, this dialogue, and this catechism formed the foundation of a century of transnational European Catholic-socialist exploration of how to achieve social justice in the world.

*Thomas Aquinas Reborn*

In the 13th century, a Dominican friar from Italy named Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) revolutionized the intellectual pillars on which the Christian faith stood. Within 50 years of his death, he had been declared a saint, and the reflections on natural law, metaphysics, and
systematic and pastoral theology contained in his voluminous *Summa Theologica* had become the reference point for almost all Christian philosophy and theology.

So-called “Thomist” knowledge taught by instructors belonging to the Dominican order quickly took root at the Universities of Paris and Salamanca, subsequently expanding to newly created European institutions of higher learning, most notably Louvain (1425). Foundational to the Counter-Reformation writings of the early Jesuit luminaries Roberto Bellarmine and Francisco Suárez, Thomism retained its central place in Catholic pedagogy until the French Revolution. In 1797, pursuant to a Revolutionary decree issued by occupying French forces, the Dominican-dominated University of Louvain was closed, and so it remained until 1834. Thomist rationalism thus lost its primacy in the universe of European higher education, replaced by its secular, Enlightenment-driven variant.  

In Catholicism, too, the actual writings of Aquinas took a back-seat to generations’ worth of dogmatic commentaries-upon-commentaries prepared about those writings.

When Leo XIII assumed the papacy in 1878, the first goal that he declared was to return Thomism to its central place in Roman Catholicism. He ordained the creation of a Collegium Angelicum in Rome, promulgated the August 1879 encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (subtitled “On the Restoration of Christian Philosophy”), and guaranteed funds for centers of Thomist study at Louvain and Fribourg. His 1879 encyclical, in particular, reinforced Thomism’s place at the foundation of all Catholic teachings, notably specifying that it was to be Catholicism’s first line of defense against Enlightenment modernity’s “false conclusions concerning divine and human things.”

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genealogy culminated with the statement that only Thomism’s definitive rationalist justification of faith in God and obedience to the Church could rise to the task of combatting the post-Enlightenment “tempest that is on us.” Indeed, Thomism alone could serve “all studies,” among which Leo enumerated law, political theory, the arts, and the physical sciences.

The universities were the principal object of Leo’s attention, and subsequent decades proved this attention to have been warranted. In *Aeterni Patris*, he wrote, “Let carefully selected teachers endeavor to implant the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas in the minds of students, and set forth clearly his solidity and excellence over others.” The “carefully selected teachers” who assumed the newly minted chairs of Thomist philosophy at Louvain (1880, with an “École de Saint-Thomas” created in 1889) and Fribourg (concomitant with the university’s establishment in 1889) received the full doctrinal, financial, and institutional support of the Vatican. 82

Leo would pay particular attention to Louvain, for which he had great sympathy from his years as Papal Nuncio to Belgium. The first holder of the chair of Thomist philosophy was Rev. Désiré-Joseph Mercier (1851-1926), future archbishop and cardinal-primate of Belgium. 83 The Dominican-run center at Fribourg began to produce the *Revue Thomiste* (still in existence today), and Mercier established at Louvain the *Revue Néoscholastique*. As the religious historian Sister Rut Wosiek has put it, “If Louvain sought above all the examination of the ties between Thomist ontology and the achievements of the various modern sciences and secular philosophy (including Kant and the positivists), then Fribourg, like Rome, concentrated rather on ontological study within a framework defined by Thomist doctrine itself.” 84

84 Barbara Rut Wosiek Franciszkanka, “Św. Tomasz w środowiskach młodzieży akademickiej i młodej inteligencji polskiej okresu międzywojennego,” in Stefan Świeżawski and Jan Czerkawski, eds, *Studia z dziejów myśli świętego
Leo XIII died in 1903, and his successor Pius X proved to be far warier of intellectual renewal among Catholics, yet the Thomist network re-established by Leo continued to grow and flourish. Thomist centers of learning recruited scores of young Polish priests – among numerous other nationalities – who shared in the Thomist renewal and imported it back to Poland. These priests were the bearers of an intellectual and spiritual exchange between Poland and Francophone Western Europe, constituting, on their return to Poland, a vanguard of the new “social-Catholic” activism.

**Rosa Luxemburg’s Critique**

Before we take up this activism, however, one particular fin-de-siècle socialist critique of the Catholic Church warrants particular scrutiny. In both France and Poland, despite the best efforts of Leo XIII and his successors at keeping Catholics worldwide outside the socialist fold, these two broadly defined camps ended up borrowing copiously from each other. In that spirit, various factions of Polish socialism co-opted Catholic rituals and symbols – national religious hymns, the practice of ecclesiastical marriage, close familiarity with the Gospels – in the years between 1870 and 1918.85

Why borrow from the “enemy”? Among socialist leaders, even committed atheists as well as individuals from non-Catholic families recognized the persistence of certain social realities among Poles. The laboring masses, both rural and urban, tended to consist of practicing Catholics. For this reason, rather than make Marx’s contention that religion is the “opium of the people” a banner headline for the movement’s rank and file, Polish socialists needed to explore

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Tomasza z Akwinu (Lublin: TN KUL, 1978), p. 351-366, at p. 355. The convention for citing nuns’ names in Polish is as follows: Given Name Ecclesial Name Surname Order Name, so, for example, articles in Polish by Franciscan Sister Teresa Landy would be cited as Zofia Teresa Landy Franciszkanka. For the sake of simplicity, I use consistently throughout the body of the present work the format Ecclesial Name Given Name, which one uses in common parlance when speaking of a nun.

85 Andrzej Chwalba, Sacrum i Rewolucja: socjaliści polscy wobec praktyk i symboli religijnych (1870-1918) (Kraków: Universitas, 2007).
other avenues. One approach involved the appropriation by socialist factions of certain Catholic rituals and symbols, without direct engagement with the institutional Church itself. A leading advocate of this approach was the anarcho-syndicalist Edward Abramowski (1868-1918), who, perhaps paradoxically, late in life “returned” to the Church with the help of one of the principal “new” Catholic activists. As a young revolutionary, however, Abramowski justified socialist appropriation of Catholic elements by arguing,

we cannot negate the religious sentiments that are still deeply rooted in the Polish working masses, while the dexterous utilization of those sentiments would make access to socialist ideas immeasurably easier for thousands of proletarian minds. The goal is simply to deprive our enemies of their monopoly over the emotional side of the proletariat, thus far strongest in Poland.\(^86\)

A second, more persuasive approach involved going after the Church as a whole on its own terms. Thus, Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919) in her 1905 manifesto *Socialism and the Churches* went after *fin-de-siècle* Catholicism for being untrue to the tenets of both the Gospels and the early Christian church.\(^87\) Arguing against the Catholic Church’s defense of capitalism – and thereby *Rerum Novarum* as well – Luxemburg wrote, citing three separate Gospels,

Did Jesus Christ (whose servants the priests are) teach that “it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?” The Social Democrats try to bring about in all countries social regimes based on the equality, liberty, and fraternity of all the citizens. If the clergy really desire that the principle “Love thy neighbor as thyself” be applied in real life, why do they not welcome keenly the propaganda of the Social Democrats?\(^88\)


\(^87\) On Luxemburg’s thought more generally, the classic portrait is Leszek Kołakowski, “Rosa Luxemburg and the Revolutionary Left,” in *Main Currents of Marxism*, p. 403-432.

Luxemburg went on to make claims concerning the early centuries of Christendom: “In the beginning, when the number of Christians was small, the clergy did not exist in the proper sense of the word. The faithful, who formed an independent religious community, united together in each city.” Only after the Council of Nicaea in 325 was there born a clergy “separated from the people,” and then slowly with the passage of centuries the progressively institutionalized Church had solidified into “degenerate servants of Christianity who have become the servants of Nero.”

Having established for her readers that the clergy and bishops had betrayed not only their own vocation but indeed the very basic teachings of Christ, Luxemburg made the final, extraordinary appeal to her Polish audience: “It is we [socialists] who are marching to the conquest of the world as he did formerly who proclaimed that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Written in the year of the Revolution of 1905, Luxemburg’s manifesto directly confronted, among others, Pope Pius X’s 1905 pastoral letter Poloniae Populum. The letter was a less articulate recapitulation of the 1832 encyclical Cum Primum, in which Gregory XVI had chastized Poles in the Russian partition for rebelling against their worldly political authority in the anti-tsarist uprising of 1830. Like the earlier document, Poloniae Populum condemned Polish – above all, clerical – revolutionary activity, remanding Polish Catholics to obedience to their “temporal Caesar,” the Russian tsar Nicholas II. In the face of yet another papal condemnation of national aspirations, Luxemburg’s manifesto held particular appeal (and apparent merit).

Luxemburg had thus made socialism out to Poles to be more Christian than the Catholic Church. Over the course of the 20th century, many would follow in her footsteps with such claims, albeit without necessarily going quite so far. Curiously, these critics would often come from within the Catholic fold. French Dominican theologians Marie-Dominique Chenu and Yves
Congar argued beginning in the mid-1930s that Catholicism was floundering in a world transformed by the Industrial Revolution, and only greater cultivation of grassroots movements within the Church – rather than top-down commands from the Holy See – could help the Church reclaim the hearts and minds of the lay masses. In his 2008 history of the Second Vatican Council, Church historian John W. O’Malley argued that one of the greatest achievements of the council was precisely this: a return to patristics, in particular, an Augustinian renewal that once again placed the laity front and center in the Church, as they had been in the very first centuries of Christendom.89

Thus, Luxemburg’s critique of the Catholic Church on Gospel-derived premises was far more than simply one more article of socialist anti-Catholic propaganda. It tapped into discursive frames within Catholicism itself that have persisted through today. If Jesus were alive today, would he be a socialist? In the fin-de-siècle, it wasn’t necessary to share Rosa Luxemburg’s Marxist radicalism in order to arrive at the following answer: even if Jesus would not join a socialist party, he certainly would not be a capitalist, and above all he would want Catholics to be better Christians than the popes had instructed them to be.

**How Eastern Europe Heard the Call**

Whether or not Luxemburg was right about the Catholic clergy overall, *Aeterni Patris* and *Rerum Novarum* bespoke a pontificate that seemed seriously committed to re-imagining the nature of Catholicism’s engagement with the modern world. Issued in Rome, however, these encyclicals had a much easier time reaching the Western European faithful than the imperial-subject minorities of the Austro-Hungarian, German, and Russian Empires. For Poles, mediation

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through Western European centers of Catholic learning proved crucial to bringing home transformative messages that the bishops of partitioned Poland often failed to underscore for fear of upsetting their *modus vivendi* with the imperial establishments. The principal path by which the Thomist renewal and the Catholic call to address the social question reached Poland was the French language.

By the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Franco-Polish intellectual exchanges were nothing new. This was more than just the mutual affection of a handful of disaffected aristocrats, *literati*, and politicians. Poles of means had long sent their children to Western Europe, particularly to Francophone universities, for their education. Studies abroad were also possible for talented Catholic seminarians who gained the support and patronage of the more intrepid among Polish bishops.\footnote{Ewa Jabłońska-Deptuła and Piotr Skarbek, “W dobie między powstaniami (1832-1864),” in Jerzy Kłoczowski, ed, *Chrześcijaństwo w Polsce: zarys przemian, 966-1979* (Lublin: TN KUL, 1992).}

*Fin-de-siècle* Catholicism saw this tradition of Francophone study expand for Poles in two fundamental ways. First, the Thomist renewal – particularly, the Catholic Church’s significant investments in Louvain and Fribourg – created new study centers that had not existed prior to 1878, with directives to take the widest possible assortment of students. Second, for the Kingdom of Poland, the Revolution of 1905 transformed the mobility of young Catholic students: prior to 1905, Polish priests and seminarians from the Russian partition could not legally study abroad – though some did so under aliases – but this ban was lifted in the revolution’s wake.\footnote{Czesław Strzeszewski, “Szymański Antoni,” in Ryszard Bender *et al.*, eds, *Słownik biograficzny katolicyzmu społecznego w Polsce* (Lublin: TN KUL, 1995), II, p. 118-120, at p. 118.} Since Warsaw belonged to the Russian partition, it was only after 1905 that this key city of Polish culture and administration could move beyond a provincial Catholicism isolated from events in Western Europe to systematic participation in transnational exchanges.
The Ethical Circle

It was in the Kingdom of Poland that the first vanguard social-Catholic organization emerged, first as a clandestine discussion club, then beginning in 1905 as a newly legalized institutional umbrella for a broader range of social-Catholic activities. Prior to the creation of the Ethical Circle, “social Catholicism” in Poland’s Russian partition had largely been limited to paternalist initiatives in urban workshops and on rural manors. As in the case of Léon Harmel’s cercles d’ouvriers of the 1870s, these were, in practice, confined to voluntary enrollment in prayer circles or charity drives organized by self-styled magnanimous Catholic magnates.92

These initiatives achieved neither a mass following nor tangible social or intellectual advances. Moreover, they functioned in almost total ignorance of Rerum Novarum, following a model developed in the 1870s and unaltered to account for the foundational 1891 shift in the Holy See’s stance on the social question. Despite their divergence from the Rerum Novarum-initiated model, these paternalistic social-charitable initiatives received the enthusiastic imprimitur of episcopal authorities in the partitions of Poland. In the bishops’ eyes, such minimalist initiatives posed the least threat of social upheaval, with the added benefit of shielding the institutional Church from uncomfortable questions about why the papacy refused to support Polish aspirations of national liberation. Ryszard Bender has described these initiatives at length as constituting the heart of “Polish social Catholicism,” which he, moreover, locates within a specifically Polish genealogy dating back through centuries of Polish priests to Poland’s Counter-Reformation icon, Father Piotr Skarga.93 Beyond its obvious nationalist slant, Bender’s

93 Ryszard Bender, Społeczne inicjatywy chrześcijańskie w Królestwie Polskim, 1905-1918 (Lublin: TN KUL, 1978), esp. p. 5-6, 12.
narrative thus misses completely the disconnect between the Holy See and the dioceses of partitioned Poland.

It for this reason that Bender underestimates the significance of a Warsaw-based group of lay and clerical activists that started small, but soon revolutionized the face of social Catholicism in Poland. The Ethical Circle constituted a radical break from earlier social initiatives in two respects. First, it escaped the trap of a pre-existing power disparity between owner and workers that stifled real social mobility and prospects of property accumulation under the social-charitable model. Instead, it created a network of discussion clubs consisting of intellectuals who, rather than haughtily isolate themselves in salons or coffeeshops, left their Circle meetings and went to create their own, hands-on social ministry. Second, within three years of its creation in 1903, several participants in the Ethical Circle had gone to study in Fribourg or Louvain. Their direct connection to the new Thomist study centers of Francophone Western Europe allowed them to sidestep the communication breakdown that inhibited the transmission of Rerum Novarum’s lessons from the Holy See, through Polish-language bishops, to their flock. As such, though it began with less than 20 members, the Ethical Circle created a deeply influential paradigm for social Catholicism in the Kingdom of Poland.

Francophone Polish priests of the fin-de-siècle were beginning the process of reconciling a Polish laity troubled by statelessness, by the rise of socialism, and by the papacy’s own intransigence toward their aspirations of breaking free of imperial-minority status. If a convincing Catholic response was to be found to Luxemburg’s Socialism and the Churches, it would come from these priests, not from the Vatican. Two particular cases are deserving of our attention, both emerging from the Ethical Circle: Rev. Antoni Szymański (1881-1942, consecrated 1904) and Rev. Władysław Korniłowicz (1884-1946, consecrated 1912). The two
pursued different but complementary paths that bridged Leo’s Thomist renewal with the end of the Great War and the creation of a “reborn” Polish state. Szymański and Korniłowicz, who, on their return to Poland, assembled vibrant Catholic activist networks, derived their philosophical and theological inspiration in the fin-de-siècle from Thomas Aquinas and Francophone Thomism.

Szymański came from a well-established petit-bourgeois family. Before and after his consecration, he was a regular of Ethical Circle meetings held at the home of the Countess Cecylia Plater-Zyberk (1853-1920). Some of the Circle’s members belonged to the laity, while others were priests; many came from wealthy middle-class families, while others had migrated to Warsaw from the countryside. The Circle first met to meditate on the passing of Leo XIII in 1903 with discussions devoted to how to practice the lessons of Rerum Novarum in their daily lives as Catholics. As Marcin Przeciszewski has emphasized, their informal group constituted the first Polish-speaking lay milieu in any of the three partitions of Poland devoted to reflection on Catholic social teaching. Nonetheless, given that the group left little written documentation, even the few Polish scholars who have attempted histories of fin-de-siècle Polish Catholicism have devoted at most a few sentences to this milieu.


Plater-Zyberk’s activities were wide-ranging, extending far beyond inspired discussions over coffee with guests in her parlor. She wrote extensively on Catholic education (particularly for women), founded several girls’ schools, and established clandestine lay “congregations” following the early-modern European model of lay brotherhoods and sisterhoods designed to promote piety throughout the Kingdom of Poland. She also founded a Catholic Association of Friends of the Youth to fund scholarships for less affluent Catholic students wishing to participate in any of her network of organizations. Following the Revolution of 1905, these previously clandestine organizations began to function legally.

Although their hostess was thus well-credentialed as a social activist by the time of the Circle’s establishment, most of its members were in their late teens or early twenties. Aside from Szymański, the more recognizable from today’s perspective among the members are Władysław Tatarkiewicz (1886-1980 – future Warsaw University professor and author of authoritative histories of philosophy and aesthetics), Józef Chaciński (1889-1954 – future leader of interwar Poland’s Christian Democratic party, prisoner of Auschwitz, and victim of the Moscow Show Trials of June 1945), and – beginning in 1905 – Władysław Korniłowicz as well.

One year after the founding of the Circle, Szymański began theological studies at Louvain under the pseudonym “Antoni Hoffen,” revealing his true identity only after 1905. One of his doctoral thesis advisors was the Thomist expert Mercier. The topic of Szymański’s dissertation, defended in 1908 and published two years later in Polish as a 152-page book,

98 On her Catholic education initiatives, see Bender, Społeczne inicjatywy chrześcijańskie w Królestwie Polskim, p. 116-123. Her most widely circulated books include Cecyla Plater-Zyberk, Jaka jest nasza wada narodowa główna? praca konkursowa (Kraków: nakł. i dr. W. Korneckiego, 1905); Plater-Zyberk, Nowy maj dla rodziców: praktyczny podręcznik nabożeństwa do Najświętszej Maryi Panny mogący służyć na cały rok (Warszawa: Druk P. Laskauera i S-ki, 1903); Plater-Zyberk, O potrzebie reformy szkoły średniej dla dziewcząt (Warszawa: nakł. Gebethnera i Wolffa, 1917).

99 She also explained in print her reasons for founding the organization: Cecylija Plater-Zyberk, O Stowarzyszeniu Przyjaciół Młodzieży: przemówienie odczytane w IV. sekcji Zjazdu dziennikarzy katolickich, d. 19 czerwca 1907 r. (Warszawa: druk. Synów St. Niemiry, 1907).

proved to be of enormous consequence for an entire segment of the Polish laity: *Poglądy demokracji chrześcijańskiej we Francyi, 1892-1907* (The ideas of Christian democracy in France, 1892-1907).  

Szymański’s was among the first intellectual histories written of the Christian Democratic phenomenon that emerged in France in response to Leo XIII’s call for a “ralliement” to the French Third Republic in his French-language 1892 encyclical *Au Milieu des Solicitudes*. During the preparation of his thesis, Szymański spent several months in France, and he made direct contact with a number of the priest-politician *abbés démocrates* from among the politico-religious network that Philip Nord has described as producing “the first Christian Democrats.” He also benefited from the testimony of a former Jesuit named Stanisław Stojałowski (1845-1911), a social-Catholic agitator from Galicia with extensive contacts in Belgium and France, including Léon Harmel, who had by this time turned away from organizing mass pilgrimages of French workers to Rome to advocate the creation of paternalistic Christian trade unions.

One of the key initiatives discussed in the first pages of Szymański’s thesis was Marc Sangnier’s Sillon (Furrow) movement, an organization notoriously difficult to classify. Sillon’s members were primarily lay Catholics: following Leo XIII’s formal announcement of the Catholic “ralliement” to the French Third Republic, Sangnier (1873-1950) organized the group

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outside the auspices of the Catholic hierarchy to help establish a productive, shared political
discourse with republicans and socialists alike. As Sangnier declared in February 1905,

The force of devotion that they [citizens of the French Third Republic] lack, we find in Jesus Christ, and we ask it of the Catholic Church, which is His living presence in this world. This is why, in our defense of our religious liberty, we fight also for democratic progress. It is necessary that we practice politics in order to defend ourselves just as others practice politics in order to attack us. But we want above all to pursue the work of social reconstruction, the realization in full of principles of justice and Christian brotherhood, and the elevation of the people to a more brotherly and free society. We are driven to this by our faith in the living divinity of Christ, who unites us in the holy equality of His love. There, we work together even with those who are not Christian but who, nonetheless, in their dreams of well-being and universal love hear an echo of the teachings of our God.\textsuperscript{104}

Szymański had a very favorable opinion of Sillon’s activities. As he put it, “Sillon, by educating its members, training them spiritually by having them lead seminars, often with contradictory theses \textit{etc.}, seeks to ‘offer into the service of French democracy those social forces that we find in Catholicism.’”\textsuperscript{105} He saw in Sillon’s guiding principles the pursuit of a “democratic majority, which would make possible the existence of a true democracy.”\textsuperscript{106} Although he did not put Sillon front and center in his study of Christian Democracy – he considered them rather too concerned with “apologetic and religious propaganda” – the image emerging from his reading of Sillon was one of dynamic energy and great potential for Christian involvement in French republican life pursuant to the appeals of Leo XIII.

\textsuperscript{104} Quoted in “Le Congrès du ‘Sillon,’” \textit{La Croix}, 28 February 1905. The text in \textit{La Croix} is a report on the Fourth Annual National Congress of Sillon’s Study Circles (\textit{Cercles d’études}), held on 25-26 February 1905 in Lyon. The quoted excerpt is from the speech delivered by Sangnier on 26 February. Pius X personally drafted a letter of blessing read aloud at the congress’s opening session, congratulating the young Sillon activists: “For you, who are swelling the ranks of the Christian faith, may God through you produce new generations of Christians!”


The Ethical Circle back in Warsaw responded enthusiastically to Szymański’s work. His slightly younger colleague Korniłowicz began university studies at Fribourg the year that Szymański finished his doctoral thesis, and on his arrival he found a wide network of Sillon supporters and activists either studying theology at Fribourg or corresponding with Sangnier and his activists in France. Korniłowicz took advantage of these contacts to familiarize himself first-hand with the work of the *Sillonistes*, whom he then put into contact with Plater-Zyberk and the rest of the Ethical Circle.

**The Vatican Volte-Face**

These contacts were formative but short-lived: the event that ended them compounded their significance for the Poles in question. Namely, on 25 August 1910, about three months after the publication of Szymański’s thesis, Pope Pius X sent the French Episcopate an encyclical entitled *Notre Charge Apostolique*, which condemned the Sillon. This condemnation sent shockwaves through French Catholic activist milieux, destroying whatever spirit of the *ralliement* had survived the Dreyfus Affair. The encyclical represented Pius X’s definitive confirmation of earlier papal condemnations of liberalism; more specifically, it prohibited Catholic engagement in the politics and society of liberal or republican orders without clerical supervision.

In other words, *abbés démocrates* – as priests – could be trusted (until proven otherwise) to follow their superiors’ instructions even in political or social action. Sillon, meanwhile, had, in

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Pius’s words, attempted “to escape the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical authority,” in the sense that its lay activists were “not sufficiently equipped to be on their guard against the penetration of liberal and Protestant concepts of doctrine and obedience.” Although he explained that he was not condemning the activists themselves (not even Sangnier), and that Sillon’s concern for “human dignity” was “praise-worthy,” the pope insisted that Sillon

claim[ed] that they are pursuing aims in the temporal order only and not those of the spiritual order; they have a particular conception of human dignity, freedom, justice and brotherhood; and, in an attempt to justify their social dreams, they put forward the Gospel, but interpreted in their own way; and, what is even more serious, they call to witness Christ, but a diminished and distorted Christ.

Not simply were Sillon’s ideas expressions of “evil and error,” but their reliance on “study groups” to propagate and deepen those ideas was simply dangerous. The view that “each man is autonomous” took Sillon’s efforts at socializing and improving the condition of the working man out of the realm of “Christian charity” into liberalism. Such liberal precepts guiding Sillon’s understanding of democracy, “far from being progress, would mean a disastrous step backwards for civilization.”109

The condemnation of Sillon shocked Catholic Europe, but the act of banning once-lauded Catholic actors had its precedent in this pontificate. Although Leo XIII’s successor insisted that he wished to continue the Thomist renewal, it quickly became in his hands a weapon against a variety of philosophical, scientific, social, and theological trends that he grouped together under the falsely homogenizing heading of “modernism.” In this respect, Pius X shut the valve of intellectual renewal opened by his predecessor. As Darrell Jodock has argued, the pontiff “virtually slammed the door on any historical study of the Bible, on theological creativity, and on

church reform. The door would remain closed for the next three decades. Its consequences were serious and far-reaching.”

Pius X, then, devoted his energies to collecting and condemning all *fin-de-siècle* immanent criticism of Catholicism and all calls for the Church to adapt its dogma to the modern world under the uniform heading of “modernist” heresy, condemned in the September 1907 encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. In brief, *Pascendi* posited that a *sine qua non* of all theological “modernism” was the Cartesian premise of metaphysical dualism, in other words, that divine and temporal realms were metaphysically distinct, with the former unknowable to human reason. Since, in this view, Church dogma was thus conditioned by the externality of existence in the temporal realm, changes in the temporal realm – for example, modernization – implied that dogma must change as well. Pius X wrote, “the modernists lay the axe not to the branches and shoots, but to the very root, that is, to the faith and its deepest fires.” The pontiff decreed this entire line of reasoning to be anathema, condemning also thinkers both inside and outside the Church who propagated the heresy in question. Headliners among those condemned included Ernest Renan (1823-1892), Alfred Loisy (1857-1940), and Maurice Blondel (1861-1949), some of the most influential French thinkers of the *fin-de-siècle* – particularly Renan, who even today is widely cited for his work on the constitutive elements of a “nation.”

In 1910, then, the pope who had gone after a somewhat artificially constructed

“modernist” heresy cut down Sillon, the lay movement that showed the most promise of

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113 Renan is most often cited for his 1882 text “Qu’est-ce qu’une nation ?” On Blondel, Loisy, and Renan, see Peter J. Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, and Action Française: the Clash over the Church’s Role in Society During the Modernist Era* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), p. 46-88.
integrating the Catholic laity into democratic republican culture. Szymański, who had returned to Poland full-time and assumed a position as professor of philosophy and social sciences at the Theological Seminary in Włocławek, found himself on the defensive against a wide range of attacks in the Polish-language Catholic press. Although no letter ever came from Rome, Szymański faced accusation after accusation from Polish colleagues that he had succumbed to “modernist” influence while in Western Europe. Such accusations also appeared against the fledgling monthly journal Prąd (Current), which members of the Ethical Circle had founded jointly with a group of young Catholic students in Austrian Poland, in Kraków, organized since 1908 under the name “Polonia.” It was in Prąd that Szymański published most of the articles in his own defense.

Prior to the Revolution of 1905 and to the Sillon controversy, it was the Prussian partition of Poland that was, paradoxically, the most socially “advanced” of the three in terms of Catholic responses to Rerum Novarum. As Robert Blobaum has described the situation prior to 1905 in Prussian Poland, “a full-fledged Catholic social movement emerged, which in Russian Poland stopped halfway in the absence of consistent support from the bishops and in Austrian Poland was stymied by the episcopate’s alliance with the conservatives.” This situation, however, began to reverse after 1905. Social-Catholic catechism debuted and took root in the Russian and Austrian partitions, while the post-1905 legal export of National Democracy outside the Kingdom of Poland almost overnight made the Polish integralists a key determinant of the tenor of Polish participation in Prussian public life. Add to this the apparent demonstration by Pius X in his condemnations of modernism and of Sillon that the Holy See was shifting its priorities

away from renewal. In the end, native Prussian-partition Poles like the ambitious Catholic politician Wojciech Korfanty (1873-1939) fell more under the sway of National Democracy, identifying the social question in purely national terms as an instrument wielded by German imperial authorities in order to stifle the Poles’ potential activism on the national question.\textsuperscript{117}

Meanwhile, the Sillon controversy had the opposite effect in the Kingdom of Poland and in metropolitan pockets of Galicia, accelerating the growth of a new social-Catholic activism. Szymański, Korniłowicz, and some of the others involved in the polemics generated by Szymański’s work were members of the clergy. Though trained in classical Thomism in an era of Thomist renewal, these priests were arguing about an entirely different set of issues, mostly revolving around the extent to which it was doctrinally and theologically proper for lay Catholics to engage in secular public life. As such, their commitments placed them on the margins of the Polish clergy. Nonetheless, a select group of clergy – indeed, some deeply influential, like Rev. Stefan Wyszyński (1901-1981), who after World War II would become a cardinal and primate of Poland – would soon follow in their footsteps.

In the fin-de-siècle, however, Szymański and Korniłowicz stood in the vanguard of a major intellectual and social shift in European Catholicism: the advent of a Catholic activism no longer defined by ecclesiastical supervision of its every move, but indeed guided by lay thinkers and led by activists from among both clergy and laity. As Daniel Olszewski has argued, “There is no doubt that the discussions and controversies of this type generated by the program and doctrinal principles of Christian democracy in France contributed enormously to the crystallization of Catholic social thought in Poland.”\textsuperscript{118} The modernist crisis and the Sillon

\textsuperscript{117} On the clash between German Catholic politics and National Democracy, see especially James E. Bjork, \textit{Neither German nor Pole: Catholicism and National Indifference in a Central European Borderland} (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), p. 77-127. We will return to Korfanty in Chapter 2.

condemnation did not dissuade the budding social and political activists among the Polish priests and laymen from their Catholicism, nor did it dissuade them from action. Rather, it motivated them to pursue a more evolutionary, personalized approach that amounted to a new kind of social Catholicism.

*Catholic Integralism: The Action Française and National Democracy*

The re-imagining of social Catholicism in the partitions of Poland confronted another set of social and political tendencies arising from Catholicism’s engagement with the modern world. These movements either sidestepped the social question in favor of the national question, or integrally combined the two. Instead of seeing their societies as lost sheep to be converted or re-converted to Christianity by catechism and dialogue, they categorized entire populations in black-and-white terms as either part of or antagonistic toward “their” nation. This brand of exclusionary pigeon-holing went hand in hand with enforced public commitments to a “national faith.” This was mass politics of the sort that engulfed right-wing Parisian shopkeepers at the height of the Dreyfus Affair.¹¹⁹

Like social Catholicism, integral nationalism aspired to help the Catholic faith play a role in public life in the modern world. Indeed, integralists pursued this role more aggressively and more directly than social Catholics. They could allow themselves to do this because, unlike social Catholics, they intentionally left entire populations behind and outside their fold. Instead of worrying about justice and equality, their principal concern was for effective collective action.

In the decade following the promulgation of *Rerum Novarum*, parallel movements emerged in France and in the Austrian- and Russian-controlled partitions of Poland. Both sought to promote ideologies of organic, “blood and soil” ethno-nationalism. Both publicized their

ideology through their own manifestos, journals, and extraparliamentary leagues, and both presented themselves as the ultimate social and political movements for pious Catholics belonging to their respective nations. The French movement was the Action Française, created in 1898; the Polish movement was Narodowa Demokracja (National Democracy; abbreviated *endeccja* in Polish), created in 1887. The respective icons and chief ideologues of the two movements – Charles Maurras (1868-1952) and Roman Dmowski (1864-1939) – had not founded the movements themselves, but they were both central figures from the early years as a result of the intensity and radicalism of their engagement. Within a decade, both had become the icons of their respective movements. Finally, despite the reliance of both movements on Roman Catholicism, indeed on the claim of “integral” unity of Catholicism and nationalism, Maurras and Dmowski themselves remained avowed agnostics until late in life.

The Action Française developed out of the Dreyfus Affair as a nationalist, monarchist movement; from 1908 onward, the movement cohered around a daily paper of the same name. Its principal ideologue Charles Maurras’s watchword “*politique, d’abord*” precluded any classification of the movement as apolitical, though Maurras rejected all established political parties and indeed the very parliamentary system itself. Instead, Maurras insisted on the primacy of extraparliamentary leagues. Although the Ligue de l’Action Française that he founded in 1905 was not a party, it embodied Maurras’s version of the essential form of legitimate political action.¹²⁰ Such action was to express “integral nationalism,” abbreviated to *intégrisme*, in other words, promoting a vision of the nation as an organic whole excluding all corrupting elements.¹²¹

Since 1893, the eternal activist and political agitator Roman Dmowski had argued for consolidation of the Polish nation through a “national faith.” With Zygmunt Balicki (1858-1916), he formed extralegal groups of collective action, first as part of the older paramilitary National League and then various subsequent political parties broadly grouped into “National Democracy.” To avoid arrest, he moved frequently back and forth between Galicia and the Kingdom of Poland in the first decade of his activism, until the Revolution of 1905 resulted in the relaxation of legislation on associations in the Russian partition, at which point he settled in Warsaw.

The evolution of his biography closely paralleled that of Charles Maurras. Both helped to run 1890s paramilitary leagues. Both authored major political manifestos: Dmowski’s 1903 *Myśli Nowoczesnego Polaka* (Thoughts of a Modern Pole) to Maurras’s 1900 *Enquête sur la Monarchie*. Both edited journals that defined their respective social movements: Maurras’s daily *Action Française* and Dmowski’s *Przegląd Wszechpolski* (Review of All Poles). Both were virulent anti-Semites who blamed Jews indiscriminately for all of the ills experienced by their respective nations. Dmowski, for example, wrote in 1903, “It is Jews whose enormous presence in Poland creates its most serious problem.” The one major difference between the men lay in the form of advocated government: unlike Maurras, Dmowski was no monarchist, and he did not oppose a parliamentary system; in fact, he even served as a deputy in the Russian imperial Duma.

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122 As Brian Porter has put it, “Dmowski and Balicki had resolved modernity’s crisis of identity by regrounding the atomized individual within a national community.” Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate*, p. 200.
Having spent 1891-1892 studying in Paris, Dmowski followed closely the day-to-day affairs of the Third Republic, and he saw a kindred spirit in Maurras, whom he would later describe as the “quintessence of what a French movement should be.” 125 Dmowski’s advantage over Maurras was that, unlike the French monarchist, he never articulated expressis verbis the idea of politique, d’abord. Maurras’s 1914 L’Action française et la religion catholique openly admitted that, although “traditional Frenchmen, separated politically from the Church, would not be intelligible to their own thought,”126 Action Française’s organizational relationship to the Catholic Church was one of “strategic alliance for the nation” rather than obedient service in Christ. In contrast, although Dmowski referred systematically in Myśli Nowoczesnego Polaka to “Christian ethics,” not until 1927 did he attempt to define in writing the proper place of the Catholic Church in national life. 127

We will return to Dmowski and Maurras in the context of the 1926 condemnation of the Action Française movement. The Polish bishops prior to 1926 had largely been happy to permit endecja activists to spread the word that endecja was the political orientation of true Catholic Poles. The influence of Action Française, however, would create a crisis that Dmowski would navigate deftly to avoid opening his movement to similar accusations of either instrumental treatment of the Church or of a sub rosa policy of politique, d’abord. The French example was thus crucial to Dmowski personally and to the durability of National Democracy.

It is important to underscore, however, that the integral nationalists were not alone in the fin-de-siècle partitions of Poland in their treatment of the social question as an issue subordinate

127 See, for example, Dmowski, Myśli Nowoczesnego Polaka, p. 102.
to the national question. In Galicia, Rev. Stanislaw Stojałowski juggled transnational contacts with Léon Harmel and other pre-\textit{Rerum Novarum} social organizers in France with a network of popular peasant journals that he launched in Galicia in the mid-1870s.\textsuperscript{128} Like Harmel, who pioneered the model of study and meditation circles for Catholic workers (\textit{cercles d’études}), Stojałowski promoted an “agricultural circle movement” encouraging limited worker self-education. His idea was to enable Catholic workers to “advise themselves about their own matters” and “solve their own misery.”\textsuperscript{129} At face value, \textit{Rerum Novarum} was a great boon for Stojałowski’s \textit{avant la lettre} social Catholicism, for it allowed him to redouble his efforts, backstopped by the Archdiocese of Kraków.\textsuperscript{130}

In reality, however, Stojałowski never actually assimilated the Catholic call for social justice as Leo XIII had articulated it. After \textit{Rerum Novarum}, the priest entered Galician politics, attempting to assemble a mass political movement of Galician peasants. Indeed, his politicking made a mockery of the social question – how to empower the impoverished peasantry – pushing him instead to reinforce his long-time advocacy of “agricultural circles” with a ferociously anti-semitic brand of the national question. Credited by numerous sources with inciting anti-semitic riots that spread like wildfire across Galicia during the 1898 electoral campaign for the Viennese

\textsuperscript{128} In 1875, he founded the journals \textit{Pszczółka} (Little Bee) and \textit{Wieniec} (Wreath). That same year, the Society of Jesus dismissed him, in large part due to his persistent social agitation among the peasantry. See Franciszek Kącki, \textit{Ks. Stanisław Stojałowski i jego działalność społeczno-polityczna. I: 1845-1890} (Warszawa: skł. gł. Kasa Mianowskiego, 1937), esp. p. 22-32.


Reichsrat, Stojałowski entered only a few years later into open partnership with Dmowski-inspired National Democrats who secured a foothold in Galicia after 1905.\footnote{See, for example, Daniel L. Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848-1916* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2005), p. 74-75.}

It is telling that this icon of early social Catholicism ended his life working side by side with the integralist tide. Stojałowski’s case is uniquely illustrative of the inextricability of the national question – and anti-semitism in particular – from the fate of the social question in the Catholic engagement with the modern world. On the one hand, Stojałowski was himself a pioneer, willing to break social conventions and transgress class divides in the interest of ameliorating the condition of the Catholic peasantry. On the other, in a fin-de-siècle Catholic world defined by *Rerum Novarum*, Stojałowski’s increasing visibility – and the volte-face by the Church hierarchy that suddenly provided him with virtually limitless support – led him to subsume definitively the social question to the national question.

Stojałowski is but the first of many figures throughout our story who both illuminate and complicate the boundaries of the Catholic approach to the social question in late modern Europe. Although the pursuit of social justice seemed to take center stage in his life, defying any simplistic categorization of him as a life-long traditionalist, Stojałowski nonetheless, when push came to shove, chose an exclusionary rather than universalist path as a Catholic participating in public life. We will see this again and again among the Franco-Polish vanguard of Catholic thinkers and activists responding to the social question between 1891 and 1958, from Thomist personalists to Catholic-socialist syncretists. However fervent their faith, however imaginative their readings of Aquinas and his 20\textsuperscript{th}-century disciples, when push came to shove, many would retreat into exclusionary nationalism, thereby making the pursuit of social justice more difficult for all of their co-religionists.
The New Catechetical Dialogue

Despite his connections in France and Belgium, then, Stojałowski’s putative social Catholicism was missing a core ingredient introduced into Franco-Polish Catholic discourse by the Ethical Circle: dialogue based on a novel understanding of the idea of catechism. The ease with which social Catholicism seemed, as in Galicia, to absorb the methods and priorities of integralism threatened the very integrity of Leo XIII’s project. The danger lay in the prospect that the national question might completely replace the social question at the center of European Catholic thought and activism. The Thomist vanguard of this activism – loyal to Leo’s memory even after his death in 1903, as disciples of his Thomist renewal – pushed social Catholics toward an intellectual and social process that constituted one of the pastoral cornerstones of Catholicism: catechism. The first generation of Catholic thinkers and activists devoted to carrying out Leo XIII’s call were themselves either pioneers or products of a personal, localized, and therefore deeply humanist dialogue between Catholicism and the modern world.

One of the earliest products of this catechetical process was a French philosopher whose thought would itself become one of the intellectual foundations of Catholicism’s re-shaping of European politics and society in the 20th century. Two years after the 1880 death of the Republican politician Jules Favre, a liberal of Protestant roots, his daughter gave birth to a son, Jacques. Raised as a Protestant, Jacques Maritain went on to study at the Sorbonne, where he developed deep fascinations with the scientism of Félix Le Dantec (1869-1917) and the intuitionism of Henri Bergson (1859-1941). In 1905, he completed his agrégation; weeks later, with his fiancée, a Russian Jewish émigré named Raïssa Oumançoff (1883-1960), he visited the mystic novelist Léon Bloy (1846-1917). A convert himself, Bloy shared his faith with Jacques
and Raïssa, who one year later both converted to Roman Catholicism, taking Bloy as their godfather.

So began the journey of a self-described “Catholic philosopher.” (Maritain vehemently insisted throughout his life that he was no “theologian.”) In the 57 years between his conversion and his death, Jacques Maritain not only revolutionized Thomism and Catholic philosophy *stricto sensu*, but he indeed redefined the terms of Catholic engagement with the modern world. Moreover, Maritain demonstrated – without resorting to the theological radicalism of Yves Congar or Marie-Dominique Chenu – the need for a re-definition of the place of a Catholic activist vanguard in Europe. Finally, as Samuel Moyn has demonstrated, Maritain did as much as anyone to construct an international discourse of human rights immediately before, during, and after the Second World War.  

Although there is no complete biography spanning Maritain’s entire life, the studies of various aspects of his thought and engagement in public life are legion, ranging from his Thomist epistemology, to his wife’s mysticism, to the influence of his writings on European integration and Latin American politics.

Maritain is central to our story because, within a decade after having received his professorship at the Institut Catholique de Paris in 1914, he had become an intellectual icon not only for the French laity, but indeed on a European scale, and in Poland in particular, offering a key philosophical contribution to Catholicism’s answer to the social question. Alongside his

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133 For an intellectual biography that does some justice to Maritain through 1939, see Guillaume de Thieulloy, *Le chevalier de l’absolu : Jacques Maritain entre mystique et politique* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005); the closest thing to a comprehensive intellectual biography of Maritain is Fourcade, “Feu la Modernité.”
peer, the French medieval historian Étienne Gilson (1884-1978), he became the widely acknowledged leader of the 20th-century chapter of the Thomist renewal, far outmatching any contemporaneous output by Fribourg or Louvain. Indeed, he developed the first Thomist personalism, a school that held particular appeal for Catholic activists in the interwar period.

Maritain’s own evolution within the Thomist framework and, subsequently, as a personalist placed him within complex and controversial situations from which others – Polish activists among them – learned by watching his successes and failures. He became an instant favorite of Pius X in 1913 despite having only recently converted to Catholicism. This was all the more impressive a feat in the era of modernist controversy, when anathema and suspicion were ubiquitous. Though, beginning in 1920, he would be a friend to Charles Maurras and a defender of the Action Française movement, Maritain would react to Pius XI’s 1926 condemnation of the movement by immediately turning on it and writing its most scathing critiques. In the 1930s, he would help his one-time tutee Emmanuel Mounier to get the journal *Esprit* off the ground, before cutting himself off entirely from that journal and from Mounier. Finally, confronting in his philosophy the various ideological and political threats of 20th-century European life – fascism, Nazism, and especially socialism – Maritain would respond to them with his own Thomist-inspired normative political philosophy: integral humanism.

Jacques and Raïssa Maritain had converted to Catholicism from other faiths under the tutelage of Léon Bloy and Charles Péguy, themselves converts. Indeed, among the key influences and authors of French Catholic personalism, there was no shortage of converts. This generation of French catechumens corresponded to successive waves of conversions or “returns” to the faith by baptized agnostics – in English, often informally described as undergoing “conversion experiences” – in the 1910s among leading intellectuals and activists across Europe.
Some of the more famous among these were England’s G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) and Germany’s Dietrich von Hildebrand (1889-1977). Poland experienced its own unique version of Catholic revival among intellectual luminaries and social and political activists who became bound up in a transnational latticework of social, political, and religious activism spanning the European continent.

**The Catholic-Socialist Dialogue in Poland**

Many of the key players in this transnational latticework lived desperately tragic lives: fallen colleagues, decades-long battles with tuberculosis, and the failed Revolution of 1905. Yet one who lived as a pariah even among pariahs ended up setting the terms of the Catholic-socialist encounter in Poland for the entire 20th century. Again and again throughout our story, we will find connections with the ideas and actions of Stanisław Brzozowski (1878-1911). As Leszek Kołakowski has put it, “The work of Stanisław Brzozowski is scarcely known outside his own country, yet the intellectual history of twentieth-century Poland cannot be understood without reference to the bizarre and disparate effects of his dynamic writings and personality.”

Like his contemporaries Edward Abramowski and Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz (1872-1905), Brzozowski started young as a radical socialist, only to have his activism tempered by poor health. Like Abramowski and Kelles-Krauz, he lived in an intellectual space that eclipsed the physical separation between Poland and Western Europe. The career of writing to which the tuberculosis that he developed in prison had destined him gained him only limited fame in his lifetime, and certainly no fortune. Although Abramowski and Kelles-Krauz, too, had complex

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relationships with mainstream Marxist socialism, Brzozowski alone suffered the indignity of a trial of peers – never officially concluded – intended to determine whether or not he had informed on his partisan colleagues to the tsarist authorities. He died aged 33, broke, alone, and disillusioned in Florence, to which he had retreated in an attempt to slow the illness that was eating his lungs, his final years a perverted caricature of an E.M. Forster novel.

Much as he suffered due to his position as an outsider with respect to both mainstream culture and his own political milieu, that same position enabled Brzozowski to capture the essential problems of socialism, nationalism, and faith not only in Poland, but in Poland’s European context as well. Rejecting Nietzschean thought as “a ‘pillow’ on which the tired wiseman has laid himself to rest,” he entered instead the world of Catholic modernism. In his travels to France, Switzerland, and Italy between 1895 and 1908, he encountered and devoured the writings of Maurice Blondel, Alfred Loisy, and Ernest Renan. An instinctive anti-clericalist whose novels unabashedly mocked the Polish clergy as a privileged class with a vested interest in opposing Poland’s national liberation – the 1905 Poloniae Populum only served to confirm his fears – Brzozowski found in the writings of these French Catholic reformers a more open, humanist spirituality. Unlike what he called the “Jesuitism of the Church,” these thinkers drew him toward re-conversion to the Catholic fold.


140 Quoted at Cywiński, Rodowody Niepokornych, p. 445.

141 Cywiński, Rodowody Niepokornych, p. 444-460.
When Pius X launched his attack on “modernism,” it was Brzozowski’s new heroes whom the pontiff had in mind: Blondel, Loisy, and Renan landed in 1907 on the Holy Office’s Index of Banned Books. Yet, rather than once again turn away from religion, Brzozowski began in the wake of *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* to meditate more profoundly on the national and social functions of Catholicism in the partitions of Poland. Like Stokałowski, Brzozowski was committed both to national liberation and to social justice, and he understood these two questions to be bound together in their very essence. For Brzozowski, the logical consequence was to call for a Polish campaign of “national strengthening.”

Unlike the Galician priest, however, he believed that such a campaign needed to be based not on an exclusionary definition of the nation, but rather on an axiological re-orientation toward human labor. Brzozowski faulted the Catholic Church for having eroded Poles’ capacity to value their own work, and thus the humanist value of labor, losses that, in his eyes, in turn prevented Poles from being either good Poles or good Europeans. Nonetheless, he received *Rerum Novarum* with great hope, believing in it as the potential cornerstone of a radical re-orientation toward a Catholic theology of labor that was necessary not just for the sake of Catholicism, but for Poland to have any chance of a future as a unified nation. As Krzysztof Pomian has astutely observed, Brzozowski’s thought “ranged from proletarian red to episcopal

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143 “I believe, and I am convinced that Europe, humanity, are not empty words, yet I also believe that one can function in them and for them only through one’s nation. Nations are reservoirs of already-gathered strength, and the depletion of one of these is a loss for all; we serve the interest of humanity, then, by reinforcing the strength of our own nation, developing in it a victorious, progressive, proud kind of man.” Stanisław Brzozowski, *Głosy wśród nocy. Studya nad przesileniem romantycznem kultury europejskiej* (Lwów: Nakł. Księżarni Polskiej B. Polonieckiego, 1912), p. 196.
Deeply torn until his final hours about his own personal faith, Brzozowski nonetheless accepted the Last Rites and died in 1911 with a priest at his side. At the time, a young Pole preparing in Switzerland to take his priestly vows began to re-read the late writer’s novels and philosophical commentaries, attempting to understand how this radical socialist had ultimately returned to Catholicism despite fundamental problems with the institution of the Church. Władysław Korniłowicz, a theology student at Fribourg at the time of Brzozowski’s death, was consecrated as a priest the next year, and the late young socialist writer’s catechetical path deeply shaped Korniłowicz’s understanding of his vocation.

Perceiving that many socialists – particularly in the wake of the Revolution of 1905 – shared Brzozowski’s sense of spiritual alienation in the face of the continued petty politicking of their partisan colleagues, Korniłowicz resolved to develop his own catechism intended specifically for Polish socialists. Two precepts guided this catechism: humanism, class-blind and defined by the shared Catholic and socialist belief in the value of work; and a sense of mission in pursuit of a joint solution to the social and national questions. Going far outside the boundaries of Catholic mission as defined by the Holy See, Korniłowicz thus posited that it was possible to develop a catechism that would teach Catholics and socialists together to strive for both social justice and

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146 On Brzozowski’s life and death, see his most recent biography: Eugeniusz Kabatec, Ostatnie wzgórze Florencji. Opowieść o Stanisławie Brzozowskim (Warszawa: Studio Emka, 2011).
147 On Korniłowicz’s studies in Fribourg, see especially Krystyna Rottenberg, “À l’école thomiste de Fribourg,” in Les traces des relations franco-polonaises dans les archives de l’Œuvre de Laski, p. 55-60.
148 Brzozowski dramatized the post-1905 disillusionment of radical socialism in his novel Plomienie with an allegory centered on the 1871 Paris Commune, specifically, the failure of its bloodshed to effect any meaningful change in social conditions or popular consciousness: “Then we were not yet thinking about any life other than ceaseless dying with firearms in our hands, and it seemed so easy. From city to city, country to country, moving along with a song on our lips, Elle ne se rend pas, la Commune de Paris! […] But I left Paris and saw life. I saw that it is the same each day, care-free, apathetic, as though it had not assimilated those enormous waves of the blood of men. On a heap fertilized by the corpses of Parisian workers grew a raucous, healthy day-to-day, deprived of all demonization. And once again the people saw nothing.” Brzozowski, Plomienie, p. 250.
national liberation while steering clear of Dmowski’s and Stojałowski’s exclusionary mass ideologies.

Korniłowicz’s first catechumens included the anarcho-syndicalist Edward Abramowski – the very same who, in the 1880s, had advocated Polish socialist co-optation of Catholic rituals and symbols – and his fellow academics Ignacy Baranowski (1879-1917) and Bronisław Chlebowski (1846-1918). As very few of Korniłowicz’s personal documents survived the Great War, it appears highly unlikely that we will ever have an exhaustive, detailed account of this “generation of difficult conversions,” difficult because navigating the treacherous straits framed – all at once – by Romanticism, Catholicism, nationalism, positivism, and socialism.

Polish historian Bohdan Cywiński has underscored, however, the foundational importance of Brzozowski’s example to Korniłowicz’s dialogues with Abramowski, Baranowski, and other socialist “catechumens”: “Rev. Korniłowicz, however – and any other priest who knew how to minister to catechumens – repeated after Brzozowski that it is impermissible to allow any essential value to be lost that was gained from years of seeking Truth outside the Church.”

This understanding of the quest for Truth motivated Korniłowicz to reach out above all to socialist activists in hopes that they, in turn, would help him to spread the new social-Catholic catechism to agrarian and industrial laborers throughout the three partitions of Poland. This choice reflected not elitism, but rather a pragmatic recognition on the priest’s part of the improbability of one man alone – without being able to perform miracles – succeeding in the

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149 Cywiński, Rodowody Niepokornych, p. 491. Abramowski was one of the fathers of Polish academic sociology, and his theory of “stateless socialism” was deeply influential for generations of Polish thinkers and activists. See, for example, Andrzej Flis, “E. Abramowski’s Social and Political Thought,” in Piotr Sztompka, ed, Masters of Polish Sociology (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1984), p. 27-52; Wojciech Giełżyński, Edward Abramowski zwiastun “Solidarności” (London: Polonia, 1986); Małgorzata Augustyniak, Myśl społeczno-filozoficzna Edwarda Abramowskiego (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego, 2006).


151 Cywiński, Rodowody Niepokornych, p. 503.
conversion of masses while pursuing a face-to-face catechetical dialogue. Asked once why he spent more time with intellectuals than with “simple folk,” Korniłowicz replied, “My child, I would love to take them all into my care and to dialogue with them, but I do not know how.”

More than an exercise in humility, however, Korniłowicz’s new social-Catholic catechetical method reflected a realistic acknowledgment of the practical conditions of ministry in the fin-de-siècle Kingdom of Poland. As Robert Blobaum has pointed out, by 1905, Polish parishes in the Russian partition – particularly in urban and industrial areas – experienced both a demographic explosion and a dearth of priests due, at least in part, to dwindling ecclesiastical finances: “The fulfillment of normal pastoral duties in these primarily working-class parishes became nearly impossible, and thousands of parishioners were left with many of their religious needs unfulfilled.” Korniłowicz’s catechetical approach, besides responding thoughtfully to Leo XIII’s call, had the added value of being practical. In other words, instead of wasting time and energy attempting to reach the masses himself, the priest invested his pastoral capital in a select group of key socialist activists who could then spread his catechetical message further on their own.

Through this catechetical dialogue, Korniłowicz discovered also a second mission for himself as a Catholic activist: a campaign for reform of the liturgy. Until Korniłowicz had arrived at a deeper personal understanding of the Catholic liturgy – i.e. the interaction between the spiritual and social aspects of the faithful’s participation in a mass – he could not answer the simple yet incisive questions of his socialist partners in dialogue. What Brzozowski, Korniłowicz, and the priest’s socialist catechumens all shared was a belief in the need to humanize and democratize the lessons of faith. Achieving these goals would involve bringing

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laymen into the practice of the liturgy and thereby transforming the figure of the Catholic priest from an exalted, privileged prince among men to a simple shepherd living and working among his flock. As Bohdan Cywiński has put it,

Religious practices, if they are to make any sense at all, must express something authentic. Thus, it is not sufficient to command that they be carried out, but rather it is necessary to explain the essential sense of prayer, liturgy, and the sacraments. These were not easy questions for traditional clergy unaccustomed to this sort of curiosity on the part of the flock. And yet answers had to be given – even if it were to come out that only one priest, Korniłowicz, understands and senses the meaning of the liturgy (as was indeed the case even at the beginning of the 1920s among the Polish clergy).\(^{154}\)

The experience of becoming a catechumen and of finding what Jacques Maritain called a “spiritual father” (maître spirituel) dominated the lives of whole groups of Polish Catholic laity returning to the Church just before, during, and after the Great War. As Brian Porter-Szűcs has shown, the Catholic Church at the end of 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century was anything but an unequivocal guardian of Polish national aspirations.\(^{155}\) Between episcopal reticence and the outright papal hostility expressed toward Poland on multiple occasions (particularly in encyclicals), it was difficult for fin-de-siècle Poles who knew something of the outside world even to sympathize with ultramontanism, let alone practice it.

**Korniłowicz and Maritain**

What remained, then, was to seek personal dialogue with the Catholic faith at a localized level. The Ethical Circle study group model survived the Great War, growing exponentially in its wake and flourishing in interwar Poland. Even before the interwar networks of discussion circles came into being, however, key individuals like Korniłowicz made a difference on their own.


\(^{155}\) Porter-Szűcs gives an authoritative account of the consequences of *Cum Primum*, including the dissociation of ethno-Catholicism from the institutional Church and of many clergy from the Episcopate: see Porter-Szűcs, “Politics,” in *Faith and Fatherland*, p. 158-207.
Korniłowicz, in particular, was a one-man network of dialogue. The experiences that prepared him to aid catechumens and to bring disaffected individuals back to the fold included his systematic training in Thomism at Fribourg, his experience with the Sillon debates surrounding Szymański’s book, and his resultant conviction that the liturgy required serious re-thinking. Only on deeper reflection would priests and their flocks alike be able to answer a series of questions succinctly summed up by Bohdan Cywiński as “why and in what do I believe?”

Where does Maritain figure in this conversation about conversions? With the reader’s indulgence, we cross over for a moment into the interwar period. From December 1920 to March 1921, as the personal envoy of his consecrating bishop, Kraków’s Adam Stefan Sapieha (1867-1951), Korniłowicz traveled to seven European countries, including Belgium and France. In the course of his travels, he had an audience with Szymański’s old advisor Mercier, now a cardinal, and over the course of a week in mid-January 1921 he visited with the Maritains at their home in Versailles. Sister Teresa Landy, a catechumen mentored by Korniłowicz who in the 1920s became his unofficial partner in the enterprise of linking the Thomist renewal with his new catechetical approach, later recalled,

Rev. Korniłowicz later explained to those of us in Kółko [Little Circle – the name of the informal Thomist reading and meditation group initiated by Korniłowicz at Laski] the extraordinary lives of the Maritains while encouraging us to familiarize ourselves with the work of Jacques Maritain, who from an atheist and a rebellious partisan of official Sorbonne philosophy had made himself into a Catholic and a wonderful force behind the renewal of Thomist

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156 Cywiński, Rodowody Niepokornych, p. 504.
158 For example, Jacques Maritain noted Korniłowicz’s visit to Versailles for a Thomist study circle meeting on 16 January 1921. This is the only mention of Korniłowicz in Maritain’s Carnet de notes, which – however – are notoriously episodic and fragmentary. See Jacques Maritain, Carnet de notes (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1965), p. 190. Nonetheless, Korniłowicz’s correspondence with Maritain makes reference to multiple visits by the priest at the Maritains’ home. See Ladislas Korniłowicz Correspondence, AJRM. On Maritain’s encounters with Rev. Korniłowicz and Zofia Landy, see also Fourcade, “Feu la Modernité,” p. 283.
philosophy.\textsuperscript{159}

The goal in presenting these encounters, at once Polish and Francophone, is not to lionize Korniłowicz, but rather to demonstrate the importance of micro-level, interpersonal contacts to the process of re-imagining Catholic activism in the fin-de-siècle and interwar periods. Korniłowicz was not some mystical or heretical spiritual mid-wife: his studies at Fribourg and his personal contact with catechumens over almost a decade of priesthood had taught him by 1921 to combine his Thomist training with a dash of Augustinian introspection. Halina Dernałowicz would put it best in her obituary for Korniłowicz: “For the Reverend, Catholic action did not mean organizations or assemblies, nor pilgrimages, nor even social activity, and political activity even less so, but rather the patient, ongoing education of human spirits, their imperceptible transformation, in order to put them in the service of truth and of good.”\textsuperscript{160}

Korniłowicz’s reflections on the liturgy were heard not simply by Maritain, Mercier, and the socialist catechumens, but also an inspired few clergy and an entire milieu of laity who gathered at the center that Korniłowicz directed beginning in 1921 (re-locating there permanently in 1930). One of his most committed non-socialist catechumens – and, from 1920 onward, a close friend – was Poland’s future primate Stefan Wyszyński, who referred to him as the “Living Thomas.”\textsuperscript{161} Although Wyszyński would become renowned four decades later as a master of mass-movement Catholicism, he learned in his youth from Korniłowicz that the starting point for fidelity to the Catholic faith and the Church’s mission needed to come from a conscious appreciation of each individual person concerned. Perhaps the best encapsulation of Korniłowicz’s life philosophy comes from a 1936 letter of his to one of the nuns at Laski:

\textsuperscript{159} Landy Franciszkanka and Wosiek Franciszkanka, \textit{Ksiądz Władysław Korniłowicz}, p. 68.
“Obedience must be conscious; one must obey not like a mechanical wheel, but like a human being.”

The Center for the Blind at Laski

What, then, was Laski? In 1911, Róża Czacka (1876-1961), a deeply pious aristocrat who had lost her sight at age 22, invested her family fortune in the creation of the Towarzystwo Opieki nad Ociemniałymi (Association of Care for the Sightless). Looking to create Poland’s first active community for the blind, Czacka had spent the past 13 years – since losing her sight – criss-crossing Europe, spending time in Austria, France, and Switzerland investigating how the blind lived in each country. In the end, she chose an organizational model pioneered by Maurice de la Sizeranne (1857-1924), a blind French aristocrat who had initiated public campaigns for wider use of the Braille alphabet. De la Sizeranne also founded the Association Valentin Haüy to serve as an institutional anchor for a new community of “functional sightless” who could help themselves and each other. Inspired by this French example, Czacka premised her social activism on a mission guided by personal faith and the precepts of the new social Catholicism, setting forth the credo: “This work is of God and for God, and it has no other reason to exist. If one day it were to stray from this path, may it then cease to exist entirely.”

The association created by Czacka languished as a result of chaos wrought by the Great War and the subsequent Polish-Soviet War of 1920 – in the interim, Czacka prepared herself spiritually to become a habited nun – but in 1921, having taken her vows, she came upon a new

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163 The most detailed work on Róża Czacka is Krystyna Rottenberg, “Mère Elżbieta Róża Czacka,” in Les traces des relations franco-polonaises dans les archives de l’Œuvre de Laski, p. 21-52. See also Janina Doroszewska, “Matka Czacka w oczach przyjaciół,” in Mazowiecki, ed, Ludzie Lasek, p. 77-89.
164 See, for example, Maurice de la Sizeranne, Trente ans d’études et de propagande en faveur des aveugles (Montbrison: J. Mechin, 1908); see also Rottenberg, Les traces des relations franco-polonaises dans les archives de l’Œuvre de Laski, p. 33-35.
165 Quoted at Rottenberg, Les traces des relations franco-polonaises dans les archives de l’Œuvre de Laski, p. 17.
idea for reinvigorating her organization. She established a new section of the Franciscan sisterhood named “Franciscan Sisters, Servants of the Cross,” whose responsibilities would be to run a center for the blind at the newly established forest village of Laski, 20 kilometers outside Warsaw, which would also become home to the Association. Since the center for the blind, although sponsored by her own personal investment, was to be a religious mission, she invited Rev. Korniłowicz, by then widely known in Poland for his ideas on Thomism and the liturgy, to join her community as the center’s spiritual director; he agreed.

What is unique about the center beyond its stated mission – there is no other center in Poland with a similar credo – is the fact that, in addition to being the site of a convent, a center for the blind, and a non-profit organization, it became home to a center of Thomist learning. Armed with books brought back from Fribourg and others gifted to him by Jacques Maritain, Korniłowicz designed a seminar for students from Warsaw and the Catholic University of Lublin, well aware of “gaps and deformations in Polish religious education, above all the education of the intelligentsia, remaining on the one hand still under the influence of anti-rationalist schools, and on the other steeped in the living traditions of Warsaw positivism.”

Beginning in November 1921, every eight days during the University academic year, Korniłowicz led a seminar for anyone who wanted to participate: although designed for University students, Korniłowicz welcomed also seminarians, sisters from the convent at Laski, and residents of the center for the blind. For this Thomist priest, Maritain’s personal support was crucial in this endeavor. The two men did not correspond frequently – Maritain was actually...

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166 For an insightful analysis of where the new sisterhood fit into the wider panorama of female religious orders in modern Poland, see Ewa Jabłońska-Deptuła, “Zakony i zgromadzenia zakonne w Polsce w XIX i XX w.,” Znak, 11-12/1965, p. 1653-1688.

167 Bohdan Cywiński is absolutely right to entitle the chapter that he devotes to Laski, “Thomas and Francis.” See Cywiński, “Tomasz i Franciszek,” in Rodowody Niepokornych, p. 463-488.

better at responding promptly than Korniłowicz – yet the clergyman responded to a package from Maritain containing a signed edition of the French philosopher’s tract Antimoderne with a 1 December 1921 letter detailing his design for the seminars, already in progress, with the confession that “for me, memory of you remains forever a great source of encouragement in this work.”

For those sisters or students with no background in theological inquiry, Zofia Landy (1894-1972, from 1928 onward Sister Teresa Landy) led an introductory seminar. A devotee of Brzozowski like her spiritual guide Korniłowicz, Landy made for yet another fascinating case of the confluence of the catechumen’s path with the fin-de-siècle Thomist renewal. Raised Jewish, distantly related to the socialist radical Feliks Dzierżyński, she undertook secular university studies at the Sorbonne in Paris. Initially enthralled with Bergsonian intuitionism, after reading Maritain’s 1913 book Philosophie Bergsonienne and attending several of his lectures, she became a convinced Thomist.

After speaking with both of the Maritains following one of Jacques’s lectures, Landy befriended Raïssa Maritain, and they maintained a steady correspondence until Raïssa’s death in 1960. The early years of their letter-writing, while deeply sentimental on Landy’s side, laid out in systematic detail her 1917 decision to convert to Catholicism (following dialogues with Korniłowicz), her 1923 decision to undertake preparations to enter the convent at Laski, and her 1928 vows. As her fellow Polish Thomist philosopher Stefan Świeżawski put it, “the profound

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169 Władysław Korniłowicz, Letter to Jacques Maritain, 1 December 1921, Ladislas Korniłowicz Correspondence, AJRM. In a letter dated 30 October 1922, in turn, Korniłowicz asked Maritain’s advice on the syllabus for a course on Thomism that he had just begun teaching at the Catholic University of Lublin.
171 See the large – over 30 letters exchanged in just 10 years – correspondence file labeled Sophie Landy, Sœur Thérèse Correspondence, AJRM.
spiritual ties into which Zofia then entered with Raïssa and Jakub [Jacques] would constitute one of the most durable threads weaving together Sister Teresa’s entire life.”

Landy was part of a wider circle of catechumens that called itself Kółko (Little Circle), with whom Korniłowicz had been leading Franciscan meditations and a Thomist reading group since 1917. Despite the Thomist renewal inaugurated by Leo XIII with *Aeterni Patris* in 1879, scholastic Thomism – in other words, Thomist scholarship based on Holy Office commentaries of Aquinas’s writings, rather than the actual Aquinas texts – remained the standard among Catholic philosophers and theologians. At Laski, however, Korniłowicz’s reading group went back to the original texts, pouring over complete editions of the *Summa Theologica*. Not only in its mission, then, but also in its hermeneutical approach, the intellectual practice at Laski was proactive and progressive like almost no other study center in Europe, save Maritain’s own study circles, with which the Kółko maintained regular contact and correspondence.

On 19 December 1923, Zofia Landy wrote to Raïssa Maritain of Jacques’s contribution to her “second conversion” – Landy’s term for the spiritual awakening that led her to decide definitively to begin preparing for her vows – linking this decision to the seminar that she had already been teaching at Laski in parallel with the Kółko group’s meetings. In her letter, she expressed the hope that other Poles might find in Maritain’s thought and in Thomism more generally the same spark that led to her second conversion:

> For the moment, I can assure you that your time has not been wasted, not only for me, but insofar as I have taken it upon myself to the extent that it is in my power to propagate your ideas among my fellow catechumens, and I have found among them people who are very interested and for whom any counsel that you might provide through me would be of great help.

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174 Zofia Landy, Letter to Raïssa Maritain, 19 December 1923. Sophie Landy, Sœur Thérèse Correspondence, AJRM.
Within five years, Landy had prepared for and taken her vows, joining the community of Franciscan Sisters at Laski in 1928, yet she also retained her unofficial role as Korniłowicz’s deputy, responsible for Thomist teachings and writings. Landy would continue to publish philosophical commentary until the last years of her life.

Laski has continued to be the principal haven of Polish catechumens – laity as well as clergy and cloistered nuns – through the present day. Indeed, its importance has only increased with the passage of time, as key figures of post-World War II Polish Catholicism and cultural life – from Czesław Milosz, to Jerzy Zawieyski, to Tadeusz Mazowiecki, to Adam Michnik – would spend time there as catechumens. 175 Younger generations likewise found among the pines, birch trees, and sands of Laski a place of spiritual solace to which to retreat from emotionally draining daily life in the city. Rev. Stefan Wyszyński, who served briefly as a chaplain at Laski in 1946 prior to receiving a bishop’s miter and two years later becoming primate of Poland, also considered the center a place of respite. As Bohdan Cywiński has put it, “the nuns at Laski maintained simplicity, poverty, and obedience to discreetly hidden oaths, even though – in all likelihood against their intention – within a short time after the establishment of their center, they became a sort of religious haven, attracting to the convent and center for the blind the elite of the emerging Catholic intelligentsia.” 176

Laski will appear again and again throughout our story. The key here has been to establish through its example the centrality of the catechumen as a figure in the life of Catholic activism on the cusp of the fin-de-siècle and the Great War. A dialogue-based social Catholicism to supplant, or at least challenge, the mass-movement model pursued by Roman Dmowski and

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176 Cywiński, Rodowody Niepokornych, p. 486.
Stanisław Stokałowski – this was the great contribution of \textit{fin-de-siècle} Polish Catholic activism, conditioned by ideas imported by priests who had studied in Francophone Western Europe, as well as a certain surge in social activism made possible, paradoxically, by the failed Revolution of 1905.

\textit{Prąd: Between Social-Catholic Catechism and Integral Nationalism}

In our discussion of the Ethical Circle, we referred briefly to the monthly journal \textit{Prąd}. Established in 1909, \textit{Prąd} was the only Catholic journal in \textit{fin-de-siècle} Poland that was not an official organ of the institutional Church. Though a five-year hiatus in its publication schedule followed the outbreak of the Great War, \textit{Prąd} was the only Polish \textit{fin-de-siècle} Catholic institution of the laity to maintain continuity into the interwar period. \textit{Prąd} crystallized the best of what Thomist priests like Korniłowicz and Antoni Szymański had brought back to Poland from Western Europe, but it also became a site of nationalist and anti-semitic polemics both before and after the Great War. In this sense, it is illustrative of the inability of even the most imaginative vanguard of social Catholicism in Poland to escape entanglement of the social question in the ever-present national question.

Before the Great War, the monthly journal \textit{Prąd} was based out of Warsaw. A joint creation of the Ethical Circle and the Kraków-based Polonia group, much of the journal’s subject matter dovetailed elegantly with that of the Jesuit monthly \textit{Przegląd Powszechny} (Universal Review), which had been in print since 1884. The difference in authorial voice was, however, fundamental. Though \textit{Prąd} had authors from among the clergy as well, its editorial staff and authorship consisted principally of lay Catholics, while \textit{Przegląd Powszechny} remained a production of the Society of Jesus and, therefore, an organ of the institutional Church. The first column of the first issue featured the following mission statement:
PRĄD above all takes into account social affairs and related ethical issues. PRĄD, standing on Christian and national grounds, is not an organ of any political group. PRĄD seeks to gather together the forces of youth working in the social and academic domains.\textsuperscript{177}

To today’s reader, the list of intended subject matter must seem rather uncontroversial: the ethical dimension of current affairs; Christian interest in the nation’s fate, independent of political attachment; and student activism on behalf of social justice. However, in light of the fact that Pius X condemned Sillon only one year later for many of the same tenets – secular, non-political mobilization of youth to deal with current affairs as well as the social question – the fact that budding lay activists dared to stick with this message even after Sillon’s 1910 condemnation is a statement of non-conformism, if not outright heretical behavior. Indeed, there were no retractions in the pages of *Prąd*. The journal’s authors defended their colleague Szymański’s book and its praise of Sillon, to the point that the *grande dame* of the *Prąd* milieu, Cecylia Plater-Zyberk, was herself accused of modernism.\textsuperscript{178}

*Prąd* responded by fighting back even harder. Tadeusz Błażejewicz (1880-1966) in a March 1911 article went far beyond playing defense, caricaturing the papacy’s stringent orthodoxy and demanding Christian charity toward, if not outright toleration of, heterodox views. Błażejewicz wrote,

\begin{quote}
Let us criticize mistaken views, yet let us not call into question without very serious proof and reason the good faith of our opponents. Let us conclude that a given individual in certain views of his is wrong; let us not take this as reason to call him a non-Catholic, or a heretic, finding himself outside the Church. Listening to the arguments and speeches of our extra-orthodox brothers one gets the impression that they consider to be Catholics only those who have never in speech or in writing made even the most subtle dogmatic error.\textsuperscript{179}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{178} Jagiełło, *Próba rozmowy*, p. 76.
\textsuperscript{179} Tadeusz Błażejewicz, “My a niekatolicy,” *Prąd*, 3/1911.
The high point of Prąd’s liberalization campaign – really a campaign for common sense – was an 1911 article by Zygmunt Fedorowicz (1889-1973) on the crisis of the younger generation:

One of the most important reasons for the religious crisis of the younger generation is the unfortunate coincidence for us that, for a long time now, those professing Catholicism are ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY sociopolitically conservative groups. Today, to a religiously uninformed person, it might seem certain that Catholicism is a sort of political party to which only the wealthy or the ignorant can belong, that Catholicism defends the class interests of the first by keeping the second in shackles.\footnote{Zygmunt Fedorowicz, “Kryzys religijny młodego pokolenia,” Prąd, 1/1911.}

In Fedorowicz’s view, then, far from campaigning actively to redress the social question, the Church seemed to have gone in the opposite direction, locking itself into a reactionary holding pattern and thereby simply giving more credence to socialist critiques like that of Rosa Luxemburg. Prąd had its own set of answers, to be negotiated and sharpened in the pages of the journal by a recombination and revision of old positivist tenets: work from the foundations, organic work, and the renewal of the individual together with the renewal of society.

These tenets did not include a commitment to nationalism, but, with the passage of time, the emphasis on the “nation” in the second point of Prąd’s 1909 mission statement became an ever-more visible rallying cry for authorship and readership alike. Indeed, a certain paradoxical duality, of which only hints appeared in Prąd in its fin-de-siècle years, would come to define the milieu’s ideology in the war’s aftermath. On the one hand, the journal’s lay authors clearly felt a need to expose and debunk the social and dogmatic conservatism broadcast by the Catholic hierarchy. On the other, these writers moved toward articulating their own version of political and social conservatism, informed by a desire to safeguard their regained nation-state.
sovereignty against any force, internal or external, that might once again lead Poland down a path toward statelessness or dependence on a foreign entity. In other words, far as these Catholics were from declaring adherence to Dmowski’s National Democracy, the national question continually threatened to subsume their commitments to social justice.

Juxtaposing texts written before the war, in 1914, that represent these two distinct yet concomitant trends yields a bizarre composite: on the one hand, hints of political liberalism and theological modernism; on the other, political nationalism manifested as anti-socialism and anti-semitism. In the February 1914 issue of Prąd, Rev. Jan Ciemniewski (1866-1947) wrote,

> The only authority accepted by modern man is an authority of his own choice; he simply does not recognize any other. Meanwhile, in order to look into the depths of the soul of modern man and perceive his spiritual needs, it is necessary to permit him to speak and to unmask the condition of his spirit, to allow him to reveal his spiritual aspirations.

Just one month earlier, however, Stefan Olszewski in the pages of the same journal had condemned socialists for revealing their “spiritual aspirations,” which he found bankrupt. Because socialists looked “at the life of the Polish nation through the prism of class doctrine,” he argued, “they want to deprive the people of their Polish, Catholic spirit.” Meanwhile, his colleague Józef Chaciński, future Christian Democratic leader, took exclusionary nationalism to a new level for Prąd, even legitimating anti-semitic texts that had appeared in the Polish church organ Głos Katolicki (Catholic Voice): “It is a sort of unconscious, instinctual defense mechanism before something inimical and repressive when a Yiddish giggle of mocking cynicism tears down the spirit of the Christian nations.”

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It is tempting to attribute the anti-semitism and exclusionary nationalism that one finds in some of the pages of *Prąd* to National Democracy or other reactionary influences, yet, as we will see again and again, these tendencies would appear frequently among even the most open-minded Catholic vanguard activists. Certainly, the ethno-nationally focused mass-mobilization tactics of National Democracy and Stojałowski’s peasant movement helped to set the tone of Catholic anti-semitism in the Polish *fin-de-siècle* by creating a situation in which the national question lurked beneath every discussion of the social question. Nonetheless, individuals like Chaciński, who had been part of the Ethical Circle since its earliest meetings, assimilated and legitimated this tone. The fact that Poland did not possess its own sovereign territory deepened the emotions that went into exclusionary politics directed at non-Catholics. Inspired by Stanisław Brzozowski, Rev. Korniłowicz had gone a long way toward revolutionizing social Catholicism, moving from the worker paternalism of the past to a new catechetical dialogue. Yet it seemed that the influence of Fribourg, Louvain, and Paris was still far from being able to penetrate the bastions of Polish nationalism and anti-semitism.

The balance of *Prąd* prior to the Great War, then, was a bizarre duality: innovative, even self-incriminating critiques of Catholic orthodoxy with respect to the terms on which lay Catholics were allowed to engage the modern world; and affirmation of exclusionary language directed at anyone not conforming to the ethno-Catholic model of a *Polak-katolik*. Korniłowicz’s work with catechumens was the *spiritus movens* behind the first tendency, yet his milieu had not learned from him the principle that empathy toward partners in dialogue could create trust and a spiritual bond. By the dawn of the Great War, despite innovative initiatives and a prominent influx of Francophone Thomism, the vanguard of social Catholicism in Poland carried little weight without its ecclesiastical supervisors, who continued to place their faith in an
exclusionary nationalist mythology. It would take the reconstitution of the Polish state in 1918 to begin to unstick Catholic activists from their ethno-national muck; to create permanent, institutionalized exchanges with Western Europe; and to bring the reinvented social-Catholic catechism into the mainstream.
CHAPTER 2
The Nation and the Person:
Jacques Maritain, Charles Maurras, and Interwar Lay Activism

I have been speaking about the West. But where exactly does it begin? We cannot apply too narrow a set of confines to it: let us remember that we are always to the east of someone. The West begins at the Golgotha. Calvary, the center of the world, is the point dividing the world into East and West. Christ, meanwhile, opens his arms in salvific embrace of both one and the other. [...] And now I ask: do we have the right to identify for whatever reason the Western world with the Christian religion? No!
--Jacques Maritain, 1929

So also the French version of Catholic culture not only cannot be dangerous for Poland, but, quite the opposite, familiarization with it can have only positive consequences for Polish Catholics, as French Catholicism is one of the most valuable. These very values, this purity, this fullness and orthodoxy of French Catholicism [...] It is simply a statement of fact that this stage of development in Poland’s Catholic culture still lies ahead of us, that we must yet attain it, naturally not by following in France’s footsteps, but rather by creating our own Catholic culture that corresponds to our national psyche and our cultural typology, keeping in mind, however, the great truth bequeathed to us by French Catholicism, that Catholic culture cannot be made, that it must grow on its own as a full, self-sufficient, and necessary expression of the Catholic human being ["człowiek-katolik"].
--Jerzy Turowicz, 1936

The coming of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and its creation of an officially socialist state – the Soviet Union – placed Poland at the vanguard of Catholic Europe’s confrontation with socialism. The interwar Polish state newly reconstituted by the Treaty of Versailles would receive a wide berth from Pius XI, who served as its papal nuncio (1918-1921) just prior to his election to the papacy. His personal acquaintance with the key players of the interwar Polish political elite – especially Józef Piłsudski (1867-1935) – convinced him that a weak democratic

order was a small price to pay so long as Poland, the geopolitical gateway to Europe, remained anti-socialist.

Against a backdrop of, by turns, anarchy and authoritarianism, Poland’s Fribourg-, Louvain-, and Paris-inspired activist priests built, in the wake of the Great War, lasting centers of social-Catholic knowledge and catechetical dialogue. These included the Catholic University of Lublin, founded in 1918, as well as the Laski community on the one hand and a growing network of intrepid, mostly lay young Catholic activists gathered under the banner of “Odrodzenie” (Renaissance). The interwar period thus served as a bridge between the fin-de-siècle, when Catholic activism was almost exclusively the purview of the clergy, and the period in the Catholic Church’s history inaugurated by the Second World War, when an independent laity rose to cultural, intellectual, political, and social prominence in national and international affairs alike.186

With the center of gravity shifting from clerical activists to lay activists, there came also an ideological shift inspired by the influx of French Catholic thought. We have already met the principal actor, Jacques Maritain, who had close ties to three popes, developed his own school of Thomist personalism, and articulated a vision for lay Catholic engagement with the modern world that he called nouvelle chrétienté (new Christendom). Maritain was not the only Frenchman to exert a significant hold over the emerging activist laity, however: Charles Maurras played a significant role as well, both in shaping Maritain’s thought and – in Poland – in helping to legitimate Roman Dmowski and his National Democracy movement. By the late 1930s, another French Catholic thinker, Emmanuel Mounier, would appear on the European scene;

186 Maryjane Osa has described as follows the transformation wrought upon the institutional Church in Poland by the onset of the Second World War: “The former aristocratic, feudal Church was transformed. An ‘activist church’ took its place, supported by the increased legitimacy garnered through the exemplary suffering and individual patriotic actions of the clergy and religious laity.” Osa, “Resistance, Persistence, and Change: The Transformation of the Catholic Church in Poland,” East European Politics and Societies, 3:2 (Spring 1989), p. 268-299, at p. 296.
although marginal in the interwar period, his influence over postwar Polish lay Catholics would far surpass that of Maurras or even Maritain.

Maritain’s pioneering of a Catholic personalism had significant implications for the fate of the social question, the implication being that only Catholics could fully comprehend and respect the dignity of individual human beings as “persons” made in God’s image, while socialism instead sacrificed the person on the altar of collectivist revolution. Personalism thus had a powerful role to play in Catholicism’s engagement with the modern world, though, at the same time, its elasticity – essentially, anyone paying lip-service to the “human person” could attempt to appropriate it – lent itself to the creation of “personalisms” in deep contradiction with Catholic ethics. The earliest among these problematic personalisms was a “national personalism,” developed by socially minded Polish Catholic activists who nonetheless refused to surrender their exclusionary nationalist commitments to the single-minded pursuit of social justice.

Personalism thus created a space for overlap between the national question and the social question, in some cases becoming a creative bridge between Catholicism and modernity, while in others offering only the illusion of ethical soundness to interwar national-chauvinists and anti-semites who appropriated personalism in order to justify their activism. National Democracy’s icon Roman Dmowski took a pass on personalism, but his Prussian-born counterpart Wojciech Korfanty, hero of Polish national uprisings in Silesia and the co-founder of Poland’s interwar Christian Democratic movement, pioneered his own anti-semitic personalism. Attentive to Maritain and other key Western European Catholic activists, Polish Christian Democracy would survive Korfanty, but not without scarring from the legacy of his exclusionary nationalism. Odrodzenie, too, shared some of these tendencies, with national personalism afflicting intrepid
Polish activists of such prominence as Rev. Stefan Wyszyński, post-World War II Poland’s renowned cardinal-primate, as well as Stefan Świężawski (1907-2004), Poland’s most dedicated disciple of Jacques Maritain. Thomist personalism proved a powerful tool in advancing the social-Catholic catechetical agenda – particularly for Rev. Korniłowicz at Laski – but it served two masters in the interwar era: the national question as well as the social question.

France and Poland shared these contradictions and hypocrisies in the interwar period, drifting amidst internal political chaos, external geopolitical menace, and an inward focus by Catholic laity as yet uncertain as to how they as Catholics could legitimately engage and seek to transform the temporal order surrounding them. The result was a messy and internally inconsistent composite of ideas and actions. As Jerzy Turowicz (1912-1999) put it, “Polish Catholicism” may have started by trying to catch up with “French Catholicism,” but in many ways the two were conducting similar experiments, with one key difference: the Poles were learning from the French, but the French were not learning from the Poles. Therein lay the roots of a postwar role reversal.

**Odrodzenie: Poland’s First National “Vanguard”**

Between 1918 and 1939, there emerged a veritable tidal wave of Catholic publications in Poland. Ryszard Bender and Brian Porter-Szűcs both cite figures from the 1936 Vatican exposition of worldwide Catholic press: out of 300 total titles, 50 came from Poland. The vast majority of these were official press organs of the Catholic hierarchy, yet several key titles represented a growing lay engagement in Polish politics and society: the long-running Prąd, the Laski-directed Verbum, and the newly founded academic journals Odrodzenie and Pax. With the exception of Verbum, the journals were the official charge of the Stowarzyszenie Katolickiej

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The Odrodzenie movement never reached a mass scale – at its height in 1934, it had just under a thousand active student members – but it did cover a wide geographical distribution, with sections for students and alumni at universities in Kraków, Lublin, Lwów, Vilnius, and Warsaw.\textsuperscript{188} Between 1919 and 1929, elected student representatives ran Odrodzenie in consultation with its founding director, Rev. Władysław Lewandowicz (1894-1949). In 1930, control passed to an Odrodzenie alumni network formed under the name of the Związek Polskiej Inteligencji Katolickiej (Association of the Polish Catholic Intelligentsia).\textsuperscript{189}

All Odrodzenie activists had the opportunity to meet annually at Tygodnie Społeczne (Social Weeks). These were explicitly patterned on the Semaines Sociales de France, an association of the laity started in Lyon in 1904 that has run continuously through the present day (except for the years 1914-1918 and 1940-1944) as an annual assembly of French Catholic activists reflecting on the state of the social question.\textsuperscript{190} To this question of how to achieve social justice for the industrial working poor, the Odrodzenie activists added other normative questions

\textsuperscript{188} The institutional history of the Odrodzenie network is reconstructed relatively thoroughly in Konstanty Turowski’s monograph-cum-memoir of the network; unfortunately, Turowski says nothing about the foundationally important international influences on Odrodzenie. Maritain, for example, does not even appear in his study. See Turowski, “Odrodzenie”: \textit{historia Stowarzyszenia Katolickiej Młodzieży Akademickiej} (Warszawa: ODiSS, 1987). The only other book-length work on Odrodzenie is the considerably weaker, less thorough, and more overtly subjective participant history in Stefan Kaczorowski, \textit{Historia, dzialalnosć i tradycje “Odrodzenia”} (London: Odnowa, 1980).

\textsuperscript{189} Beginning with the January 1931 issue of \textit{Prąd}, each successive year’s January issue featured a ZPIK chronicle examining both the general meeting of Odrodzenie “elders” and regional sub-meetings from the previous December. See, for example, “KRONIKA Z.P.I.K. – 1-szy Zjazd Rejon. Inteligencji Katolickiej w Kielcach dnia 9 grudnia 1934 r.,” \textit{Prąd}, 1/1935. On changes made to the organization of \textit{Prąd}’s content to correspond to the evolution of Odrodzenie as a movement, see the final chapter of Zbigniew Skrobicki, “Program odrodzenia katolicko-społecznego w Polsce w ujęciu czasopisma \textit{Prąd} (1909-1939),” Ph.D. Dissertation, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski (Catholic University of Lublin), 1976.

about how best to structure Catholic education, what model to apply to the Polish family, and how to mobilize youth activism, all standard fields of Catholic morality and social teaching consistent, for example, with the agenda set out by Pius XI in his 1922 encyclical on Catholic Action, *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio*. *Prąd* became the official journal of the Tygodnie Społeczne, with upwards of half of the articles of most issues coming from the given year’s conference.\(^{191}\)

Although *Prąd*, upon its reactivation in 1920, became the charge of Odrodzenie, it maintained continuity – in the numbering of its issues and in its graphic design – with the pre-war *Prąd* that had grown out of the Ethical Circle and Rev. Szymański’s work. Altogether, a vast network of Polish Catholic lay activity crystallized in the interwar period through printed publications and the discussion groups that grew up around them, anchored at universities, with Laski as a crucial auxiliary node to this network of student activism. These journals and discussion circles educated the generation that began its professional life in the 1930s as well as the generation that came of age in that decade: these two generations combined to assume leadership of the Catholic laity after 1945. Some would lean more toward socialism, others more toward integral nationalism, with still others taking the middle road of Christian Democracy. All were under the influence of French Catholicism.

Catholic clergy and laity alike had learned their lessons from the condemnation of Sillon: to avoid incurring the wrath of the Holy See, even organizations and publications consisting principally of laity had priests as editors-in-chief, associational directors, and authors. Indeed, there was a well-established model to follow in Roman Catholicism: *La Civiltà Cattolica*, the Jesuit voice of the Holy See, founded in 1850.\(^{192}\) Neither Benedict XV, who had succeeded Pius

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X in 1916, nor Pius XI, who succeeded Benedict in 1922, came even close to exercising the same level of organizational control over hierarchy and laity as their anti-modernist predecessor. All the same, Poles were prepared to be cautious. The 1926 condemnation of the integralist icon Action Française came as a surprise to most, if not all, in the world of Polish Catholicism.  

At the same time, the presence of priests and nuns in the leadership of lay movements and publications must be understood in the context of a sociological transformation of Catholic activism accelerated by Pius XI’s own ecclesiology. Although the Catholic Church and its separate religious orders maintained a variety of official press organs, the initiative for new developments in Catholic philosophy, theology, and engagement with the world was shifting to the laity. Marc Sangnier may have suffered condemnation in 1910 for his deconfessionalization of Sillon – making it, in other words, a movement of Catholics but not a Catholic movement – but his was the way of the future.  

In 1935, Jacques Maritain identified the difference between acting *en chrétien* (“in a Christian way,” that is to say, informed by the spirit of Christianity, but without speaking in the name of the faith) and *en tant que chrétien* (presenting oneself as Christian – i.e. a confessional activity *tout court*). This distinction is of great significance not only to historical analysis of the period, but indeed as a seminal idea consciously engaged by several generations of Polish laity who internalized Maritain’s lessons over the course of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s.

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194 Indeed, the late interwar period would redeem Sangnier, as he was able to join forces with Thomists and personalists to establish yet another short-lived political and social movement, Jeune République; see Jean-Claude Delbreil, *La Revue “La Vie intellectuelle,” Marc Sangnier, le thomisme et le personnalisme* (Paris: Cerf, 2008).  
For their part, certain prominent activist priests actually helped to accelerate the transition of Catholic activism in Poland in the interwar era from what Maryjane Osa has described as a “feudal church” to an “activist church” model characterized above all by the proliferation of horizontal linkages among a growing sphere of lay activists.\textsuperscript{196} The key priests responsible for shepherding this transition were almost without exception prominent new professors of the fledgling Catholic University of Lublin (KUL, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski). Two are already well-known to us: Rev. Korniłowicz of Laski and Rev. Szymański, who served as rector of KUL from 1933 to 1942.\textsuperscript{197} Equally worthy of attention were Odrodzenie’s founding director Rev. Władysław Lewandowicz and Jesuit Father Jacek Woroniecki (1878-1949), KUL rector from 1922 to 1924.

True – a number of priests participated actively in the Odrodzenie network alongside their lay compatriots.\textsuperscript{198} And many of Korniłowicz’s young catechumens became priests or habited nuns. Nonetheless, for the most part, the social-Catholic activist priests of the interwar era were doubling also as spiritual guides to multiple generations of lay Poles educated to be full-time Catholic activists without the vocation to join the clergy.

The interwar pontiff’s own plans for revitalizing the Catholic Church sped this transition along. Inspired by the success – fleeting and localized though it was – of the Opera dei Congressi, founded in Rome in 1874, rechristened Azione Cattolica in 1905, the new pope announced in 1922 in his first encyclical, \textit{Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio}, the reanimation and expansion of Catholic Action to all of Catholic Christendom. His goal was to create a disciplined “lay apostolate,” closely supervised by clergy, but channeling the energy of engaged masses of

\textsuperscript{196} Osa, “Resistance, Persistence, and Change,” p. 296.
\textsuperscript{197} See, for example, Stefan Kunowski, ed, \textit{Księga jubileuszowa 50-lecia Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego: praca zbiorowa wydana w rocznicę 50-lecia istnienia uczelni} (Lublin: TN KUL, 1969).
\textsuperscript{198} On priests active in Odrodzenie, see Turowski, “Odrodzenie,” p. 31-39.
the faithful from all walks of life into shared labor in Christ. As Gerd-Rainer Horn has succinctly put it, the encyclical’s goal was “the establishment of the Peace of Christ [on earth] via the founding of the Kingdom of Christ.”

The more immediate doctrinal goal involved the same troublesome social question that had continued to haunt the Church even after *Rerum Novarum*. If Pius XI drew one lesson from the Sillon crisis, it was that some intermediary solution had to be found between the reliance on private charity suggested by Leo XIII and the unbridled, unchecked lay republicanism of Sillon. The Catholic Church deeply feared the geopolitical center of state socialism that had begun to take shape as the Soviet Union in 1917. In particular, Pius XI, having just finished a tour as *nuncio* to Poland, came to the papacy with the conviction that, to avoid losing the laity not just to socialism but indeed to Bolshevism specifically, it was necessary to engage laymen body and soul in work that might be ancillary to the Gospels themselves, but indispensable to the survival of Christendom.

**Integralism vs. Thomism: The Case of Jacques Maritain**

We have seen in Chapter 1 how National Democracy in its integralism resembled in many ways Action Française, while in roughly the same time period priests like Korniłowicz and Szymański were propagating the Thomist gospel that they had brought back from Fribourg, Louvain, and Paris. National Democracy was a mass movement, while the *fin-de-siècle* Ethical Circle and the interwar Odrodzenie were fairly small. Nonetheless, the latter grew considerably

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in number, stature, and imagination over the course of the interwar period, in large part due to French Catholic ideas and practices imported into Poland.

To draw a black-and-white opposition between National Democracy and Odrodzenie would be an oversimplification. Particularly after the Great War, with the Soviet Union suddenly overshadowing the entire eastern horizon of Poland, few Odrodzenie activists were willing to enter into the sort of dialogue with socialists that Kornilowicz had begun in the fin-de-siècle with Abramowski and continued ever since. Cutting back on dialogue with socialists was one thing, but in many cases the activist laity literally began to withdraw from the social question altogether to play the national-chauvinist blame game, which led them to anti-German, anti-Russian, anti-Ukrainian, and above all anti-semitic sentiment. The tension between integralism and personalism plagued the Odrodzenie movement as it plagued the entire Polish Catholic world. In this respect, once again, the Polish Catholic laity followed the French example. To understand the interwar spread of integralism in Poland, therefore, it is essential first to reflect on the face of interwar integralism in France.

Martin Conway and Philip Nord have respectively used the term “ghetto Catholicism” to describe French Catholic culture in the interwar period. Although it is an apt term for describing the inward focus and apolitical nature of milieux from the Scouts de France to Robert Garric’s Équipes Sociales to (at least in its very first years) Emmanuel Mounier’s journal Esprit, the notion of “ghetto Catholicism” masks key developments in Catholic France in the interwar period. While interwar French Christian Democracy (the Parti Démocrate Populaire and the Jeune République) was too marginal and too weak to lobby for a constituency beyond ghetto

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Catholicism, any historical account of Catholicism in interwar France must look outside that framework to understand the rise and fall of Action Française.\textsuperscript{202}

A key barometer of Action Française’s status at any given point in the interwar years was the relationship between Maritain and Maurras.\textsuperscript{203} Fourteen years Maritain’s senior, Maurras became a friend and mentor to his junior colleague, a young star who had received his Catholic Institute professorship at the age of 32, only eight years after his conversion to Catholicism. Deeply influenced by the antimodernism of Pius X, whom he had impressed with his precocious 1913 Thomist critique of Bergsonian intuitionism, Maritain in 1917 received an honorary doctorate from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. The inscription embossed on his award ended with the following words: “he devotes himself to fearless attack with the aid of his pen on the most inimical and damaging errors of all to the faith, of modernism.”\textsuperscript{204}

There is some disagreement among historians as to whether or not Pius X in fact hoped that Action Française would attain political power in France,\textsuperscript{205} but for a young, initially anti-modern French Catholic lay thinker like Maritain, no great intellectual leap was necessary to develop sympathies for Action Française. From 1920 to 1926, Maritain contributed regularly to its monarchist journal Revue Universelle, developing a genre of argumentation that, while philosophical in nature and lacking any explicit references to contemporary political life, showed

\textsuperscript{202} Indeed, there was an entire generation of young laity on the fence between ghetto Catholicism and public activism to whom Action Française appealed prior to 1926: these young men and women are the subject of Chenaux, Entre Maurras et Maritain.


\textsuperscript{205} Peter J. Bernardi reminds us that the Holy Office reviewed and condemned portions of Maurras’s writings and that Pius X confirmed these condemnations on 29 January 1914 but never published them; indeed, it was those original texts that Pius XI would issue in December 1926 when condemning Action Française. Bernardi, Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, and Action Française, p. 209.
his deepening disdain for the intellectual and spiritual climate fostered by republican politics. Without being a monarchist, Maritain shared with Maurras a profound anti-republicanism.

The first systematic assemblage of Maritain’s thoughts on the damage wrought by the ascendancy of contemporary republican culture, which he identified as an extension of the cornerstones of modernism set by key “reformers” of earlier centuries, was his 1925 work *Trois Réformateurs*. According to Maritain, the ills of the modern world followed from Martin Luther’s individualism, René Descartes’s skepticism, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s ignorant manipulation of the rationalism inherited from the scholastics. The greatest of these sins was individualism: “Look with what bombastic piety the modern world has announced the sacred rights of the individual and what price it has paid.” Yet, despite this emphasis, “never had the individual been more at the mercy of the nameless powers of the State, Money, and Opinion” than in Maritain’s own time. The young Thomist’s diagnosis – “The modern world has simply confused two notions that ancient wisdom held as distinct: it mixes individuality and personality.” Indeed, “the modern order sacrifices the person on the altar of the individual.”

*Trois Réformateurs* constituted both the zenith of Maritain’s anti-modern and anti-republican inclinations and the first stepping stone on his path to ultimate reconciliation with modernity. Maritain’s anti-modern early supporter Pius X had died in 1914, his successor Benedict XV in 1922; the mid-1920s were the era of Pius XI, of Catholic Action, of engagement with the world by a growing lay apostolate. Pius XI was no lover of modernity, but, rather than fight it tooth and nail, he sought to use Catholic Action to re-evangelize the modern world, to win it “back” over to Catholic truth. Maritain had never seemed entirely comfortable either with

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207 Maritain, *Trois Réformateurs*, p. 121.
Maurras’s positivist inclinations\textsuperscript{208} – Maurras was a professed agnostic – or his radical nationalism. Nonetheless, despite his expertise in Thomism, prior to 	extit{Trois Réformateurs} Maritain had never quite been able to develop a systematic worldview of his own that could rival the elegance of Maurras’s ideas. Thomist personalism, which Maritain articulated over the course of the next two decades, would become this worldview.

In the mid-1920s, however, Jacques Maritain found himself at a crossroads. Heated polemics in the Belgian mainstream press in the summer and fall of 1925 contending that Maurras’s integralism had been detrimental to Catholic social action had caught the attention of both the French Episcopate and Pius XI.\textsuperscript{209} A correspondence between the pope and the French bishops’ conference resulted in a 5 September 1926 papal letter in which the pope expressed fears that Action Française represented a “rebirth of paganism.” Worse, Maurras seemed to threaten the prospects of the pope’s prized new project of Holy See-direct Catholic activism:

Action Française could imperceptibly derail the true Catholic spirit, that spirit’s fervor and piety, through its writings and well as speeches, could offend the delicacy of the spirit’s purity; in a word, denigrate the perfection of Christian practice and, what is more, the apostolate of the true “Catholic action” to which all of the faithful, youth above all, have been called to collaborate actively for the extension and affirmation of the reign of Christ in individuals, in families, in society.\textsuperscript{210}

Three months later, rising tensions between Action Française and the Holy See exploded in public: the pope confronted the leadership of Action Française with an ultimatum, using a 20 December 1926 homily at the Consistory to warn Maurras’s organization of its need to submit to discipline at the hands of the Holy See or face condemnation. The response came on Christmas Eve, in the form of a front-page article in the 	extit{Action Française} daily entitled “Non possumus.”

\textsuperscript{208} See Maritain, 	extit{Carnet de notes}, for 1920-1926.
\textsuperscript{209} See, for example, Maurice Gand, Letter to the editor, 	extit{La Libre Belgique}, 2 October 1925.
denying that the movement “had ever placed politics before religion.” Five days later, Pius XI made good on his promise, condemning Maurras’s works as well as the Action Française daily and bimonthly periodicals.

When the accusations out of Belgium had begun the downward spiral that ended in the condemnation of Maurras’s movement, Maritain had offered his help in defending the movement. In fact, he, Maurras, and Henri Massis – editor of Revue Universelle – sat down together to map out a public strategy. In the final analysis, however, Maritain’s defense – published as a brochure entitled Une Opinion sur Charles Maurras et le Devoir des catholiques – suggested a change of heart: his central contention was the relatively neutral claim that Maurras had reached his conclusions “by means of induction and – if one might say so – direct claims of reason. This is why they can be accepted and assimilated by different doctrines, not being properly of any one of them.” The argument, derived from Thomist epistemology, defended Maurras’s method, but not the substance of his conclusions.

This half-hearted defense may have simply been a prelude to Maritain’s great 1927 opus Primauté du Spirituel, penned in the months following Maurras’s condemnation. This work not only distanced Maritain from Maurras, but it indeed deconstructed the entire logic of politique, d’abord, insisting instead on the “primacy of the spiritual” as a guiding force in all action. Pietro Cardinal Gasparri, Pius XI’s Secretary of State, wrote personally to Maritain to thank him on the pontiff’s behalf: “His Holiness thanks you from the bottom of his heart and can only congratulate you on the passion with which you have countered the factographical and other errors and

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211 “Non possumus,” Action Française, 24 December 1926.
demonstrated the incompetency of the *Action Française* writers." Maritain’s slate, then, had been wiped clean, as he emerged on the right side of Catholic activism, in the good graces of yet another pope.

The *Action Française* implosion is important to our larger story of Franco-Polish Catholic exchange for two reasons: first, as Maritain’s entry point into the Polish lay Catholic milieu; second, as a point of reference and a source of lessons learned for Dmowski and his Polish integralists, who were attentively watching and adapting their position in light of the news on *Action Française*. In just a few years, Maritain went from one of the top names affiliated with *Action Française* to its most stringent critic. Likewise, he demonstrated newly found prowess as a commentator of events; indeed, it was the run up to *Action Française*’s condemnation that had at last given Maritain the impetus to begin developing his own philosophy of political and social engagement. This philosophy, though Thomist in inspiration, defied the stringent fidelity he had shown to the Angelic Doctor’s texts in the work that had gotten him to his place of prominence vis-à-vis the academy, the papacy, and Thomist thought more generally.

The fundamental shift undergone by Maritain would soon have a profound impact in Poland on the Catholic activists of Odrodzenie. The first time that any words of Maritain’s were printed in the Polish language was an interview that he gave in March 1926 to Maria Czapska (1894-1981), daughter of a wealthy family who studied in Paris in the second half of the 1920s, developing a fascination there with Aquinas’ writings and Maritain’s interpretation of them. The monthly literary journal *Przegląd Współczesny* published this interview with a year’s delay, and that time delay made for a curious disconnect between the interview’s content and its

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publication context. The interview had been conducted well before Action Française’s condemnation, though it appeared in print well after.

When asked by Czapska whether most Catholic youth in France were “moving to the right, even to monarchism,” Maritain replied in the affirmative, noting that many identified with Action Française. However, Maritain used the qualifier “unfortunately,” going on to hypothesize that young French laity were flocking to Action Française only because they did not possess journals of their own. As he put it, “Political passions combined with the superficiality of identification with Catholicism often lower the value of the religious convictions of certain Catholics, and infect others; at the same time, these inclinations toward the Right attest to the pursuit of order and stable authority.”

The interview with Maria Czapska suggested the extent of the fundamental shift in progress in Maritain’s worldview. One of its lasting consequences would be his articulation of a philosophy of the human person anchored in the writings of Thomas Aquinas.

**The Birth of Thomist Personalism**

Maritain first used the term “person” in *Trois Réformateurs*, and his first prominent usage of the term “personalism” as a systematic explanation of the essential value of the “human person” came in *Primauté du Spirituel*. For him, the “human person” was a Thomist concept *par excellence*. In this sense, Maritain’s development of a Thomist personalism redeemed the term for Catholic philosophy. Leo XIII had used the phrase “human person” once in *Rerum Novarum* with a footnote to the *Summa Theologica*, but it was not until Maritain’s Thomism, anti-republicanism, and discontent with Action Française fused into a single intellectual trajectory

\[216\] Maritain, “Odrodzenie katolicyzmu we Francji,” p. 156.
that any Catholic philosopher or theologian attempted a complete hermeneutics of Thomas Aquinas’s “person.”

In Article 4, Question 29 of the first part of the *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas sought to answer the question, “Whether this word ‘person’ signifies relation?” In keeping with the structure of argumentation in the *Summa*, Aquinas followed the question with objections to which he then himself responded. For the question at hand, the objections cited Aristotle, Boethius (the first philosopher to define the “person”), and Augustine of Hippo in an attempt to develop what a 20th-century philosopher might describe as a phenomenology of the person. Rather than grant that the “person” is simply an essence, a substance, or a relation, however, Thomas answered as follows:

> it is one thing to ask the meaning of this word “person” in general; and another to ask the meaning of “person” as applied to God. For “person” in general signifies the individual substance of a rational figure. The individual in itself is undivided, but is distinct from others. Therefore “person” in any nature signifies what is distinct in that nature: thus, in human nature it signifies this flesh, these bones, and this soul, which are the individuating principles of a man, and which, though not belonging to “person” in general, nevertheless do belong to the meaning of a particular human person.\(^{217}\)

The significance of Aquinas’s definition lies in the final phrase, “the meaning of a particular human person.” If we return to *Trois Réformateurs*, to Maritain’s distinction between the “individual” and the “person,” we find the core of Thomist personalism: the individual is simply a unit, a quantitative measure of humanity, while the person is a unique entity defined by the existence of a divinely created soul in corporeal form in the temporal realm. Hence Maritain’s ire with regard to the person being “sacrificed” to the individual. Everything wrong with the modern world, especially the moral and material ills responsible for the social question – anomie, the

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dehumanization of the worker, the profit at his expense by the greedy industrialist – was traceable to the confusion of the person with the individual. In this sense, Thomist personalism was the best intellectual weapon that Catholicism had found yet against socialism, said to perpetuate the confusion of the person with the individual.

Maritain devoted the next three decades of his life to articulating the relationship between the Thomist conception of the “person” and secular notions of “human dignity.” As Samuel Moyn has recently demonstrated, one of the most significant consequences of this pursuit was Maritain’s contribution as a Catholic to the birth and propagation of an international-legal discourse of human rights, a “new rights-talk.”

Pius XI, in turn, followed Maritain’s lead in successive pronouncements, calling for the defense of the person against fascism (Non Abbiamo Bisogno, 1931) and Nazism (Mit Brennender Sorge, 1937), as well as – far more resoundingly – socialism (Quadragesimo Anno, 1931) and Soviet Communism (Divini Redemptoris, 1937). These last two were more important to Pius for two reasons: first, because he – like Maritain – perceived a need for them in the Church’s ongoing failure to solve the social question once and for all; second, because the passage of four decades since Rerum Novarum had shown that, not only had socialism failed to wane, but it had in fact given rise to “bolshevistic and atheistic Communism.” This last force had already proven itself via the Russian Revolution and the Polish-Soviet War to pose a civilizational threat to European Christendom. Thomist personalism thus furnished Pius XI with the instruments to verbalize what was to be defended from the Soviet Union: “the rights, dignity, and liberty of human personality.”

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219 The quoted phrase is from Pius XI, Divini Redemptoris (19 March 1937), Online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi.
220 Pius XI, Divini Redemptoris.
French Lessons for National Democracy

On 14 May 1926, the national hero and godfather to the reborn Polish state Józef Piłsudski carried out a *coup d’État* against parliament and president, with close to 400 dead in an armed firefight. Six months later, he assumed the post of prime minister, and though over the next nine years he would move in and out of government, he became a sort of puppeteer pulling the strings of decisions of state. The pseudo-authoritarian rule of Piłsudski’s *sanacja* formation provoked a strong reaction from opposition groups of various shades – the Peasant Party, Christian Democracy, and, of course, National Democracy – but the *endecja* was the best organized, and it returned to its pre-1918 paramilitary league formation, pooling resources in an umbrella organization called the Obóz Wielkiej Polski (Camp of Greater Poland). Street battles ensued. Interspersed with periodic political repressions and the imprisonment of opposition leaders – Christian Democrats and Peasant leaders as well as *endeks* – violence between representatives of the different political camps continued on and off until the outbreak of the Second World War.

The Catholic Church accepted the May *coup d’État* without protest because Pius XI trusted Piłsudski. The two men knew each other well from Pius’s days as *nuncio* to Poland. Aware that Piłsudski had been a leading *fin-de-siècle* socialist radical – a friend and ally of his party colleague Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz, among many others – and was no great Catholic, Pius XI nonetheless placed his faith in the Polish war hero because of Piłsudski’s proven, iron-fisted opposition to the Soviet Union. Moreover, as Neal Pease has put it, “Ratti [Pius XI] and Piłsudski simply liked each other.”

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222 Pease, *Rome’s Most Faithful Daughter*, p. 36.
Meanwhile, Roman Dmowski, leader of the *endecja*, was widely known – manifested most notably in his 1905 appeals to Japan *not* to support Polish revolutionary actions against the Russian Empire – as a Slavophile. Despite his virulent nationalism, Dmowski saw what he called *Moskale* (“Muscovites”) differently than he saw Germans or Jews. For him, the Russian Empire was a tactical enemy rather than an organic enemy of “blood and soil.” The ecclesiastical hierarchy was aware of this, and Dmowski knew that the pope knew. Having attentively followed the Action Française controversy, Dmowski feared that his organization might be next: as Brian Porter-Szűcs has put it, “Reconciliation between the Church and the Endecja was hastened when Pius XI openly denounced the French radical right in a way that made parallels to the National Democrats all too clear.” Facing political repression at the hands of Piłsudski’s sanacja forces as well as the prospect of reprimand, if not outright condemnation, at the hands of an infavorably disposed pope, Dmowski sat down at his desk and wrote.

Neal Pease and Brian Porter-Szűcs are absolutely right to draw attention to Dmowski’s authorship of the 1927 *Kościół, Naród, Państwo* (*Church, Nation, State*) as a critical turning point for the fate of Polish lay engagement in the country’s public life. The text bears more than just a brief mention, however, for a close examination of it reveals how attentiveness to the French example saved Polish integralism from condemnation.

Of utmost significance in Dmowski’s 1927, *Kościół, Naród, Państwo* is the ordering of nouns in the title: Church, then nation, then state. With respect to the text itself, it is important to

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224 See, for example, Pease, *Rome’s Most Faithful Daughter*, p. 10.

225 Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland*, p. 181. Compare with Krzysztof Kawalec, *Roman Dmowski* (Warszawa: Éditions Spotkania, 1996), p. 325: “Having proclaimed in 1927 his readiness to work together with the Church, Dmowski was not so much changing the political orientation of his milieu as strengthening within that milieu a certain orientation that had already long been strong and vibrant.”
underscore that Dmowski was not writing on the defensive. Quite the opposite, he painted a portrait of a victorious march of Catholic evangelization in the spirit of Pius XI’s beloved Catholic Action initiative: “It must be noted that the latest phenomenon in Catholic countries, beginning with France and ending with Poland, is the turn toward religion – heralding the dawn of a new era in European history.”

Indeed, the text at times reads as though Dmowski had taken a page directly from Pius XI’s 1922 encyclical announcing Catholic Action. Why agitate for Catholic education? Because “[s]ons of Catholic societies torn through their education away from Catholic roots are déracinés, condemned to dry out, and at the very end to rot.”

As for Action Française, Dmowski confronted its blighted status head-on. While acknowledging that France, Italy, and Poland had all developed Catholic integral nationalisms “simultaneously,” he underscored that “in each of these countries this movement is born of its own accord, independently of external influences.” In other words, although Dmowski’s studies in Paris had helped to inspire his approach to extraparliamentary leagues on Polish territory, Polish nationalism crystallized in the National Democratic movement out of its own “organic need,” not some coordinated international effort. By extension, then, National Democracy bore no responsibility either for Maurras’s ideas or their implementation in Action Française.

Drawing a contrast with the tactical view of religion that Maurras articulated in 1914 in *L’Action française et la religion catholique*, Dmowski – directly addressing the Church’s role for the first time ever in his writings – presented a succinct historiosophy: “Without the accomplishments of Christianity and the Roman Church in history, today’s nations would not exist.” For Poland specifically, “Catholicism is not a supplement to Polishness, a decoration, but rather it is bound to the essence of Polishness; to a large extent, it constitutes that essence. To

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226 Dmowski, *Kościół, Naród, Państwo*. 
attempt to divide our Catholicism from Polishness, to tear the nation away from religion and from the Church, is to destroy the very essence of the nation.”

This is the quintessential expression of the Polak-katolik myth that Brian Porter-Szűcs has elegantly debunked. It was National Democracy that was responsible for introducing into Polish intellectual and political discourse the notion that the “true” Pole had always been a Polak-katolik. However, Dmowski had only alluded to the Church’s role in this dual identity in his earlier writings; the “Catholic” identity had always been vaguely spiritual, never institutional. Now, it was not only the abstract semantic referent “Catholicism” that was designated a sine qua non of the Polish nation, but indeed the “Roman Church” itself. Kościół, Naród, Państwo then closed with Dmowski’s definitive disavowal of politique, d’abord: “Politics is an earthly matter, and the political point of view is earthly, temporal. But even from this standpoint, religion in the life of nations is the highest good, which cannot be sacrificed in the pursuit of any goal.”

**National Democracy, Personalism, and Christian Democracy**

It is impossible to understand the Polish Catholic laity’s postwar path without first grasping how the generations educated and come of age in the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s grappled with National Democracy’s influence over the masses of the faithful. Almost without exception, the activists of Odrodzenie rejected Piłsudski’s coup d’État. Although the student movement never suffered political repression, its material resources suffered considerably under the post-1926 authoritarian regime. Nonetheless, the principal alternative – the Dmowski-inspired paramilitary groups – was hardly enticing for someone who spent his free

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227 Rev. Jerzy Lewandowski argues that these writings contain the roots of post-World War II Primate Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński’s Polish political “theology of the nation”: “This was preparation for the thesis that the nation can exist and develop only within the boundaries of the Church, and only the Catholic Church.” Lewandowski, *Naród w nauczaniu kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego* (Warszawa: ODiSS, 1982), p. 78-79.


time reading in French about the “primacy of the spiritual” and the “dignity of the human
person,” or about the need to evangelize the modern world by spreading Catholic social teaching. For this reason, simply untenable is Krzysztof Kawalec’s claim that Dmowski’s “underscoring of
the role of religion corresponded [...] more closely to personalism than to collectivism.”230 The Action Française case is nonetheless tremendously important to our story, for it shows that, in
learning from their French colleagues’ mistakes, Polish integralists preserved a powerful hold
over the Polish Catholic imaginary.

Throughout our story, we will find national-chauvinists and ex-fascists who landed in
non-endek organizations once World War II and socialism forced National Democracy as a
movement into prison or exile. Exclusionary nationalism – and its attendant anti-semitism –
persisted as a set of impulses even among Catholic thinkers and activists who never would have
dreamed of joining Dmowski’s ranks. Some of these impulses were the inheritance of the
exclusionary-nationalist vein in the fin-de-siècle Catholic vanguard, particularly Prądz. However,
just as often they constituted an organic response on the part of young Catholic interwar activists
to contingent social and political circumstances. Much as personalism offered the promise of a
comprehensive answer to the social question, the persistence of national-chauvinism threatened
to derail that answer from the get-go. Indeed, even the most intrepid Catholic activists of the
interwar vanguard would prove incapable of extricating their social-Catholic advocacy from the
national question.

The activist milieu in which these contradictions became most apparent was interwar
Poland’s nascent Christian Democratic movement. Initially drawing most of its constituency
from the former Prussian partition of Poland, the Chrześcijańska Demokracja functioned on the

230 Kawalec, Roman Dmowski, p. 324.
cusp of the national and social questions.\textsuperscript{231} Dedicated as a movement and a party to the implementation of social policy aiding the peasant and the industrial worker, the formation remained rooted in the fin-de-siècle experience of Prussian Poland. Even as he despised Germany and Germans for attempting to force their Germanness on Poles in the era of the partitions, Wojciech Korfanty, the father of Polish Christian Democracy, instinctively emulated both the German social-charitable Catholicism of Bishop Ketteler and the German Catholics’ Zentrum political party. From its very beginning, then, Chrześcijańska Demokracja was defined by tension between the national character of its commitment to the working classes of interwar Poland and its foreign roots in imperial Germany. Given both this tension and National Democracy’s seminal role in fin-de-siècle anti-German agitation in Prussian Poland, it took little for interwar Christian Democrats to sound like National Democrats.

Though he was in and out of the movement’s official leadership throughout the interwar era, Wojciech Korfanty more than any other individual shaped the agenda and ideology of Polish Christian Democracy. A long-time activist in the German-controlled partition of Poland, Korfanty had developed expertise in political Catholicism by first keenly observing the dynamics of the German Zentrum party and then successfully running against Zentrum for a seat in the Reichstag. As a deputy elected from Upper Silesia for the first time in June 1903, then as a regional councilman, Korfanty developed a brand of political Catholicism uniquely tailored to the needs of Poles living in German-speaking areas. For this reason, the various loosely termed Christian Democratic organizations that emerged after the reconstitution of the Polish state in 1918 derived most of their support from Upper Silesia – parts of which joined the Polish state following the Silesian Uprising of 1921, led by Korfanty himself – and Pomerania.

James E. Bjork has written elegantly on Korfanty’s career through 1921, but little has been written on his interwar politics and thought.\(^{232}\) The most stable period of his relationship with Chrześcijańska Demokracja was the period of his imprisonment in 1930 – on Piłsudski’s orders, with a large group of opposition leaders – in horrific conditions at the infamous Brześć (Brest) fortress, then again during a period of exile between 1935 and 1939.\(^{233}\) Throughout the 1930s, he contributed regularly to the Katowice-based journal *Polonia*, the movement’s ideological bulletin. Never affiliated with Odrodzenie, which had no foothold in the former Prussian partition, Korfanty nonetheless wrote extensively on many of the same issues: *Rerum Novarum*, *Quadragesimo Anno*, Catholic education, and Christian solidarity.

What defined Korfanty’s writing above all, however, was his steeping in the realm of the political. In keeping with Carl Schmitt’s interpretation of the term, Korfanty had concrete friends and foes: his friends had been in prison or in exile with him, while his foes were Piłsudski’s *sanacja* and Dmowski’s *endecja*. Caught between the two poles defining political life in Poland, it was Korfanty’s fate to leave his most enduring mark through texts taken up by his successor party Stronnictwo Pracy (SP – in exile in London, they translated their own name as the “Polish Christian Labor Party”), itself defined by exile and repression.\(^{234}\)

With Chrześcijańska Demokracja institutionally dismantled by Piłsudski’s *sanacja* after the *coup d’État*, Korfanty and his younger colleague Karol Popiel – head of another minority Catholic party called the Narodowa Partia Robotnicza (National Labor Party) – made a last-ditch effort after Piłsudski’s death to bring Christian Democracy back into mainstream Polish politics.

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\(^{233}\) For a vivid account of this path by Korfanty’s fellow Brześć prisoner and future lieutenant in a reconstituted Christian Democratic party, see Karol Popiel, *Od Brześcia do “Polonii”* (London: Odnowa, 1967).

Though Korfanty himself was assassinated on the eve of World War II, his party participated in the decision-making of the Polish government-in-exile in London, and it would create one of wartime Poland’s strongest clandestine resistance networks. In the course of these and their subsequent postwar travails, Polish Christian Democrats read, re-read, and held closely to the writings of their founder.\footnote{Franciszek Gałązka, Interview with Author, 18 February 2006; Stanisław Gebhardt, Interview with Author, 23 February 2006; Popiel, Od Brześcia do “Polonii,” p. 29-31.}

Many of the top Christian Democratic activists shared an intellectual genealogy with Odrodzenie. Some, like Józef Chaciński, had come from the Ethical Circle. Others, like Konstanty Turowski (1907-1983), were deeply active in the Odrodzenie network itself, particularly its Vilnius section. The affinities between Christian Democracy and Odrodzenie, reinforced by the presence of these activists in Korfanty’s movement, penetrated his writings as well. Korfanty studied Maritain’s writings, and a good deal of Thomist language on the “human person” made it into his Polonia articles. In 1933, for example, Korfanty wrote at length on Aquinas, describing Thomism as “once again moderne” and the encyclicals Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno as “pure Thomism, of course with modern window-dressing.”\footnote{Wojciech Korfanty, “Kościół a reforma społeczna,” Polonia, 26 February 1933, reprinted in Wojciech Korfanty, Naród, Państwo, Kościół: wybór publicystyki katolicko społecznej (Katowice: Ksiąg. św. Jacka, 1992), p. 166-168, at p. 168.} Almost verbatim from Trois Réformateurs is Korfanty’s declaration that modern man “sacrifices on the altar of his own pride the dignity of the individual human being and all of the values of its person, its rights, and its freedom.”\footnote{Wojciech Korfanty, “Zasada solidarności,” Polonia, 28 October 1934, reprinted in Korfanty, Naród, Państwo, Kościół, p. 220-222, at p. 220.} Like Maritain, he declared his opposition to both “the collectivist Bolshevik economy” and “the capitalist economy, in which relatively few individuals control the entire life of the economy and the state.”\footnote{Wojciech Korfanty, “Ustrój chrześcijański,” Przyszłość, 11 March 1934, reprinted in Korfanty, Naród, Państwo, Kościół, p. 200-202, at p. 201.}
At the same time, however, Korfanty evinced an anti-semitism that seemed to give the lie to his personalist belief in “the dignity of the individual human being.” Korfanty’s anti-semitism was not eliminationist, focusing instead on what he saw as the practical task of solving the “Jewish question,” premised on the ethno-national conviction that the Jewish population of Poland was preventing the Polish nation from reaching its full social and economic potential. This was a page out of Dmowski, not Leo XIII, not Maritain, and certainly not Korniłowicz. In addition to periodic one-liners in his texts attacking unspecified “harmful Jewish and Bolshevik interests,”239 Korfanty wrote into the October 1937 program of the newly minted SP – just formed out of the merger of Chrześcijańska Demokracja and the Narodowa Partia Robotnicza – not only a justification for repressions against Jews, but indeed a systematic plan for their expulsion from Poland. The final section of the final plank of the party platform, subtitled “Poles in control in the Polish state” (Polacy gospodarzem w Państwie Polskim) concerned Poland’s resident Jewish population, and it bears citation in its entirety:

The Jewish question has for us a separate, ever more pressing significance. The good of the Polish nation and state suffer dramatically as a result of the sizable overpopulation of Jews, their social and territorial distribution, and above all also their moral oddities and political and social tendencies, remarkably harmful for our economic, cultural, and moral interests. We will achieve resolution of the burning Jewish question above all through support of Polish economic and cultural creativity, progressive transformation of the capitalist order, expansion of Polish social and private property, development of Polish industry, commerce, and artisanry as well as the independent trades and cooperative movement. The Polish authorities and society ought to work together to execute the planned mass Jewish emigration. Legislation will guarantee the acceleration of the process of the return to the nation of Polish economic, political, cultural, and social life.240

Brian Porter-Szűcs may be correct that, by the standards of interwar Poland, Korfanty was a “political moderate.” There is nothing shocking about the presence of Catholic anti-Semitism in interwar Poland, even among well-educated, well-traveled public figures. Yet here we have a self-identifying Catholic activist writing again and again about “human rights” and “human dignity” and praising the Catholic Church as the only true protector of those values who, when he had the opportunity to make good on those values in the platform for his own political party, went wildly in the other direction. Only five months earlier, Korfanty had published a text decrying how Marxism and Hitlerism “infringe on natural human rights and violate the human personality.” One month before that, Korfanty had explained how only “the Church voices Christian personalism, in other words, it stands guard protecting the inviolable and sacred rights of human personhood.” Yet the SP platform included not just an idea, but indeed a promise of quashing the human dignity of an entire segment of the population by forcibly expelling them and stealing their property. The obsessive persistence of the national question in Korfanty’s writings threatened to poison the well of personalism for the entire Polish Catholic vanguard.

Korfanty died in 1939, leaving SP to its vice-chair Karol Popiel (1887-1977), who would assume a ministerial post in the Polish government-in-exile in London prior to attempting to re-enter Polish politics in 1945 and ultimately returning into exile in 1947. Popiel left no anti-Semitic writings and was, by all accounts, free of the prejudices that colored Korfanty’s thought. Nonetheless, Popiel was Korfanty’s party vice-chair from 1937 to 1939; he at least had to have rubber-stamped the platform that Korfanty wrote. It may be entirely unfair to burden the later SP activists in exile, Popiel among them, yet the fact of the matter is that Korfanty was nowhere

241 Porter-Szűcs, Faith and Fatherland, p. 106.
near alone in these beliefs. To understand how it was that the national question could remain predominant and still produce such pointedly anti-semitic advocacies by the end of 1930s among Poland’s Catholic vanguard, it is necessary to retrace exactly how personalism entered and spread in interwar Poland.

**Maritain and Odrodzenie**

Maritain’s attempt in the late 1920s to develop Thomas Aquinas’s “person” into a school of thought immediately found a welcome reception in Poland. Thomist personalism permitted Polish Catholic thinkers – priests and laity alike – to read papal encyclicals differently and thereby to discover what they understood as personalist ethics within those encyclicals. Father Jacek Woroniecki, then-rector of KUL, who had studied Thomism at Fribourg alongside Korniłowicz in the fin-de-siècle, published a ground-breaking article in Prąd in 1924 entitled “Sensus catholicus”: “In an atmosphere of subjectivism, there can be no place for service to God; there remains only to be served by God.” Woroniecki defined this “atmosphere of subjectivism” that he perceived in the modern world by the “absence of personality.”

Michał Jagiełło has argued that the great achievement of the Odrodzenie movement and of Prąd in particular was the capacity for “synthesis,” that is to say, for loyalty to Catholic doctrine and the hierarchy combined with “competent utilization of cultural resources even from beyond the world of Christianity.” Indeed, Odrodzenie was responsible for publicizing Maritain’s work in Poland, for helping to organize for him a visit to Poland in 1934, and for spawning and publicizing a range of homegrown Polish personalisms throughout the 1930s. Its overriding goal was to reinforce social-Catholic initiatives by growing personalist thought into a definitive trump card against socialism, with the core idea being that, since socialists saw human

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245 Jagiełło, Próba rozmowy, p. 87-88.
labor only as the product of a class-based collective, they could never defend the dignity of individual human “persons” like Catholic social activists could. The question in the final analysis would be whether Odrodzenie actually promoted the dignity of the human person in keeping with its social mission, or if – instead – the national question succeeded in co-opting their social activism altogether.

Indeed, Odrodzenie activists paid attention not only to Maritain the philosopher, but also to Maritain the man, finding in the example of Christian life that he and his wife led an ethical model worthy of emulation. Zenon Kałuża has recounted the contrast between the two great French Thomist scholars of the interwar period – Étienne Gilson and Maritain – as being principally one of character, which also explained the Polish fascination with Maritain that extended barely at all to Gilson: “Gilson loved a good meal, good wine, a life of luxury; Maritain was a simple man who, after his wife’s death, chose to become a monk, but who even earlier lived a saint’s life.”

Among the handful of Poles who had the privilege of contact with the Maritains in France, there developed an intense loyalty to Jacques reinforced by affinity with his Thomist philosophy. Of course, for the larger Polish laity, personal contact with the Thomist master would be an unaffordable luxury and an unlikely privilege. Nonetheless, beginning with *Trois Réformateurs*, key individuals in Odrodzenie – beginning with Korniłowicz, Landy, and Szymański themselves and ending on the young philosopher Stefan Świężawski and the young historian Karol Górski (1903-1988) – obtained copies of Maritain’s works and shared them with their Odrodzenie discussion groups. Both the KUL library and the Biblioteka Wiedzy Religijnej (Library of Religious Knowledge) attached to the association responsible for Laski imported and

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246 Zenon Kałuża, Interview with Author, 30 November 2009.
made available to readers every book produced by Maritain or his colleague Étienne Gilson. Once the first words by Maritain had appeared in Polish in 1927, Korniłowicz on behalf of Prąd requested that Maritain consider regularly sharing texts for translation and publication in the Odrodzenie journals; Maritain eagerly agreed.247

The young Catholics reading Maritain in Poland were in a quandary. They found in him a brilliant Thomist scholar with an increasingly creative philosophical agenda that soon took shape as Thomist personalism, but they also saw in him Maurras’s old accomplice, Antoni Gołubiew (1907-1979) and Jerzy Turowicz (1912-1999), two prominent Odrodzenie activists who would later found one of postwar Poland’s most successful Catholic journals, spoke often and fondly of Maritain. However, they often added a word of regret that he had tarnished his reputation by aligning himself early in his career with the architect of politique, d’abord.248 No one accused Maritain of being an integral nationalist, let alone an anti-Semite – rather the opposite, National Democrats writing about him in the 1930s regularly referred to him as a Jew – yet memory of his articles in Revue Universelle remained. The question is then worth posing: did Maritain contribute more to the social question or to the national question in interwar Poland?

**Maritain in Poland**

The March and April 1929 issues of Prąd ran a two-part essay of Maritain’s entitled “The Unity of Christian Culture,” reprinted from the newly minted French Dominican journal La Vie Intellectuelle.249 Although he began with a resounding indictment of modernity, taking a page from Trois Réformateurs, Maritain managed, in this one essay, to justify Thomism; to articulate an ethics of caritas; to present a realist’s take on the future of Christian culture; and to explain Europe’s obligations with respect to itself, its colonies, and the rest of the world. According to

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247 Korniłowicz, Letter to Jacques Maritain, 20 October 1927, Ladislas Korniłowicz Correspondence, AJRM.
Maritain, the sins of the epochs represented by Luther, Descartes, and Rousseau amounted first and foremost to pride: man “assigned to himself in the domain of thought the privilege of absolute independence or self-sufficiency, a privilege proper to God, which theologians call *aseitas.‖ Attempting to play God, profiting from “spiritual usurpation of the intellectual domain,” man embraced positivism and domesticated himself completely within materialism.

It was this materialism in particular that had given rise to the greatest threat to the human spirit: “Man began to feel more fragmented than ever before, at odds with others and with himself, for the material world, being a source of division, can produce only fragmentation. Nations against nations, classes against classes, passions against passions, until finally the human personality is torn apart.” The fragmentation of existence was to persist until the Resurrection; until then, the most that man could do in life would be to prioritize love, patterned after God’s *caritas* for man, as expressed through the Gospels.

What followed this historiosophy of modern man’s Fall was a passage considered provocative even by Maritain’s standards, an appeal to the sociocultural and political leaders of Europe to take upon themselves responsibility for Christendom’s renewal. According to Maritain, if “some common philosophy will gain the ears of the European elites – for the Western world, this would be the beginning of a return to health,” for “a philosophical era is coming again.” Thomism could promise renewal encompassing not only the intellectual and spiritual but also the social and political realms: “In the moral domain, Thomist metaphysics and theology would lead the way in developing a new social order, this sociology and Christian politics that the world presently so vehemently demands.”

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Maritain’s appeal was a European appeal *par excellence*, for Europe to evangelize not by colonization, not by exclusionary politics, not by hegemony, but by a complete reconceptualization of existing cultural and sociological categories. Unlike the French travelers of the Enlightenment, Maritain not only did not orientalize “Eastern Europe,” but he indeed considered Jerusalem and Egypt part of the Occident:

I have been speaking about the West. But where exactly does it begin? We cannot apply too narrow a set of confines to it: let us remember that we are always to the east of someone. The West begins at the Golgotha. Calvary, the center of the world, is the point dividing the world into East and West. Christ, meanwhile, opens his arms in salvific embrace of both one and the other.

As the “West” was to be synonymous with neither “Western Europe” nor even “Europe,” so was it not to be synonymous with Christendom: “And now I ask: do we have the right to identify for whatever reason the Western world with the Christian religion? No!”

Maritain’s essay seems in certain respects more appropriate to today’s era of globalization than to audiences in early 1929: “Gone are the days of clear boundaries resultant from mental protectionism. Every book, every daily article (Catholic writers must constantly remind themselves of this), has readers on the banks of the Ganges and the Yellow River, the Tenu, or the Thames.” With respect to Europe’s colonies, Maritain advocated a reversal of the “white’s man burden” policy of colonialism, identifying “what Europe has exported to Africa and Asia as gospels of destruction.” Finally, Maritain hinted at a new ecclesiology for the Catholic Church: “Instead of a defensive fortress, set out among the lands, it would become us rather to think of an army of stars spread across the sky. Such a unity is no less realistic, but it is distributed, rather than concentrated.”
Relatively little scholarly attention has gone to the *La Vie Intellectuelle* original publication of this text, and no previous scholars have attended to the Polish-language translations. Yet, aside from the 1926 interview for *Przegląd Współczesny*, this is the first opportunity that Poles had to read Maritain in Polish. In some ways, this is the most detailed political program that Maritain, who notoriously kept his distance from parties and politicians, ever set out, the most pointed message that he ever delivered on colonialism, imperialism, or trade. The text in many ways foreshadowed and in others even surpassed the gall of Maritain’s breakthrough 1936 treatise *Humanisme Intégral*, his most comprehensive statement on the proper nature of the Catholic’s engagement with the modern world. This was a book that, as Philippe Chenaux and Gerd-Rainer Horn have aptly put it, became the “veritable ‘little red book’ of an entire generation of Catholics.”

Granted, this was the era of Pius XI, the pope of the lay apostolate, and Maritain was advocating re-evangelization. That said, the geography that he advocated was nothing short of revolutionary, and it seemed perfectly calculated to be reprinted for non-French readership. On some level, this text fulfilled the wildest hopes and dreams of Poles seeking at last not to be orientalized; indeed, it even called them to service, as it would any other people of the “West.” Nonetheless, Maritain asked his readers to become aware of their own practices of “mental protectionism” so as to be able to open themselves to the rest of the world. In a country wracked by anti-semitism in particular and discomfort with ethno-national minorities in general, this was a tall order. Jerzy Turowicz would later recall how utterly astounded and thrilled he had been to read this essay at the tender age of 17.

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The text itself may have been revolutionary, but did anyone take note besides Turowicz? The answer is yes, especially in Odrodzenie. In the five years following the publication of this essay, virtually every issue of Prąd – and, with the establishment in Vilnius in 1933 of the monthly journal Pax (no relation to the postwar PAX), issues of that journal as well – contained at least one article responding to, if not entirely devoted to, the work of Maritain.\textsuperscript{253} Moreover, the discursive and semantic consequences of the propositions set out by Maritain became visible in the postwar activities of the Polish Catholic laity that we will trace in subsequent chapters. According to Turowicz’s own testimony, he would take the perils of decolonization seriously in the 1950s and 1960s precisely because reading Maritain as a young student had forced him to start thinking about such issues.\textsuperscript{254} And Turowicz was not alone: Maritain helped to reset the mental maps of an entire generation of Catholic activists.

When Maritain came to Poland in 1934, he continued with his analysis of the human person: not only the world’s obligations vis-à-vis the person, but indeed the person’s obligations vis-à-vis the world. He came to the 28-30 August International Thomist Congress in Poznań directly from the University of Santander in Spain, where he had just given a series of six lectures published later the same year as Problemas espirituales y temporales de una nueva cristianidad. As René Rémond has argued, events in France – the bloody chaos of the 6 February

\textsuperscript{253} The historiography of Prąd is thin at best, yet scholarly work on its Vilnius-based sister journal is virtually non-existent. Konstanty Turowski, an Odrodzenie network alumnus who has made the only attempt thus far to offer a document-based chronicle of its activities, suggested that “The sparsest news to reach [Lublin or Warsaw] came from Vilnius, and this is why the greatest gaps in our knowledge about Odrodzenie come precisely from its node there. Even when all of the Catholic organizations there got together to produce as their shared bulletin the well and ambitiously edited Pax, it contained nothing even resembling a chronicle of their livelihood and activities.” Turowski, “Odrodzenie,” p. 11 n. 8.

\textsuperscript{254} Turowicz, “Maritain.”
1934 paramilitary demonstrations in Paris – and Spain profoundly structured both Maritain’s message and the form of his delivery.²⁵⁵

Several scholars have briefly noted the fact of Maritain’s voyage to Poland, where he not only attended the congress in Poznań, but also traveled to Częstochowa, Vilnius, and Warsaw, spending several days in the company of his friends Rev. Korniłowicz and Sister Landy at Laski.²⁵⁶ Nonetheless, no scholar has yet examined the significance of the time spent in Poland for *Humanisme Intégral*. When Maritain arrived, Poland was eight years into its quasi-authoritarian rule begun by the May 1926 coup d'État. The country alternated between *endecja* and *sanacja* paramilitary groups in the streets, was seven months into a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany, and had imprisoned its Christian Democratic and Peasant party leaders (among many others). The significance of the timing was not trivial.

Maritain had originally planned to speak on Bergsonian intuitionism, but he changed his mind at the last minute, wracked with anxiety over the Republic under threat that he had just experienced in Spain, aware that he was coming to yet another country where the republican model of government had recently failed. The French philosopher spent his free hours from the congress wandering the streets of Poznań, reflecting on the implications of the tribulations of French, Spanish, and Polish republican life for Catholic activism in the modern world. The young Polish Thomist philosopher Stefan Swieżawski – a disciple of Gilson’s and Maritain’s who also attended the 1934 congress – recalled seeing “the philosopher’s shadow moving through the streets of Poznań, lost in a profound, melancholic meditation. I cannot forget the


pained look on his face, his ardent prayer, his eyes raised to the sky in a church where he
believed himself to be alone, as I, unseen, recorded in my memory this image of my maître, my
friend.” 257

The result of these meditations was a presentation at the Thomist Congress in which
Maritain revised and expanded the final three lectures from his stay in Santander. In his emphasis
on practical applications of “problems of moral and social philosophy of the present times,”
Maritain stood out among the other congress participants. Other headliners at the congress’s
well-attended plenary sessions – which attracted between 500 and 900 listeners each – included
Maritain’s erstwhile friend, Dominican theologian Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1877-1964),
who spoke on “the sense of mystery in St. Thomas as it pertains to the clear-obscure
intellectual,” and the young Lublin-based Thomist economist Czesław Strzeszewski (1903-
1999), who gave a paper on political economy according to Aquinas. 258

Maritain’s talk, in particular, was so well-attended that the Congress organizers needed to
change its location three times in order to accommodate the audience of 900. In a session
presided by August Cardinal Hlond (1881-1948), Primate of Poland, the French philosopher
blew the doors off the auditorium. His intellectual biographer Michel Fourcade has elegantly
recreated the scene:

> on 29 August, there was, without a doubt, some surprise in the great
> hall of the University of Poznań as Maritain, choosing to present in
> revised form the three final lectures he had delivered at Santander,
> articulated from the podium the “historical ideal of a new Christendom.”
> Pronounced in front of the Catholic intellectual elite of the entire country,
> in a session chaired by Primate Hlond, in the presence of Czech, Slovak,
> and Croat Thomists as well as representatives of the Collegium Angelicum
> (notably, Father Garrigou-Lagrange) and the Pontifical Gregorian

258 See the reports on the congress in “Chronique : Pologne – Congrès,” Bulletin Thomiste, April-September 1934, p.
224; “Chronique : Pologne – Congrès,” Bulletin Thomiste, October-December 1934, p. 331-332. See also
University, of the Catholic institutes of higher learning of Milan, Louvain, and Fribourg, and before two monastic Masters-General, the Dominicans’ Martin Gillet and the Jesuits’ Włodzimierz Ledóchowski, as well as numerous theologians of both orders, this decision was of course not without its risks, constituting indeed a sort of test run: to what extent, in effect, would this new historical ideal be compatible with the “corporatist Christian state” to be found here and there, derived from encyclicals? Six months after the suppression of riots in Vienna, only a month after the assassination of Chancellor Dollfuss by the Nazis (25 July 1934), the question had a particular resonance, especially in Poland, where the corporatist project had mobilized significant forces.259

Odrodzenie’s journal Prąd printed the text of Maritain’s Poznań presentation – which would become chapters four and five of his 1936 tract Humanisme Intégral – in the May, June, and July-August 1935 issues.260 Maritain had come to Poland on the personal invitation of Primate Hlond, and the French Thomist Association, of whose executive council Maritain was a member, treated his journey as a sort of diplomatic mission. For this reason, the opening remarks of Maritain’s Poznań paper contained the clearest statement that he had ever made publicly about Franco-Polish Catholic cooperation:

Allow me to add that the bonds of friendship particularly dear to me, which connect me to many of your fellow countrymen, magnify my sense of the significance of intellectual cooperation between Poland and France particularly on the foundation of Christian philosophy. [...] All of this explains my emotion and the joy that I feel having found myself among you today.261

Meanwhile, the substance of Maritain’s talk showed that, in light of current events, his thought on the role of the Church and particularly of the laity had undergone a profound transformation since Primauté du Spirituel.

260 See also the conference proceedings, published as Studja Gnesnensia, 12 (1935).
True – spiritual motivations were always to be the guiding force of engagement in the modern world for all Catholics, clergy or laity. However, gone was the central role of the Church hierarchy that had won Maritain such affection from three successive popes. In the presentation *L’idéal historique d’une nouvelle chrétienté* ("The historical ideal of a new Christendom"), he set about to debunk the myth of the "Holy Empire," in other words, that medieval Christendom under the aegis of the Holy Roman Empire had successfully defended the person. Indeed, Maritain demanded a new "historical ideal" for Catholicism in the modern world. Embracing modernity whole-heartedly, he declared, "nothing seems more dangerous to me than an unequivocal conception of the Christian temporal order that would bind this order to dead forms from the past."

Instead of the "dead form" of the Holy Roman Empire, Maritain set forth the idea of a "new Christendom." This Christian order – Christian in "inspiration" and "guiding principle" rather than hegemonic totality – ought to function in a "pluralist state, which in its organic unity encompasses also a diversity of social groups and orders that retain their freedom." Particularly pioneering was his next suggestion, a call for the Christian conception of a state to welcome people of other faiths:

In a modern state, believers and unbelievers are interspersed. And there is no doubt that the total state reserves to itself the right once again to force upon everyone one and the same faith, yet it does so in the name of the state and in the name of the temporal order. Thus, Christian society, in contemporary conditions, could only remain Christian if it permitted believers and unbelievers to live and participate side by side in one and the same temporal commonwealth. [...] In this way the state would be Christian, while non-Christian faiths would enjoy the freedom due to them.

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262 Since there is no separate word for Christendom or *chrétienté* in Polish, the translators substituted in different instances for the same word the Polish phrases *cywilizacja chrześcijańska* (Christian civilization) and *porządek chrześcijański* (Christian order).
Maritain was no liberal, and certainly no proto-Rawlsian – he described the search for a common denominator of philosophical precepts for all citizens as “a sign of intellectual cowardice leading to the enfeeblement of the spirit,” evincing particular ire for French republican laïcité – but at the heart of his new conception was the human person. In modernity, “the masses have made themselves aware of the dignity of the human person not as something that they really deserve or actually possess, but rather as a pursuit.” Maritain declared the alternatives unacceptable: the liberal status quo simply entrenched a classed order, while socialism would enslave the human person within a gray mass of “symbolic, deeply misleading forms.”

The ultimate expressions of liberalism’s material blight were the “total” states – Maritain borrowed this vocabulary from Carl Schmitt – of fascism and Nazism, while socialism, embodied by the Soviet Union, portended its own unique brand of evil. Scholars have widely recognized the following sentence from Humanisme Intégral as the basis for the political tenets of post-World War II European and Latin American Christian Democracy: “For this reason only in the future new Christendom can the ethical and emotional value of the word democracy – which expresses what might be called a popular sense of citizenship – actually be saved.”

One more sentence bears emphasis from Maritain’s 1934 lecture in Poznań. Maritain subsequently rewrote it in late 1935 and incorporated it into the central argument of the seventh and final chapter of Humanisme Intégral. Exhorting “today’s Christendom” to “break with the civilizational order that has its spiritual basis in bourgeois humanism and its economic foundations in the accumulation of wealth,” he observed, “Speaking of Christendom, I of course do not mean the Church, which has never been connected to any temporal order; I have in mind rather the Christian world that is strictly temporal.”

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Having thus ignored the fact that the Holy See until 1870 had possessed its own state in the temporal realm, Maritain nonetheless made the great leap of focusing on Christians – Catholics in particular – as uniquely empowered persons. This was Maritain’s way of laying out the great role to be played by Catholicism as a horizontally oriented universe encompassing clergy and laity together, not just the vertical hierarchy of the institutional Church. In the final chapter of *Humanisme Intégral*, he ran with this notion: “It is not for the Church, it is rather for Christians as worldly members of this worldly organism to share directly and immediately in its transformation and regeneration according to the Christian spirit. In other words, it is the people and not the clergy who hold the reins of power in worldly and political matters.”

In less than 25 years, Catholic philosophy had come a long way from Pius X’s condemnation of Sillon. It seemed that Maritain was exhorting his audience to do exactly what had been condemned in 1910: to engage the modern world as organized groups of laity, without the leadership of clergy, accepting a given order and seeking to transform it from within into a social and political order guided by Catholic ethics and teachings. Furthermore, the emphasis on pluralism, and particularly on the equitable membership of non-Christians in the new Christendom – while falling short of what the Second Vatican Council would decree in *Dignitatis Humanae*, its 1965 constitution on religious liberty – left no room for orthodox disciples of Maritain to indulge exclusionary national-chauvinism or anti-semitism.

The 1930s were a decade of great success for Maritain in Poland. Between 1929 and 1939, 19 of his shorter texts were published in Poland, as well as complete Polish-language translations of five books (*Trois Réformateurs, Science et Sagesse, Art et Scholastique, Religion*

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266 For a slightly more political interpretation of *Humanisme Intégral* – suggesting Maritain’s thought as the basis of a liberation theology analogous with that developed in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s – that nonetheless reinforces my own reading of Maritain, see, for example, Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, p. 89-97.
et Culture, as well as the text of a lecture delivered at Laski in 1934). The students and graduates of the Odrodzenie network flocked to Poznań to hear him in 1934, and they not only absorbed the lessons of his treatises and lectures, but indeed produced their own critiques, adaptations, and responses. Maritain’s presence in Poland over the course of the 1930s defined a new vocabulary of Catholic engagement with the modern world, breeding a wide range of homegrown Polish personalisms, of which Korfanty’s anti-semitic variant was but one example.

Nationalism vs. Personalism

The partitions may have been a thing of the past, but interwar Poles still lived in a complex geopolitical environment. Theirs was a world defined by Bolshevism to the east and, after 1930 and certainly 1933, National Socialism to the west; also structuring their world was the struggle between authoritarian social democracy and xenophobic integralism that was being physically fought out in the streets of their cities. For young, academically minded Catholic activists seeking to focus on the social question while forgetting the cacophony created by the national question, it was not difficult to choose to lose oneself in the musings of French philosophers and theologians.

Nonetheless, despite the flourishing of “ghetto Catholicism” as a network of social and intellectual milieux, it is necessary to keep in mind that France was no idyll either. Even after the condemnation of Action Française, the rise of paramilitary leagues like the Croix de Feu that led to the bloody and dramatic chaos of 6 February 1934, the persistent plight of workers whose political support made possible the 1936 Popular Front victory – these crises show that the

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French Catholic laity may have been ahead of its Polish brothers and sisters in intellectual and theological training, but on the street and in the field their problems were quite similar.

The Polish activists of Odrodzenie had taken Maritain seriously since before his texts began to appear in Polish translation in their journals, but the tenets of his 1934 talk in Poland marked an enormous qualitative leap from their standpoint. After 1934 – and particularly after 1936, when Maritain came out openly on the side of the Republican government in the Spanish Civil War – attacks multiplied on Maritain throughout the Polish cultural press (secular and National Democratic as well as Odrodzenie), but so did articles in his defense. The years 1934-1938 thus marked a veritable flowering of Maritain-inspired Polish personalist inquiry.

The Odrodzenie activists were successful in disengaging from most mainstream political issues, but broader questions of civic engagement were relevant to the way in which they interpreted Maritain’s call for a personalist “new Christendom.” Dumping the Polish national martyrological tradition as well as belief in a “Jewish question” proved to be a tall order. Only a small, unrepresentative handful succeeded in doing so, while the other fledgling Polish personalists fell along a wide spectrum of national and anti-semitic personalisms. Not all poisoned their personalism with anti-semitism to the extent that Wojciech Korfanty did. Nonetheless, just as Maritain had needed to break with Maurras in order to develop a Thomist-personalist philosophy of sociopolitical activism, so would the Poles be unable to deploy personalism’s full potential for addressing the social question as long as Dmowski, rather than Leo XIII or Rev. Korniłowicz, was still setting their social agenda.

Maritain wrote little on nations and nationalism, yet in some sense there was no need for him to do so explicitly: the ideal of the “new Christendom” was clearly a universalistic ideal, and

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his earlier writings on the “West” and on the importance of recognizing “non-believers” as “human persons” demonstrated that, at least by the 1930s, there was no room for an exclusionary option in his Thomist personalism. Given the dangers faced by their state, however, it is unsurprising that Polish activists tied to the Odrodzenie network would come away from Maritain asking themselves above all how they as Poles – not simply as human beings – should respond to Maritain. Therein lay the recipe for a “weak” national personalism: not exclusionary per se, but designed to apply only to one country, with the rest at best being “other,” at worst being outright enemies. One of the earliest Odrodzenie activists to develop such a personalism was none other than Rev. Stefan Wyszyński, Poland’s future cardinal-primate.

By the mid-1930s, Wyszyński was an up-and-coming young seminary professor and a leading member of Odrodzenie’s alumni board of overseers. He had obtained a doctorate in canon law from KUL in 1929; studied briefly in Rome, Louvain, and Paris, where he attended Maritain’s lectures at the Institut Catholique de Paris; and returned to Poland as a professor of canon law at the theological seminary in Włocławek, where he taught until the outbreak of World War II. During his student years, Wyszyński was an active participant in the annual Tygodnie Społeczne organized by Odrodzenie; after receiving his Ph.D., he joined the group of Odrodzenie’s “elders.” Between 1929 and 1939, he published six articles in Prąd, mostly dealing with the Catholic Action’s resistance to the tightening grip of fascism in Mussolini’s Italy.270

In 1934, Wyszyński published a 33-page booklet entitled Kultura bolszewizmu i inteligencja polska (Bolshevism’s culture and the Polish intelligentsia). In certain respects – his description of Bolshevik culture as “barbaric,” his portrayal of the Soviet Union as a “great

prison that no one can leave‖271 – his writing in 1934 foreshadowed the uncompromising opposition to state socialism for which he would become famous after World War II as the leader of the institutional Church in People’s Poland. In other respects, however, Wyszyński demonstrated a close reading of the Thomist dimension of recent papal encyclicals, particularly Quadragesimo Anno, and a keen focus on the “human person.” Wyszyński was deeply in awe of the writings of Maritain’s friend and fellow Parisian personalist Nikolai Berdiaev (1874-1948) – a Russian émigré to France who had reflected deeply on the relationship between Orthodoxy Christianity and socialism in Soviet Russia, believing in the pursuit of social justice but fundamentally rejecting Soviet state socialism as a solution.272 Wyszyński’s core concern was that Bolshevik propaganda might weaken the Polish intelligentsia’s commitments as Catholics to the social question, leading them, in turn, to abandon “Christian respect for the human person.”273

In order to understand the nature and limits of Wyszyński’s personalism, it is necessary first to specify what he meant by “intelligentsia.” In English-language historical scholarship, this term has rarely been used to describe any nation other than Poland274 or Russia.275 But why “intelligentsia” and not “intellectuals,” for example? In part, this is a question of translation; in part, however, it is the legacy of certain ideological and sociological factors as well. Jerzy Jedlicki has recently observed that the use of the term “intelligentsia” to describe Poland and Russia instead of the French intellectuels or the German Bildungsbürgertum is to a certain extent

271 Stefan Wyszyński, Kultura bolszewizmu i inteligencja polska (Włocławek: Drukarnia Diecezjalna, 1934), p. 22.
272 Wyszyński, Kultura bolszewizmu i inteligencja polska, p. 32 n. 38. The position cited from Berdiaev was Le Christianisme et la lutte des classes (Paris: Éditions Demain, 1932).
273 Wyszyński, Kultura bolszewizmu i inteligencja polska, p. 7.
a function of “differences of social structure.” In 1844, the Polish philosopher Karol Libelt defined the intelligentsia as “all those who, having received a more concerned, broader education at schools and institutes of higher learning, now stand at the head of the nation as men of learning, functionaries, teachers, clergy, even industrialists, who lead it as a consequence of their higher degree of enlightenment.” In other words, the very category of “intelligentsia” bore within itself the seeds of Romantic-nationalist ideology.

What the insistence on “intelligentsia” meant for Wyszyński, however, was that the manner in which he conceived of the intelligentsia’s leading role in fighting Bolshevism boxed his personalism into a nationalist framework. Indeed, such roots for what has been described as his postwar “theology of the nation” match existing accounts of Wyszyński’s later thought. Porter-Szűcs, for example, in examining a 1946 sermon by Wyszyński, writes that Wyszyński “adopted the slogan of ‘personal dignity’ for his own.” It is important to underscore, however, that “personal dignity” was no mere slogan for Wyszyński; it expressed his own nationally minded yet Thomist-derived personalism.

In its 1934 germinal stage, this argument encompassed the following elements: anti-materialism (for matter had “imprisoned the human spirit”), evolutionary rather than revolutionary civilizational progress (“calm, systematic work on an evolutionary path, mutual recognition and respect of rights in the spirit of justice and social love”), and social Catholicism (“de-proletarianization” and respect for the “dignity of the working man” per Quadragesimo Anno). Catholicism and the nation were to fight this battle together, for Catholic social

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276 Jedlicki, Preface, p. 19.
279 Wyszyński, Kultura bolszewizmu i inteligencja polska, p. 22, 27, 33.
teachings had “grown over the ages to be an organic part of the honorable spirit of the nation.”

Unlike the Soviet failure to combat its “crisis of the human being” through anything but material advancement – Magnitogorsk is the case invoked by Wyszyński – the Catholic Church promised respect for the family, for “cooperative solidarity in the life of the state,” and for “a deep sense of the dignity of the citizen.”

Wyszyński’s unique brand of national personalism was, however, rather exceptional among contemporaries both for the insistence on a national Sonderweg and the emphasis on urgent geopolitical concerns. He was not alone, however, in emphasizing the leading role of the intelligentsia. The name taken by Odrodzenie’s elders at the moment of their formal association in 1930 was, after all, the Union of Polish Catholic Intelligentsia. Wyszyński was therefore unique not in his emphasis on the nation, but rather in his attempt to accentuate equally the nation and the person. It was as though the priest had attempted to reclaim the nation from Dmowski with the help of Maritain.

Poland’s Thomist Personalists

Far more loyal to Maritain’s Thomist intent was the young historian Karol Górski. In the May 1935 issue of Prąd, Górski, a young professor at the University of Poznań, published an article entitled “A New Ideal in Education.” A medievalist whose interests extended to France as well as the history of the Teutonic Order in Poland, Górski spent the bulk of the Thomist Congress in his own city of Poznań at Maritain’s side. Having read widely in the original French the œuvre not only of Maritain, but also of the Thomist medievalist Étienne Gilson, Górski was, at the time of Maritain’s visit in Poland, one of the most qualified potential conversation partners.

280 Wyszyński, Kultura bolszewizmu i inteligencja polska, p. 32.
281 Wyszyński, Kultura bolszewizmu i inteligencja polska, p. 29.
282 Wyszyński, Kultura bolszewizmu i inteligencja polska, p. 35.
for Maritain in Poland. Górski’s article in *Prąd* was a direct outgrowth of his conversations with the French philosopher on Catholic education. He subsequently expanded the article into a 248-page book published in February 1936 by Catholic Action, entitled *Personalistyczne wychowanie* (A Personalist Education). This was the first systematic attempt to translate French Thomist personalism into a practical guide for the Polish laity.

With this approach in mind, Górski supported virtually every argument and recommendation in the book with references to the work of Maritain and Gilson. In the preface, Górski explained that his intention was to respond to a widely perceived need in Poland to “educate a new man.” As Górski explained it, “an educational system can be built only on the basis of philosophy and by means of the philosophical method of inquiry.”²⁸⁴ He described this method of inquiry as

personalism based in faith that a human being is a value immeasurably greater than all material things, that his internal development is worth more than any power, any riches, any animal instinct. In an era when the human being, tortured and trampled, cast often down to the very bottom rungs of life, fights desperately for the right to exist – let us return to eternal truths, truths recorded in the inner depths of our own beings.²⁸⁵

Górski’s personalism was a textbook derivation of Aquinas’s view of the person, developed into a justification for feeling a sense of personal worth.

Górski’s personalism was uniquely Polish. Without resorting to nationalism, without elevating an “intelligentsia” or any other social group, Górski, unlike Wyszyński, asked Polish Catholics to forget about the geopolitical dangers surrounding them in the form of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The alternative he preached was an internal focus amounting to collective

spiritual self-discipline. These were not “spiritual exercises” for the individual in the style of Ignatius Loyola, but neither did Górski frame them as a purely collectivist enterprise:

Poland, standing on the edge of Europe, flooded by the waters of two mutually hostile seas, two seas so foreign to Poland, that it must find its own path of development. The location of our nation is full of tragedy and wonder – as the last outpost among signs leading to Hell. Its future should be built on human personality, on its development and blossoming.\textsuperscript{286}

Though Poland stood bracketed on either side by the geopolitical menace of Germany and the Soviet Union, it was not alone intellectually. Górski included France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and Belgium, as well as England, Holland, and Austria as either actual or potential sources of Thomist theory and praxis.

Górski’s reliance on Maritain’s thought was clear first and foremost in his explanation of the concomitance of reason and authority. Decrying the “degenerate” forms of Catholic education that had legitimated authoritarian figures in politics as in pedagogy, Górski borrowed from Maritain the distinction between the “world of sensory phenomena and the world of the spirit, and – in the domain of the latter – the world of freedom, an essential component. The material world accessible to the senses is bound by deterministic chains of cause and effect.”\textsuperscript{287}

Meanwhile, reason illuminates for the human person a path to God: “Maritain demonstrates that ‘a human being finished and unhappy in his existence can move to the supernatural state only through the intertwining of intellect and love with a better object than himself. God stands at the zenith of personality, while the human being is also a person, though in the most impoverished possible sense.’”\textsuperscript{288} This application of Thomist metaphysical realism

\textsuperscript{286} Górski, \textit{Wychowanie personalistyczne}, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{287} Górski, \textit{Wychowanie personalistyczne}, p. 15.
also helped Górski to determine the necessity that religion be central in any education program. Only by means of Catholic education – in the eyes of both Górski and Maritain – could human beings find the optimal conditions for refining their capacity for reason; in repetition, this process of education and self-renewal even in the temporal realm would lead them ever closer to God.

Górski’s book is a rich study, in some ways deeply orthodox, in others quite revolutionary. Rather than simply condemn “modern” thought, he addressed arguments and discoveries made over centuries of “Western” history – by Calvin, Dalton, de Broglie, Einstein, Freud, Rousseau – spanning not only pedagogy but also ontology, epistemology, the physical sciences, and art.289 For example, once again following Maritain’s lead, Górski argued, “Personalism demands from art a pure beauty, without an admixture of hedonism. Personalism desires a personalist art, flowing from development and progress internal to the individual artist.” 290

The Thomist ideas adapted to the Polish context by Korniłowicz and his group at Laski also reappeared in Górski’s personalist compendium. Professing concern that “Poles are characterized by individualistic religiosity” in the spirit of Romanticism and fideism, Górski argued that collective participation in the liturgy was crucial to setting the human person’s inner spiritual needs back on track: “Rather, the virtue of religion should be practiced in supernatural life through the liturgy, which subordinates the individual’s preferences to a collective act of faith, which contributes also to deepening one’s connection to God.”291

289 Jacques Maritain’s Art et scholastique appeared in Polish in 1936, the same year as Górski’s book, the product of a joint translation effort by Górski and his brother Konrad. On Maritain’s influence on aesthetic criticism, see the excellent volume – from which Poland is notably absent, however – Rajesh Heynickx and Jan De Maeyer, eds, The Maritain Factor: Taking Religion into Interwar Modernism (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009).

290 Górski, Wychowanie personalistyczne, p. 61.

291 Górski, Wychowanie personalistyczne, p. 73.
This is the essence of the liturgical reform introduced by Korniłowicz at the beginning of the interwar period and practiced not just at Laski proper, but at every mass at every annual Tydzień Społeczny, where it was Korniłowicz who officiated. The Laski-based Thomist’s idea was simple: to encourage all faithful to speak the liturgy aloud in order to generate a sense of collective participation in communion with God. This method was surprisingly effective: almost every Catholic lay activist who came into contact with Korniłowicz reflected on the profound spirituality that this simple alteration to the liturgy evoked in the 1930s, three decades before the Second Vatican Council. Korniłowicz was no theological radical, but even this small step of including the flock in the recitation of the entire mass was revolutionary.

Both Górski’s model of “personalist education” and Rev. Korniłowicz’s liturgical reform were deeply indebted to Sister Teresa Landy, Korniłowicz’s one-time catechumen and subsequently partner in running Laski’s Thomist reading groups. Along with his brother Konrad, Górski spent a great deal of his free time in the latter half of the 1930s at Laski, where he participated regularly in the reading group run by Korniłowicz and Landy. A wide variety of Polish Francophone Catholic activists frequented Laski in these years, including Rev. Wyszyński, who had attended Korniłowicz’s lectures at KUL, and Maria Winowska (1909-1993), who, like Landy before her, found that university studies in France left her with a burning desire to become a Thomist catechumen on her return to Poland. Other major Polish cultural and intellectual figures of the time – the painter and writer Józef Czapski (1896-1993); his sister Maria Czapska, who had done the first Polish-language interview with Maritain; and the well-known writers Czesław Miłosz and Jerzy Andrzejewski (1909-1983) – passed through Laski as well.
What drew all of these Polish activists – as well as Maritain himself during his 1934 visit to Poland – to Laski was the opportunity, unique in Poland, to sit with several score copies of the *Summa Theologica* and the newest works of Catholic thought from Paris, Louvain, and Fribourg debating the meaning and implications of those texts with some of the best-educated, most original minds in Europe of the time. Given Laski’s enormous success in attracting a wide range of visitors, its founder Mother Czacka invested a portion of what remained of her family fortune in a quarterly journal called *Verbum*, which Konrad Górski, Sister Landy, and Maria Winowska edited in consultation with Rev. Korniłowicz. More than just a journal of Thomist thought or a conversation partner for the Odrodzenie journals, *Verbum* publicized and commented the main currents of Polish, French, and European literature. *Verbum’s* editors turned the journal into a forum for bringing social-Catholic catechism in conversation with a variety of thinkers – Catholic and socialist – ranging from Stanisław Brzozowski to François Mauriac (1885-1970). Maritain himself contributed an original essay to the journal on the occasion of his visit to Laski.

In the December 1930 issue of *Prąd* entitled “Why St. Thomas?” Sister Landy had offered an explanation of Thomism’s appeal to interwar Catholic activists. Namely, the Romantic strain in Polish thought remained so strong that it was “entirely independent, sometimes perhaps even at odds with rational inquiry.” It was precisely to harmonize the Catholic faith with the Romantic spirit in a modern environment that Poles needed to learn to extricate the writings of Aquinas from what they considered to be a mass of medieval “ignorance.”

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According to Landy, the greatest selling point of Thomism in general, but particularly for a Polish audience, was its multi-faceted realism, universality, and objectivism. The *sine qua non* of faith, in Landy’s view, was to find the lowest possible threshold for limits to impose on “the wave of rationalism,” in other words, to be a rationalist without allowing that rationalism to threaten the Christian theodicy. Finally, Landy concluded by referring to the superstructure of *Trois Réformateurs*, explaining that the recent return to Thomism had remedied the errors of the Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment.

Landy’s commentary on both Aquinas and Maritain serves as a useful reminder that neither Maritain nor the Poles of Odrodzenie were philosophical or political liberals. Seeing the social ills surrounding them, they needed metaphysical realism to allow them to diagnose their situation and to determine how to proceed, yet they only wanted to go as far as their faith would take them. The intellectual tenets of political liberalism simply did not apply. This fact explains, without justifying, the wide range of social and political ideologies that took hold of the Odrodzenie activists, as well as their capacity to evolve intellectually and politically over the course of decades while retaining the same basic philosophical framework. To militate on behalf of human dignity was not necessarily to abandon social conservatism. Neither reactionaries nor liberals, Maritain and his Polish disciples alike sought an optimal balance between rationalism and faith, though many continued to wallow in serious social prejudices. Ultimately, almost all would move beyond Maritain, as we will see in subsequent chapters, yet Maritain’s Thomist personalism proved foundational to their worldview.

**Making Personalism Relevant to the Modern World**

There is a fundamental difference, however, between social conservatism and exclusionary nationalism. At Laski, and among serious Polish participants in the Thomist-
personalist conversation, the latter option was simply off the table. The constitutive element of Korniłowicz’s social-Catholic catechism pioneered in the fin-de-siècle was an opening to those different from himself: some, like Edward Abramowski, came to him from socialism; others, like the future Sister Landy, came to him from other religious backgrounds. This entire process of catechesis necessarily precluded exclusionary nationalism, for by definition all of Korniłowicz’s partners in dialogue would have been outside the nation at the beginning of their catechism. In this sense, Wyszyński already inhabited the outer boundaries of what was ethically and catechetically acceptable at Laski, simply in virtue of his attempt to develop a national – rather than universalist – variant of Thomist personalism.

For Thomist personalism to succeed as a motivating component of social-Catholic activism, however, it could not be confined to hermetically sealed meetings of Catholic thinkers operating in ignorance of the political realities of the world around them, which was, after all, the modern world that they were supposed to be engaging as Catholics. Wyszyński’s national personalism stemmed precisely from his observation and subsequent concern with events in the international arena, namely, threats posed to the Polish state by the emerging Soviet Union. In this respect, it was Wyszyński’s argumentation – and not, for example, Górski’s – that survived the immediate context within which it was produced: after 1946, Karol Górski published nothing on the topic of personalism; meanwhile, Wyszyński’s 1934 text would go through two re-editions in the 1980s. Clearly, there was a balance to be struck between not soiling personalism with nationalism – or worse, as Korfanty had – and making personalism relevant to more than just a handful of thinkers.

This was the challenge taken up by lay activists of Odrodzenie a generation younger than Wyszyński. Some ended up closer to the politically neutral univeralist Korniłowicz, others to the
nationally minded but non-chauvinist Wyszyński, and still others to the wavelength of Korfanty’s anti-semitic personalism. Jerzy Turowicz, who would become an icon of postwar Polish Catholic activism, in his student years fell mostly somewhere between Korniłowicz and Wyszyński. Born in Kraków in 1912, Turowicz studied in Lwów before returning to Kraków to take a second degree at Jagiellonian University. Although active in Odrodzenie from his first day as a student, he did not begin publishing regularly until the emergence of the short-lived monthly journal *Odrodzenie* in 1935, intended to supplement the publications of the Warsaw-based *Prąd* and the Vilnius-based *Pax* (1933-1938). Turowicz wrote one of the *Odrodzenie* monthly’s mission statements, published in February 1935, declaring the “enormous and largely unappreciated role of the Odrodzenie movement in the growth and deepening of the Catholicism of the younger generation.”

Two years later, he devoted an extended two-part essay in the February and March 1937 issues of *Odrodzenie* to Maritain’s “Catholic humanism,” as he called it: “Today the last and only defender of the human being, his freedom, and his dignity, is the Catholic Church. [...] Not the model of the Middle Ages, nor the return to distant times – though they were not really much ‘darker’ than the present – but rather the construction of a new unity, a new culture, corresponding to the current, changed historical conditions, the current historical climate.” Combining tenets of Maritain with those of his more revolutionary erstwhile disciple Emmanuel Mounier – in a 1958 interview, Turowicz would describe the pair as his “great masters” of Catholic engagement in the modern world – Turowicz called for “the greatest revolution possible, a profound, internal, personalist revolution.”

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It was Turowicz who took up a die cast in 1936 by writers tied to National Democracy in order to defend a range of ideas that those writers had fallaciously homogenized under the label of Odrodzenie’s “French Catholicism.” The National Democracy-affiliated weekly *Prosto z Mostu* (Straight from the Hip) maintained what Adam Michnik has recently termed an “unusually high class of authorship for such a reactionary journal.”298 Polemics between National Democratic activists and Odrodzenie activists were commonplace, and the opening quote of this chapter comes from a 24 May 1936 response by Jerzy Turowicz entitled “About Maritain, that is, about the best Catholicism,” to a diatribe published one week earlier by Adam Doboszyński (1904-1949). Doboszyński had lambasted both Maritain and the Catholic novelist François Mauriac, but he had reserved particular ire for Maritain, whom he had described as a “hack and a Jew.” In response, Turowicz first called Doboszyński on the “irresponsibility” of his claims, then presented a brief synopsis of Maritain’s œuvre, describing the “great campaign of renewal, modernization, and extension of Thomist philosophy in France” as “largely his doing.”299

Lambasting Doboszyński for “rejecting all of French Catholicism” with Maritain, Turowicz noted that Doboszyński had evidently forgotten that “Catholicism is a universal and supranational faith and that no kind of Catholicism emerging on the basis of certain differences of psyche and national culture can be dangerous to any Catholic, as long as it is a pure Catholicism, not deformed.” Indeed, Turowicz went further, describing French Catholicism as “one of the most valuable.” Even a brief comparison of so-called French Catholicism and so-

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298 Adam Michnik, Interview with Author, 2 April 2010.
299 Turowicz, “O Maritain’ie czyli o najlepszym katolicyzmie.” Adam Doboszyński two issues later wrote a letter to the editor of *Prosto z Mostu* replete with arrogant attempted retorts to Turowicz’s arguments; much of the letter focuses on Doboszyński’s “certainty” and “confirmation” by hearsay and by observation that Maritain associated with Jews and that Maritain was, thus, himself a Jew. Sadly, this is typical National Democratic rhetoric, even quite high-brow given the milieu. See Adam Doboszyński, “Sprawa Maritaina,” *Prosto z Mostu*, 7 June 1936.
called Polish Catholicism showed, “In France, we now have a third generation building Catholic culture, while in Poland there was neither the generation of Léon Bloy, nor the generation of Charles Péguy, born of the pre-war anxiety.” Polish Catholicism was learning from French Catholicism, “not simply going in France’s footsteps, but forging our own Catholic culture corresponding to our national psyche and our cultural typology.”

And yet, Turowicz’s decision to grant Doboszyński’s premise that such notions as “French Catholicism” and “Polish Catholicism” had even polemical value was a mistake. It is one matter to describe and analyze the state of Catholicism in a given country at a given moment or to reflect on the singularities of a given national context. It is quite another matter, however, to suggest – as the terms in Doboszyński and Turowicz’s exchange do – that any one country can have its “own” Catholicism bounded only by that nation.

In the particular case of France and Poland in 1936, the terms were especially misleading because French Catholicism was so deeply embedded in the entire spectrum of Polish Catholicism, from Action Française’s influence on Dmowski to Maritain’s influence on Odrodzenie. Furthermore, the sitting pope himself had been deeply influenced by Catholicism in Poland as nuncio to Poland, and Catholicism in France – particularly its political valence – had learned numerous lessons from the friendships of Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki with Charles de Montalembert and Frédéric Ozanam in the 1830s and 1840s. This was only one of a number of instances of vicious attacks on Maritain and other major figures of French Catholic interwar culture in Prosto z Mostu, and on each occasion an Odrodzenie activist rose to the challenge to defend French thought.300

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300 Jan Dobraczyński, “Maritain na pograniczu herezji,” Prosto z Mostu, 5 December 1937.
Stanisław Stomma (1908-2005) was a lawyer who completed his studies at Stefan Batory University in Vilnius in 1932. In 1938-1939, he pursued post-graduate work at the Sorbonne. In between these two periods of study, he contributed regularly to the monthly *Pax* published by the Vilnius section of Odrodzenie. The journal’s name – unrelated to the post-war PAX organization led by Bolesław Piasecki – was a play on the acronym of the Vilnius section’s name: Porozumienie Akademickich Katolickich Stowarzyszeń (PAKS, or, Coalition of Catholic Student Associations). Stomma was, in many ways, an exception among the Odrodzenie activists: more an Augustianian than a Thomist – in the sense of placing more priority on individual reflection and less on the person’s communion with the entire community of the faithful – he came to Maritain only in the 1940s, largely under Turowicz’s influence. At the same time, however, Stomma had a keen sense of the need for Christendom’s renewal, and the close attention that he paid to Western European attempts at political Catholicism in the course of his travels abroad taught him that “political democracy had not survived its attempt at life.”

Stomma walked a very fine line in his personal politics that was evident in the essays that he wrote for public consumption. Disgusted both with Piłsudski’s *sanacja* pseudo-socialism and with National Democracy, he ended up taking elements from both in order to articulate, in a series of articles published in *Pax* over the course of 1936, a conception that he described as “vertical solidarity.” Stomma was thus flirting with national-chauvinism: “The assimilation of foreign guiding principles, the total effacement of ideas defining one’s own culture, means the loss of a nation’s individuality. This means a loss of nationhood, absorption, assimilation of one nation by another.” In 1938, Stomma went even further, articulating a concept that he described

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as “Christian nationalism,” namely that “objective nationalism leads in a direct line to the
solidarity of nations.”

After the Second World War, Stomma left these writings behind him and never looked
back. Nonetheless, the interwar Stomma crossed over into exclusionary territory, going beyond
Wyszyński’s national personalism toward a more National Democratic organic nationalism that,
in Poland’s case, needed to be a “Christian nationalism.” The notion that an international
constellation of “Christian nationalisms” was essential to guaranteeing “solidarity of nations”
was curious: at minimum, it constituted Stomma’s definitive rejection of any kind of
internationalism; at maximum, Stomma seemed to be advocating precisely the sort of “Holy
Empire myth” that Maritain had debunked in *Humanisme Intégral*.

Unlike Stomma, Stefan Swieżawski had avidly followed Maritain’s career from the
moment that he entered Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów. Between 1925 and 1932, as he
prepared first his Master’s thesis and then his Ph.D., he traveled regularly between Poland and
France. In 1929-1930, he and his mother spent an entire year living in Paris, where he took
courses with Étienne Gilson and, thanks to a warm introduction made by his Odrodzenie mentor
Rev. Korniłowicz, became a regular at the home of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain in Meudon.
Indeed, Swieżawski would remain lifelong friends with both Gilson and the Maritains.\(^{303}\)

Active in Odrodzenie from the first day of university, he served as student president of
Odrodzenie in the 1927-1928 academic year, and in 1928-1929 he led the first Odrodzenie
seminar on Thomism at Lwów, reprised later in the 1932-1933 academic year.\(^{304}\) Sister Rut
Wosiek has used Swieżawski’s personal archives to analyze in some detail the course of study in
this seminar, which had two principal goals: a general appreciation of Thomism’s place at the


\(^{304}\) Swieżawski, *Wielki Przelom*, p. 117-164.
foundations of the Catholic worldview; and the preparation of a “Thomist platform” for the Odrodzenie movement, based above all on Jacek Woroniecki’s 1924 “Sensus catholicus” article in Prqd.  

Swieżawski was a scholar par excellence, the first internationally renowned Polish Thomist with connections in Western Europe to belong to the laity, rather than the clergy. Swieżawski was thus the quintessential symbol of the sociological transition from clergy to laity in the course of the 20-year lifespan of interwar Poland, one of the best-educated and most urbane members of the Odrodzenie movement. And yet, Swieżawski of all people was at the center of an ugly Polish debate over numerus clausus, the policy of limiting Jewish access to universities. Rare as it was for Odrodzenie activists to get involved in mainstream politics, Swieżawski, as a high-ranking student activist in Odrodzenie, spoke out when it came to questions concerning university life. In a January 1930 article in Prqd, Swieżawski wrote, “We do not agitate against Jews for racial or religious reasons, but we must defend ourselves from the materialism of their culture and the anti-Polish bent of their international interests.” Swieżawski continued, “we must defend our particular Polish culture from a deluge by the bankrupt Jewish culture, particularly in education, art, and social mores, and at the same time strengthen and expand as energetically as possible our economic wealth.”

Roman Dmowski’s anti-semitism, while offensive to a contemporary reader’s moral sensibilities, fits within the overall conceptual framework of his organic nationalism. In the case of Swieżawski and his fellow pro-numerus clausus Odrodzenie colleagues, however, the attempt to reconcile an evidently anti-semitic nationalism with Thomist personalism fundamentally calls into question his entire worldview. For Swieżawski was not simply presenting his own personal

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305 Wosiek Franciszkanka, “Św. Tomasz.”
view: as an organization, Odrodzenie had no problem with *numerus clausus*, grafting the justification for that exclusionary policy into a larger claim in its statute about the need to reject “materialism” and consolidate Polish national culture. The “materialism” claim is particularly revealing of Świężawski’s exclusionary nationalism because it is so clearly selective: on the one hand, Świężawski argued that Jewish culture was infecting Polish culture with materialism, thereby, presumably, endangering Poles’ pursuits as Catholic Poles. On the other hand, he argued that Poles needed to expand their “economic wealth” in order to counteract Jewish influence in the material realm as well. The argument was as logically inconsistent as it was anti-semitic.

It is unfortunate that we lack documentation as to what Jacques Maritain knew about the *numerus clausus*. It is difficult to imagine that, had Maritain been informed for example of the substance of Świężawski’s 1930 article, he would have established the bonds of friendship evident in the men’s exchange of letters beginning in 1934 and ending only in the year of Maritain’s death, 1973. After all, had Maritain’s wife been university age and living in Poland in the interwar period, the *numerus clausus* would have applied to her as well. Particularly in light of Maritain’s appeal in his Poznań lecture and then again in *Humanisme Intégral* for a

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307 Then again, it is worth considering also that Maritain only emerged in the mid-1920s from years of close friendship with the vociferously anti-semitic Charles Maurras. Indeed, John Hellman has made a provocative case that not only Maritain, but indeed his wife as well, should be classified as anti-semites through the moment of Maritain’s departure from Action Française: “While his imprecations in those years against the Jews might have seemed relatively dispassionate, reasoned, and moderate when set against those of some of his more virulent contemporaries, they were central in his social, political, and religious thinking.” If we take Hellman’s argument at face value – that the Maritains always “rejected racialist anti-Semitism” while nonetheless, prior to 1926, “allowing for the existence of a ‘Jewish problem’ in France that had to be faced” – this could imply that Świężawski and others in Odrodzenie shared the Maritains’ Catholic anti-semitism as a point of departure while failing to evolve out of that anti-semitism as the Maritains did. Useful though Hellman’s reflections are, it is difficult to move past the Jewish heritage of Raïssa Maritain. Moreover, even if we grant Hellman’s argument in full, however, we must still recognize that, by the time that the Poles of Odrodzenie had begun to read him, Maritain had moved out of his exclusionary Action Française phase to the belief in a universalistic Thomist personalism that encompassed human persons of all faiths. Świężawski’s position was thus still a betrayal of the Thomist personalism of which he styled himself as one of Poland’s clarion voices. See John Hellman, “The Jews in the ‘New Middle Ages’: Jacques Maritain’s Anti-Semitism in Its Times,” in Robert Royal, ed, *Jacques Maritain and the Jews* (Notre Dame: American Maritain Association/University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), p. 89-103, at p. 89, 99.
genuine pluralism of faiths and civic cultures, it is difficult to reconcile Świężawski’s pledge of 
loyalty to Maritain’s thought with his active approbation of anti-semitic policy.

As we leave the interwar era, then, we see the extent to which the national question 
continued to pull social Catholicism off the rails. Jacques Maritain offered social Catholics a 
powerful new tool for appealing to potential new catechumens: the argument that only 
Catholicism respected the dignity of an individual toiling human being as a “person” made in 
God’s image. And yet, many Polish activists who wanted nothing to do with the institutions of 
National Democracy nonetheless undercut their own potential for making effective use of 
personalist thought by reifying the exclusionary premises of integral nationalism.

On some basic level, interwar Poland responded to the arrival of Maritain’s revolutionary 
new theses with a wide variety of homegrown personalisms, ranging from the more 
hermeneutically inclined Thomism of Laski, to the more nationally minded ideologies of 
Wyszyński and Stomma, to the outright anti-semitic personalisms of Świężawski and Korfanty. 
The choice by Korfanty to indulge anti-semitism and national-chauvinism was both more 
dangerous and more understandable given his status as a politician needing to appeal to electoral 
constituencies. In Świężawski’s case, however, it was an expression of genuine sentiment 
connected to his reflections on Poland as a nation. Paradoxically, it seemed that anyone 
attempting to take Thomist personalism out of its academic box and apply it directly to pressing 
social and political issues risked poisoning it with the national question. The only successful 
balancing acts seemed to belong to Wyszyński, who expressed genuine concern about 
international affairs in national terms without instrumentalizing the person, and Turowicz, who, 
despite his fervent defense of Maritain, nonetheless never called Doboszyński on his anti-
semitism, negating only the claim that Maritain was Jewish.
Conclusions

Thomism, Thomist personalism, and the person of Jacques Maritain were the central elements of interwar Catholic thought and activism in Europe. In Maritain’s life and in the reception of his writings, the social question and the national question continually crossed swords. Furthermore, it soon became clear that, for personalism to serve the social-Catholic catechism productive and effectively, it needed to carry weight outside of small reading groups, in public social and political activism, in a manner that would defend both the social question and the human person against exclusionary nationalism. By the end of the interwar period, a select few Polish Catholic thinkers and activists, inspired by their French examples, were experimenting with these balancing acts, but the results were hardly reassuring as of the onset of the Second World War.

It may be odd that one of the chief factors in the transformation of Polish Catholic activism was a French Catholic philosopher. Nonetheless, the plurality of affinities that developed between Maritain and Poland even before his visit in 1934 – Korniłowicz’s liturgical reform, Landy’s conversion, Świeżawski’s research, and the parallels between the Action Française story and that of National Democracy – ensured a warm reception for the philosopher and his work, which in turn supplied the Polish Catholic activists with multiple vocabularies to use in the description of their plans, projects, and civilizational quandaries.

John Hellman is correct that “Polish personalism was not merely derivative.” The Polish personalisms of the 1930s constituted a mixed bag of nationalism, Thomism, and exhortations for spiritual renewal. Catholic education, the life of the family, and the dignity of the human person – all central tenets of Catholic Action, all elaborated and transformed by

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Maritain into a promise of engagement with the modern world – clashed among Polish Catholics with extreme anti-semitism, intolerance, and exclusionary politics. The rejection of liberalism and materialism, although widely agreed in the Odrodzenie movement as in Polish Christian Democracy, carried over many of the facets of Roman Dmowski’s organic ethno-Catholicism, successfully saved from ecclesial condemnation thanks to lessons learned by Dmowski from the plight of Charles Maurras.

Though Maritain’s vision of the human person as dignified and liberated through communion with the largest possible group implied a certain brand of communitarianism, there were clear normative limitations: the person should always take priority over the collective, the spiritual over the political, the inclusionary over the exclusionary. Although the figures of the nation and the person were thus not irreconcilable – Rev. Stefan Wyszyński’s thought is a case in point – Maritain’s own conscious break with the integralism of Action Française pointed toward the dangers of a nationally oriented approach. The delicate balance between the nation and the person in Wyszyński’s thought would become particularly difficult to maintain with the arrival in Poland of Soviet-backed state socialism after World War II.

The real danger to the new personalist ethos, however, was a specific brand of exclusionary nationalism twisted by other deformations: anti-semitism. The importance of the experience of being a catechumen – of appreciating the return to faith of lapsed believers, the conversion impulse of non-believers, and, most importantly, the willingness of tolerant and respectful non-believers to dialogue with believers – was central to the inception of Thomist personalism. Maritain himself converted from Protestantism, and his wife Raïssa entered the Catholic faith as a converted Jew.
The exclusionary tendencies bequeathed to interwar Poles by a legacy of Romantic nationalism therefore threatened to derail the new ethics of the human person from its very inception. Even Turowicz, one of the most ardent Polish personalists of the 20th century, utterly devoted to Maritain, could marshal no more principled an argument to defend Maritain in the Polish press from anti-semitic accusations other than to say that Raïssa Maritain’s Jewish heritage did not make Jacques Maritain a Jew. The widespread existence of virulent, violent anti-semitism in interwar Poland is well-known, but the fact that this anti-semitism permeated and endangered even the most progressive among the rising generation of new, Europe-oriented Catholic lay activists forces a deeper reflection on their commitments to the ethics of the human person, an ethics that they above all would be responsible for spreading and teaching over the next half-century.

By the outbreak of the Second World War, the youngest generation of Odrodzenie had internalized Maritain’s lessons and longed for more: hence the advent in Poland of the new “revolutionary and communitarian” personalism of Emmanuel Mounier. The complex latticework of Catholic lay activism that would emerge in Poland in the postwar decade owed its various elements to the interwar period – to Laski, to Odrodzenie, to Christian Democracy, to National Democracy – but these in turn owed their ideas and other facets of their intellectual, social, and political development to France. *Pace* the Turowicz of 1936, “Polish Catholicism” had already profited from “French Catholicism,” but “French Catholicism” itself was in no perfect state. With *Action Française* unrepentant – and, following the 1939 election to the papacy of Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli, i.e. Pius XII, its condemnation lifted309 – “ghetto Catholicism” keeping most French Catholics out of mainstream public life, and socialism, Communism, and

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309 For the original celebratory commentary within the movement itself, see “Le Saint-Siège a levé l’interdiction de l’Action française,” *Action Française*, 16 July 1939.
anti-semitism on the rise as well, neither the geopolitics nor the social hypocrisies seemed to be in much better a state in France than in Poland.

As we continue our story, let us keep in mind the catechumens: not only the converts at Laski, but, more generally, socialists looking to dialogue with Catholics, and indeed Catholics looking to dialogue with each other. Lay apostolate in the modern world implied an ongoing conversion experience, for there was nothing to make an activist question his faith quite like the opportunity to see through an outsider’s eyes the worst in Catholicism. And yet, during and after the Second World War, the European laity would consolidate, grow, and indeed nourish other milieux at not only a domestic but a transnational level.
CHAPTER 3

The Person and the Proletariat:

Catholic Revolution, Labor Theology, and an “Outstretched Hand” in the 1930s

While work is one of the most important elements of human life and the modern states are seeking to give it status, where do we have a theology of work? There is an urgent need for us as clerics to turn our efforts and apply our vocation of “salt of the earth” to theology itself, as a human science of the things of faith or that touch on faith. As long as we have not done the theology of all the great human realities that must be won back for Christ, we will not have done the first thing that is to be done. As long as we talk about Marxism and Bolshevism in Latin, as I've seen it done in classes and at conferences of theologians, Lenin can sleep in peace in his Moscow mausoleum. [...] We must prepare, on the austere, laborious level of theological science, to reconquer the modern world. But the first condition for doing theology is believing in it.

--Yves Congar, 1935

Personalist democracy is not the same as individualistic or liberal anarchy, the right to do as one pleases, the reign of disorder and incompetence, the free field of play for all oligarchies. **OUR DEMOCRACY IS NOT NEUTRAL, IT INSTEAD EXISTS TO PUT ITSELF AT THE SERVICE OF THE PERSON.** This is to say that it is to intervene, by normal methods in normal times, by exceptional and dictatorial methods if threatened by danger [...] Democracy does not lie in doing away with chiefs, in decapitating the nation, but rather in disengaging power elites FROM ALL LAYERS OF SOCIETY and watching so that 1) they do not accord themselves ARBITRARY POWER OVER PERSONS while invoking the power that they hold in virtue of their civil service; 2) that they do not entrench themselves in hermetically sealed classes. [...] **Esprit** is at the service of all those who wish to become involved in this path. We have now undertaken our task: to offer them a spiritual climate and a center of research.

--Emmanuel Mounier, 1938

Catholic France in the 1930s and 1940s witnessed the reinvention of the idea of “mission.” From the task of overseas evangelization to non-Christian subject populations of colonial empires, French philosophers and theologians retasked mission as a project of ministry and dialogue with the industrial proletariat of the European continent, which had been drifting

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farther and farther away from Catholicism for over a century. Dialogue with socialist or other catechumens in the fin-de-siècle had involved a personal sense of commitment on the part of those believing Catholics who lobbied their agnostic or atheist neighbors on an individual basis for conscious conversion to salvation through the Catholic faith. The task undertaken by the French Catholic vanguard of the 1930s built on the emerging philosophy of Jacques Maritain, seeking both to humanize personalism and to translate it into a mechanism of social and political activism that could directly reach entire masses of the working poor.

In part, this new impulse was the result of a conviction growing in certain circles – particularly among philosophers and theologians who found strict adherence to Thomist philosophy too cut off from the realities of everyday life – that social Catholicism and Thomist personalism would not be enough to address the social question. Three different approaches emerged over the course of the 1930s – one as a socialist initiative, two as Catholic initiatives – that inspired and framed subsequent thought and activism by the Catholic vanguard in France and Poland alike.

The initiative taken by Maurice Thorez (1900-1964), head of the French Communist Party, of a main tendue (outstretched hand) to Catholic workers frightened both the institutional Church and the Catholic vanguard. ^312^ The Holy See responded to the main tendue with wholesale condemnations of socialism and its Communist variant, as well as a redoubling of the efforts of Catholic Action. In a decade when Communist parties and labor unions were growing in power while republican governments were being overrun by domestic violence and authoritarian coups, Catholic Action was barely even a band-aid applied to the gaping wound of

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ongoing proletarian attrition from the Catholic ranks. Realistically, it carried little or no appeal for those who had already gone over to socialism.\footnote{313 My point is not to question the accomplishments of Catholic Action, but rather to underscore the structural limitations of a pastoral enterprise that, even if premised on mission at the local and national levels, clearly took orders from and answered to the Vatican through a disciplined hierarchy of priest-administrators. The best accounts of lay activism within the confines of Catholic Action are in Chamedes, “Reinventing Theocracy,” esp. Ch. 2; and Horn, \textit{Western European Liberation Theology}, esp. p. 38-44.}

Catholic vanguard thinkers like Emmanuel Mounier and Fathers Marie-Dominique Chenu and Yves Congar saw the limited effects of Catholic Action. At the same time, they believed that Maritain’s personalism, while seminal, needed to be translated into a more radical enterprise with which impoverished masses might actually be able to identify. The Dominican fathers’ answer was very different from that of Mounier: while the former advocated serious study of socialism and the proletariat with the ultimate goal of producing a new Catholic personalist theology of labor to allow workers to feel a sense of belonging to Catholicism in virtue of their labor, Mounier and his journal \textit{Esprit} sought to join forces with anyone who would listen to prepare a personalist, anti-capitalist “revolution.” Mounier’s anti-materialism took socialism off the table for him, but his language and his methods – despite the importance for him of Maritain’s personalism – in many ways brought him closer to socialism than to the Holy See.

This chapter introduces all three of these tendencies, which formed the bridge between the social-Catholic catechism pioneered in the \textit{fin-de-siècle} and the attempts at Catholic-socialist syncretism that would proliferate in Europe both West and East following the introduction of Soviet-backed state socialism in 1944-1945. The French Communist \textit{main tendue}, the Dominican \textit{nouvelle théologie}, and \textit{Esprit}’s revolutionary personalism all came closer than Catholicism ever had in France or Poland to a non-nationalist, non-Holy See-directed form of collective Catholic activism with even a chance of reaching the industrial proletariat of Europe.
As such, the interaction between Catholicism and socialism in Europe is unintelligible for the era beginning in the 1930s without considered reflection on the concepts and language introduced into Catholic thought and activism by each of these three tendencies.

Maurice Thorez and the Catholic Proletariat

Our story focuses first and foremost on the Catholic approach to socialism in Europe, yet the history of this approach in Europe’s 20th century cannot be understood without the main tendue campaign as a point of reference. It is unclear whether or not the French Communist Party was earnest in its declared desire to open its doors to masses of Catholic workers. Nonetheless, the potential for their attrition gave the Holy See such a fright that it devoted several years at the height of European international crisis – with the militarist expansionism of both Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany becoming patently clear – to radicalizing its declared opposition to socialism in all its forms. The specter of potential Trojan Horses from the political Left thus haunted the Catholic Church on the eve of the Second World War, when the French Communist main tendue forced a critical re-imagining of Catholic activism both by the Holy See and by the vanguard.

By the 1930s, the Holy See’s line on socialism seemed well-worn and universally known. Pius IX had been the first pope to condemn it, including socialism on his infamous 1864 Syllabus of Errors. Leo XIII’s ground-breaking 1891 Rerum Novarum had been, as much as a call to Catholics to tackle the social question, a condemnation of socialism itself. On the 40th anniversary of the promulgation of Rerum Novarum, Pius XI offered his own anti-socialist encyclical, Quadragesimo Anno of 15 May 1931. In it, Pius intended not only to provide the definitive Catholic settlement of the “social question,” but also to expose the spiritual dangers to the working class posed by socialism. The goal was to underscore that neither liberalism nor
socialism – with particular attention paid to the latter – could alleviate the plight of the working poor engendered by the Industrial Revolution, but rather that workers could count only on “the Christian reform of morals.” Socialism, in contrast, would reveal itself to be “far worse than the evil itself.”

That said, Pius XI explicitly recognized the difference between the “two sections [...] often opposing each other and even bitterly hostile” into which socialism had split in the 100 or so years of its existence. Communist socialism, in the pontiff’s eyes, had already “laid waste [sic!] vast regions of eastern Europe and Asia.” For this reason, Pius deemed “it superfluous to warn upright and faithful children of the Church regarding the impious and iniquitous character of Communism, yet We cannot without deep sorrow contemplate the heedlessness of those who apparently make light of these impending dangers.”

The heart of the encyclical lay in the question of whether Christianity could not somehow be reconciled with non-Communist socialists, “to meet Socialism half-way and, as it were, by a middle course, come to agreement with it.” The pope took pains to emphasize that many voices had reached him from faithful Catholics seeking papal consent to combine their Catholicism with political socialism. To them, Pius XI replied in no uncertain terms, “Whether considered as a doctrine, or an historical fact, or a movement, Socialism, if it remains truly Socialism, even after it has yielded to truth and justice on the points which we have mentioned, cannot be reconciled with the teachings of the Catholic Church because its concept of society itself is utterly foreign to Christian truth. [...] Religious socialism, Christian socialism, are contradictory terms; no one can be at the same time a good Catholic and a true socialist.”

Six years later, the same pope, having reached the conclusion that his earlier decision in *Quadragesimo Anno* that there was no need to caution against Soviet Communism had been premature, did precisely this. In *Divini Redemptoris*, an encyclical devoted to exposing Communist socialism, the pontiff denounced it as “evil,” a “satanic scourge,” albeit – again – without threatening its Catholic exponents with excommunication or excommunication. At several points in the encyclical, Pius XI explicitly deployed the language of Thomist personalism, arguing that Communism “robs human personality of all its dignity” and “denies the rights, dignity, and liberty of human personality.” Finally, the pontiff denounced the collective basis of society in Communism, countering that “Only man, the human person, and not society in any form is endowed with reason and a morally free will.” Indeed, “each individual man in the dignity of his human personality is supplied with all that is necessary for the exercise of his social functions.”

Why the pope’s *volte-face*? Why the decision six years after condemning socialism *tout court* to hurl an entire encyclical’s worth of invective against its Communist variant? The Great Terror and its attendant show trials in progress in the Soviet Union played only a small role in this decision. Rather, as Francis J. Murphy has suggested, the deciding factor behind the pope’s decision was an about-face by Parti Communiste Français (PCF, French Communist Party) head Maurice Thorez on the question of whether Communists would welcome Catholic collaboration. In 1936, Léon Blum’s SFIO and the PCF shared an electoral victory in the French parliamentary elections. Together with a group of Radical Party MPs, Blum, with Thorez’s support, formed the famed French “Popular Front” government of 1936-1937. Fresh off of this electoral performance, Thorez gave a much-commented radio address on the airwaves of

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315 Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*.

Radio Paris on 17 April 1936, in which he declared, “We extend our hand to you (Nous te tendrons la main), Catholic, worker, employee, artisan, peasant; we, who are outside the faith, because you are our brother, and you are, like us, plagued by the same concerns.”

Most scholars who have discussed Thorez’s speech and its effects stop with this citation, but it is important that Thorez published extensive written commentary on his own speech in a Party pamphlet that appeared in the late fall of 1937. In the section in which he quoted his 1936 radio address (entitled “Profession of materialist faith”), Thorez reaffirmed the Communist creed of rationalist, materialist atheism. At the same time, he provided a veritable laundry-list of citations from Marx, Engels, and Lenin to the effect that Communists must respect the religious beliefs of individual members of the working class. Thorez noted that Lenin had written that “to treat the declaration of war on religion as a political task of the Workers’ Party is but an anarchists’ phrase.” Indeed, he went on to explain that Lenin had considered priests as well as workers to be welcome to workers’ parties, so long as “the priest comes to us to deliver himself into shared political work and that he consciously accepts his task, without placing himself above the program of the Party.”

In the next five pages, Thorez turned to Catholic texts, including Rerum Novarum, Quadragesimo Anno, and the epistles of St. Paul, using a litany of quotations to emphasize the shared Catholic and Communist emphasis on “charity” and on the need to redress the deleterious effects of “modern capitalism.” According to Thorez, “class warfare was not proclaimed by some ill-willed Communists” – the implication being that the Catholic Church had recognized it

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319 Lenin, De la religion, p. 20, quoted at Thorez, Communistes et catholiques, p. 12.
as a reality since *Rerum Novarum* – but that Communism would, nonetheless, in “liberating man from economic and political servitude [...] permit him to taste of the bread of the Spirit.”

The point of Thorez’s pamphlet was to encourage Communist workers assembled in the Confédération Générale du Travail trade union to seek cooperation with Christian workers assembled in the Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens. His so-called *main tendue* radio address had mentioned only workers, no other social groups. Yet the Vatican took the speech very seriously. When the Dominican journal *Sept* published an exclusive interview with Thorez’s Popular Front partner, the French Socialist prime minister Léon Blum, on 19 February 1937, the journal ceased to function overnight, on orders of the Holy See delivered by Dominican superiors. As Oscar Arnal has underscored, the Spanish Civil War had made Pius XI deeply sensitive to Catholicism’s Left flank.

There was no evidence of a mass run on the part of Catholic workers to accept Thorez’s outstretched hand, so the PCF stepped up its press campaign by attempting to discredit individual French bishops and Church-approved leaders. The PCF newspaper *L’Humanité* also printed a series of commentaries reminding French Catholics of their Gallican tradition. In other words, as the Communist press organ put it, French Catholics retained an oft-exercised historical prerogative to ignore the doctrine and policy of the Holy See altogether.

This was too much for Pius XI. On 19 March 1937, he handed down an encyclical entitled *Divini Redemptoris*, with the subtitle “On Atheistic Communism.” The principal motivation and function of this encyclical was to slap the outstretched Communist hand

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323 See articles on the “Affaire Villerabel” in *Humanité*, 17-28 May 1936. See also the commentary at Murphy, “*La Main Tendue*,” p. 260.
demonstratively away. Short of identifying Thorez and the *main tendue* by name, Pius XI came as close as possible to linking the encyclical to the PCF campaign, writing that, “without receding an inch from their subversive principles, they invite Catholics to collaborate with them in the realm of so-called humanitarianism and charity; and at times even make proposals that are in perfect harmony with the Christian spirit and the doctrine of the Church.” Pius XI’s answer – “Those who permit themselves to be deceived into lending their aid towards the triumph of Communism in their own country, will be the first to fall victims of their error.”

Thorez’s late 1937 pamphlet – which made no direct reference to *Divini Redemptoris*, despite the other encyclicals cited – was an attempt to renew the *main tendue*, this time with significant textual support from Christian and Communist canons alike. To no avail, however – historical contingency played out its role, with the PCF losing its footing in the French political establishment with the collapse of Blum’s government and the Popular Front in advance of the Spanish Civil War’s decisive turn in Franco’s favor. The first attempt to elaborate a Catholic-Communist alliance at the highest levels disappeared in the disarray of the late 1930s, with the PCF placing the final roadblock to reconciliation with its 1939 re-orientation toward Nazi Germany in the wake of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Nonetheless, Catholicism was deeply marked by this serious socialist attempt at Catholic-socialist partnership. Above all, the Holy See knew to look for the slightest evidence of either a Catholic response to such initiatives or, even more dangerously, homegrown corresponding Catholic initiatives at Catholic-socialist alliance or – worst of all – syncretism. With Pius XI’s death in 1939, just months before the outbreak of World War II, his longtime Secretary of State and successor, Pius XII, set his Holy See to be vigilant and merciless toward any Catholic vanguard thinkers or activists extending their own outstretched hand toward socialism. This
vigilance, in turn, undercut even social Catholicism of the Korniłowicz variety, suspect now because it involved taking socialism seriously. The Holy See would persist in this stance through Pius XII’s dying day.

_Le Saulchoir_

The Dominican theologians Chenu and Congar are widely considered the organizers of a transnational movement of dissident Catholic theology that would cover at least five European countries – Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Poland – as well as multiple religious orders. This was the _nouvelle théologie_, born in the early 1930s at Le Saulchoir, the key Francophone Dominican learning center, run by Father Chenu himself. As Jürgen Mettepenningen has underscored, however, the theologians known today as scholars of _nouvelle théologie_ did not constitute one coherent school.324 Like the “modernists” condemned by Pius X in 1907, they came from disparate milieux with different intentions, and it was only fallaciously homogenizing criticism from the Holy See that projected the image of _nouvelle théologie_ as a single movement. The scholars of what Mettepenningen has called the “first wave” of _nouvelle théologie_ were Dominican and Jesuit, French and Belgian, some more historically minded, some more inclined toward sociology. For the transnational theology of labor that would emerge in the wake of the Second World War, it was the French theologians who mattered most.

Le Saulchoir, founded in 1904 in the Belgian Walloon town of Tournai, moved to Paris only in 1937, during the rectorship of Marie-Dominique Chenu. Together with his priest-professorial colleague Yves Congar, it was Chenu who transformed the intellectual profile of this prominent Dominican institution over the course of the 1930s and 1940s. One of the most important among the unorthodox – by contemporary Vatican standards – methods employed by

324 Mettepenningen, _Nouvelle théologie_, p. 3-7.
the Dominicans of Le Saulchoir was *ressourcement*. Rather than validate the Holy See’s practice, a standard since the late Middle Ages, of using internal ecclesiastical commentaries-upon-commentaries as the basis for adjudicating theological questions, Chenu and Congar proposed a literal “return to the sources.” By sources, they meant above all the Bible, but also the patristic writings of the Church’s founding fathers – including St. Anselm, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine – as well as “the historical Thomas Aquinas, Catholic theology’s authority *par excellence*.”

As Dominicans, and thus members of the same order to which Aquinas had belonged in the 13th century, Chenu and Congar took seriously the call dating back to Leo XIII to reframe mainstream theology around Thomism, yet, while warmly embracing the Thomist personalism advanced by Maritain, they took Aquinas’s writings a step further. Unlike their lay elder colleague, the Dominicans refused to consider the *Summa Theologica* and later scholastic theologians’ commentaries on it on equal footing, insisting instead on the exclusive priority of Thomas Aquinas’s own writings. Le Saulchoir promoted what Chenu and Congar called a “historical theology” over and against the “speculative theology” predominant among the Vatican’s officially sanctioned scholastic theologians, particularly their *confrère* Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange. The Saulchoir theologians were thus at the root of an agenda for reforming Catholicism by promoting a return to early Christian practices, in other words, the very agenda that would ultimately carry the day at the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s.

Congar and particularly Chenu stirred considerable controversy already in the mid-1930s. Le Saulchoir relocated from Belgium to France in the year of the promulgation of *Divini.*

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325 Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle théologie*, p. 11.  
Redemptoris. While Pius XI was reminding the faithful that Communism was the “scourge of Satan,” Chenu was complaining that Dominicans could not effectively engage with modern philosophy without understanding Marx, and so he stocked the shelves of Le Saulchoir’s new library with walls full of Marxist writings. The result was Chenu’s first official reprimand – by his order’s Master-General – in 1938. Le Saulchoir was closely tied to the Dominican journal Sept, in which Maritain had first articulated the difference between living “en chrétien” and “en tant que chrétien,” and in which there appeared in 1937 the interview with Léon Blum that earned Maurice Thorez’s praise and Pius XI’s ire, expressed in the immediate shuttering of the journal.327

While Chenu kept Le Saulchoir on the verge of theological and political heterodoxy, Congar vented his frustration with mainstream Catholic theology’s inability to address the needs of the working poor who had supposedly been the Church’s renewed priority since Rerum Novarum in 1891. Already in 1935, Congar wrote,

While work is one of the most important elements of human life and the modern states are seeking to give it status, where do we have a theology of work? There is an urgent need for us as clerics to turn our efforts and apply our vocation of “salt of the earth” to theology itself, as a human science of the things of faith or that touch on faith. As long as we have not done the theology of all the great human realities that must be won back for Christ, we will not have done the first thing that is to be done. As long as we talk about Marxism and Bolshevism in Latin, as I’ve seen it done in classes and at conferences of theologians, Lenin can sleep in peace in his Moscow mausoleum. [...] We must prepare, on the austere, laborious level of theological science, to reconquer the modern world. But the first

327 Founded in 1934 by Rev. Marie-Vincent Bernadot, who had earlier founded La Vie Intellectuelle, Sept was based out of the Dominican cloisters first at Juvisy, then on the Boulevard de la Tour-Maubourg in Paris. For an exhaustive history of the journal, its ties to Le Saulchoir, and its place in the mosaic of interwar French Catholicism, see Aline Coutrot, Un courant de pensée catholique : l’hebdomadaire “Sept” (mars 1934-août 1937) (Paris: Cerf, 1960). That analysis has been condensed, revised, and updated in recent years to take into account the complete declassification by the Vatican of the documentation of Pius XI’s pontificate: see Della Sudda, “La suppression de l’hebdomadaire dominicain Sept.”
condition for doing theology is believing in it.328

Congar’s text points to an important revision by the Dominican practitioners of *nouvelle théologie* of Leo XIII’s call for a Catholic social doctrine. Like the 19th-century pope, Congar saw Catholicism at a crossroads in its engagement with the modern world. Whereas Leo XIII, however, had considered the Thomist renewal and a voluntarist social Catholicism sufficient to oppose socialism, Congar believed that the Catholic Church could only triumph in its contest with socialism by first substantively and seriously engaging the practical benefits of socialism in the world in order to understand what lessons there were for Catholics to learn from socialism. The point, for Congar, was to stop merely talking “about Marxism and Bolshevism in Latin” and instead to go out into the world and develop a socialized theology of the working poor.

Congar himself was no socialist. Indeed, he, Chenu, and their fellow *nouveaux théologiens* were social realists. Looking at the world around them, they saw, 40-50 years after *Rerum Novarum*, the proletariat slipping ever deeper, ever more quickly, away from Catholicism into socialism while mainstream Catholic theology had locked itself away in abstract, byzantine, self-referential neo-scholastic debates that often accorded the Holy Office priority over the letter of the *Summa Theologica* and even the Bible. These observations led the Dominicans of Le Saulchoir to the conviction that Catholicism not only could, but in fact must learn and absorb elements of socialist thought and practice. This conviction then opened the door to syncretism, Catholic-socialist dialogue on a grand scale, and – most fundamental of all – informed study of the modern world. Władysław Korniłowicz had led Catholic-socialist dialogue on an individual, face-to-face basis in *fin-de-siècle* Poland, but he had never had the resources to take his social-

328 Quoted at Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle théologie*, p. 44.
Catholic catechism to the masses. Meanwhile, this was precisely what the late-interwar and wartime theologians of Le Saulchoir wanted to force the Catholic mainstream to do.

Although it may seem that the story of the nouvelle théologie runs counter to our overall narrative of the shift from clerical to lay leadership of Catholic activism over the course of the 20th century, it is, in fact, perfectly synchronous with changes in the Church in the late interwar, wartime, and immediate postwar years. After World War II, Pius XII would attempt to revive and globalize the nationally bound ranks of Catholic Action with annual World Lay Congresses to bring lay activists to Rome from as far away as Sydney and Accra.329 That said, the center of gravity of Catholic activists was shifting away from a command structure with the Vatican at the top to horizontally oriented transnational networks of intellectuals, journalists, labor activists, and politicians. These lay Catholic activists paid attention to current pronouncements by the Holy See and consulted with their national episcopates to a greater or lesser degree. Nonetheless, their activism marked a social revolution of sorts within Catholicism based in the fact that they were now running transnational lay-activist enterprises entirely independently of the Vatican.

One of the principal factors in elevating this type of enterprise was the Vatican’s demonstration in its treatment of nouvelle théologie that it was completely unsuited to be the command center for Catholics working to cater to the spiritual and practical needs of the working poor. This was a particularly devastating conclusion to be drawn at a time when half of Europe was in the early stages of building socialism. The loudest voices of doctrinal authority speaking from Rome on the Francophone experiments with Catholic-socialist dialogue in the years 1935-1955 were unequivocally damning.

What is most striking about the Vatican campaign against the *nouvelle théologie* is its timing. At the very moment when Pius XII was refusing to excommunicate Catholics acting on behalf of the Third Reich, when he was staying silent on German mass executions of Jews and other “non-Aryan” peoples across Europe, his most trusted advisors were loudly and publicly firming up the line of Catholic orthodoxy against the modern world. Their specific targets were not just collaborators with socialism, but indeed anyone looking to broaden and deepen the social-Catholic catechism as pioneered, for example, by Rev. Korniłowicz.

In February 1942, a manuscript of Chenu’s entitled *Une École de théologie : le Saulchoir* – a history of Le Saulchoir and the methodology it imparted to its Dominican students – was placed on the Index of Banned Books, together with a manuscript by Chenu’s Belgian colleague Louis Charlier entitled *Essai sur le problème théologique*. Chenu, who, admittedly, had openly antagonized mainstream Catholic theologians, to whom he attributed “a theological imperialism which is nothing but intellectual clericalism,” became the scapegoat for a decade of pent-up Vatican frustration with the Dominicans’ modernizing teachings.  

 Removed from the rectorship of Le Saulchoir and banned from teaching there, Chenu became also the central object of a critique published in *L’Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican’s daily newspaper, by up-and-coming Neapolitan theologian Pietro Parente (1891-1986). Parente, a trusted confidante of Pius XII and a future cardinal, made a point of lumping Congar and the Belgians in with Chenu as “portents of a dangerous threat to Catholic teachings.”

This was only the first of a series of attacks on *nouvelle théologie*. Chenu and Congar found their field of activity progressively more and more circumscribed, with both ultimately banned from teaching altogether in 1954. These repressive measures by their superiors silenced

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neither Chenu nor his fellow Dominicans, but they helped to convince the Dominicans themselves to press for lay leadership of the initiatives that they had been advocating. In 1953, Father Congar published *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat* (Markers for a theology of the laity), in which he declared, “a proletarian is not made by being in a subordinate condition, but by living in a society of which he does not feel himself to be organically an active member, with his own rights. Lay people will always be a subordinate order in the Church; but they are on the way to the recovery of a fuller consciousness of being organically active members thereof, by right and by fact.”

Congar’s implied identification of the Catholic laity and the industrial proletariat was at the bedrock of his contribution to the new Catholic ideology underlying, reinforcing, and evolving alongside the revolutionary social activism of the first postwar years. With *nouvelle théologie* locked in active struggle against the Holy See, the ideas that its authors offered became tools in the hands of lay thinkers and activists taking up the mantle of a personalist theology of labor for mass mission to the workers. One of these thinkers was Emmanuel Mounier.

**Catholic Revolution**

Emmanuel Mounier was the quintessential Catholic non-conformist. Accused in his lifetime of both philo-fascism and philo-socialism, Mounier died at the age of 45 in 1950, having alienated many of his closest mentors and collaborators and leaving numerous unanswered questions about what was and what could have been. Born in Grenoble in 1905, the *petit-bourgeois* son of a pharmacist, Mounier began studying philosophy in 1927 at the Sorbonne, but


financial demands and his devotion to his writing led him to leave the university. Nonetheless, within five years, he had conquered the Catholic intellectual elite of Paris, earning a place in a tight circle of eminent religious thinkers, including Maritain, Berdiaev, Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973), and the future Jesuit priest and cardinal Jean Daniélou (1905-1974).

After he started his own monthly journal *Esprit* in 1932 with the participation of Albert Béguin (1901-1957), Jean Lacroix (1900-1986), and other lesser-known disciples of the French philosopher Charles Péguy, he and Maritain grew apart. *Esprit* was an overnight success. On the margins of “ghetto Catholicism,” *Esprit* was Catholic without being exclusively so, personalist without being Thomist *strico sensu*, and progressive without being socialist. Mounier genuinely occupied the middle position between Chenu and Congar on the one hand and Thorez on the other. Though he dealt with few representatives of the working masses on a daily basis, he and his family lived in near-poverty for most of his adult life. He commuted between Paris and his high-school teaching job in Brussels as running *Esprit* became for him an unpaid second full-time job. He thus understood the reality of the social question much better than some of the other key players in our story.

The liminal status of Mounier and the rest of the *Esprit* milieu has challenged historians over the decades in their attempts to classify Mounier adequately. Zeev Sternhell has (unpersuasively) made him out to be a proto-fascist, while John Hellman has convincingly

334 There is no comprehensive biography of Mounier. However, John Hellman’s intellectual and political portrait of Mounier’s last 20 years is excellent, and Mounier’s younger *Esprit* colleague Jean Conilh wrote a well-researched biography-homage: Hellman, *Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left*; Conilh, *Emmanuel Mounier, sa vie, son œuvre, avec un exposé de sa philosophie* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1966).

shown (for the postwar period, at least) Mounier’s philo-socialism. Whether he sympathized with Communist parties or not, Tony Judt has argued, Mounier bore partial responsibility for political crimes committed on his watch by Marxist-Leninist regimes of which Esprit wrote approvingly, including postwar socialist Poland. Emmanuel Mounier certainly never trusted Christian Democracy, and despite a lifetime of varied political sympathies ranging from extreme right to extreme left, Christian Democracy was never one of them. Yet his thought provided more than sufficient grounds for aspiring Catholic-socialist syncretists, himself included, to take revolutionary personalism as a point of entry into syncretist experimentation. Indeed, Mounier managed to situate himself and his journal Esprit neatly, as Lucien Pélissier has put it, “between [Maurice] Thorez and Jesus Christ.”

However we classify Mounier, it is clear that the questions provoked by his work and its influence are qualitatively different from those provoked by Maritain and Thomist personalism. Mounier was not a politician, but he believed in action, engagement, and service, three words repeatedly regularly throughout his writing. Whether in 1932’s Révolution personnaliste et communautaire, 1936’s Manifeste au service du personnalisme, 1946’s Qu’est-ce que le personnalisme? or 1950’s Le personnalisme, the message was the same: fight the

337 As Judt argues, regardless of his precise ideological or political sympathies, Mounier would become a “useful idiot” in his unwitting propaganda service on behalf of nascent Communist regimes. Judt, Past Imperfect, p. 225.
340 What is more, as Samuel Moyn has pointed out, the distinct agenda elaborated by Mounier in turn pushed Maritain to engage the political more directly in his own writings: “As much as the negative example of the far right, it was Mounier’s para-Catholic and this-worldly combat for a personalist rupture – whatever that meant – that pushed Maritain to elaborate his own politics. [...] Maritain opposed Mounier’s drifts into apparent proximity to fascism, but would never have become a political thinker without Mounier’s example.” Moyn, “Personalism, Community, and the Origins of Human Rights,” p. 90-91.
capitalist désordre établi through “affirmation of the primacy of the human person over material necessities and the collective apparatus that sustains its development.” Mounier’s rallying cry against the “established disorder” was analogous to Maritain’s general condemnation of materialism. However, Mounier went beyond Maritain’s appeal to Catholics for an ethics of new Christendom, proposing outright “communitarianism.” Maritain would write in his final book, the 1967 Paysan de la Garonne, with respect to Mounier’s phrase “personalist and communitarian revolution”: “The expression is correct, but when I see the way that it is used now, I am not very proud of it. For after lip-service is paid to ‘personalist,’” it is clear that what is really cherished is ‘communitarian.’”

Mounier’s significance for our story, then, was that, despite systematic condemnations of socialism and particularly its Marxist variant in his writings, the revolutionary spirit animating his exhortations, the neo-Hegelian determinism of his arguments – “We know well that no age fulfills its more or less human mission until it has first heard the superhuman call of history” – and his deep-set antiliberalism made him, often despite himself, clearly Marxisant. The Romantic spirit never seemed to abandon Mounier: while Maritain retained his antipathy toward the Renaissance even after writing Humanisme Intégral, Mounier called on the readers of the first article of the first issue of Esprit to Refaire la Renaissance, to make the Renaissance anew: changez le cœur de votre cœur. Et dans le monde, tout ce qu’il a contaminé (“change your heart of hearts. And in the world, everything that it has contamined”).

342 Jacques Maritain, Paysan de la Garonne, in Œuvres complètes, XII, p. 736. This is only one of many cautionary examples underscoring the need to distinguish between Maritain’s project of a reformed Catholicism and the revolutionary Catholic ideologies that he inspired, with Mounier’s revolutionary personalism at the forefront. It is thus misleading to depict Maritain, as Gerd-Rainer Horn does, as the ultimate “éménence grise or spiritus rector of left Catholic experiments in the late 1930s, the crucial 1940s – and beyond,” Horn, Western European Liberation Theology, p. 89.
343 Mounier, Manifeste au service du personnalisme, p. 15.
Mounier was strongly ambivalent about socialism in general and its lived Soviet version in particular, vacillating between explicit condemnations of Marxism and open declarations of support for “people’s democracy.” Unless he was talking specifically about Communist parties as political institutions, Mounier rarely if ever used the term “Communism” in his writings. Rather, one generally finds the term “socialism,” replaced occasionally by its specific variant “Marxism” in instances where Mounier was making a point about Soviet ideology. Over the 18 years between Mounier’s creation of *Esprit* in 1932 and his death in 1950, the place of socialism – in its various incarnations, from Léon Blum’s mainstream political party to its revolutionary Bolshevik variant – fluctuated dramatically in France and the world. Given these changing circumstances, and given Mounier’s need to duck the condemnations of socialism emanating from the Vatican in 1931, in 1937, and subsequently again in 1949, the persistence of Mounier’s ambivalence on socialism over the course of his career is perhaps understandable.

In the first issue of *Esprit*, Mounier announced that the journal was of “neither the right, nor the left” and that it rejected the political as such, reserving for itself rather the domain of the “spiritual.” Even when Mounier proposed in a 1938 special issue of *Esprit* devoted to antifascist commentary a “coalition for personalist democracy,” his program – proposing a cryptoconstitutionalist Statute of the Human Person – was juridical rather than political *stricto sensu*. Yet the political Left attracted the bulk of his attention in his early writings. In his 1935

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346 On their subject, Mounier was also deeply ambivalent: as Lucien Péllissier has put it, “His position on their subject is not one that can be encapsulated in a single moniker.” Péllissier, “Mounier et les communistes,” p. 65.  
347 Mounier, “Refaire la Renaissance.”  
348 Mounier, “Appel à un rassemblement pour une démocratie personnaliste.”
Révolution personnaliste et communautaire, Mounier wrote, “On the Left [...] have appeared the majority of new forces, every example of social progress, almost all of the multitude of new things in art and in literature, and what is more than all of that, the immense influx of desire for justice maintained without compromise, even without eloquence, at the heart of the working masses.”

In contrast, only one year later, in the Manifeste au service du personnalisme, Mounier insisted that “Personalism is the only terrain on which an honest, effective combat can be launched against Marxism.”

Finally, a decade later, Mounier wrote, “Personalism is not opposed to socialism or to Communism. Everything depends on which personalism, which socialism, or which Communism one means.”

It is tempting to see Mounier – and some of his followers, particularly André Mandouze, have encouraged this temptation – as a strict precursor to the so-called “third way” approach between capitalism and socialism that would become the defining quality of Soviet-bloc “anti-political” dissidents of the 1970s and 1980s. Nonetheless, this sort of reasoning smacks of teleology. It would be too simplistic to conclude, following Mandouze, that Mounier was “anything but anti-Communist” and “anything but pro-Communist, even less Communisant,” and therefore fully invested in the project of a “third force.”

Considerably more persuasive, despite Mounier’s positioning of himself as ni droite, ni gauche, is Lucien Pélissier’s characterization of him as a man of the Left. His commitment to keeping Esprit out of the mud-slinging of mainstream republican politics may have kept him

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349 Emmanuel Mounier, Révolution personnaliste et communautaire, in Œuvres, I, p. 140.
350 Mounier, Manifeste au service du personnalisme, p. 42.
351 Mounier, Qu’est-ce que le personnalisme?, in Œuvres, III, p. 203. That said, French Communists were hardly unequivocal fans of Mounier. The PCF MP Pierre Hervé, for example, described Esprit as a “worldly brigade of anti-Communism” and “a certain leftist, revolutionary wing of the Catholic intelligentsia [...] charged with political operations against the Communist Party.” Quoted in Mounier, Ceritudes difficiles, in Œuvres, IV, p. 182.
353 See, for example, Pélissier, “Mounier et les communistes,” p. 68.
from openly declaring himself for any one party, but Mounier believed unequivocally in a commonality of Catholic and socialist interests. In 1934, he explained that *Esprit* would “never be for money because the world of money cannot cease to be evil.” 354 Twelve years later, he not only maintained this fundamentally anti-capitalist stance, but indeed admitted outright that personalism had borrowed it directly from socialism: “Personalism, in fact, believes that capitalist structures today are an impediment to the movement towards the liberation of man, and they must be abolished and replaced by a socialist organization of production and consumption. It is not we who have invented socialism. It was born of man’s suffering and his reflections on the disorders that oppressed him.” 355

Mounier’s stance on the Marxist variant of socialism was more complex, yet in the end still positive. On the one hand, he insisted in his 1946 *Qu’est-ce que le personnalisme?*, the same volume in which he explained personalism’s connection to socialism, “The Marxist critique of the alienation and life of the workers’ movement is pregnant with personalism.” Indeed, he wrote in one of the final texts penned prior to his death that “Communism and Christianity reinforce each other like Jacob and the angel, with a rigor and brotherhood-in-arms that infinitely surpass the struggle for power.” 356 And yet, in the *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*, the cornerstone text of his revolutionary personalist movement, Mounier defined personalism as the only terrain for “honest, effective combat” against Marxism, to which he attributed also a “totalitarian” potential.

The claims are only seemingly contradictory: Mounier drew heavily on Marxism and believed in the ideology of socialism, yet he remained till his dying day a critic of the materialism at the heart of the Marxist enterprise. What drew him to socialism, what led him to

perceive the “brotherhood in arms” of Communism and Christianity, was his fundamental prioritization of the pursuit of social justice for the working masses, articulated already in his 1935 first book Révolution personnaliste et communautaire. Following this logic, then, Mounier consistently sought a personalist-socialist, Catholic-Marxist dialogue, and this pursuit drove Mounier to lean left because, in Pélissier’s words, “in order to dialogue effectively with Communism, it is necessary to be ‘on the Left.’”

Mounier escaped criticism on the part of the Holy See in his lifetime, in large part because Esprit did not openly advertize itself as a “Catholic” publication. According to Mounier’s successor at the helm of Esprit, Jean-Marie Domenach, when Pius XII died in October 1958, the Holy See had already prepared an official condemnation of Esprit. Whether or not this was indeed the case, it was Esprit – as the lay vanguard-of-the vanguard of Catholic activism – on Mounier’s watch that reacted seriously to both the main tendue and the nouvelle théologie, going where political interests and ecclesiastical restraints kept others from going. In the story of Mounier’s revolutionary personalism – and particularly its dynamic reception in Poland – we find the story of the transition within certain circles of the European Catholic activist vanguard from social Catholicism to Catholic-socialist syncretism.

Led by Mounier himself, these syncretists – in defiance of almost a century of encyclicals by the Holy See – sought not only to learn from socialists and to dialogue with them, but indeed to seek out the best ethical, intellectual, and social content of socialism in order to incorporate that content into a new and improved form of Catholic activism that might actually reach the Left en masse. By the advent of the Second World War, Mounier’s thought was a cornerstone of

357 Franco V. Lombardi is absolutely correct in his interpretation of Mounier’s leftward pull: “To be on the Left is, for him, the expression of a desire, better still, of a will to insert himself into the current of social progress and of an aspiration to social justice.” Lombardi, “Mounier di fronte al marxismo,” Momento, 4-5 (July-October 1965), p. 17.
358 Pélissier, “Mounier et les communistes,” p. 68.
359 Domenach, Beaucoup de Gueule et peu d’or, p. 190.
Catholic vanguard activism across the European continent. As our story continues, we will see the rich, multi-faceted message brought to wartime, and then socialist, Poland by the doctrine of personalist and communitarian revolution. Tony Judt is correct to conclude that the “writers at *Esprit* strove hard in the early postwar years to construct a bridge, in this case between their version of a Catholic ethics and the Communists’ account of Marx. Indeed, after Maurice Thorez, Mounier was the nation’s most visible advocate of a rapprochement between the two.”

To leave it at that, however, would involve a fundamental misunderstanding of the transformation of Catholic activism in Europe in the mid-20th century: given that some of the strongest reverberations of Mounier’s thought and activism came in Poland, that is where we must look to make a fully informed assessment of the Catholic-socialist syncretism that it spawned.

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CHAPTER 4

War and Resistance: Personalism, Clandestine Networks, and the Blurring of Political Boundaries in World War II

Yes or no, if Christ came to aid us in 1943 in the re-establishment of religion in our world in its present state of ferment, would he not count above all, as before, on the meek, on the proletarians?

--Revs. Henri Godin and Yvan Daniel, 1943361

For us Leftist students sharing the bread of the numerus clausus with our Jewish friends, measuring with each passing day the rising tide of nihilist revolution, yet at the same time gladly making the sign of the cross, reading Esprit brought some promise of possible brotherhood with those in Poland who might perform a task similar to that which in France was being carried out by the group concentrated around the person of Mounier.

--Jan Strzelecki, 1958362

The anti-socialist encyclicals and the main tendue constituted the essential point of reference for the leftward turn by the lay Catholic vanguard that began during World War II and accelerated in its aftermath. The war began only a few months after Pius XII’s election to the papacy. Though well-versed in ecclesiastical politics and diplomacy from his years as Pius XI’s Secretary of State, he had no opportunity to consolidate and prepare the Church for six years of political and infrastructural menace.

Popes prior to 1939 had never balked at the notion of getting their hands dirty in secular geopolitics. In the 16th century, Julius II had built a worldly empire in the form of the “Papal States,” and, more recently, Pius IX had, in 1870, excommunicated the newly crowned king of the reunited Italy for taking Rome – the last of the papacy’s remaining worldly territorial possessions – away from him. Indeed, even Pius XII’s immediate predecessor Pius XI invested a

good portion of his pontificate in the task of concluding concordats and issuing encyclicals in an effort to keep up with the major worldly political movers and shakers of the day, most notably Mussolini and Hitler.\footnote{On the concordats with Italy and Germany, see, respectively, Frank J. Coppa, “Mussolini and the Concordat of 1929,” in Frank J. Coppa, ed, \textit{Controversial Concordats: The Vatican’s Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini, and Hitler} (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1999), p. 81-119; Joseph A. Biesinger, “The Reich Concordat of 1933: The Church Struggle against Nazi Germany,” in Coppa, ed, \textit{Controversial Concordats}, p. 120-181.} As we saw in Chapter 2, it was anti-socialism that led Pius XI to support the agnostic quasi-dictatorship of Józef Piłsudski in interwar Poland.

The Second World War dramatized in unprecedented fashion the dilemma of Catholicism’s place in the modern world. Under Pius XI, who died only five months prior to Hitler’s invasion of Poland, the Vatican’s political entanglements were limited to concordat diplomacy on the one hand and a vanguard sector of lay activism on the other, torn between the national question and a variety of \textit{avant-garde} internationalist projects. The French and Polish discourses of the human person had achieved a wide reception by 1939, but their most active exponents were either fixed in largely apolitical academic networks or in so-called \textit{non-conformiste} circles (like Emmanuel Mounier’s \textit{Esprit}), so named in part for their limited reach. Martin Conway’s term “ghetto Catholicism” thus remained apt up until the very eve of the Second World War.

In a secular world of chaotic republican politics on the one hand and dictatorships on the other, the Holy See had made clear that it preferred the latter. Influential as Jacques Maritain’s Thomist elaboration of the ethics of the human person had been on Pius XI’s major encyclicals of the 1930s – anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi, anti-socialist, and anti-Communist – the international commitment that spoke loudest was the pope’s ardent support for the military \textit{junta} of General Francisco Franco in Spain. The conduct of the war bore out to a certain extent the Vatican’s fears
of socialist and Communist anti-religious “barbarism,” with thousands of clergy held captive or killed between 1936 and 1938.\textsuperscript{364}

Nonetheless, the Vatican’s campaign against the Spanish Republic placed Pius XI at loggerheads not only with \textit{non-conformistes} like Mounier, but indeed with the otherwise doggedly loyal Maritain as well. Indeed, the publication of Maritain’s 1936 \textit{Humanisme Intégral} in France coincided with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, and Maritain used his promotional campaign for the book as a sort of bully pulpit to denounce Franco’s aggression.\textsuperscript{365} In the final years of the interwar era, then, Maritain, the defining Catholic intellectual light of the period, was in the Vatican’s political doghouse.\textsuperscript{366}

Internal fragmentation within the Catholic universe spoke to a much larger problem that came to a head already in the first 18 months following Adolf Hitler’s invasion of Poland. The Holy See’s support of the violent overthrow of the sitting Spanish Republic by Franco had been only the capstone of a larger Catholic campaign against Europe’s political Left. The campaign itself dated back at least to the mid-19\textsuperscript{th}-century pontificate of Pius IX, but the rise of the Soviet Union as a serious power in the international arena had made the anti-socialist campaign the papacy’s top priority.\textsuperscript{367} The pontiff’s fear of the USSR drove him to make rightward-leanings compromises throughout his pontificate. There was, in turn, a very tangible social consequence

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{364}{José M. Sánchez gives precise figures in Sánchez, \textit{The Spanish Civil War as a Religious Tragedy} (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987).}
\footnotetext{365}{On Maritain’s stance on the war, see Doering, “The Spanish Civil War”; on \textit{Humanisme Intégral} and the Spanish Civil War, see also René Rémond’s preface to the 2000 French-language re-edition, Rémond, “Préface.”}
\footnotetext{366}{Despite Maritain’s serious engagement with Marx and Marxist thought and practice in \textit{Humanisme Intégral}, it would be a mistake to identify his support for the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War with what Gerd-Rainer Horn has, somewhat misleadingly, described as Maritain’s “embrace of the Communist mystique.” It would be more accurate to speak of Maritain’s engagement with, or considered meditation on, the Communist mystique, which he took seriously but – unlike his erstwhile disciple Emmanuel Mounier – never assimilated as his own. Compare with Horn, \textit{Western European Liberation Theology}, p. 102.}
\footnotetext{367}{The most concise account of this pontiff’s reactions to the growth and successes of socialism and the Soviet Union remains Arnal, “Stillborn Alliance.”}
\end{footnotes}
of this taking of sides: the alienation of workers and intellectuals across Europe from the Catholic faith.

In this context, the development of a personalist theology of labor nourished from one side by Dominican nouvelle théologie and from the other by the lay activism of revolutionary personalists encountered a new missionary current within the French institutional Church born of the experience of war. In fact, this vision of a new Catholic mission intérieure – training secular priests especially for direct, face-to-face ministry to masses of industrial workers – originated with none other than France’s cardinal-primate Emmanuel Suhard (1874-1949) himself. These vanguard trends emanating from Catholic France thus produced a revolutionary ideology of Catholic activism in the very years when thousands of other self-proclaimed revolutionaries – these, in turn, trained either in Moscow or in clandestine Communist cells across Europe – were moving from armed anti-Nazi struggle to the building of socialism in state and society on the eastern half of the continent.

Francophone Catholic thinkers like Father Yves Congar were coming to see the analogy between the Catholic laity and the industrial proletariat as groups kept from achieving self-actualization by those at the apex of the power structure. At the same time, Catholic activists in the Soviet Bloc were debating how best to draw their fellow Catholics into social and political activism in a world in which the proletarian revolution already seemed to be in progress. Some accepted a personalist theology of labor as the basis for an integral combination of Catholicism and socialism, in other words, for syncretism. Others sought to safeguard the priority of social Catholicism through political means, accepting the revolutionary character of the postwar years.

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368 The term comes from Horn, Western European Liberation Theology, p. 234. The venture acquired the name of “Mission de France” – after the name of the seminary out of which it was based – and featured several hundred specially trained priests ministering to France’s industrial and rural poor. The most celebrated and controversial among these became known as worker-priests for their adopted lifestyle, living and working as wage laborers alongside the proletariat to whom they were ministering.
but believing that the revolution should be not socialist, but social-Catholic, in nature. The story of the wartime and postwar interactions between Catholicism and socialism in Europe played out in the interstices between these positions, whose spokesmen went from being mostly clergy to mostly laity by the middle of the postwar decade.

La révolution sera morale, ou elle ne sera pas – wrote Charles Péguy, Mounier’s intellectual icon, a French moral philosopher who perished in the final battles of the Great War in 1918. The advent of a second world war brought home the message of the need for morality in revolution to Emmanuel Mounier and his followers in France and Poland alike. At a time when devastation and collapse reigned across Europe, Mounier’s interwar theory of revolutionary, communitarian personalism took on a new meaning, as Catholic thinkers and activists spanning several generations learned to rely on localized, clandestine social networks as communities of resistance to German occupation. Even with the war’s end, these localized communities – both West and East – retained a belief in the need for a revolutionary transformation of the moral and social bases of the order that had buckled so easily under pressure from Nazi Germany.

**Pius XII and the War**

Prior to his elevation to the papacy, Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli had served as Vatican Secretary of State to the dying Pius XI, in which capacity he negotiated a concordat with Nazi Germany. Before receiving his cardinal’s hat, Pacelli had been papal nuncio to Germany. Pius XII thus came to the papacy even more predisposed to support movements of the Right than his

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369 Mounier made this quotation central to the opening article of the inaugural issue of *Esprit*: Mounier, “Refaire la Renaissance.” That said, not all interest in Péguy came through Mounier. For an example of Polish postwar Catholic reflections on Péguy, see Karol Zajczniewski [Janusz Zabłocki], “Charles Péguy,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 22 January 1950.
predecessor had been. Indeed, one of his first acts as pope was to lift Pius XI’s condemnation of Action Française.

World War II, however, would overwhelm Pius XII’s rightward impulse. Though he was able to keep the Holy See on the sidelines for most of the war to avoid appearing an outright partisan of Hitler, he was unable to prevent Catholic and Leftist cooperation in resistance movements against Germany’s occupation of Europe. Oscar Cole-Arnal may have gone too far in concluding that “the Vatican welcomed the Cold War as one means of liberating Pius XII from the stain of collaboration with the Nazis and Italian fascists,”370 but there is no doubt the war years cast a pall over the Catholic Church that would make the postwar papacy far more bellicose than it had been during World War II. As the Vatican became more extreme in both its political crusades and its quest for theological and philosophical orthodoxy, so did the European Catholic vanguard radicalize, uninterested as the papacy seemed to be in dealing with the exacerbation of the social question by wartime chaos and destruction.

Our story is not the place for a detailed discussion of Pius XII’s failure to respond adequately to news of the extermination of European Jewry – whatever its motivations – but it is worth noting that Pius XII also did little to prevent the murder of Catholic priests, let alone laymen, by German occupying forces across the European continent.371 As Polish primate Hlond wrote in a 2 August 1941 letter to the pope, “the Poles are complaining that the pope does not protest against crimes when the Germans have 3,000 Polish priests killed in concentration camps, that he does not speak out in condemnation when hundreds of priests and members of Catholic Action, including papal chamberlains, are shot to death, all exterminated without the

slightest offense on their part.” Pius XII’s personal war effort did not extend much beyond harboring fugitives – Christian resisters as well as some Jews – in the Vatican and delivering radio addresses, with those at Christmas getting the most attention.

**French and Polish Catholics at War**

The Catholic episcopates of Europe were thus left by and large to fend for themselves in the face of a wide spectrum of behavior by occupying German forces, ranging from largely respectful co-existence (France) to encumbrance, harassment, and mass violence (Poland). The experience of laity and clergy alike was extraordinarily diverse, but across Europe social networks formed in the course of collaboration with or resistance against German occupiers and their national proxies like Vichy.

In Western Europe, particularly significant were alliances formed within resistance networks by Catholics and Communists after 1941, when Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union abrogated the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, thereby once again re-orienting Europe’s Communist parties toward anti-fascism. In France, Communist and non-Communist socialists alike

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372 Quoted at Sergio I. Minerbi, “Pius XII: A Reappraisal,” in Rittner and Roth, eds, Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust, p. 85-104, at p. 95. Having received Hlond and other Polish bishops at the Vatican just prior to Poland’s capitulation to Germany, Pius XII did prepare an encyclical on the war, Summi Pontificatus, promulgated on 20 October 1939, which included a passage on Poland’s collapse. However, this encyclical spoke in sweeping, romantic language of Christian sacrifice without either identifying the responsible party or condemning the aggression of war. This was the extent of the pontiff’s commentary on the first campaign of the war: “The blood of countless human beings, even non-combatants, raises a piteous dirge over a nation such as Our dear Poland, which, for its fidelity to the Church, for its services in the defense of Christian civilization, written in indelible characters in the annals of history, has a right to the generous and brotherly sympathy of the whole world, while it awaits, relying on the powerful intercession of Mary, Help of Christians, the hour of a resurrection in harmony with the principles of justice and true peace.” Pius XII, Summi Pontificatus (20 October 1939), Online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii.


participated in the Conseil National de la Résistance from the moment of its creation by Jean Moulin, and they were among the more accomplished of the French maquis, the guerrilla resistance fighters.375

In Eastern Europe, meanwhile, such cooperation was possible only in rare instances. In Poland, in particular, the deeply ideologized identities of the separate forces of resistance to Nazi occupation – broadly associated with either the Armia Krajowa (Home Army, loyal to the government-in-exile in London) or the Armia Ludowa (People’s Army, created in 1944 and loyal to the Polish Committee of National Liberation assembled in Lublin by Stalin-backed Polish Communists) – rendered cooperation virtually impossible. Bands of guerrilla fighters nominally associated with one side or the other only complicated matters.376

The differences between the respective experiences of war in France and Poland were fundamental. France saw no Soviet occupation nor Nazi death camps, no Warsaw Ghetto Uprising nor Warsaw Uprising; its resistance fighters gained Anglo-American recognition even as Poland’s Home Army lost that recognition.377 It is therefore perhaps remarkable that, despite their divergent experiences of war and occupation, France and Poland both hosted several generations of resistance fighters-turned-revolutionary-personalists whose wartime activism in networks of resistance contributed significantly to their respective leftward turns. In France, the Lyonnais network of Témoignage Chrétien and, in Poland, a number of clandestine youth

resistance groups became incubation sites for the vanguard of postwar Catholic lay activism, born in both cases of armed anti-German struggle.

**Maritain Abroad**

For the Catholic personalists of France, the German decision in November 1942 to expand the occupation of France from the “northern” zone (occupied since 1940) to include Vichy France was a major turning point.\(^{378}\) In 1940-1941, personalist involvement in the war effort had been ambivalent at best. Jacques Maritain, personalism’s leading light, was in the United States on a lecture tour at the time of Germany’s invasion of France, and he and his wife passed the duration of the war in the United States and Canada. Even from abroad, Maritain did his best to involve himself actively in resistance efforts.\(^{379}\) For example, he co-founded in New York the École Libre des Hautes Études as a sort of university-in-exile where he and other expatriate French academics – including Claude Lévi-Strauss – met and lectured regularly.\(^{380}\)

Despite a difficult material situation – he passed the entire war with no permanent academic appointment, offered only temporary lecturerships at Columbia and Princeton – Maritain wrote prolifically, publishing his work with the exile press Éditions de la Maison Française.\(^{381}\) In 1941, he published *À travers le désastre* (Through the disaster), a study of the reasons behind France’s overnight collapse in 1940; in 1942, *Les Droits de l’homme et la Loi*

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\(^{378}\) With the German decision to occupy all of France, the ranks of France’s “internal,” rather than London-based, resistance swelled overnight. Free France under Generals Charles de Gaulle and Jacques Leclerc had made impressive contributions to the wartime fight earlier in 1942 at the battles of Bir-Hakeim and Gazala, and Jean Moulin’s Conseil National de la Résistance incorporated members of the six main political parties of the fallen Third Republic. See, for example, Guillaume Piketty, *Français en résistance : carnets de guerre, correspondances, journaux personnels* (Paris: R. Laffont, 2009).

\(^{379}\) The special issue of the *Cahiers Jacques Maritain* subtitled “Le philosophe dans la guerre (1939-1945)” (April 1988) offers a rich compendium of source material and scholarly commentary on Maritain’s wartime activities.

\(^{380}\) After the war, this institution relocated to Paris and took the name of the Écoles des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, which functions to this day as one of France’s most prestigious institutions of higher learning. See, for example, Claus-Dieter Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile: Refugee Scholars and the New School for Social Research*, trans. Rita Kimber and Robert Kimber (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), p. 59-72.

naturelle (The rights of man and natural law); and in 1943, *Christianisme et démocratie* (Christianity and democracy). Smuggled into France and reproduced on a large scale on clandestine printing presses, copies of these volumes furnished especially underground Christian Democratic activists with propaganda material while they were building new organizational structures under the aegis of the wartime Conseil National de la Résistance.

The circulation of Maritain’s new writings during the war also contributed to the Free French propagandistic effort to mobilize Anglo-American support for the resistance movement led by Charles de Gaulle (1890-1970). The pride taken by Maritain in the ends served by his wartime writings is clear from his January 1942 letter to his friend, French political philosopher Yves Simon: “my book is being printed clandestinely in France, the latest news received tells me, in 10,000 copies, which attests to a serious underground organization [...] It is also necessary that a certain corpus of political and international doctrine be prepared here under conditions of freedom so that it may exert an influence on the French in London and on General de Gaulle himself, whom we must try to help.”

That said, Maritain’s absence from metropolitan France for a long time deprived Christian resisters of an intellectual leader. Interwar “popular democrats” – arguably the forerunners of the postwar Christian Democratic formation – had leaders in the persons of Robert Schuman (1886-1963), Maurice Schumann (1911-1998, De Gaulle’s spokesman), François de Menthon (1900-1984, one of Jean Moulin’s closest contacts), and Georges Bidault (1899-1983, who became president of the Conseil National de la Résistance after Moulin’s capture and

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murder). These individuals, however, for the most part built national reputations for themselves only during the war; more importantly, none had been seriously involved in Catholic intellectual life before the war. With Maritain physically removed from the French scene, primacy of place fell to his erstwhile personalist disciple, Esprit founding editor Emmanuel Mounier.

**Vichy Collaboration and Christian Witness**

Over the war’s first 18 months, Mounier was hardly a paragon of resistance activity. In the summer of 1940, he and one of his closest Esprit colleagues, Jean Lacroix (1900-1986), a philosophy professor from Lyon, had accepted invitations from their friend the Abbé du Naurois to teach part-time at the École des Cadres at Uriage, the young elite training academy of Vichy France. Mounier threw himself completely into work on behalf of Vichy’s National Revolution, continuing to produce Esprit out of Uriage and promoting the “spiritualist” training that has since motivated historian Zeev Sternhell to describe him as a proto-fascist.

Paradoxically, however, in the eyes of Vichy’s Catholic intellectual guru – and former Action Française luminary – Henri Massis, it was precisely Mounier’s spiritualism that necessitated his dismissal from Uriage in April 1941, at which point Esprit ceased to appear for the duration of the war. Indeed, once out of the Vichy mainstream, Mounier quickly became a

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386 See, for example, Hellman, *The Knight-monks of Vichy France*, p. 53. Mounier’s own account is that “the order was given from Vichy to the École des cadres at Uriage to dispense with my services... Not losing the occasion to avow that the ‘National Revolution’ is, for two-thirds of its leaders, a revolution of party and class, while the reality is one of national submission.” *Mounier et sa génération*, in Mounier, *Œuvres*, IV, p. 704.
favorite punching bag of the Vichy authorities, who kept him for most of 1942 either imprisoned or under house arrest pending charges of involvement with the Resistance. Paradoxically, it was when these charges were dropped – following a hunger strike by the benighted Mounier – that the philosopher actually did become involved with the internal resistance.\footnote{For a corrective to the judgments pronounced on Mounier by John Hellman and Zeev Sternhell and a more detailed account of Mounier’s arrest and hunger strike, see Michel Bergès, \textit{Vichy contre Mounier : les non-conformistes face aux années 40} (Paris: Economica, 1997).}

By the end of 1942, Lyon had begun to attract significant numbers of French thinkers of different political and religious backgrounds looking to join the Resistance. Since November 1941, a small group of young Catholics supervised by the Jesuit priests Gaston Fessard (1897-1978) and Pierre Chaillot (1900-1972) had published on a bimonthly basis a clandestine journal entitled \textit{Cahiers du Témoignage Chrétien}, alongside a more compact \textit{Courriers du Témoignage Chrétien} whose print run, at its height, reached 100,000 copies. Each issue consisted principally of a single extended essay meditating on contemporary events and their philosophical and spiritual implications.\footnote{For an informative, albeit early and partly testimonial, account of the Témoignage Chrétien clandestine publishing enterprise, see Renée Bédarida, \textit{Les Armes de l’esprit. Témoignage chrétien (1941-1944)} (Paris: Les Éditions ouvrières, 1977).}

This milieu’s aim was literally to bear witness \textit{en chrétien} – following Maritain’s distinction between \textit{en chrétien} and \textit{en tant que chrétien} – to the damage done to the French spirit by Vichy’s collaboration with Nazi Germany. The subtitle of the first issue was \textit{France, prends garde de perdre ton âme} (France, be on your guard against losing your soul), with Nazism and Vichy identified as the possible soul-snatching forces. The group openly promoted Catholic-Socialist-Communist cooperation in the Resistance. Indeed, with the reconstitution of the \textit{Cahiers du Témoignage Chrétien} in 1944 as a weekly journal entitled simply \textit{Témoignage Chrétien}, the staff published a number of articles reminiscent of Thorez’s \textit{main tendue} language.
of 1936-1937. Over the course of 1942, the young clandestine group attracted prominent Catholic writers, including Stanislas Fumet (1896-1983) and Georges Bernanos (1888-1948). For their January-February 1943 issue, the featured author was none other than August Cardinal Hlond, primate of Poland, who had escaped Poland in early 1940 and passed the remainder of the war either in France or in German captivity.

The great influx of vitality into the Lyon Catholic resistance circles, known by the moniker of Témoignage Chrétien, came with several of Mounier’s and Lacroix’s former students from Uriage, most notably Gilbert Dru (1920-1944) and the Lyon-born Jean-Marie Domenach. Together with the young historian of St. Augustine, André Mandouze, who as a graduate student in Paris had been a member of the Sept editorial group prior to its Vatican-ordered liquidation in 1937, these were the Young Turks of Catholic clandestine publishing in wartime Lyon. Mandouze in 1943 was promoted to deputy editor of the Cahiers du Témoignage Chrétien, yet he maintained a regular teaching load in the Humanities Department at the Université de Lyon. Domenach wrote in admiration of Mandouze, “His elevated clandestine position in no way interrupted his official conduct.”

Although Mounier spent the bulk of his post-Uriage years nursing his health and writing in the village of Dieulefit, he met several times with the Témoignage Chrétien crew, meditating on the opportune moment to come back into the open by reactivating Esprit. In the end, Esprit reappeared only with its editors’ return to Paris after the capital’s liberation in the spring of 1944,

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389 See, particularly, André Mandouze, “Nous avons su rompre, nous saurons unir!” Témoignage Chrétien, 9 September 1944; André Mandouze, “Front spirituel,” Témoignage Chrétien, 4 November 1944.
390 The full texts of all of the Cahiers and Courriers have been reprinted in the two-volume edition: Renée Bédarida, ed, Cahiers et Courriers clandestins du Témoignage chrétien, 1941-1944 (Paris: Témoignage Chrétien, 1980). Hlond’s personal courrier for the duration of his time in France was none other than Maria Winowska, known to us from Chapter 2 as a French-educated Korniłowicz disciple and an editor of Verbum.
393 Mandouze, Mémoires d’outre-siècle, p. 102.
yet, in his memoirs, André Mandouze has described this period of rumination by Mounier on what the latter called *clandestinité publique* (public clandestineness) with a great deal of reverence. Mandouze wrote, “Thus, for Mounier, a heroic and mobilizing testimony rather than – and mostly for reasons of his occasional imprisonment – clandestineness in the ordinary sense of the term.”

It is notoriously difficult to compare the impact of different modes of resistance in warfare. How, for example, can one compare the significance of clandestine publishing with that of guerrilla fighting? One may achieve a material, military victory, yet the other maintains or creates consciousness, discourses, and ideology fundamental to motivating and sustaining the material victory. For Domenach and Mandouze, who would both become leading lights of postwar efforts at Catholic-socialist syncretism, clandestine publishing in wartime Lyon constituted an incubation period, one reinforced by the opportunity to get to know and admire up close both fellow young activists and iconic figures like Mounier. Domenach, writing together with Robert de Montvalon two decades later, romanticized this effort while nonetheless spelling out its essential goals: “Many young Christians, obliged to rely on their consciences and sometimes even to challenge the directives of certain bishops, discovered the eternally new face of the Gospel teachings, and threw themselves whole-heartedly into the Liberation movement, which, after freeing their land and institutions, was also to be a liberation of souls.”

If this clandestine activity sounds somewhat idealized beyond the occasional moral qualms on Mounier’s or Domenach’s part over having been involved with Uriage, the experience of occupation did occasionally bring violence and tragedy into the lives of the personalist-

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resisters. Gilbert Dru, Domenach’s best friend and a leading activist of the clandestine Jeunesse Étudiante Chrétienne, was identified and summarily executed at the age of 24 in the Place Bellecour in late July 1944, only a month shy of Lyon’s liberation. Domenach was so shaken by the circumstances of Dru’s death that he devoted an entire book, published in 1947, to his friend in which he made clear that his friend’s demise had definitively turned him into a partisan of peace.

With Maritain in exile and Mounier caught between Uriage, repressions at the hands of Vichy, and ambivalence over reactivating Esprit, the real center of gravity of the French Catholic intellectual resistance to German occupation lay amidst the Young Turks of Témoignage Chrétien. Mounier and Lacroix might have taught at Uriage, and Domenach and Dru might have studied there, but their spiritualist tendencies kept them closer to humanism and revolutionary personalism than to fascism or, even more so, traditional nationalism. Their milieu thus became also a veritable breeding ground for postwar Catholic-socialist syncretism. And Gilbert Dru became, in death, an iconic martyr of sorts for a wide variety of postwar Catholic lay organizations – most notably, France’s new Christian Democratic party, the Mouvement Républicain Populaire. That said, his death was, in many ways, an exceptional feature of the French personalists’ wartime experience. For Domenach in particular, however, the exception reinforced the postwar pacifist rule.

**France’s Mission to the Workers**

Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard, archbishop of Paris and primate of France at the time of the country’s fall in 1940, was initially an enthusiastic supporter of Philippe Pétain’s

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396 A number of Esprit’s supporters who have reflected on the Uriage question have distinguished between Uriage before and after October 1941. See, for example, Lucien Pélissier: “in October 1941, a second ‘École nationale des cadres’ was created near Vichy, that of Uriage having clearly taken a position against collaboration and having educated numerous young men in that spirit.” Pélissier, “Mounier et les communistes,” p. 76.

397 See, especially, the first pages of Domenach, *Gilbert Dru*. 
accommodation of the German occupying forces.\textsuperscript{398} As Oscar L. Arnal has argued, however, what turned Suhard around on Vichy and the Germans was the introduction in September 1942 of the Service du Travail Obligatoire (STO), a compulsory draft of French citizens sent to work in labor camps in the Third Reich.\textsuperscript{399} What’s more, however, the STO – which offered no exemptions for priests – struck Suhard as an affront to the personal dignity of the conscripts. Testimony from surviving conscripts revolutionized Suhard’s understanding of the experience of the working masses in the modern world. Having already called in 1941 for the creation of a large new French seminary for secular priests, the French primate, acting on advice from three priests – Louis Augros (1898-1982), Henri Godin (1906-1944), and Yvan Daniel (1909-1986) – initiated the enterprise that would become known as the Mission de France.\textsuperscript{400}

Augros, Godin, and Daniel all had significant experience as social activists associated with the interwar équipes (teams) of the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (JOC). A Belgian-inspired spin-off of Catholic Action, the French JOC took off in the 1930s as a means of organizing young, church-going industrial workers with the goal of preserving and deepening these workers’ spiritual commitments. Lofty as these ideals may have been, they were largely successful, albeit very limited in reach.\textsuperscript{401} Augros, pastor at the Church of the St. Sulpice in Paris and a confidante of Cardinal Suhard’s, arranged for himself and his two friends to meet with the cardinal in August 1942 to discuss possible revisions to the JOC model of ministry to the


\textsuperscript{399} Arnal, “Témoignage of the Worker-Priests,” p. 120. On the STO, see Patrice Arnaud, \textit{Les STO : histoire des Français requis en Allemagne nazie, 1942-1945} (Paris: CNRS, 2010).

\textsuperscript{400} On Suhard’s proposal for a new seminary, see Vinatier, \textit{Le cardinal Suhard}, p. 227-230.

\textsuperscript{401} On the challenges facing JOC in reaching workers both before and after World War II, see Oscar L. Arnal, “Toward a Lay Apostolate of the Workers: Three Decades of Conflict for the French Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (1927-1956),” \textit{Catholic Historical Review}, 73:2 (April 1987), p. 211-227, esp. at p. 218-224. Gerd-Rainer Horn also underscores the importance of the Mission de France’s roots in JOC, but on this point his argument largely recapitulates elements of Arnal’s writings. See the footnotes at, for example, Horn, \textit{Western European Liberation Theology}, p. 105-107.
industrial proletariat. Asked by Suhard to prepare a report on the “spiritual state” of France’s workers, Godin and Daniel traveled extensively and collected testimony and statistical data for their report.⁴⁰²

Among those interviewed by the priests were workers who had returned from forced labor in Germany. Although not part of the STO conscription wave – the northern, “occupied” zone of France had been subject to labor deportations since the armistice of 1940, while the STO simply expanded the pool of potential deportees to include residents of the southern, “Vichy” zone as well – these workers inspired Godin and Daniel to make an aggressive pitch to Suhard based on the STO’s expansion of the forced labor base. What so struck Godin, Daniel, and subsequently Suhard as well were stories from the returnees about conscripted priests and JOC activists offering solace to large groups of workers gathered in barracks at the end of days of labor.⁴⁰³ According to Godin and Daniel’s transcription of one such testimonial, “Christ willed that this great misery of the war and that the STO serve to spread his doctrine. He gave us a unique opportunity to touch the masses, the real masses, in permanent and profound contacts.”⁴⁰⁴

On receiving Godin and Daniel’s report in April 1943, Suhard was reportedly so moved by what he was reading that he spent an entire night making his way through the text without sleeping a wink, absorbed in the meticulously documented reality of “the retreat of Christianity in France,” where “in 1943, the faith is not being preached in an entire milieu, millions of people in France are not hearing the Gospel.”⁴⁰⁵ He put the full weight of his support behind the report’s publication later that same year as a monograph entitled *La France, pays de mission*?

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⁴⁰² For a detailed chronology, see Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, p. 227-234.
⁴⁰³ Arnal, “*Témoignage of the Worker-Priests*,” p. 120.
⁴⁰⁴ Godin and Daniel, *La France, pays de mission?*, p. 34. This same testimonial notes that the JOC had come nowhere close to the kind of evangelical effect reached in the wartime STO and POW camps. “You must have seen that the French JOC, the Parisian JOC in particular, did not really touch the masses, among whom Christ is unknown.” Quoted in Godin and Daniel, *La France, pays de mission?*, p. 35.
Suhard had opened his new seminary in October 1942, and this report soon became the blueprint for the seminary’s curriculum. Indeed, the term Mission de France referred to the seminary before it came to represent also the larger enterprise, for it was the seminary, with Augros as its first Rev. Superior, that received the task of training priests for a mission intérieure.\textsuperscript{406}

The idea of mission came directly from Godin and Daniel: “the renewal of the gesture of Christ, who took form and came into the world to save it.”\textsuperscript{407} The program of the Mission de France thus centered on the re-evangelization of those sectors of the country – above all, the industrial proletariat – that had lost contact with the Gospels and with Catholicism.\textsuperscript{408} The new seminary was crucial because priests participating in the Mission de France needed special training to go beyond the basic liturgical and pastoral tasks traditionally considered proper to Catholic clergy. Godin and Daniel insisted that these priests needed to be inculcated with a “real missionary vocation” in order to deal with the “pagan world” within Christian France.\textsuperscript{409}

To understand the significance of the Mission de France for the story of the interaction of Catholicism and socialism, we return to the idea of catechism. \textit{Pace} today’s conventional definition of the term, the term “catechumen” applies to more than students of the catechism of the Catholic Church preparing for confirmation or adult baptism. Rather, the catechumen is, first and foremost, a partner in dialogue with his catechist; the catechumen may be returning to a faith from which he has grown apart, or he may be entirely foreign to the spiritual world that he traverses in partnership with his catechist. At the heart of any project of (re-)evangelization – in the sense of spreading the word of God – is the figure of the catechumen.

\textsuperscript{406} For Augros’s testimony on the beginnings and early years of the seminary and its larger mission, see Louis Augros, \textit{De l’Église de hier à l’Église de demain : l’aventure de la Mission de France} (Paris: Cerf, 1980), p. 46-73.\textsuperscript{407} Godin and Daniel, \textit{La France, pays de mission?}, p. 18.\textsuperscript{408} “The proletariat does not know the Church: they are separated from each other to such an extent; but, once it encounters the Church, it will be necessary still that it be able to recognize the Church.” Godin and Daniel, \textit{La France, pays de mission?}, p. 47-48.\textsuperscript{409} Godin and Daniel, \textit{La France, pays de mission?}, p. 51.
In the context of *nouvelle théologie* and *Mission de France*, the catechumen was, above all, the working man: dispossessed, atomized, and alienated from Christendom by the Industrial Revolution and its attendant processes of proletarianization. As Revs. Godin and Daniel put it, “Yes or no, if Christ came to aid us in 1943 in the re-establishment of religion in our world in its present state of ferment, would he not count above all, as before, on the meek, on the proletarians?”\(^{410}\) The study by Godin and Daniel, like the theology of Congar and Chenu, thus took the premise of social Catholicism into new territory by actually postulating the social, psychological, and pastoral reality of what it would take for Catholic catechists to reach proletarian catechumens via “an organized catechumenate.”\(^{411}\)

The analytical vocabulary of *La France, pays de mission?* is a composite of several different philosophical and theological elements. Positing core values of “human solidarity” facilitated through “Christian community,”\(^{412}\) Godin and Daniel explained the process of building that community as being contingent on “the priority of the personal.” Moreover, their analysis relied in several instances on historical references to the “founding fathers of the Church.”\(^{413}\) These advocacies interlocked, respectively, with Emmanuel Mounier’s personalism – notably, the simultaneously “personalist and communitarian” qualities of his revolutionary ethics of the human person – and the method of *ressourcement* practiced by the Dominican *nouveaux théologiens*.

Indeed, Marie-Dominique Chenu, for whom Cardinal Suhard had enormous respect, sat on the censorial review board that granted *La France, pays de mission?* its *Nihil obstat* as a Catholic publication on 23 May 1943, just over a year after his own indictment by the Holy See’s

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\(^{410}\) Godin and Daniel, *La France, pays de mission?*, p. 64.

\(^{411}\) Godin and Daniel, *La France, pays de mission?*, p. 89.


\(^{413}\) Compare with Godin and Daniel, *La France, pays de mission?*, p. 64.
Chenu, who maintained close contact with Rev. Louis Augros, would remain a clarion voice in the French Catholic press promoting the Mission de France, devoting a series of essays and pamphlets over the course of the 1940s to justification of the Mission de France and its “evangelization of the shop floor.” The result was precisely the kind of theology of labor for which Congar had called over a decade earlier.

It is perhaps little surprise, then, that, even though the Mission de France was an initiative of the cardinal-primate of France himself, involving priests under the close supervision of the hierarchy, the Vatican looked on it unfavorably almost from the start. Of particular concern were Rev. Augros’s “lax” administrative style, the Marxist literature available in the seminary’s library, and the “communal” style of vocational training. Like the JOC, the Mission de France operated on the assumption that mission in the world was best achieved through équipes, teams of priests able to fan out across several parishes and establish a tight network of communities facilitating interaction among their respective catechumens. As a result, the Mission de France trained its priests in équipes from day one of seminary, instead of relying on the traditional vocational model of individual soul-searching that one might associate with Ignatius Loyola’s Spiritual Exercises. Ideologically, institutionally, and pastorally, the seminary was breaking new ground.

414 Godin and Daniel, La France, pays de mission?, p. 4. Despite the serious Vatican campaign against him, Chenu retained teaching positions at the Institut Catholique de Paris and the Sorbonne thanks in part to the personal support of Cardinal Suhard.

415 Chenu’s emotional and spiritual investment in the Mission de France enterprise is clear from the preface that he wrote for Augros’s memoirs: Marie-Dominique Chenu, “L’Église en état de mission,” in Augros, De l’Église d’aujourd’hui à l’Église de demain, p. 7-13. See also Horn, Western European Liberation Theology, p. 105.

416 Chenu reflected deeply on the implications of the praxis of labor for the proletarian’s spiritual state: “The brutal and material solidarity that the machine imposes becomes the support for a spiritual solidarity of human beings carrying out identical labor from that moment onward when they begin to sense and know that they are at home within their activity of labor.” Marie-Dominique Chenu, “Civilisation technique et spiritualité nouvelle,” Masses ouvrières (May 1948), p. 14-37, at p. 32. See also Marie-Dominique Chenu, Spiritualité du travail (Liège: La pensée catholique, 1947).
Future cardinal and Vatican II traditionalist Alfredo Ottaviani (1890-1979) and his ally Pietro Parente kept the leadership of the seminary and the episcopal superiors of the various Mission de France projects on their toes throughout the 1940s. However, it was one fateful decision on the part of Rev. Augros that ended up fundamentally undercutting the Mission de France enterprise: allowing équipes of priests to become paid manual laborers as part of their mission to the proletariat. This became the affair of the so-called “worker-priests” (prêtres-ouvriers), all of whom received their training at the Mission de France. It was only after Suhard’s death in 1949, when in-fighting began within the French Episcopate over the Mission’s fate, that the Vatican began to treat the worker-priest option as a singularly dangerous enterprise. The results included Augros’s removal as seminary superior in 1952, a Holy See instruction to the French bishops in late 1953 to suppress worker-priest activity, and two separate re-locations of the Mission de France in order to cut it off from contact with proletarian communities.

The Mission de France from its wartime inception functioned, like the Dominican nouveaux théologiens, under constant threat from the Vatican precisely because it had taken Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno to a new level. The new enterprise permitted Catholic activists seeking to wrestle through the real problems of the modern world to move beyond the abstractions of Catholic social teaching to actual substantive engagement with socialism. The Vichy-collaborating Cardinal Suhard and his friend Rev. Augros were even less likely candidates for association with socialism than Fathers Chenu and Congar. The Mission de France founders sought, rather, to fight socialism, not with neo-scholastic or Cold War rhetoric, but through a

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417 Already the first Mission de France delegation to the Vatican heard in November 1946 from future cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani that the seminary had brought “clouds over France.” Horn, Western European Liberation Theology, p. 280.

grassroots understanding of the everyday problems of the proletariat. Their hope was to win proletarian trust through ministry to the working poor of France. Nonetheless, in the face of a Soviet Union ascendant and Communist parties legitimated in their share of Western European postwar reconstruction by their role in wartime resistance, it look little for the Vatican to suspect a socialist Trojan horse effort on the part of men of the cloth. If Rev. Korniłowicz had not died in 1946, perhaps he, too, despite his exemplary track record of social-Catholic catechism and ministry, might have fallen prey to the postwar zeal of the Holy See.

Rather than value the Mission de France for its theological and pastoral contributions, Pius XII and his advisors saw it, like the nouvelle théologie, exclusively through an overdetermined political lens colored by fear of the Soviet Union. Esprit editor Jean-Marie Domenach was thus hardly alone in his private assessment of Pius XII as the “Stalin of the Church.” Father Congar’s term for the Holy See under that same pope was “a police regime of betrayal.”

Although avant-garde efforts among French Catholic clergy to beat socialists at their own game were under the gun from the wartime years onward, lay activists received a considerably wider berth. Indeed, one of the reasons why the story of postwar Catholic-socialist syncretism is foundational to the 20th-century transformation of Catholic activism is that the Vatican’s drive to maintain orthodoxy began with the clergy. For this reason, although nouvelle théologie and the Mission de France constituted essential elements of the personalist theology of labor assembled over the course of the 1940s, providing the ideological animus for Catholic-socialist syncretic efforts in the emerging Soviet Bloc, the core ingredient was, in fact, Mounier’s revolutionary personalism.

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419 Domenach, Beaucoup de Gueule et peu d’or, p. 190.


France in Poland

The Polish story of lay Catholic wartime resistance was more complex than the French story, but it illuminates also the importance of the French example to wartime Poland. The Polish equivalents of the Young Turks of the Lyonnais resistance derived inspiration, like their French counterparts, in part from the personalist thought of Emmanuel Mounier. There was also a wealth of resistance activity on the part of older generations, but, among Catholic activists, one of the key determinants of success in the postwar decade would be the extent of wartime contact with French Catholic thought.

As of the Second World War, few young Polish intellectuals had more experience in this department than Czesław Miłosz. Though disaffected in his Catholicism, Miłosz had passed in and out of Laski at the end of the 1930s, developing with guidance from Rev. Korniłowicz a deep appreciation not just for Thomas Aquinas, but even more so for the writings of his most influential contemporary scholar, Jacques Maritain. Actively composing and circulating his poetry throughout the war, Miłosz made another significant contribution to Polish wartime clandestine publishing: a complete translation – accompanied by a preface of Miłosz’s own authorship – of Jacques Maritain’s À travers le désastre.

An avid reader of Maritain’s writings since even before the 1936 Humanisme Intégral, Miłosz, in the words of his biographer Andrzej Franaszek, considered Maritain to be the “author who proved that it is possible to harmonize Catholicism with modernity and to liberate it from ties to nationalist ideology.” Though he had attended Rev. Korniłowicz’s seminars and dialogues on spirituality and the liturgy at Laski, Miłosz – unlike Abramowski before him – had

422 Franaszek, Miłosz, p. 281.
not proven a particularly attentive catechumen. Nonetheless, he retained close ties with the Laski milieu through his friend Maria Czapska, and it is through Laski that Miłosz came to acquire a copy of *À travers le désastre* printed in New York and smuggled into Poland in the fall of 1941 by a Dutch merchant.

When Miłosz heard that his friend Zenon Skierski (1908-1961) was starting an underground press, he pitched Maritain’s book to become the press’s first publication, and he completed the translation in less than six months. Indeed, Miłosz’s translation appeared in print before the clandestine re-edition of the book was issued on French soil. Miłosz’s translation appeared in 1640 copies, with 1300 of these sold within six weeks. This was a triumph of underground publishing, particularly given the logistical difficulties of procuring paper and given that most printed material had an average readership in the double digits, passed from hand to hand within clandestine organizations and among friends and family. Writing the preface to his translation of Maritain in January 1942, only a year after Maritain had finished writing the tract, Miłosz underscored the importance of continued positive Polish sentiment toward France, Poland’s long-time example, despite the latter’s ignominious collapse.

Miłosz presented Maritain’s diagnosis of the French collapse as an antidote to any possible Polish souring toward France: “When as eminent a writer as Maritain takes the floor, we have a right to expect an explanation. And, for the most part, that is what we have received. [...] It is not true that the faults that resulted in the collapse of France are faults indelibly tied to

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423 Indeed, he confessed in writing that, together with the writer Jerzy Andrzejewski, with whom he had traveled to Laski, “we admitted to each other that the asceticism and the depth and nobility of spiritual self-reflection awakened only our appetites for vodka and juicy steaks.” Milosz, *Zaraz po wojnie: korespondencja z pisarzami 1945-1950* (Kraków: Znak, 1998), p. 18.


425 Andrzej Franaszek makes the point that the book had to have first become available between January 1942, which is the month given by Miłosz in his preface to the Polish underground edition, and 6 March 1942, when Polish resistance hero and later Catholic activist Władysław Bartoszewski (1922-) noted in his diary that the published translation had become widely available in Warsaw through underground networks. Compare Franaszek, *Miłosz*, p. 809 n. 157; and Władysław Bartoszewski, *1859 dni Warszawy* (Kraków: Znak, 2008 ed.), p. 320.
democracy – this is the first certainty that Maritain explains.\textsuperscript{426} The credibility accorded to Maritain by Miłosz was a function not only of Maritain’s status as “the leading representative of contemporary Catholic philosophy,” but also Maritain’s “place of honor” in the pursuit of a “re-ordering of the wilderness of contradictory conceptions bogging down contemporary humanist thought. In this current, interrupted by the cataclysm, Maritain holds a place of honor.”\textsuperscript{427}

Maritain’s personalism would remain important in the postwar decade as an inter-generational bridge between Polish Catholic lay activists from the interwar era and novices who had been too young to play a role in intellectual and political life prior to 1939. Miłosz, though he had grown apart from the Catholicism of his childhood, single-handedly kept Maritain’s thought alive in Poland during the war years.\textsuperscript{428}

**Emmanuel Mounier and the Young Polish Resistance Fighters**

Despite having his finger on the pulse of the Polish reception of Maritain, Miłosz lacked the analogous sensitivity to understand his fellow countrymen’s engagement of Maritain’s erstwhile disciple, Emmanuel Mounier. More than five decades after the war’s end, Miłosz wrote, “Mounier was, in fact, known in Poland only second-hand, and his legend did not really correspond to reality.”\textsuperscript{429} Although there is some truth to the second part of the statement, the first is entirely inaccurate. Not only had Mounier been published in interwar Poland,\textsuperscript{430} but
during World War II he in fact became one of the most important Western European voices speaking to an entire generation of young Poles grouped in several different networks of clandestine resistance.431

The three among these that engaged most directly and substantively with Mounier’s writings, notably the 1936 *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*, were Konfederacja Narodu (National Confederation); Szare Szeregi (Gray Ranks), consisting of underground Home Army units formed in late September 1939 from among former, mostly teenage, Scouts432; and Płomienie (Flames), composed of non-Marxist socialists inspired above all by the writings of Stanisław Brzozowski.433 The first of these would welcome also members of the second in the immediate postwar to form the milieu of a new Catholic weekly journal entitled *Dziś i Jutro* (Today and Tomorrow), which became the seat of revolutionary personalism and of Emmanuel Mounier’s most ardent fans in postwar Poland. Paradoxically, these milieux included many of the most conservative Catholic activists of the interwar period, deeply marked by National Democracy.

Konfederacja Narodu (KN) was a Home Army-affiliated guerrilla organization, far more militant and more enthusiastic than Unia in its pursuit of partisan fighting. KN drew all of its leadership and most of its membership from the interwar Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny (ONR, Mounier a leading exponent of “Christian Communism.” See Emmanuel Mounier, “Odnowa katolicyzmu we Francji,” *Wiadomości Literackie*, 7 January 1934; F.B. Otto Forst de Bataglia, “Zgon tygodnika ‘Sept,’” *Przegląd Powszechny*, 11/1937.

431 We still lack a reliable historical sociology of these groups in wartime Poland. For a dated and ideologized yet still useful study, see Bogdan Hillebrandt, *Konspiracyjne organizacje młodzieżowe w Polsce, 1939-1945* (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1973).

432 The surviving members of Szare Szeregi have produced a significant memorial literature, including testimonials and surviving correspondence, with most volumes specific to the given region or locality in which particular units were organized. Post-1989 academic research on Szare Szeregi is still in its early stages, but of particular value is the so-called encyclopedia of Szare Szeregi: Zygmunt Gładysz, *Szare Szeregi: słownik encyklopedyczny: hasła rzeczowe* (Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza RYTM, 2010). See also Jerzy Jabrzemski, *Harcerze z Szarych Szeregów* (Warszawa: PWN, 1997).

433 The group took its name from the title of Brzozowski’s classic 1908 novelistic manifesto. On the Płomienie group more generally, see Andrzej Mencwel, “Rozum w służbie wartości. Świadectwo ‘Płomień,’” in *Przedwiośnie czy potop. Studium postaw polskich w XX wieku* (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1997).
National-Radical Camp), particularly its league of young militant fascists, the Falanga (Falange; so named in solidarity with its Spanish counterpart). Its supreme leader Bolesław Piasecki was a rebellious disciple of Roman Dmowski. Although he accepted the exclusionary nationalism – complete with anti-semitism and anti-Germanism – of National Democracy, he consistently attempted to blaze his own path to power through bold, maverick moves.

Even his most ardent political opponents have recalled again and again the personal magnetism he exuded that seduced potential new adherents, winning their faith and their loyalty. The “old guard” of the Falanga – Jerzy Hagmajer (1913-1988), Zygmunt Przetakiewicz (1917-2005) – welcomed also a new wave of non-fascists who approved of Piasecki’s aggressive militancy. Key among these were Wojciech Kętrzyński (1916-1983) and Andrzej Krasiński (1916-1997), who, together with Konstanty Łubieński (1910-1977), would play decisive roles in the postwar Dziś i Jutro milieu.

It remains a curiosity that interwar fascists could pass through wartime guerrilla militancy only to emerge in the postwar period as Poland’s leading exponents of a Catholic-socialist syncretism expressed through Emmanuel Mounier’s revolutionary personalism. There is no direct evidence that Piasecki ever actually read Mounier, though they would speak at length during Mounier’s 1946 visit to Poland, and Piasecki would host a litany of other Esprit staff

435 A definitive intellectual and political biography of Piasecki – which, although thorough in its treatment of the history of the Dziś i Jutro-PAX movement, does not examine its transnational ties within the world of Catholic activism – is Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader.”
436 Jacek Woźniakowski mocks this effect in his memoirs, all the while noting its very real hold on a number of his friends and peers, including Wojciech Kętrzyński. Woźniakowski, Ze wspomnień szczęściarza, p. 144.
437 The only one among these to produce a memoir was Zygmunt Przetakiewicz, Od ONR-u do PAX-u: wspomnienia (Warszawa: Książka Polska, 1994).
438 Unlike Kętrzyński and Krasiński, who had come up through Konfederacja Narodu, the older Lubieński had been a Home Army regular officer and, following Poland’s capitulation, had joined Unia and SP, which he left only in 1946. “Lubieński, Konstanty,” Ministry of Public Security Biographical Note [for Internal Use], 3 March 1951, AIPN BU 0648/118/1.
members in Warsaw in the decade following the Second World War. That said, it is clear that, despite the tight organizational leash on which Piasecki sought to keep KN, he recognized and nurtured intellectual talent among his disciples, even encouraging them to familiarize themselves with the major cultural and intellectual trends of the day when these suited his goals. Given that the KN leaders’ opening to the outside world represented a decisive shift from their earlier fascism, it is perhaps unsurprising that the new blood in KN needed other organizations to obtain literature and information as well as partners for discussion and debate. Evidence gathered by the postwar Polish state security apparatus in the early 1950s suggests that precisely this sort of extensive intellectual crossover and exchange played out among KN, Płomienie, and Szare Szeregi.439

One of the core tenets of wartime resistance was the clandestine continuation of Polish-language higher education courses, which had been forbidden by the German occupying forces. Most of the underground units had prominent affiliated professors in the humanities who delivered closed-door lectures and led seminars and discussion groups within their respective affiliated resistance organizations. Jan Strzelecki (1919-1988), the leader of Płomienie, invited Stanisław Ossowski (1897-1963), his mentor and an internationally renowned sociology professor at Warsaw University, to meet with and educate the members of Płomienie.440 Both Strzelecki and Ossowski were avid readers of Emmanuel Mounier.

439 “Personalizm w Szarych Szeregach,” 26 February 1952, AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1. The source of the dictated report is likely Jerzy Dałbiski, the Public Security Ministry’s mole within the semi-clandestine discussion circle formed by Czesław Czapów, Zygmunt Skórzyński, and a number of Dziś i Jutro-affiliated writers in 1950 to discuss the possibility of adapting a hybrid of Emmanuel Mounier’s personalism and Karl Mannheim’s sociology of knowledge to Polish conditions in order to create a humanist, socialist personalism. See also “Postanowienie o wszczęciu agenturalnego opracowania,” 31 January 1951, AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1.

440 Already by the time of the onset of war, Ossowski had established himself as a prolific empirical sociologist; his postwar study Struktura klasowa w społecznej świadomości (1957) would be translated into a dozen languages. For the English translation, see Stanisław Ossowski, Class Structure in the Social Consciousness, trans. Sheila Patterson (New York: Free Press, 1963). Strzelecki would follow after the war in his mentor’s footsteps into academic sociology, though his magnum opus would only be published posthumously and to this day has appeared only in
In an interview given in 1958, Strzelecki would describe in great detail how he came to translate the first three chapters of Mounier’s 1936 *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*. According to Strzelecki, “for us Leftist students sharing the bread of the *numerus clausus* with our Jewish friends, measuring with each passing day the rising tide of nihilist revolution, yet at the same time gladly making the sign of the cross, reading *Esprit* brought some promise of possible brotherhood with those in Poland who might perform a task similar to that which in France was being carried out by the group concentrated around the person of Mounier.”

Strzelecki explained that *Płomienie*, as a wartime continuation of the interwar Association of Independent Socialist Youth, valued in particular in Mounier the quality of “overflowing with beautiful passion in the struggle for dignity and development of the human personality.” Strzelecki explained that these qualities in personalism guaranteed “respect and a sense of closeness” among its adherents.

Strzelecki was not a practicing Catholic. That said, given how interconnected the various young underground militant groups were, what was initially an informal discussion between religious and non-religious colleagues soon turned into something much larger. Indeed, Strzelecki became indirectly responsible for educating an entire cross-section of Poland’s resisting youth population in the revolutionary personalism of Emmanuel Mounier. The process began when, in May-June 1941, Strzelecki, having completed his translation of the chapters from Mounier’s book, brought the copy he had found to Aniela Urbanowicz (1899-1988), a respected elder within the Szare Szeregi.

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In 1941, Urbanowicz, aided and encouraged by Bogdan Suchodolski (1903-1992), eminent philosopher and future Łódź University rector, completed a full translation of the *Manifeste*. Suchodolski then took the manuscript and immediately arranged for the mimeographing of 200 copies, which were distributed as widely as possible across underground resistance networks. The Home Army soldier and future Catholic activist Wiesław Chrzanowski (1923-), though a loyal National Democratic student of Dmowski’s writings, nonetheless became an enthusiastic participant in the discussion initiated by Strzelecki and Urbanowicz. Six decades after the war’s end, the impression made on him by the “lively discussions surrounding the clandestine translations” was still fresh in his mind. Both the fact of having access to such a foundational text from abroad and the experience of coming to understand Mounier’s thought would help him, or so Chrzanowski believes in retrospect, “to find common ground for dialogue with socialists and personalists” for the duration of People’s Poland.

Suchodolski’s plan was to arrange for a mass printing of Urbanowicz’s translation at least on the scale of Miłosz’s translation of Maritain. Two separate misfortunes thwarted this goal, however. First, copying by manually operated mimeograph was interrupted by the late 1942 arrest of the assigned mimeographer, Konrad Zembrzuski of the Szare Szeregi. Next, the clandestine publishing enterprise Załoga (Crew), which was to have produced the large print run of the *Manifeste*, shut down when the Warsaw Uprising began on 1 August 1944. Indeed, the original manuscript and the corrected proofs of Urbanowicz’s translation were both lost in the

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442 Aniela Urbanowiczowa [Urbanowicz], Interview with Juliusz Eska and Andrzej Krasiński, in “Rozmowy o Emanuela Mounier,” p. 49-51, at p. 49-50. Aniela Urbanowicz also indicated that, prior to his May 1946 visit to Poland, Mounier had evidently heard her name, as he attempted to contact her after his arrival to set up a meeting. Mounier’s source is almost certainly the unidentified author of a January 1946 note in *Esprit* explaining in brief the story of translations and clandestine publications of the *Manifeste au service du personnalisme*. See Y.K., “Poussées personnalistes hors de France – En Pologne : une idée au combat,” *Esprit*, 1/1946.

443 Wiesław Chrzanowski, Interview with Author, 3 November 2005.
chaos of the Uprising, and only two printed copies – unedited, with preface and introduction missing – survived the war to make their way back into Urbanowicz’s possession.\textsuperscript{444}

Nonetheless, prior to the Warsaw Uprising, readership of Mounier was widespread, and discussions extended far beyond the set of individuals who had actually held a copy of the translation in their hands. Suchodolski was not only a friend to Urbanowicz, but indeed a key counselor to the Warsaw-area units of Szare Szeregi. Moreover, numerous sources confirm that a latticework of personal friendships and acquaintances rendered the ties between Szare Szeregi and Płomienie very deep, turning Mounier’s revolutionary personalism into a field of regular exchange and dialogue across organizational lines.\textsuperscript{445} One of the consequences, according to Juliusz Eska and Andrzej Krasiński, was that Mounier overnight became “extremely fashionable in the Szare Szeregi.”\textsuperscript{446}

It was through Szare Szeregi, in turn, that Piasecki’s disciples in Konfederacja Narodu got their hands on the translations of Mounier. Wojciech Kętrzyński and Andrzej Krasiński, in particular, had already encountered Mounier’s writings in the interwar in the course of their educations in French language and literature,\textsuperscript{447} but extensive personal contact with Szare Szeregi afforded many opportunities for the passing back and forth of the mimeographed copies of the \textit{Manifeste au service du personnelisme}. The intellectual crossing and re-crossing of paths of the three clandestine youth networks, particularly in the summer and fall of 1943, created the opportunity for them to wrestle – separately and together – through ideological issues

\textsuperscript{444} Urbanowicz explained these losses in a 1950 letter to Jerzy Turowicz sent along with one of the surviving copies, which she offered in case the staff of either \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny} or \textit{Znak} might be prepared to publish excerpts. No such excerpts appeared in print, however. Aniela Urbanowicz, Letter to Jerzy Turowicz, 26 May 1950, Aniela Urbanowicz Correspondence, AJT.

\textsuperscript{445} See, among the other documents in this postwar Public Security Ministry file, “Personalizm w Szarych Szeregach,” AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1.

\textsuperscript{446} Eska and Krasiński, Interview with Aniela Urbanowicz, in “Rozmowy o Emanuelu Mounier,” p. 51.

anticipating the problems of the postwar reality. From the Plomienie standpoint, Mounier was a gateway to a “more properly humanistic socialism, being a very clear form of lay personalism,” while the Konfederacja Narodu fighters also became “very close to personalism, maybe more in its [clerical] Catholic version, but always personalism.” Like Gilbert Dru of the Lyonnais Catholic intellectual resistance, KN had its own young personalist martyr: Włodzimierz Pietrzak (1913-1944), who perished in the Warsaw Uprising on 22 August 1944, would be memorialized by the postwar Dziś i Jutro group with an annual prize named in his honor and frequent posthumous printings of his wartime writings.

Few of the Plomienie group ended up in lasting dialogue with Konfederacja Narodu, but the ties between KN and Szare Szeregi proved durable. In the war’s immediate aftermath, Piasecki and his most trusted colleagues, under pressure to avoid NKVD prison or even summary execution, would move far to the left politically. Historians of the “progressive” weekly journal that they created – Dziś i Jutro – and the PAX movement that grew up around it have generally treated this shift as purely instrumental without really being able to explain why the KN group chose, of all possible ideologies, a Catholic-socialist syncretism specifically linked to Mounier. Even this brief examination of the wartime contacts among clandestine resistance organizations, therefore, sheds significant light on this ideological evolution. Moreover, it explains how some of the leading future Young Turks of Dziś i Jutro – most notably Janusz

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448 “Personalizm w Szarych Szeregach,” AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1.
450 The PAX movement received its official charter in April 1952, which, although technically limited to the Mazovian province containing the city of Warsaw, gave the movement legal control all at once over, among others, the weekly Dziś i Jutro, the daily Słowo Powszechne, the PAX publishing house, a network of discussion clubs, a high school, and two quasi-free market consumer product distribution enterprises (named Inco and Veritas). In practice, the movement included also a “Committee of Catholic Intellectuals and Activists by the All-Polish Committee of Defenders of the Peace” and a branch of the separately formed “patriot-priest” movement. See Jacek Żurek, Ruch “Księży Patriotów” w województwie katowickim w latach 1949-1956 (Warszawa-Katowice: IPN-KSZpNP, 2009), esp. p. 134-231.
Zabłocki (1926-) – ended up making what, to an outside observer, would seem like a
counterintuitive leap in the immediate postwar from Szare Szeregi, the military arm of a
nationalist scout movement, to revolutionary personalism.\footnote{To this day, former Szare Szeregi members are reluctant to connect the dots in their public testimony between patriotic struggle and an openness to outside – in this case, French revolutionary personalist – influence. This is likely the result of trends typical to post-1989 Polish historiography and memorial literature, among others the desire not to diminish the legacy of heroic struggle constructed for future generations with any details, whether positive or negative, that might complicate that picture. Janusz Zabłocki, for example, has published a relatively detailed written account of his years in Szare Szeregi and then in hiding prior to the February 1947 amnesty of former armed clandestine young fighters. Yet there is not a word about Mounier or personalism in that testimonial, despite the fact that he has freely admitted to me in an interview that Szare Szeregi was the first context in which he had even heard the name Emmanuel Mounier. Janusz Zabłocki, Kawalki pociętego sztandaru: nieznane karty z dziejów “Szarych Szeregów” 1945-1947 (Warszawa: Fundacja “Szarych Szeregów”/ODiSS, 1992); Janusz Zabłocki, Interview with Author, 17 January 2006.}

Finally, understanding the relationship between KN and Szare Szeregi helps to explain
also the choice of title by the old guard for the weekly journal that they launched in November
1945: \textit{Dziś i Jutro} (Today and tomorrow). This was a direct reference to the clandestine motto of
Szare Szeregi soldiers: \textit{Dziś – jutro – pojutrze} (Today – tomorrow – the day after tomorrow).\footnote{Despite the justified paranoia that drove even the leadership of \textit{Dziś i Jutro} to self-censorship in presentations made during closed-door sessions of the movement’s inner circle, Konstanty Łubieński hinted in 1949 at the Szare Szeregi connection – a politically dangerous and therefore taboo subject in the first years of Stalinism – in a presentation made at a closed-session meeting of the journal’s leadership on 27 November 1949. Namely, Łubieński noted, “it was no accident that we chose to print the word ‘Dziś’ in all-black ink in the first issue,” the implication being that the fledgling journal had used its debut to commemorate fallen colleagues from the underground resistance of “today.” The transcript that I read of this presentation comes from Łubieński’s top-secret Ministry of Public Security file: see Łubieński, “Referat wygłoszony przez Łubieńskiego w gronie zespołu \textit{Dziś i Jutro} z okazji 4-letniej rocznicy tego samego zespołu,” 27 November 1949, p. 1, AIPN BU 0648/118/1.}

Each of these had an explicit chronological referent built into an overall programmatic
commitment to “education through struggle,” by means of conspiracy and armed preparation
(today) for an open uprising (tomorrow) in order to be able to work in a free Poland (the day
after tomorrow).

If we set aside the conservative-patriotic ideological lens that this motto was originally
meant to serve, we arrive at the paradoxical conclusion that Piasecki and company chose the title
\textit{Dziś i Jutro} with the explicit intent of masking a Trojan Horse launched within the new socialist
establishment by hiding it in the open. Mikołaj Kunicki, the first serious academic biographer of Piasecki, has argued that Piasecki’s intent for the postwar movement was just this, yet Kunicki in his study of Piasecki does not take seriously the Mounier connection with Dziś i Jutro, nor does he consider Szare Szeregi. While ultimately agreeing with Kunicki’s characterization of Piasecki, the present work adds depth to the Dziś i Jutro story by taking seriously both its horizontal linkages with other milieux and the genuine ideological commitments of the secondary players surrounding Piasecki.

It is difficult to reach unequivocal conclusions as to who most influenced whom and who was most responsible among the three Polish wartime clandestine youth organizations for the spread of Mounier’s personalism among future Catholic activists. It is clear, however, that the judgment pronounced on the KN legacy by historian Jacek M. Majchrowski in a 1984 study is at least partially incorrect: “The role of KN under the occupation can be summed up with the statement that it lay principally in presenting projects for the future that were as original as they were unrealistic.” Namely, Piasecki may have met the war’s end in an NKVD prison, and neither KN nor its successor group Dziś i Jutro was ever in a position to take the reins of political power in Poland, yet the KN network (like Piasecki himself) survived. Indeed, personalist ideas incubating in his milieu throughout the war ended up furnishing Piasecki with a direct path to fruitful postwar international contacts and partnerships.

**The Resistance Legacy of Odrodzenie and Christian Democracy**

Like France, Poland featured also a self-styled Christian Democratic party – Stronnictwo Pracy – created just before the onset of the Second World War, which survived in part

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453 On Dziś i Jutro and Mounier, see Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader,” p. 216. On Piasecki’s larger vision of the movement’s strategic placement within postwar Polish society, see, for example, Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader,” p. 196: “A staunch ideologue himself, Piasecki dreamed about the ideological confrontation between Marxism and his own system of belief – a confrontation which would take place under the guise of political symbiosis.”

454 Majchrowski, Geneza politycznych ugrupowań katolickich, p. 143.
underground and in part in exile. Unlike France’s Parti Démocrate Populaire leaders, who remained on French soil during the war, the SP’s top leaders – its president Karol Popiel, executive committee chair General Józef Haller (1873-1960), and chief party ideologue Rev. Zygmunt Kaczyński (1894-1953) – fled Polish territory at Poland’s capitulation to participate in the government-in-exile in London, in which all three served as ministers.\footnote{\textsuperscript{455} The literature on SP’s wartime exile activities is very sparse: see Bujak, \textit{Historia Stronnictwa Pracy}, p. 44-48. Nonetheless, Popiel left a remarkably complete archive at his death, encompassing also the war years, deposited in the Karol Popiel Political Papers, APIASA.}

One might balk at finding a Catholic priest among the top officials of a secular government, even if representing a political party with a confessional ideology. Nonetheless, Rev. Kaczyński had been active in public life for the entire interwar era, having been elected an MP for the first time in 1919, and he was instrumental in the SP’s creation in 1937.\footnote{\textsuperscript{456} On Kaczyński, see especially Edward Balawajder, “Kaczyński Zygmunt,” in Bender \textit{et al.}, \textit{Słownik biograficzny katolicyzmu społecznego w Polsce}, II, p. 7-9.} Indeed, hundreds of Polish priests had held elective or appointed public office in the interwar period.\footnote{\textsuperscript{457} On the broader question of priest-politicians, see, for example, Pease, \textit{Rome’s Most Faithful Daughter}, esp. p. 77-108.} Kaczyński was one of the last to do so.

When SP’s top three leaders went into exile, they left behind a well-developed network of disciplined party activists, as well as the bulk of the party executives. This entire network had to go underground to avoid arrest, imprisonment, and execution at German hands.\footnote{\textsuperscript{458} On SP’s clandestine activities, see Majchrowski, \textit{Geneza politycznych ugrupowań katolickich}, p. 52-64; Bujak, \textit{Historia Stronnictwa Pracy}, p. 49-109.} Although several waves of successful investigation and arrest depleted the ranks of the SP leadership that remained on wartime Polish territory – mostly in the territory annexed to the German \textit{Reich}, rather than the General Government ruled by Hans Frank – politicking and in-fighting persisted among the surviving leadership. A pro-Soviet group under Zygmunt Felczak (1903-1946) and
Feliks Widy-Wirski (1907-1982) gained ascendancy, largely through tactical control over several underground print media, particularly the journal Zryw (Surge).

The socialist historian Waldemar Bujak wrote in 1981 of the Zryw group: “there was not a trace of partisan blinders in the way that Z. Felczak and his colleagues looked at the world. Their honest analysis led them to conclude that the USSR would be the deciding player [at war’s end], and they were ready to act accordingly.”459 If we strip away the Polish socialist historian’s own ideological blinders, we see the makings of a later conflict that, once the dust would settle over the Yalta Accords in Poland, would spell SP’s doom. In the fall of 1942, however, the SP’s London leadership simply ordered Felczak’s removal from SP. Felczak and Widy-Wirski fragmented the party’s structures, taking with them a small group, but the conflict was settled.460

Facing the need to rebuild their field organization while maintaining the secrecy needed not to compromise their entire network, the SP leadership voted to join forces with the clandestine Unia (Union) group.461 Since the Polish army’s surrender in the late fall of 1939, clandestine resistance organizations had sprouted up all over the annexed Polish territory, with two staple elements: an armed unit – incorporating trained Home Army regulars as well as untrained guerrilla fighters – and an intelligence unit.462 Unia was unique both in that its membership was explicitly Catholic – “national-Catholic,” according to its program statement,

460 On Felczak and Widy-Wirski, see Mirosław Piotrowski, Służba idei czy serwilizm? Zygmunt Felczak i Feliks Widy-Wirski w najnowszych dziejach Polski (Lublin: Red. Wydawnictw KUL, 1994).
461 A copy of the original agreement providing for the 1942 merger of the SP and Unia clandestine movements can be found in APIASA 9.126.
though without National Democracy’s advertised emphasis on exclusionary nationalism — and that it featured intellectuals of various stripes.

The postwar Catholic lay activist Krzysztof Kozłowski (1931-) came from a family closely tied to Unia: indeed, his father Tomasz Kozłowski, an interwar MP, actively collaborated with the movement’s leadership, among other things by opening the doors of the family manor at Przybyszewice to provide safe harbor for Unia leaders. The younger Kozłowski provides a succinct description of Unia as a clandestine enterprise:

> I think it is in the nature of most clandestine projects that...Utopian dreams constitute their motive force, free us for a moment from the heavy weight of the everyday, allow us to persist with a sense of purpose... But in Unia’s project we can see also a realistic assessment of the problems that the Second Polish Republic failed to handle. The reconstruction of the economic order, the universalization of property ownership and education, the strengthening of local self-government.

Unia’s leaders included Jan Hoppe (1902-1969) and Jerzy Braun (1901-1975), both of whom would occupy prominent places in the short-lived attempt to reintroduce legal Christian Democratic politics into Poland after 1945.

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463 However, as Jan T. Gross has pointed out in the case of several key Unia figures – most notably Jerzy Braun and Zofia Kossak-Szczucka – the anti-semitism and exclusionary nationalism that pervaded Wojciech Korfanty’s writings and the founding documents of SP deeply colored and corrupted the ethical and political programs advanced by these individuals. On Braun, see Jan T. Gross, *Strach: antysemityzm w Polsce tuż po wojnie. Historia moralnej zapaści* (Kraków: Znak, 2008), p. 62-63; on Kossak-Szczucka, see Gross, *Strach*, p. 321. We will return to this issue in Chapter 6 in reference to the 1946 Kielce Pogrom.

464 Krzysztof Kozłowski, Interview with Michał Komar, published as Kozłowski and Komar, *Historia z konsekwencjami* (Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2009), p. 82. Krzysztof Kozłowski, an adolescent during the war, was surrounded for much of the war’s duration by the Unia leaders, many of whom had been long-time friends of his father, an interwar Piłsudskaite MP who had held chairmanships of several parliamentary committees. An entire chapter of the younger Kozłowski’s memoirs is devoted to the time spent by Unia leaders at Przybyszewice: Kozłowski and Komar, *Historia z konsekwencjami*, p. 77-99.

465 On Unia’s program, see, in brief, Bujak, *Historia Stronnictwa Pracy*, p. 110-117; Majchrowski, *Geneza politycznych ugrupowań katolickich*, p. 62-64. Braun, who was also the last clandestine on-the-ground liaison with the Polish government-in-exile, will receive more attention in Chapter 6. On Hoppe, see Jerzy Braun, Karol Popiel, Konrad Sieniewicz, *Człowiek ze spiżu* (London: Odnowa, 1981); and Hoppe’s own memoirs, Jan Hoppe, *Wspomnienia, przyczynki, refleksje* (London: Odnowa, 1972). Krzysztof Kozłowski has described Hoppe in his memoirs as “my father’s best friend, deep in thought, genuinely worried about what would happen to Poland, about
Another prominent friend of the Unia leadership was Jerzy Turowicz. Having just left the interwar Odrodzenie academic network after completing his graduate studies, Turowicz had moved back to Kraków, married, and taken up a job in 1939 as deputy editor of the Christian Democratic paper *Głos Narodu* (Voice of the Nation), run by his future co-founder of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Rev. Jan Piwowarczyk (1889-1959).\(^{466}\) A mere six months later, Turowicz became editor-in-chief of the paper,\(^ {467}\) which he soon had to shutter following the outbreak of hostilities. With his wife Anna, Turowicz – exempted for medical reasons from military service – withdrew to the family country house at Goszyce, 20 kilometers outside Kraków.

For the next five years, Goszyce served as a haven of wartime cultural and intellectual life, especially for members of Unia. Though averse to the politics of interwar Christian Democracy, Turowicz joined Unia in 1940 and approved of its merger two years later – once Unia’s guerrilla units had left to join regular underground Home Army forces – with SP. Out of Goszyce, Turowicz coordinated the operations of Unia’s clandestine journal *Kultura Jutra* (The Culture of Tomorrow). His chief task within Unia was to draw up plans for a “Catholic socio-cultural journal” to be launched with episcopal support immediately after the war’s end. The creation of *Tygodnik Powszechny* in 1945 would, indeed, follow these plans to the letter.

In the interim, the Turowicz family, like the Kozłowski family, offered safe harbor to political fugitives from the occupation authorities, including Braun, Hoppe, and future postwar SP secretary-general Konrad Sieniewicz (1912-1996). This was also the time when Turowicz first crossed paths with the young Karol Wojtyła (1920-2005), not yet a priest or even a

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\(^{467}\) In his first editorial, Turowicz wrote, “If there is to be war again, then afterward there must come an economic and spiritual reconstruction of Europe.” Jerzy Turowicz, “*Po co znowu wojna*,” *Głos Narodu*, 21 July 1939.
seminarian, whose clandestine wartime theater troupe drew support from Unia. \(^{468}\) All of these activists came and went from Goszyce while moving around Polish territory in the course of their clandestine tasks. \(^{469}\) After the Warsaw Uprising ended in an almost-total razing of the city by the victorious German forces, the poet Czesław Miłosz, too, along with his family spent nearly a month at Goszyce. \(^{470}\)

**Conclusions**

The experience of wartime resistance in both France and Poland demonstrated the tremendous flux experienced by Catholic thought and activism during World War II. On the one hand, well-established figures – ranging from Maritain to Karol Popiel – proved significant in their public contributions to the war efforts of their respective nations. On the other, the wartime vacuum allowed new organizations – Témoignage Chrétien, Unia, Konfederacja Narodu – to enter the field of play that would help to reinvent the Catholic vanguard in the immediate postwar.

Even as Mounier was himself moving toward Catholic-socialist syncretism, his thought became formative for an ideological cross-section of young Catholic resisters in wartime Poland. It was precisely the personalism of Maritain and Mounier that helped to create horizontal linkages among Catholic milieux of dramatically different ideological profiles – ranging from socialism to integralism – linked together by the wartime disruption of ecclesiastical authority, which had created for them a shared experience of alienation from the institutional Church. This

\(^{468}\) See, for example, Kozłowski and Komar, *Historia z konsekwencjami*, p. 79; Marek Lasota, *Donos na Wojtyłę. Karol Wojtyła w teczkach Bezpieki* (Kraków: Znak, 2006), p. 36-38.

\(^{469}\) My initial source for the information regarding Sieniewicz was Stanisław Gebhardt, Interview with Author, 4 May 2006. Sieniewicz and Turowicz disagreed vehemently on the major political questions that defined virtually every turning point of Polish history between 1945 and 1989, so it is particularly telling that Sieniewicz continued to speak decades after the war of his “more than 40 years of friendship” with Turowicz based on their wartime contacts. For an example of such phrasing, complemented by a political scolding regarding Turowicz’s failure to commemorate Unia’s wartime agenda “deservedly” in the pages of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, see Konrad Sieniewicz, Letter to Jerzy Turowicz, 3 September 1979, Konrad Sieniewicz Correspondence, AJT.

\(^{470}\) Miłosz, “Turowicz i Jacques Maritain.”
same experience elevated in both France and Poland political Christian Democracy, which in both countries had been marginal in the interwar period. Even as the war was still raging, it became clear that these newly significant organizations, their ideological profiles still in flux, would become loci of struggles over political power in the immediate postwar.

At the same time, despite the disruption of ecclesiastical lines of communication and the proliferation of horizontal linkages within European Catholicism to substitute for the isolation of Pius XII’s Holy See, the social question did not disappear. In fact, even though the national question held a place of prominence – a logical outcome in any scenario of wartime resistance against a foreign occupier – exclusionary nationalism seemed to be on the decline among organized Catholic activists, while the impulse to minister to the surviving industrial proletariat grew. In France, this impulse encouraged the cardinal-primate of Paris to turn away from Pétain and create the controversial new Mission de France. In Poland, Catholic activists would soon confront the reality of operating in a country in the process of being rebuilt by an establishment openly professing revolutionary state socialism. The wartime realignment and invigoration of European Catholic activism would survive the resistance movements to confront the dramatic material and spiritual challenges of postwar reconstruction and transformation.
CHAPTER 5


Catholic Poland, the Polish Catholic nation, shies away from no sacrifice for the good of the Republic. It will gladly guarantee its civic participation in the construction of civic life, but it continues to hold the position that Polish collective reality must correspond in moral terms to the spiritual reality that the nation carries in its heart. We fear neither modernity nor social transformation, nor people’s governments, as long as they continue to respect the principles of unchanging Christian morality. We want Poland to be the most progressive and the most cultured of countries, and we will do our part.

--August Cardinal Hlond, 1945

It is therefore the duty of each Pole to fight for the shape of the Polish revolution. [...] Poland does not lack Christian revolutionaries. It is enough to say that, if these forces do not revolutionize themselves they will lose any impact on reality.

--Bolesław Piasecki, 1945

The end of World War II revolutionized the position of socialism on the European continent. The Soviet Union, the seat of self-styled “Communist” state socialism, had spread its army across the eastern half of the continent, from Moscow to Berlin to Bucharest, as it did its part in the Allies’ “liberation” of the continent from German occupation. British prime minister Winston Churchill and the late American president Franklin D. Roosevelt had signed off on as much at the Allied leaders’ February 1945 Yalta Conference, in return for Stalin’s promise to guarantee the conduct of “free and fair elections” in each country of the Red Army-occupied space within the immediate future. Elections were eventually held, their results falsified, and a

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pseudo-legitimate claim established to government by Soviet-backed “Communist” parties in each country of the newly emerging Soviet Bloc.\textsuperscript{474}

Poland was certainly not the only Catholic country in the post-Yalta space, but it did contain the largest and most activist population of Catholic faithful. Catholicism among Czechs had been on the wane for centuries, while Catholic Slovakia suffered from its association with the wartime Nazi-puppet government of the Catholic Rev. Jozef Tiso.\textsuperscript{475} In ethnically and religiously divided Yugoslavia, the Catholicism of the Croats was easily marginalized.\textsuperscript{476} Only Hungary rivaled Poland in the centrality of Catholicism to its national and political culture, and its elderly primate Jozsef Cardinal Mindszenty’s close ties to Pius XII made him a ready target for the emerging socialist establishment.\textsuperscript{477}

In Poland, however, the war had transformed the social and institutional relations among Polish Catholics. As Maryjane Osa has put it, from a “feudal Church” was born an “activist Church.”\textsuperscript{478} At the war’s onset, Primate Hlond escaped into exile: although another bishop – Adam Stefan Sapieha of Kraków – stepped into the ecclesiastical spotlight to mediate between the Church and occupation authorities, Sapieha was no replacement primate.\textsuperscript{479} In the absence of strong episcopal leadership, Catholic activists in wartime Poland relied on the strong horizontal linkages that emerged either within clandestine movements like Unia and Konfederacja Narodu or through readings of foreign Catholic thinkers like Maritain and Mounier. These linkages only became more important in a postwar order in which the state’s borders had been shifted and

\textsuperscript{475} Ward, “No Saint.”
\textsuperscript{477} See, for example, Kent, The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII, p. 217-236.
\textsuperscript{478} Osa, “Resistance, Persistence, and Change,” p. 296.
\textsuperscript{479} See the final two chapters of Jacek Czajowski, Kardynał Adam Stefan Sapieha (Wrocław: Zaklad Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1997).
populations displaced *en masse*. Anti-Germanism and misunderstandings between Polish Catholics and the Holy See multiplied as the Vatican refused to re-draw diocesan lines to take Polish Catholics in the new “Recovered Territories” – transferred from Germany to Poland by the Allies at Potsdam – out of the charge of German bishops and into the pastoral responsibility of the Polish Episcopate.480

Given the complexities of the wartime demographic and geopolitical shifts, the Soviet-backed Polish establishment’s task of finding a place for Catholics in the postwar civic order was in some sense easier, in another more complex. On the one hand, Polish Catholics alienated from their institutional hierarchy were already one step closer to accepting the new socialist order. On the other, the lack of a strong institutional Church made the task of co-optation more difficult for the establishment. James Ramon Felak has noted that, among Slovaks in Czechoslovakia between 1945 and 1948, “The Communists, for instance, despite an atheistic outlook and a desire to cripple the influence of the churches, were not unequivocally hostile to Catholics in this period; rather, their attempts to weaken the Catholic Church ran simultaneously with efforts to build positive relations with Catholics and woo them into their camp.” If this was true in postwar Slovakia, it was all the more so in Poland.

Between 1944 and 1948 – respectively, the year of the creation of the Soviet-backed Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego (PKWN, Poland’s socialist Committee of National Liberation) and the year of the onset of Stalinism in Poland – the new Polish socialist establishment made a concerted effort to bring Catholics into the emerging order of state socialism. This effort included both tentative concessions for the creation of autonomous lay and


clerical Catholic activist organizations and invitations extended to two – as the PKWN deemed them – “non-fascist” political parties that had survived from the interwar era in the government-in-exile: Stanisław Mikołajczyk’s Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL, Polish Peasants’ Party) and Karol Popiel’s SP. Initially, it seemed as though these two parties might serve as guarantors of the fulfillment of Stalin’s Yalta pledge to hold free elections. Within a matter of months, however, these reactivated parties had become little more than target practice for the new order’s emerging security apparatus and state bureaucracy.

Even before Poland’s postwar state socialism turned Stalinist in 1948, it already had “teeth.” The PKWN’s major political party – the Polska Partia Robotnicza (PPR, the Polish Workers’ Party, postwar Poland’s “Communist” party) – controlled all access to information and the ability to publicize news in the country. Its powers included a stranglehold over the new Ministry of Information and Propaganda, the state radio network and Polish Press Agency (on which all other parties had to rely for news), the new Czytelnik publishing house, and the army’s Main Political-Education Agency.

Even more of a presence in daily life was the Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego (MBP, Ministry of Public Security), created in January 1945 to facilitate information-gathering with the Soviet NKVD, which remained active in anti-guerrilla field operations in the Polish countryside until August 1946. Already by the fall of 1945, the MBP had over 27,000 officers in its employ, with an exponentially growing network of agents and informants. Even before the PPR went Stalinist, it could and did make systematic use of this ministry as a partisan police

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force turned on Catholics as well as any other activists perceived to be endangering the new order.\textsuperscript{483}

Ominous as the situation seems to have been for Catholic activists in Poland already by the end of 1945, it is important not to overdetermine their fate with a monocausal explanation about the rise of the PPR and its subordinate institutions. Too often, historians of Eastern Europe – and of Catholicism, in particular – have oversimplified the story of Catholicism’s encounter with state socialism in postwar Poland. Mikołaj Kunicki is not wrong to describe the PPR’s design for the institutional Church as of 1945 as a “carrot-and-stick approach,” and Jan Żaryn is not wrong to speak of “salami tactics” deployed by the postwar socialist establishment against Catholic activism.\textsuperscript{484} Nonetheless, this was not the whole story.

Instead of treating 1944-1945 as a definitive caesura separating \textit{fin-de-siècle}, interwar, and wartime Catholic activism from a supposedly incommensurable activism mapped out under postwar state socialism, our story highlights both continuities and discontinuities. True – state socialism revolutionized the interaction between Catholicism and socialism. On the one hand, Catholics seemed to be at least a step behind a socialist establishment that was supposed to have already initiated a revolution dedicated to delivering justice to the working poor. On the other hand, the bitter reality soon became visible to all that this ideology of justice often simply masked a cynical lust for power.

Despite this double-bind, the \textit{fin-de-siècle} and interwar ideas used to theorize and effect the Catholic answers to the social question returned in the postwar period. With National Democracy banned from postwar Poland and a government in power declaring itself totally


focused on improving the proletarian lot, social Catholicism, in particular, came into renewed focus. Indeed, the “social-Catholic” label became a prize that diverse groups of postwar Catholic activists competed to claim for themselves. The significance of the connotations carried by this term – above all, that of Catholic fidelity to the social mission declared by Leo XIII in 1891 – drove the activists of Bolesław Piasecki’s Dziś i Jutro organization, for example, to continue to label themselves “social Catholics” well into the years when they had, in practice, traded loyalty to the institutional Church away to become Stalinist lackeys.

The remainder of our story will explore the fate of social Catholicism and its uniquely privileged postwar successor, Catholic-socialist syncretism, through the horizontal linkages that emerged both within Polish Catholic activism and between Polish and French activism in the years between 1944 and 1956. This end date marked the final disillusionment of the last activists in socialist Poland who genuinely believed that they had been serving both Catholicism and socialism, rather than just an authoritarian perversion of the latter.

In this chapter, we will highlight the socialist establishment’s justification of its initial attempts at cooperation with Catholic activists before examining the fate of two specific movements: the Christian Democratic Stronnictwo Pracy and the emerging Catholic-socialist-syncretist Dziś i Jutro movement. The latter benefited directly in proportion to the establishment’s quick and utter suppression of the former. Piasecki experimented not only with emulating the SP’s goals as a Catholic political party, but indeed with appropriating its declared mission of carrying out a political agenda defined by social Catholicism. In this venture, postwar geopolitics proved to be a welcome partner.
The Gentle Revolution

Karl Marx had declared religion the “opium of the people,” yet a newly created, foreign-backed government consisting of radical activists with only the smallest of pre-existing constituencies on Polish soil needed all the help it could get to consolidate power. For this reason, the PKWN and its core party, the PPR, decided to offer their own version of Maurice Thorez’s *main tendue* to Poland’s Catholic activists. As Mikołaj Kunicki has put it, “In order to consolidate their position they had to extend their hand to people who ideologically remained at the other end of the political spectrum. Only then would the [C]ommunists be able to secure civil peace and launch into the economic reconstruction of the country.”

This *main tendue* was part of a broader campaign by the more nationally minded – as opposed to the entirely Moscow-centered, like Bolesław Bierut (1892-1956) and Jakub Berman (1901-1984) – among the new socialist ruling elites. Władysław Gomułka (1905-1982), postwar deputy prime minister and general-secretary of the PPR, used his authority in the immediate postwar to push for a coalitional model of government permitting limited – and tightly controlled – political pluralism. Jerzy Borejsza (1905-1952), a French-educated former Zionist, was the key theorist of this coalitional model, and his wartime loyalty to the Soviet Union earned him the informal status of the *czar* of postwar Poland’s intellectual life (until 1948). Borejsza was the force behind the socialist establishment’s new cultural and intellectual publishing house Czytelnik (Reader), and his support for particular interwar or wartime activists could tip the balance in favor of their redemption. A key example was Piasecki himself.

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It was Borejsza who offered a principled statement of the fledgling socialist establishment’s selectiveness toward prospects of partnership with “non-fascists.” In Borejsza’s parlance, such partnerships would reflect a shared interest in pursuing national reconstruction and transformation as well as deeper aims of social justice pegged to socialist goals of proletarian revolution. Rather than proceed immediately to a violent dictatorship of the proletariat along the trail blazed by the Soviet Union, however, Borejsza argued for joint efforts to insure that the revolution remained a *rewolucja łagodna* (gentle revolution). In 1948, with a Stalinist turn against “right-wing nationalist deviations” in the PPR, Borejsza’s “gentle revolution” advocacy would cost him his position in the party and in public life. In 1945, however, his pluralistic proposal to substitute for the revolutionary “guillotine” a degree of autonomy for Poland’s “progressive intelligentsia” opened the door to at least the appearance of cooperation with non-socialists.

The fusion of the *main tendue* and the gentle revolution in postwar Poland cracked the door to public life for Catholics. It was not clear, however, where the institutional Church itself fit into the gentle revolution model. On 12 September 1945, Poland’s Government of National Unity unilaterally abrogated the 1925 concordat with the Holy See. At one fell swoop, the institutional Church became an extra-legal institution, with its diplomatic channels to the Holy See unrecognized by the state, which furthermore threatened to deprive the hierarchy of its legal privileges, tax-exempt status, ecclesiastical charities, and – of greatest concern to the Polish Episcopate – the place of Catholic education in schools. It did not help the Church’s cause that

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489 Shore, *Caviar and Ashes*, p. 269-270.
the returning Primate Hlond was widely viewed in the establishment as a wartime defector. Though Kraków’s Archbishop Sapieha had won the respect of establishment circles for his stalwart wartime opposition to the German occupation, he could not supplant his ecclesiastical superior, nor did he wish to do so.

With the formation of new state structures after Poland’s liberation by the Red Army, supervision of churches and religiously affiliated associations fell initially to the Ministry of Public Administration. Its first minister, Władysław Wolski (1901-1976), created a Department of Religious Affairs to handle the logistics of administration, while his office handled political decisions in direct consultation with the Central Committee of, first, the PPR and, later, its PZPR (Polish United Workers’ Party) successor. In April 1950, the Polish parliament would eliminate this ministry and turn the Department of Religious Affairs into an autonomous administrative unit answering directly to the prime minister. From that point onward, the Polish state security apparatus took over most of Wolski’s portfolio.

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491 There is virtually no post-1989 scholarship on the extensive administrative apparatus deployed to monitor and control religious affairs in postwar Poland, and no scholarship at all that would attempt a synthetic analysis of the different branches of that apparatus across the entire period of People’s Poland, despite the accessibility of written documentation and participants who can still provide testimony for oral history. Polish historian Andrzej Friszke has provided a close analysis of the functioning of the Office of Religious Affairs for the years 1970-1978: Friszke, PRL wobec Kościoła: Akta Urzędu do Spraw Wyznań 1970-1978 (Warszawa: Biblioteka WIEZI/ISP PAN, 2010). However, for the earlier years it is necessary to rely on schematic studies published by Polish officials of the socialist establishment who worked for this very apparatus: see, especially, Wiesław Mysłek and Michał T. Staszewski, eds, Polityka wyznaniowa: toło, warunki, realizacja (Warszawa: PWN, 1975). A separate – and equally sparse – literature details the control exercised by the Polish state security apparatus. Here, as in Friszke’s book, the post-1989 scholarship has really only made progress in the study of the 1970s: see Paweł Tomasik and Miroslaw Bielaszko, eds, Plany pracy Departamentu IV MSW na lata 1972-1979 (Warszawa: IPN-KSZpNP, 2007). This is an area that demands urgent attention in future projects. I have attempted to fill some of the gaps in available knowledge with interviews with still-living Religious Affairs administrators and, where relevant, testimony from activists subject to the decisions of this administrative apparatus.
492 Aleksander Merker, Interview with Author, 19 June 2006. Merker worked for the Office of Religious Affairs throughout almost the entire period of its existence, ending his career as director-general responsible for the churches. As the person responsible for liquidating the Office’s collections – and choosing what to retain and what to destroy – on its dissolution in 1990, Merker knows more than any other individual about the history and operations of the Office of Religious Affairs in People’s Poland.
494 See Micewski’s recollections of the experience of Dziś i Jutro with this transition at Micewski, Współrzędnic czy nie klamać?, p. 34. It bears emphasis that, in Polish-language historiography, materials of the state security
Given how rapidly the new socialist establishment was replacing the hierarchy’s interwar privileges with an apparatus designed more to keep the institutional Church in check than work with it, it is unsurprising that Hlond, Sapieha, and others looked to proven lay activists from the interwar and war years to represent the hierarchy’s interests in Polish public life. The establishment and the hierarchy overlapped in their willingness to accept the following groups: the political parties invited back from exile and the underground – the PSL and especially the SP – and the new, post-National Democratic Dziś i Jutro movement spearheaded by Bolesław Piasecki.

**The Return of the “ Opposition”**

The PKWN extended an offer in June 1945 to return to Poland to the two political groups in the London government that it classified as “non-fascist.” One of the potentially significant benefits of attracting the PSL and SP back to Poland was the power that they might wield in convincing their former constituents fighting in clandestine resistance movements to lay down their arms and integrate into socialist Poland’s civic life. This had all of the dramatic trappings of a struggle for the soul of the nation, and despite good-faith pronouncements by leaders of both returning parties, Poland remained in a state of virtual civil war through 1947, with NKVD and MBP officers working alongside regular armed forces to seek out and arrest or execute “partisans” who remained in hiding throughout the countryside.495

The London exile government’s former prime minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk (1901-1966) lent his full support to the Yalta agreements. On behalf of the exiled PSL party that he

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chaired, he agreed to its reactivation on Polish soil, himself returning to Poland on 27 June.

Karol Popiel, too, despite bitter disagreement within the London SP milieu about whether or not to return, which led to SP’s split into three factions in 1945 – the others led by General Haller and by Stanisław Sopicki (1903-1976) – Popiel decided to return to Poland together with Rev. Zygmunt Kaczyński. According to Popiel, indeed, Kaczyński – who would die in 1953 in a Stalinist prison – was, in 1945, the most determined of all of the SP politicians to return to Poland.496 Popiel described the decision tersely in his memoirs: “My country, via a telegram from the Executive Committee of SP, called me in 1945 to return home. I returned. We fought for a voice and for our active role in the life of the nation.”497

Popiel’s plan had been first to call a national party congress to obtain a vote of confidence for his leadership, then to consolidate the party’s field organization in preparation for the “free and fair” parliamentary elections promised at Yalta. His own personal goal was in line with the expectations of Primate Hlond and the rest of Polish Episcopate: that SP should assure “Catholic political representation” in socialist Poland.498

When Popiel received his invitation to return home, he was fully aware of the show trial taking place in Moscow at that very moment (18-21 June 1945) of the “Sixteen,” leaders of the Polish underground invited to Moscow for consultations and arrested on their arrival.499 The Sixteen included Popiel’s good friend and SP ministerial colleague Józef Chaciński, who would

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496 Popiel noted sorrowfully in his memoirs that Kaczyński, in a speech to the SP executive committee-in-exile, “spoke of the land of our fathers and the strength that it gives to those who stand on it with their own two feet. (He did not foresee, poor man, that there awaited him on that land prison and martyrdom.)” Popiel, Od Brześcia do “Polonii,” p. 56.


498 Kaczyński’s reasoning, in Popiel’s paraphrasal recorded on 25 June 1945, was that “millions of organized Catholics, not only in parishes, but also social, professional, and political organizations, have a right to expect our help and that we simply cannot allow ourselves to fail to meet this obligation.” Popiel, Od Brześcia do “Polonii,” p. 55.

499 See, for example, Kersten, The Establishment of Communist Rule in Poland, p. 154. According to Popiel, Mikołajczyk sent him a telegram with a detailed account on 31 May that Popiel received only on 19 June. Popiel, Od Brześcia do “Polonii,” p. 51. The documentation is at APIASA 9.14.
be one of the few to survive his subsequent sentence and return to Poland, albeit in such ill health that he died soon thereafter.\footnote{Janusz Zabłocki, 	extit{Chrześcijańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji 1947-1970} (Lublin: Ośrodek Studiów Polonijnych i Społecznych PZKS, 1999), p. 53 n. 73. This version of events is confirmed by an account from his daughter, the late Teresa Gałązka (née Chacińska), Interview with Author, 20 February 2006.}

Mikołajczyk was in Moscow at the time of the Sixteen’s show trial, negotiating the PSL’s place in Poland’s soon-to-be-established Government of National Unity. Mikołaj Kunicki is correct to emphasize that the timing of these two events – the sentencing of one set of non-socialist Polish politicians by a Soviet court a mere few kilometers away from negotiations to bring others into the new Polish government – was no coincidence.\footnote{Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader,” p. 203.} Unable to aid his condemned colleagues, Mikołajczyk nonetheless plodded along a path that led to little more than temporary legitimation of Poland’s new socialist establishment. His re-activated party would face arrests, kidnappings, and murders at the hands of the MBP almost from the moment of the PSL’s re-entry into Polish public life.

The fortunes of Popiel’s party were less bloody, though no more successful. Despite his deep disillusionment with Mikołajczyk’s inability to aid their colleagues among the Sixteen, Popiel nonetheless persisted in his planned repatriation, and he succeeded in organizing an SP party congress on 15 July 1945. The assembled SP members confirmed, at least temporarily, the legitimacy of the SP leadership, yet already in the congress’s immediate aftermath, this leadership began to encounter a series of ultimately insurmountable roadblocks. On the one hand, Polish prime minister Edward Osóbka-Morawski passed onto Popiel pressure from Moscow to unite SP with the Stronnictwo Demokratyczne (Democratic Front), a minor, socialist-
sympathizing party. Popiel refused to agree to this merger, underscoring that he had returned to assure the presence in postwar Poland of a confessional Christian party.\textsuperscript{502}

On the other hand, Popiel was faced with a challenge from within his own party. Zryw, which had splintered off from the SP underground movement in 1943 under the leadership of Zygmunt Felczak and Feliks Widy-Wirski, demanded to be let back into party’s ranks with a significant share of leadership votes. Backing this demand was the real seat of state power in Poland, the PPR. Popiel’s hands were tied, and he and Widy-Wirski locked in arduous, months-long negotiations. Zryw demanded no less than 40\% of the slots in the SP leadership, a figure at least double the real numerical representation of Zryw within the party. In the end, Zryw withdrew entirely from negotiations on 9 July 1946, as a result of which Osóbka-Morawski blocked plans for a second party congress. The SP executive council under Popiel in turn passed a resolution on 18 July to suspend the party’s functioning “until such time as the government changes its stance.”\textsuperscript{503}

To avoid a one-sided account of these events, it is useful to present here some of the language used by Widy-Wirski to mobilize Zryw in late 1945. In December, he published a book under the provocative title \textit{Polska i Rewolucja} (Poland and the Revolution), dedicated to the “youth of Poland.” It is difficult not to notice that this book, written by a putatively Christian politician from a confessional Catholic party, was full of citations of Marx, Engels, Lenin, even Bernstein and Kautsky, but not a single biblical reference nor even a mention of Christ or the Christian faith.

Instead, the book’s introduction consisted of the text of a speech given by Widy-Wirski in Warsaw for the 28\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the Russian Revolution, in which Widy-Wirski called upon

\textsuperscript{502} Popiel, \textit{Od Brześcia do “Polonii,”} p. 76.
\textsuperscript{503} Quoted at Zabłocki, \textit{Chrzescijańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji}, p. 11.
Poles to take advantage of the “privilege” bestowed upon their nation by the liberating Red
Army to initiate a “Polish Revolution.” Widy-Wirski expounded, “Tragic is the fate of those
nations and individuals who are unable to fathom the great historical process unfolding before
our eyes [...]. This is the problem of the Polish Revolution, which would conquer in one decisive
leap our present backwardness.” 504 In the conclusion to the treatise, Widy-Wirski went on to
complain that Poles had great difficulty with “political realism,” 505 the implication being that
Widy-Wirski and Zryw had no such trouble. Whatever Popiel’s and SP’s flaws or pretenses, it is
difficult not to see that the deck was stacked against him and his party from the start.

In the end, Popiel’s SP never received permission to hold its second congress in advance
of the parliamentary elections scheduled for 19 January 1947. Aside from the problem posed by
Zryw, the socialist main tendue soon began to pull away from its coalition “partners” as the PPR
turned more aggressively toward the pursuit of propagandistic self-aggrandizement. Although
the PSL refused in April 1946 to participate in an electoral bloc coordinated by the PPR,
Mikołajczyk agreed to back a referendum campaign on three issues: the abolition of the Senate,
support for land reform and nationalization, and recognition of Poland’s new western borders.
Despite questions framed to maximize the number of “Yes” votes cast, the PPR still had to
falsify the results in order to claim an overwhelming victory in the so-called “three times ‘Yes’”
referendum. 506 The marginalization of Catholic activism in the face of a socialist establishment
willing to bend its own rules was an ominous portent of the ultimate failure of the “gentle
revolution.”

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505 Widy-Wirski, Polska i Rewolucja, p. 360.
The Polish Episcopate lodged a protest in SP’s name at its 9-10 September plenary conference in Częstochowa, demanding on the Catholic party’s behalf a right for it to hold its own congress. Polish president Bolesław Bierut was still concerned enough about Catholic opinion that he responded with an extensive interview in the pages of Rzeczpospolita on 20 November 1946 in which he declared that the government needed the support of all Catholics to rebuild the country. As a result, he pledged, “Catholics possess and will continue to possess in Poland the same rights as other citizens. If they want, they can campaign on behalf of a separate Catholic representation in the next Sejm [Polish parliament].”

Both Andrzej Micewski and Tadeusz Przeciszewski have published accounts of negotiations undertaken by a wide variety of Catholic organizations pursuant to Bierut’s proposal. These involved not only Popiel’s group, but also Bolesław Piasecki’s Dziś i Jutro group, as well as smaller delegations from three other Catholic journals. According to Przeciszewski, a participant in one of the negotiations, Piasecki droned on incessantly about “the priority of our nation’s existence and our obligations as Catholics to preserve that existence,” only in the end to be the one to pull the plug on the negotiations when SP and the other groups refused to concede to Dziś i Jutro 50% +1 of seats in the leadership of the new “Catholic”

507 “The bishops are pained to declare that, in the sector that based its program on a Catholic worldview and sought the fulfillment of social-Christian principles, a splintering has been effected, with the consequence that the party in its new form no longer pledges to act out of Catholic thought and principles.” Quoted at Popiel, Od Brześcia do “Polonii,” p. 283.

508 Bolesław Bierut, Interview with Ksawery Pruszyński, Rzeczpospolita, 20 November 1946, quoted at Popiel, Od Brześcia do “Polonii,” p. 284. The British Catholic weekly The Tablet reported on state-imposed roadblocks to even the most basic of discussions within Catholic activist circles over Bierut’s supposedly good-faith proposal, noting also that “M. Bierut omitted to tell the whole story, making no reference to the obstruction of the work of the Church among the younger generation.” “Poland: M. Bierut Reassures the Church,” The Tablet, 25 January 1947, p. 60-62, at p. 62.

In the end, nothing came of Bierut’s declaration, and Widy-Wirski’s group held its own separate congress as “Stronnictwo Pracy” (dropping the Zryw name entirely), with its delegates figuring alone on the official list of candidates and usurping Popiel’s group’s name.

The failure of these negotiations dealt a deathblow to SP. In October 1947, Popiel returned into exile; while Popiel left legally, Mikołajczyk, fearing prison or worse, arranged for himself to be smuggled out of the country. Repressions against SP activists and politicians did not begin until mid-1948, but Popiel claims to have been convinced when leaving Poland in 1947 that he was doing so permanently, as would indeed be the case. As it happened, Popiel was fortunate to gather around himself in his second exile a small but devoted group of lieutenants and followers who would not only keep SP alive on paper, but indeed translate their commitment into tangible political results on the international stage.

Led by Popiel and SP secretary-general Konrad Sieniewicz, who, like Mikołajczyk, left Poland illegally, this “SP-Popiel” exile group (in contrast with the two SP groups that had never returned to Poland from London), became a serious presence at Christian Democratic international congresses, particularly of the Nouvelles Équipes Internationales, Western Europe’s postwar Christian Democratic international. Popiel’s group would, moreover, make lasting contacts with the CIA-funded Free Europe Committee, who in the late 1950s would aid SP in an

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510 Przeziszewski, “Wspomnienia z dramatycznych lat,” p. 54. The general sense of the meeting is confirmed by both Micewski and Kunicki.

511 Popiel’s insistence that he leave the country legally required considerable legwork on his part and on the part of his lieutenants from the disbanded SP. Indeed, it took more than a month to obtain a passport for him even with the personal intervention of prime minister Józef Cyrankiewicz and the justification that his wife, residing in London, was gravely ill.

attempt to regain a foothold in Poland.\textsuperscript{513} As of mid-1947, however, the organized non-socialist
political parties that had sought to pursue the social question in public activism on Polish
territory were finished.

\textit{The Bizarre Socialist Legacy of National Democracy}

It was a curious twist of fate that, among lay Catholic activists in early-postwar socialist
Poland, the one group to survive the implosion of the gentle revolution was also the one group
that openly admitted its roots in National Democracy and interwar fascism. Arrested in 1944 in
the course of his Konfederacja Narodu leadership, Bolesław Piasecki hatched a plan while under
guard by the NKVD to re-enter Polish public life in the war’s aftermath by creating a new sort of
public activism. Many scholars and commentators – dating back to the MBP defector Józef
Światło’s 1955 broadcast over Radio Free Europe\textsuperscript{514} – have presented Piasecki’s story as the
ultimate conspiracy theory of socialist Poland: an ex-fascist freed by NKVD general Ivan Serov
(1905-1990) who went on to found a self-described “social-Catholic journal” in socialist Poland
that he ended up growing into a Soviet-Bloc financial micro-empire.

It is not my intention to lose our story in the details of Piasecki’s biography, curious
though it was. For our purposes, rather, Piasecki himself was less important than what was
represented by the movement that he created on his release from prison in the summer of 1945.
One of several Catholic journals created in Poland in that year – which we will discuss jointly in
the next chapter – \textit{Dziś i Jutro} assembled a staff from among Falanga and ONR ex-fascists,

\textsuperscript{513} A wide variety of Polish security service reports throughout the 1950s and 1960s attest to the fact that the Polish
state intelligence network knew exactly how the Free Europe Committee functioned, following also the specifics of
its contact and involvement with members of Popiel’s group. A particularly convincing piece of evidence as to how
well-informed the Polish services were is a copy of the 1958 annual report of the president of the Free Europe
Committee to the Committee’s board of directors that can be found, translated in full into Polish, as “Roczne
sprawozdanie prezesa Komitetu Wolnej Europy dla dyrektorów i członków Komitetu – Sprawozdanie prezesa za
rok 1958,” AIPN BU 01299/601.

\textsuperscript{514} Micewski, \textit{Współrządzić czy nie kłamać?}, p. 25.
Konfederacja Narodu national-chauvinists, and a wide variety of interwar National Democrats who sought to find a place for themselves in socialist Poland. Dziś i Jutro quickly became a non-conformist milieu of Catholic activist misfits seeking to reform the order in which they were living. In this respect, they were not unlike Mounier’s Esprit, with one significant difference: everything that happened at Dziś i Jutro happened with the full knowledge of and in consultation with representatives of the socialist state.

Through Borejsza, Władysław Gomułka summoned Piasecki for a face-to-face meeting on 4 July 1945. Although Piasecki made Gomułka uneasy in several respects – pushy and nationalistic as the ex-fascist was, with the added minus that Gomułka sensed Serov’s hand in staying Piasecki’s execution and releasing him back into the world – the PPR leader invited Piasecki back for a second meeting two weeks later, with instructions to prepare a political program in the interim. Following their second meeting, Gomułka approved Piasecki’s project to start a Catholic lay association anchored in a journal. In subsequent conversations with Borejsza, Piasecki settled on his program for the Dziś i Jutro weekly.

To understand the emerging ideological and social profile of this journal, it is important to examine a few key phrases from the political program that Piasecki submitted to Gomułka. This program subsequently became the basis for Piasecki’s front-page headline article “Zagadnienia istotne” (Essential questions), with which he launched the first issue of Dziś i Jutro on 25 November 1945. After committing to making Poland a “bridging, not a dividing, factor between the world of the East and the West” and to campaigning on behalf of Polish-Soviet friendship, Piasecki concentrated on the area of greatest personal and institutional interest to him: Catholic-socialist partnership. Piasecki declared,

Ideological elements of the governing camp harbor fears that allowing for the identification of idealistic milieux and subsequently a movement can result in the regeneration of reactionary elements on Polish soil. In contrast, the Christian-idealist milieux lack faith in the good will of Marxist leaders, in their loyal commitment to involve them in the construction of Polish reality. We believe that this mutual lack of trust must be broken. We want to make this happen by a) sharing with Marxists in the principal task of reconstruction and transformation of the Polish state; and b) sharing with Marxists our ideologically pure and loyal struggle for the fullest development of the Polish idea in the service of humanity. Mutual relations between Marxists and idealists can only enrich both sides.  

In an attempt to appeal to Gomułka on a linguistic level by adopting Marxist terminology, Piasecki used the term “idealists” to refer to all religious people, a group in which he included himself. The operative terms in Piasecki’s proposal were “sharing,” “cooperation,” and “mutual,” with the clear suggestion that, although Marxist socialists constituted the “governing camp,” Piasecki expected to build a partnership that would break down the wall between the two.

Though not entirely certain what to make of the ideologically realigned assemblage of former national-chauvinists and fascists, Primate Hlond initially offered them his token support, even contributing US$500 to help get their journal off the ground. Borejsza, too, met regularly with Piasecki in the fall of 1945 to help the latter develop an editorial plan. This newly constituted group, carrying enormous baggage from the national question, embraced as the subtitle for its journal the designation tygodnik katolicko-społeczny (social-Catholic weekly). In other words, of all the Catholic thinkers and activists in postwar Poland, it was those assembled in Dziś i Jutro who most directly problematized the issues that we have been examining.

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throughout our story. Driven to cater at once to Catholicism and to socialism, having – in principle, at least – escaped the national question to refocus on the social question, and benefiting from the initial support of hierarchy and establishment alike, this milieu seemed poised to become Poland’s greatest export to European Catholic activism.

This was not to be, for a number of reasons. When Piasecki started politicking on Dziś i Jutro’s behalf in the wake of SP’s problems with Zryw, Hlond at first cautiously supported the new journal in its goal of putting up candidates for parliament, only to pull his support suddenly when alerted to the fact that this support would likely hurt the PSL. Moreover, the movement soon demonstrated that it was as interested in enracinating itself in the socialist establishment as in achieving any Catholic goals. In their first year of functioning, the Dziś i Jutro staff received a government concession to run a private bus company serving the Warsaw environs. Their commercial ventures soon multiplied, growing to encompass two trading companies, Inco and Veritas; a private high school; a daily newspaper; and the only publishing house in Poland with a concession to print the Bible in large quantities. Already in its first year of existence, then, Dziś i Jutro seemed to be quickly drifting away from social Catholicism toward Catholic-sponsored entrepreneurship.

In terms of the trade-off between the national question and the social question, too, the first years of Dziś i Jutro’s activism left a complex balance-sheet. The interwar anti-semitism and exclusionary nationalism of the movement’s old guard had given way to an analogous sentiment directed against Germany, the object of Polish fear and hatred as the – potentially revanchist – source of the Recovered Territories transferred to Poland at Potsdam. Particularly in light of the Holy See’s decision to side with German bishops refusing to relinquish their diocesan jurisdiction over the Territories – in 1948, Pius XII addressed a long letter to the German bishops
declaring full support for their claims. – Dzīš i Jutro thus channeled a new national-chauvinist focus. Though this focus certainly detracted from their pretense of social-Catholic activism, it dovetailed perfectly with the declared goals of the Polish state to defend the Recovered Territories at all costs. Indeed, even the Polish Episcopate refused to accept Pius XII’s judgment with respect to Germany.

It is thus understandable, particularly given Piasecki’s personal track record, that historians have been quick to dismiss Dzīš i Jutro as – at best – hypocrites, at worst, Stalinist henchmen and advocates of the “Communization” of Catholicism. Yet leaving it at that ignores the fact that Dzīš i Jutro is an integral part of any intellectual and social genealogy of Catholic activism on Polish territory in the 20th century. As we will see in subsequent chapters, Dzīš i Jutro also formed substantive horizontal linkages with social Catholics and Catholic-socialist syncretists across the European continent, especially in France.

Piasecki may not have been personally invested at an intellectual or theological level in the writings of Emmanuel Mounier or Father Yves Congar, but many of the activists whom he gathered around him were, as we will see again and again. In this respect, Mikołaj Kunicki’s otherwise exceptionally illuminating biography of Piasecki is unfortunately myopic with respect to the larger movement: “Piasecki’s political philosophy had nothing to do with the philosophical school of the French personalist Emmanuel Mounier that sought to reconcile the Catholics and the Marxist left. Mounier’s vision of a Christian-communist fraternity derived from

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519 The letter appeared later that same year in Polish translation as an anti-German, anti-Vatican propaganda piece: Pius XII, Papież Pius XII do biskupów niemieckich: pełny tekst listu z dnia 1 marca 1948 (Katowice: Odra, 1948).
521 Particularly unforgiving has been the judgment of Adam Michnik, who has described the relationship between Dzīš i Jutro/PAX and the PPR/PZPR as a dialogue “between two totalitarians.” Michnik, The Church and the Left, p. 176.
philosophical speculations and applied to democratic societies rather than Soviet-controlled people’s democracies. Piasecki ignored philosophy and committed himself to the communists on the basis of political realism and ideological affinity.  

Finally, dismissing *Dziś i Jutro* and its movement – renamed “PAX” in 1952 – out of hand risks ignoring the manifold connections between the SP enterprise and *Dziś i Jutro* that existed at both an ideological and a personal level. True – Piasecki took advantage of the vulnerability of Popiel’s milieu to try to build up his own Catholic political organization, but his goals did not emerge out of a vacuum. More importantly, he succeeded in gathering around him several generations of activists committed to Catholic social thought who had belonged to SP until its demise.

Piasecki was the most natural candidate to benefit from the fall of Karol Popiel’s Stronnictwo Pracy. True – his negotiations with Popiel and his fellow Catholic editors had failed to secure consensus for Piasecki to take 50% +1 of the leadership of a new Catholic political party. Yet Piasecki was able to leverage these negotiations in his dealings with the establishment to obtain an allowance of three MPs for the *Dziś i Jutro* group in the 1947 Polish parliamentary elections: this, at a time when Catholic activists were either fleeing into exile or preparing themselves for prison sentences.

The greatest gain made by *Dziś i Jutro* with the collapse of Stronnictwo Pracy was the passage of a significant number of budding Christian Democratic youth activists to *Dziś i Jutro*.

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523 After the falsified outcome of the parliamentary elections of 19 January 1947 had become clear, *The Tablet* printed, among its other coverage of the elections, a key fragment in translation of a *Dziś i Jutro* editorial from two months earlier that had announced 10 candidates who then stood in the January elections. The editorial explained their candidacy in the following terms: “Under conditions as difficult as the present there is a necessity to undertake, on the sole responsibility of the initiators, independent attempts with the purpose of relieving tension and dispelling the growing difficulties in public life.... Should their attempts bring positive results, the initiators hope that they will be approved by the Hierarchy. If not, they will be able to bear the consequences.” “The New Polish ‘Parliament’: The Lack of True Catholic Representation,” *The Tablet*, 8 February 1947, p. 87; for the original text, see “Katolik i obywatel,” *Dziś i Jutro*, 15 December 1946.
A number of participant accounts reveal the significance of these transfers of cadres from Christian Democracy to *Dziś i Jutro*’s syncretist twist on social Catholicism. Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927-) – in 1946, an ambitious 19-year-old, soon to become one of the most important *Dziś i Jutro* activists, and, 40 years hence, postwar Poland’s first postwar non-Communist prime minister – is one such example. Mazowiecki, who as of the July 1946 decision by Popiel’s executive committee to suspend SP activities, was head of the SP youth activist cell for the region around his hometown, Płock, freely admits that “All I wanted was to become engaged in public life as a Catholic.” When the SP door closed, Mazowiecki saw another open in *Dziś i Jutro*, and he eagerly joined up. By the time that *Dziś i Jutro* had organized its first official national youth retreat – in August 1948, at Rowy (near Słupsk) – Mazowiecki was an integral part of Piasecki’s staff.

The experience of Zygmunt Skórzyński (1923-) is equally revealing. Skórzyński was, in 1946, a 23-year-old student in Kraków looking, like Mazowiecki, to become involved in public life as a Catholic. Having only just signed up for SP membership, Skórzyński received a rude awakening when he witnessed the bitter negotiations and disputes between Popiel’s core group and the Zryw faction. At the time, lacking any knowledge of the wartime context of Felczak and Widy-Wirski’s original splintering off from SP, Skórzyński saw the dispute simply as a great source of disillusionment. As he has explained, “since this party was to bring Catholics together, I expected that it would be possible to combine harmoniously a socially progressive, active stance with work in the intellectual instruction of young Catholics. I had no idea at the time about the political profile of that party and was shocked by the politicking that was the order of

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524 Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Interview with Author, 25 January 2006.
the day.‖ This was the reaction of a significant number of youth: a pox on both the Popiel group and Zryw, with the activists formerly of SP headed to Dziś i Jutro instead.

Despite the conspiracy theories surrounding the creation of Dziś i Jutro and the often ambiguous intentions of its founder, it is important to keep in mind that, as the cases of Mazowiecki and Skórzynski illustrate, many of the individuals who became involved with Dziś i Jutro simply wanted an organizational home in which they could publicly express both their Catholicism and their desire to participate in the ongoing Polish Revolution. Whatever degree of personal magnetism Piasecki did or did not have, budding young Polish Catholic activists of the postwar – beginning with one-time National Democrats and proceeding to those stranded by the successive collapses of SP and the PSL – had little choice but to join Piasecki’s enterprise if they wanted to remain active.

Meanwhile, Dziś i Jutro, while an excellent milieu for ambitious, publicly minded young Catholics like Mazowiecki, could easily accommodate also those seeking simply to get involved in public life without giving up the public profession of their faith. This was the ideal point of departure for a Catholic-socialist syncretism, and Emmanuel Mounier’s personalism would rapidly become the key pathway to this pursuit. In its openness toward a socialist establishment that offered them the promise of actively participating in the construction of a workers’ state – conceived simultaneously as a mission of evangelization by Piasecki and his younger writers – Dziś i Jutro opened the doors of the outside world to young lay Catholics in Poland wishing to do more than just repeat tired ethical niceties.

CHAPTER 6
Rewriting the Social Question:
Poland’s Catholic Press and the Influence of Emmanuel Mounier, 1945-1948

A great experiment is underway in Poland, yet, in this Catholic nation, Catholicism as such has absented itself from that experiment, without being able to justify that absence by anything other than a palpable hostility to the established power. This absence is dangerous. It would be less so if, even without adhering enthusiastically to the regime, something that is not demanded of it, Polish Catholicism took a bold stance informed by historical wisdom and social progress. We would, however, be remiss not to be attentive to the first steps of a Catholic avant-garde whose task stretches over the long term, for it must create an entire tradition that we in France already have behind us, along with its attendant trials and tribulations. [...] By far the boldest is the position of Dziś i Jutro.

--Emmanuel Mounier, 1946

Dziś i Jutro was only one of three — indeed, the last of the three — major lay Catholic journals to emerge on Polish territory in 1945. Its counterparts were Tygodnik Powszechny (Universal Weekly) — started in Kraków in March by Rev. Jan Piwowarczyk and Jerzy Turowicz under Archbishop Sapieha’s patronage — and Tygodnik Warszawski (Warsaw Weekly), a lay project initiated by Primate Hlond and closely tied to Popiel’s SP even after its liquidation. All

527 Rzeczpospolita, 27 August 1947.
528 As of May 1946, a total of 432 publications were appearing in print in Poland, 23 of which were religious. The three weeklies examined here were both exceptional and the most influential among these 23 and noteworthy as such, for while the other publications offered only printed versions of prayers and pastoral letters, these journals not only embodied but indeed facilitated ideological and sociological shifts within Catholicism in post-World War II Poland. For the statistics of the press in postwar Poland, see “The Catholic Press in Poland: Screened but not Hidden Vigour,” The Tablet, 25 May 1946, p. 260-261.
529 The term “journal” is used here loosely, to emphasize the nature of the content rather than the format of the publication. All three of these journals appeared on newsprint folded halfway along the side, like a daily newspaper,
three laid claim – in name as in the subject matter that they treated – to the *fin-de-siècle* and interwar heritage of social-Catholic thought and activism. All three designed their respective proposals for a postwar social Catholicism moving beyond face-to-face catechism by attempting to reach masses through print-circulation numbers in the tens of thousands: *Dziś i Jutro*, with the lowest circulation, still reached an average of 10,000 subscribers with each issue. Each journal developed its revamped attempt at a mass-audience social Catholicism by balancing, to different degrees, interwar Catholic approaches to the social question with new vocabularies imposed by the postwar Polish socialist establishment on the one hand and, on the other, their French Catholic icons, above all Emmanuel Mounier.

The postwar decade, though clearly most lucrative – or, seen from another angle, least oppressive – for those inclined to toe the Soviet-inspired line, encompassed a wide range of dynamic activities that only over time were whittled down into what has become known rather monolithically as Polish “Stalinism.” By 1948, as *Tygodnik Warszawski* suffered repressions alongside SP while *Tygodnik Powszechny* swore off political activism, it would become clear that *Dziś i Jutro* was the only one of these journals growing and flourishing as a Catholic enterprise in a socialist order. Already in the first postwar years, Piasecki’s journal had grown into a “movement with no name,” as Piasecki described it until bestowing upon it the name

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530 The nuance of the “Stalinization” process is captured best in Norman Naimark and Leonid Gibianskii, eds, *The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe, 1944-1949* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997). With respect to the three postwar Polish Catholic activist weeklies, Janusz Zablocki, despite the ideological blinders and mission of revisionist self-redemption that color his narrative, has recognized the dynamism of these processes better than any other account in print: see Zablocki, *Chrześcijańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji*, p. 35-62. One of the most prominent Young Turks of *Dziś i Jutro* and PAX in the early 1950s, Zablocki had, by the 1970s, claimed to have converted to Christian Democracy
“PAX” in April 1952.\textsuperscript{531} Tygodnik Powszechny, too, carved out for itself and its sister monthly journal Znak a safe haven in socialist Poland that would allow them to develop their activist model until they were shut down in March 1953 for refusing to eulogize Stalin.

Despite the subsequent, dramatic divergence of the paths taken by these Catholic journals, it is important to begin in pre-Stalinist socialist Poland with the journals’ shared roots and joint debates. The major figures behind these journals – from Jerzy Braun to Jerzy Turowicz – are already familiar to us from wartime Catholic social networks. Indeed, most of their paths crossed and re-crossed throughout World War II, making for a significant degree of overlap at the intellectual, personal, and political levels. For much of the period 1945-1948, many of the respective voices featured in the three journals were non-exclusive. In other words, a significant proportion of postwar Poland’s Catholic thinkers and activists regularly traded places, taking turns writing for Dziś i Jutro, Tygodnik Powszechny, and Tygodnik Warszawski.

Beyond the emerging, horizontally oriented world of the lay Catholic press – functioning independently of the hierarchy, albeit with an initial strong push from the bishops – the immediate postwar brought to Poland new intellectual horizons that revolutionized Poland’s linkages with the Francophone Catholic world. This new approach forced all Catholic activists to re-conceptualize their relationship to French Catholic thought and activism as a function of Poland’s new postwar, “revolutionary” sociopolitical order. Understanding the shared elements of the stories of Catholic activism’s evolution in Western and Eastern Europe is no mere task of comparison and contrast. Activists at the cutting edge of the postwar project of mission in both France and Poland were in regular contact, visited each other, and shaped each other’s approaches. The French inspired the Poles, who, in turn, attempted to draw French as well as

other Western European counterparts into what they all understood to be a revolutionary transformation conditioned by socialism on the one side and Catholicism on the other.

Polish Catholic activists’ path from Thomist personalism to revolutionary personalism, from Maritain through Mounier, from a capitalism-neutral doctrine of charity to open support of the workers’ revolution, began with the war’s end. Hand in hand with the ideological shift went a sociological shift that accelerated the path undertaken before World War II by Odrodzenie: from clerical leadership of the Catholic vanguard to priests’ increasing marginalization within activist networks, to the ultimate point of their relegation to purely technical positions tied to theological commentary.

The greatest difficulty in telling the story of these journals lies in developing an adequate analytical vocabulary that avoids historicist moral-political goals of either apologizing for Communism or celebrating anti-Communism. The best remedy for such historicist projects is a close intertextual reading of a key sampling of articles from several points in these journals’ postwar history. Such an approach in no way removes politics from our story, but rather keeps to a minimum conscious moral-political grand-standing over who was the more ardent anti-Communist or who deserves more blame for having collaborated in the project of building socialism.

Understanding the fate of SP in the immediate postwar is crucial to grasping the intellectual, political, and religious significance of the Catholic weeklies. As the case of SP ideologue and Tygodnik Powszechny co-founder Rev. Jan Piwowarczyk illustrates, the social-Catholic position that served as the point of departure for both Tygodnik Powszechny and Tygodnik Warszawski – unlike Dziś i Jutro – was indelibly bound up with the social-Catholic mission statement of SP. Likewise, a clear picture of the state apparatus responsible for Catholic
activists is essential to understanding both why all three weeklies were initially allowed to function at least semi-freely and why repressions were forthcoming against Tygodnik Warszawski and ultimately Tygodnik Powszechny as well, but not Dziś i Jutro.\footnote{532 For an early analysis of these trends – valuable despite its clear partiality to social Catholicism and its selective mythologization of Tygodnik Warszawski and certain aspects of Tygodnik Powszechny – see Maciej M. Łetowski, “Dwa tygodniki. Tygodnik Warszawski i Tygodnik Powszechny (1945-1953) w życiu katolicyzmu społecznego w Polsce,” Chrześcijanin w Świecie. Zeszyty ODiSS, 146 (November 1985), p. 41-56.}

A close reading of early issues of the journals reveals that all not only approved of, but indeed actively campaigned for the revolutionary project of transforming the basis of Polish society. All attempted to pioneer new “social Catholicisms” adapted to the postwar socialist order that would nonetheless allow them as Catholic activists to function in a space between orthodox capitalism and Soviet-style socialism. All failed in this attempt.\footnote{533 Whenever possible, I avoid the often acontextual and overly heuristic term “third way,” despite its prominence (alongside its sister term “civil society”) in the literature on the postwar journals: see, for example, Żmijewski, The Catholic-Marxist Ideological Dialogue in Poland, p. 27; Manetti, “Sign of the Times,” p. 11. Provocative or not as a way of thinking about the journals’ aims, the concepts themselves represent above all an excessively functionalist approach, for they mask the real and significant intellectual, political, and religious differences among the journals that conditioned their different paths. The “third way” idea, then, is less appropriate as a catch-all term for individuals or movements seeking to chart a course between any two given camps, than to situations in which the term’s usage is contextually warranted, for example, Anthony Giddens’s ideologization of Tony Blair’s government in the United Kingdom: see Giddens, The Third Way: the Renewal of Social Democracy (Malden: Polity Press, 1999).}

What determined who achieved the most – intellectually, economically, and socially – in addition to political contingency was the degree to which these postwar Catholic social activists were willing to push their nascent ideologies beyond Pius XI’s Maritain-inspired Catholic social teaching to incorporate the revolutionary-personalist writings of Emmanuel Mounier and Esprit.

\textit{Kraków}

The first Catholic journal to appear in Poland in 1945 was Tygodnik Powszechny, which debuted on 24 March, over a month before Germany’s capitulation to the Allies. This journal would, in the eight years prior to its 1953 suspension for failure to publish an obituary for Josef Stalin, average the extraordinarily high – for a non-mass-oriented, non-daily, non-newspaper –
Although memory of the war’s unprecedented violence and destruction weighed heavily on the journal’s early issues, its articles from the outset reflected a well-designed program intended to combine guidelines for Poland’s spiritual and material reconstruction with a vibrant “socio-cultural” program. In other words, its editors made the conscious choice not to dedicate the journal exclusively to “social Catholicism” or “Catholic social teaching,” a choice apparent in the use of the adjective “socio-cultural” rather than “social” in the journal’s subtitle. This was, moreover, the fulfillment of the wartime project drawn up by Turowicz at Goszyce under the influence of his fellow Unia members and the various cultural luminaries to whom he and his wife had offered safe harbor during the war.

Turowicz had maintained contact with his old superior from Głos Narodu in 1939, Rev. Jan Piwowarczyk. Piwowarczyk, like Zygmunt Kaczyński, was a priest who had been a major figure of interwar Polish Christian Democracy. Rather than serve as an MP or minister, however, Piwowarczyk had taken upon himself the role of party ideologue. After he produced the authoritative Polish translations of Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno while also writing extensive commentaries on both encyclicals, he incorporated this work into programmatic documents first for SP’s forerunner parties and, from 1937 onward, for SP itself.


535 The “statement from the publisher” in the first issue of Tygodnik Powszechny declared, “Tygodnik Powszechny will be a Catholic journal. It will, therefore, aim to make Catholic Truth permanent among broad cross-sections of our society and to express it in the socio-cultural matters that life’s passing brings us. Tygodnik Powszechny will be an apolitical, non-partisan journal. For this reason, we exclude from its pages current political matters and the struggles between parties.” “Oświadczenie wydawnictwa,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 24 March 1945.

Piwowarczyk was a close confidant of Kraków Archbishop Adam Sapieha, who in January 1945 called Piwowarczyk and Turowicz to Kraków for a series of consultations with the goal of establishing a new Catholic journal based on Turowicz’s wartime blueprints. Sapieha, who emerged from the war with a reputation of fierce antagonism toward the German occupiers, was able to offer political protection for the fledgling journal. Piwowarczyk and Turowicz, working in tandem and expanding their team as rapidly as possible to include many of Kraków’s cultural and intellectual luminaries, produced the first issue immediately after the city’s liberation.537

Was Tygodnik Powszechny a journal of the clergy or of the laity? Most historical accounts of Tygodnik Powszechny neglect to mention that Sapieha had asked Piwowarczyk to take the leading role in the journal from its inception. Jerzy Turowicz loyally repeated this fact in interviews and written reflections – “he [Piwowarczyk] was of course the #1 person in this enterprise”538 – but the fact of the matter is that we lack any written documentation to confirm this arrangement. Consistent with the oral history, however, is the logical interpretation that Sapieha, given that he was putting up Church funds and requesting that the journal add to its footer the note “Journal of the Princely-Metropolitan Curia,”539 preferred to have a priest with experience in publishing in charge of the new weekly, rather than a 33-year-old layman. The reason that today’s casual peruser of archival issues of Tygodnik Powszechny would not know that Piwowarczyk had been editor-in-chief at the start, however, was that Tygodnik Powszechny followed the accepted practice at the time – as did Tygodnik Warszawski – of writing “Edited by the Staff” [Redaguje: Zespół] rather than name a single lead editor.

539 In the original – “Pismo Kurii Xiążęco-Metropolitalnej.”
The question is relevant because, seven months into Tygodnik Powszechny’s existence, government print censors, who had just begun to establish an iron grip over what could or could not appear in print, demanded one name for the journal’s masthead. Turowicz asked Piwowarczyk to submit his name, but the latter refused; by default, then, Turowicz’s name went on the masthead. Despite the fact that Tygodnik Powszechny was an ecclesiastical initiative in which the place of prominence belonged to a journalist-priest, its official face was that of a journal of the laity. Indeed, by the time Turowicz’s name first appeared on the masthead, Piwowarczyk’s place within the journal had crystallized as that of the lone priest on a large, lay editorial staff.540

It is therefore understandable that John Paul II, writing in 1995 to congratulate Turowicz on the journal’s 50th anniversary, neglected any mention at all of clerical involvement in the Tygodnik Powszechny enterprise. Indeed, although John Paul II, as the young Rev. Karol Wojtyła, had written regularly for the weekly since 1949, his lasting impression of it was of a journal of the laity intentionally designed as such. His reflections bear scrutiny: “If I say that the initiative of creating Tygodnik Powszechny at a moment when the Second World War was still raging was a decision born of Divine Intervention, I mean also that it carried in itself a theology of the laity. A journal edited by laymen is one form of lay apostolate.”541 John Paul II was absolutely correct in this assessment of the significance – social as well as theological – of Catholic journals as a form of lay activism, but his account glosses over the shift internal to Tygodnik Powszechny’s own history.

The front page of the first issue led off with an essay by Rev. Piwowarczyk entitled “Ku katolickiej Polsce” (Toward a Catholic Poland). In this text, the journalist-priest combined a

commitment to revolutionary, historical transformation with a Thomist personalism in order to insist that the Church not only needed to play a leading role in Poland’s transformation, but indeed that it was historically prepared to do so. The text began, “Our entire attitude toward the events underway can be summarized in the following two truths: 1) The world, and Poland with it, must succumb to transformation, not only reconstruction; 2) The Church has a particularly important role to play in this time. Thus far, we have divided history into three epochs: antique, medieval, and modern. Now it will be necessary to add a fourth: the one that we are currently entering.”

Piwowarczyk’s decision to lead off the first article of the first issue of a new Catholic journal with the declaration of a revolutionary break with the past was quite a modern act, hardly the work of a nationally minded priest. Indeed, Piwowarczyk went out of his way to argue not just the compatibility, but indeed the necessary complementarity, of Catholicism with democracy, evoking the first French ralliement of the early 1890s: “In a day when ‘democracy’ is synonymous with progress, let us recall that Leo XIII personally elevated and blessed at St. Peter’s Basilica the banners of French democracy.”

No integralist, Piwowarczyk simply preferred Pius XI’s brand of social Catholicism, combined with an evident grounding in Thomist personalism as articulated by Maritain. Indeed, Piwowarczyk explicitly evoked central tenets of two separate works by the French Thomist to warrant a principled rejection of totalitarianism in favor of civic personalism. First, while acknowledging that Poland needed “a new type of culture in which we can fit Western values,”

542 Jan Piwowarczyk, “Ku katolickiej Polsce,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 24 March 1945. Curiously, the Polish Episcopate would issue in April 1946 a letter whose language deeply echoed that of Piwowarczyk’s article. In their Lenten Pastoral letter, the bishops would declare, “Social structures can and must change [...]. Neither the Church nor Catholic culture, nor the Christian traditions of the nation, will seek to hinder this march towards a more perfect life. On the contrary, they will always support progress, knowledge and a wise raising of living conditions. But the improvement of temporal civilization should proceed step by step with the growth of moral values, and technics [sic!] should not subjugate but liberate the spirit.” Piwowarczyk thus proved to be a trendsetter for both the laity and the bishops of Poland. See The Lenten Pastoral Letter of the Polish Archbishops and Bishops, April 1946, translated and reprinted (abridged) as “‘Poland cannot be communist’: The Lenten Pastoral Letter of the Polish Archbishops and Bishops,” The Tablet, 27 April 1946, p. 211-212.
Piwowarczyk evoked Maritain’s *Primauté du Spirituel* to define those values: “the primacy of the spirit over matter, the liberation of the human person from the tyranny of external conditions, the ethical meaning of life, etc.” Second, Piwowarczyk introduced what would be a recurring theme in his writings: “rights and responsibilities” of citizens conscious of their status as “human persons” in a state that exists only instrumentally, to “offer security” to a “greater number of human persons having a purpose in themselves.”

Piwowarczyk’s political theory was straight out of Thomas Aquinas’s version of natural law: hence the preference for the authoritative 20th-century intermediary for Aquinas’s writings, Jacques Maritain. Presenting Thomism as the answer to totalitarianism, Piwowarczyk wrote, “In place of these [totalistic] addictions, the Church imprinted upon humanity Christian personalism, conscious of responsibilities and rights, rendering unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s, and unto God that which is God’s.”

This passage could have been taken straight out of Maritain’s *Trois Réformateurs*, whose English translation in fact carries the title *The Things that are not Caesar’s*.

In his preface to a 1984 collection of Piwowarczyk’s writings, Turowicz described *Tygodnik Powszechny* as the forum in which Rev. Piwowarczyk had elaborated a “vision of personalist democracy based on the fulfillment of the principles of social justice.” This is an extremely accurate characterization: Piwowarczyk’s exploration of the “rights and responsibilities” of the human person in a democracy was, for once, in line with the thought of Emmanuel Mounier, whose advocacies Piwowarczyk otherwise found indefensible for their

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543 Samuel Moyn has described an analogous influence by Maritain on wartime and early-postwar thought in Western European intellectual and legal discourse as having “cemented the resonance of the dignity of the human person as the communitarian framework for the new rights-talk.” Maritain’s evident influence on Piwowarczyk and Piwowarczyk’s attempt to combine a call for social “transformation” with the new Catholic personalist “rights-talk” raise the possibility that Poland might have shared in the flourishing of this transnational rights-talk if not for the political, social, and intellectual consequences of the division of Europe created by the Yalta Accords. Moyn, “Personalism, Community, and the Origins of Human Rights,” p. 95.

544 Turowicz, Foreword, p. 8.
excessive straying from ecclesiastical orthodoxy.\textsuperscript{545} In this instance, however, Piwowarczyk’s analysis was evocative of the Statute of the Human Person proposed by Mounier in his 1938 “Call for a coalition for a personalist democracy” to protect “THE PERSON” against political establishments of all sorts.\textsuperscript{546}

Piwowarczyk – alongside Rev. Antoni Szymański and Father Jacek Woroniecki – had been interwar Poland’s expert on Thomist natural law. The Vatican had welcomed his 1933 Polish translations of \textit{Rerum Novarum} and \textit{Quadragesimo Anno}. His textbook \textit{Katolicka etyka społeczna} (Catholic social ethics) went through four editions in the 1930s and 1940s.

Piwowarczyk was perhaps the personification of Polish ecclesiastical interwar personalism. It is thus a curious contingency that made this priest, of all people, the \textit{spiritus movens} behind Poland’s first postwar Catholic “journal of the laity.”

Though Turowicz, too, had a deep appreciation of Maritain, as did the team that he assembled between 1945 and 1948 – including Antoni Gołubiew, Józefa Hennel (1925-), Paweł Jasienica (1909-1970), Stefan Kisielewski (1911-1991), Hanna Malewska (1911-1983), Zofia Starowieyska-Morstin (1891-1966), Stanisław Stomma, and Jacek Woźniakowski (1920-) – the staff of \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny} left serious philosophical and theological commentary to Piwowarczyk. It is thus difficult to determine who among the \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny} staff stood where on these issues and at what point, particularly in 1945-1946.\textsuperscript{547} This was a motley crew of

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\textsuperscript{545} It is thus inaccurate to suggest, as Brian Porter-Szűcs does, that Jan Piwowarczyk “drew upon the work of Mounier.” Porter-Szűcs, \textit{Faith and Fatherland}, p. 146. In 1947, Piwowarczyk went so far as to indict Mounier by name, arguing, “He aims through sharp criticism of the Church authorities on social matters to reach some sort of ‘understanding’ with the revolutionary camp. [...] Knowing, however, how easily French opinions are assimilated in Poland, we have reason to fear that these opinions will reach us as well.” Piwowarczyk, “Wierność wobec Kościoła,” \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny}, 2 February 1947.


\textsuperscript{547} That said, Andrzej Franaszek has described, for example, how Czesław Miłosz and Stanisław Stomma, who had known each other since attending the same middle school in interwar Vilnius, had moved together over the course of
prose writers, poets, and journalists assembled from among Kraków literary circles, Catholic University of Lublin alumni, Warsaw academics, and forcibly resettled figures from the Polish interwar cultural haven of Vilnius, which the Potsdam Accords of 1945 recognized as the new capital of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. The diverse staff of editors and authors wrote on an eclectic array of topics: from the state’s border adjustments to new trends in poetry, religious iconography, and urban design. Existing accounts of staff dynamics make it clear that Piwowarczyk was wary of imposing a uniform ideological profile on the staff, who – as Norbert Żmijewski has elegantly illustrated – embodied a wide spectrum of philosophical inclinations, from liberalism, to solidarism, to socialism.

Memories and photographs preserved by the Tygodnik Powszechny staff of the mid-to-late 1940s suggest that the atmosphere in the journal’s offices fell somewhere between the tragic, smoke-filled café world of interwar Warsaw’s Marxist intellectuals and the carnivalesque atmosphere of 1980s Wrocław’s student street protests. Turowicz was the driving force behind this atmosphere. Norbert Żmijewski’s descriptions of Turowicz’s stance as “ideological indifferentism” or “political pragmatism” thus entirely miss the point of his efforts.

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548 On the diversity of the staff, particularly the experience of those resettled from Vilnius, see Józefa Hennelowa [Hennel], “Bo jestem z Wilna.” Z Józefą Hennelową rozmawia Roman Graczyk (Kraków: Znak, 2001).

549 See the second chapter of Żmijewski, The Catholic-Marxist Ideological Dialogue in Poland.

550 The elegant and definitive portraits of these milieux are, respectively, Shore, Caviar and Ashes; Padraic Kenney, A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). The memoirs and volumes of collected interviews with former Tygodnik Powszechny staff are legion, but particularly rich in its combination of textual detail with photographs and other visual sources is Woźniakowski, Ze wspomnień szczęściarza. Christina Manetti also captures some of this spirit in her study of Tygodnik Powszechny and its broader milieu: Manetti, “Sign of the Times.”

551 Żmijewski, The Catholic-Marxist Ideological Dialogue in Poland, p. 35. On whether or not Tygodnik Powszechny expressed “political pragmatism,” see the 2011 Polish mainstream press debates over a fragmentary, moralizing study written out of disillusionment and frustration by former Tygodnik Powszechny staff member Roman Graczyk, who – despite denying his intention of delivering “morality lessons” – treats this putative pragmatism as the point of departure for a story of “bitter compromises by the entire milieu and personal defeats for some of its members.” Roman Graczyk, Cena przetrwania? SB wobec “Tygodnika Powszechnego” (Warszawa: Czerwone i Czarne, 2011), p. 8. Graczyk’s frustration and disillusionment with the institutional mythologies that he
Turowicz’s goal, as he would reveal after 1989, was to take full advantage of the public forum given to him and his staff for as long as possible. In this sense, he was remaining loyal to the spirit of his wartime involvement in Unia. The mere fact of his adhesion to that organization shows that he was not at all “indifferent” to politics when faced with the opportunity to oppose the Nazi occupation; rather, as he understood it, his idea of opposition centered above all on support for Poland’s continued cultural and intellectual flourishing. This is precisely the path that Turowicz chose once again as Tygodnik Powszechny editor. In this respect, he was less disposed toward a head-on ideological encounter with the emerging socialist establishment of People’s Poland than the editors of the other Catholic weeklies.

In the eyes of those chroniclers who have lauded Piwowarczyk – or his colleague Józef Marian Święcicki, the one layman of Tygodnik Powszechny who stood out for his anti-socialist social Catholicism – as “unbending,” the implication is that Turowicz et al. bent for the establishment.\(^{552}\) This is a misunderstanding. Piwowarczyk represented the rear-guard of a social-Catholic school whose passing coincided with the acceptance by the bulk of Polish Catholic lay activists of the country’s new social and political order. Moreover, as Piwowarczyk himself had explained, his own wartime experiences of arrest and hiding had convinced him that the new order was something to be welcomed as a sanctification of the “generation of heroes and martyrs who with unswerving virility suffered for Faith and Nation.”\(^{553}\) Piwowarczyk thus represented a national personalism that, in the postwar Catholic activist mainstream, was the sole remaining outpost of Thomist thought outside the Catholic University of Lublin. There,

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\(^{552}\) See, for example, Zabłocki, *Chrześcijańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji*, p. 40-42. For an insightful overview of these political-interpretive dilemmas, see Manetti, “Sign of the Times,” e.g. p. 13-15.

\(^{553}\) Piwowarczyk, “Ku katolickiej Polsce.”
philosophy professors and students alike – the few surviving interwar priest-professors, as well as the younger scholars Stefan Świężawski (appointed to the Lublin philosophy faculty in 1946\textsuperscript{554}) and Czesław Strzeszewski – continued even in the postwar decade to frame their entire worldview around the writings of Aquinas and Maritain.\textsuperscript{555}

\textit{Warsaw: The National-Personalist Version}

In 1948, the 47-year-old Stefan Wyszyński would take center stage in the Polish ecclesiastical structures, succeeding the recently deceased August Cardinal Hlond as Polish primate. Just three years earlier – before becoming diocesan bishop of Lublin in late 1946 – Wyszyński had been a mere seminary professor of canon law, and his principal activities outside the seminary were limited to regular visits to Laski and contributions to \textit{Tygodnik Warszawski}. Indeed, Wyszyński’s writings – alongside those of Rev. Zygmunt Kaczyński, the journal’s \textit{de facto} editor-in-chief from 1945 until early 1947 – set the ideological tone for the new weekly. In a front-page article published in January 1946, Wyszyński offered a Thomist-personalist interpretation of the notion of “social progress” – for obvious reasons, a hot topic of public debate in Poland in 1945-1946 – that could have been copied verbatim from Piwowarczyk:

“Social progress is expressed in the evolution of forms of social co-existence with an ever-better adaptation of those forms to the needs of the developing human personality.”\textsuperscript{556}

\textsuperscript{554} Stefan Świężawski, “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego,” 11 October 1951, AIPN BU 0192/168/1.

\textsuperscript{555} A noteworthy exception is Karol Wojtyła, to whom Thomist convictions are often falsely attributed for his years as a student and young philosophy instructor, read backward through a selective interpretation of the encyclicals that he promulgated as pope, particularly the 1991 \textit{Centesimus Annus}. Krzysztof Kozłowski, Wojtyła’s friend from both Lublin and \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny}, has provided a useful corrective: “No one tried to deny Thomism’s greatness, yet it was an anachronism to insist that this was the only possible basis for philosophical inquiry […] A lot of things can be said about Karol Wojtyła, but not that he was a Thomist. He sought inspiration in phenomenology and wrote about Max Scheler, which often was not particularly well received by KUL’s traditionalists. But I will tell you that it was really nice to watch Wojtyła’s discussions with Stefan Świężawski, who was, after all, a Thomist.” Kozłowski and Komar, \textit{Historia z konsekwencjami}, p. 121-122.

In a hard-hitting follow-up, Wyszyński tackled head-on the polemics against Pius XII circulating in the Polish socialist press (especially the journal Kuźnica). Going further than Maritain himself – who, by this time serving as French ambassador to the Holy See, had begun to fall out with the pontiff\textsuperscript{557} – Wyszyński portrayed the beleaguered pope as a defender of the “rights of the human person” against totalitarianism: “The entire struggle of the Pope for the security of the personal rights of human beings, for a personalist social, political, and economic order, a struggle unappreciated by the person in whose defense it is waged, creates a certain chasm between the Holy See and the other side.”\textsuperscript{558}

It is perhaps a testament to how few copies of Tygodnik Warszawski remain in existence that no scholar or author who has mentioned Tygodnik Warszawski has engaged in close textual analysis of its content. Janusz Zabłocki, whose book on postwar Polish Christian Democracy devotes more space than any other study to the journal – not even a full 10 pages, in any event – quotes no Tygodnik Warszawski text from before 1947. If we examine the first issues of the journal, however, we find that its message interlocked perfectly with that of Rev. Piwowarczyk as he came across in the pages of Tygodnik Powszechny. In this respect, Zabłocki is absolutely right about the two journals’ common roots.\textsuperscript{559} Let us examine the passage that opened the first editorial in the first issue of Tygodnik Warszawski, published on 11 November 1945:

\begin{quote}
We stand at the threshold of a new era, we all see and feel it. [...] The second step will involve not only reconstruction, but indeed transformation from the ground up of more than one thing. [...] And if all of humanity is hearing today the call for a profound social and political transformation, then where can one find stronger and more certain foundations for this transformation than in Christ’s words on the responsibility of brotherly love, if not in the commandment “to love each other socially”?\textsuperscript{560}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{557} See the fifth chapter of Doering, \textit{Jacques Maritain and the French Catholic Intellectuals}. 
\textsuperscript{558} Stefan Wyszyński, “‘Problem’ Watykanu,” Tygodnik Warszawski, 17 March 1946. 
\textsuperscript{559} See, for example, Zabłocki, \textit{Chrześcijańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji}, p. 35-36. 
\textsuperscript{560} “Od redakcji,” Tygodnik Warszawski, 11 November 1945.
The similarity with Piwowarczyk’s message from 25 March is striking, and the phrasing of the declaration that “not only reconstruction, but indeed transformation” was necessary was almost a verbatim copy from Tygodnik Powszechny. Like Piwowarczyk’s first article, the Tygodnik Warszawski editorial justified the Church’s place in the new order with the evocation of “brotherly love” as the essence of Catholic social ethics. Echoing Piwowarczyk’s well-intentioned myth that democracy and the Catholic Church had been in symbiosis since the first French ralliement of the early 1890s, the Tygodnik Warszawski editors wrote, “if today the universal motto around the world has become democracy, then cannot every Catholic subscribe to this motto, since in the very premise of Christianity there resides such a definitive idea of equality among people, identical rights for all who were previously deprived of them?” Indeed, the journal conveyed to its readers a positive Christian moral obligation for engagement in the “new world order,” which, if “its structure is not to be one-sided, must be built with the hands of all people of good faith. No one is allowed today to stand passively off to the side, or to isolate himself in waiting.”

The editorial went considerably farther than Piwowarczyk, however, in its orientation toward Poland’s “national character”: “Polish society in particular has been melded with Catholicism over the thousand years of its history, making it the essence of Poland’s culture, the most valuable element of its national character.” Finally, the editors offered a mission statement for their journal, walking a fine line between the social and national questions: “Party to no partisan conflicts, we desire to give in the pages of our journal expression to those creative forces that reside in Catholic society. We desire to aid as much as we can in the guarantee of a better tomorrow for Poland.” Tygodnik Warszawski’s editors thus declared the journal to be non-partisan – despite its close ties from the outset to Christian Democracy – but firmly engaged in
the political and social processes of national transformation. The central force in these processes was to be Catholicism.

As in the case of Tygodnik Powszechny, we are obliged to inquire as to the editors’ identity. Was this also a “journal of the laity,” or was it an organ of the ecclesiastical hierarchy? A complex question – just as Tygodnik Powszechny was funded by the Kraków Archdiocese and initially run by a priest, Tygodnik Warszawski appeared under the explicit protectorship of Primate Hlond, the metropolitan of Gniezno who, in early 1946, assumed also the responsibilities of metropolitan-archbishop of the Warsaw archdiocese. Hlond arranged for the journal to receive funds through a hastily founded publishing company that served as a front for the archdiocese to funnel money directly to the weekly without it appearing to be a press organ of the hierarchy stricto sensu. That said, three of the five principal founders of Tygodnik Warszawski – including Rev. Zygmunt Wądołowski, its first editor-in-chief, quickly replaced by Rev. Kaczyński on his return from London – were priests with a history of active political and social engagement.561

It is not difficult to see that the proliferation of priests within Tygodnik Warszawski made this the first among the Catholic weeklies to attract the socialist establishment’s suspicions. Rev. Piwowarczyk was the lone clergyman on the Tygodnik Powszechny staff, and, although Archbishop Sapięha of Kraków insisted on regular meetings with the journal’s editors, his relatively strong public position worked to Tygodnik Powszechny’s advantage in its dealings with the state, at least until his death in 1951.562 The case of Tygodnik Warszawski was entirely different: its patron, Cardinal Hlond, had fled to France in 1940 and spent the war in exile; though he was the primate, his position was considerably weaker than that of Sapięha. Moreover,

561 Zabłocki, Chrzestcjańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji, p. 36.
562 The British Catholic weekly The Tablet, for example, in its reporting of Catholic news out of Poland, consistently described the journal as “Cardinal Sapięha’s Tygodnik Powszechny.” See, for example, “The Catholic Press in Poland: Screened by not Hidden Vigour,” The Tablet, 25 May 1946, p. 260-261, at p. 261. On Sapięha’s dexterity in dealing with Poland’s emerging socialist establishment, see Czajowski, Kardynał Adam Stefan Sapięha, p. 192-205.
the journal’s new editor-in-chief had also just returned from exile. There was also a second strike against him: he had been a minister in the London government when it was already in opposition to the Soviet-inspired PKWN, created in July 1944 and recognized by the Allies in place of the Polish government-in-exile as the country’s legitimate authority. Articles like Stefan Wyszyński’s “‘Problem’ Watykanu,” forcing the readers of Tygodnik Warszawski to question whether Wyszyński’s praise of the pope wasn’t intended as a veiled attack on the emerging Polish socialist regime, only exacerbated the problem.

Catholic priests constituted a significant proportion of the authors published in Tygodnik Warszawski – particularly of its front-page articles – over the journal’s three-year existence. At the same time, the weekly spawned a vibrant network of lay authorship spanning a wide range of views, including politicians who had returned from the London exile milieu, Catholics involved in public life (often with clear left-wing sympathies), and authors from the permanent staffs of the other two major Catholic weeklies (Tygodnik Powszechny and Dziś i Jutro). On this last point, as Jacek Woźniakowski has recalled, “there was so much crossover that it was hard to tell in some cases who was primarily affiliated with which weekly.”

Stefan Kisielewski and Hanna Malewska (principally of Tygodnik Powszechny) and Jan Dobracyński and Andrzej Micewski (principally of Dziś i Jutro) were particularly committed examples of authors who systematically blurred the lines among the journals’ staffs.

One of the points of crossover was a young adults’ supplement to Tygodnik Warszawski entitled Kolumna Młodych (Youth Column), which began appearing on 8 December 1946. The

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564 As Andrzej Micewski has recalled, “Pieasecki did everything in his power to integrate with the Kraków activists [of Tygodnik Powszechny], and he was successful, for a time.” Micewski, Współrządzić czy nie kłamać?, p. 28.
565 For a more detailed account of how Kolumna Młodych came into existence as well as the place its authors occupied in the broader Tygodnik Warszawski milieu, see Wiesław Chrzanowski, “Wokół Tygodnika Warszawskiego,” in Wiesław Chrzanowski, Interview with Piotr Mierecki and Bogusław Kiernicki, published as
editors and authors of this column – notably Wiesław Chrzanowski, Andrzej Kozanecki, and Tadeusz Przeciszewski (1922-2000) – came either from wartime conspiratorial organizations or the few Catholic Action-related groupings remaining in Poland (particularly Sodalicja Mariańska Akademicka, or, the Marian Academic Sodality).\textsuperscript{566} Most had also fought in the Warsaw Uprising of August-September 1944. A number had done time in Soviet labor camps in the Urals after having been arrested for making contact with residual Home Army guerrilla units following the Red Army’s liberation of Poland.\textsuperscript{567} Thus, although there was no clandestine activity involved in the group’s work, their backgrounds, problematic for several reasons in each case, seemed to destine the group for particularly bad treatment at the hands of the authorities.

\textit{The Politics of the Catholic Press}

The SP’s path was central to the fates of our three postwar Catholic weeklies. If we consider that both Reverends Kaczyński and Piwowarczyk were prominent activists in interwar Polish Christian Democracy, and that Kaczyński had just returned from serving as an SP minister in the London government, it is no surprise that they still felt deep ties to Popiel’s party. Indeed, Piwowarczyk co-wrote the Party’s programmatic statement passed at the 15 July 1945 congress.\textsuperscript{568} In early 1946, under the penname Mikołaj Patkowski, he published an extensive pamphlet entitled \textit{Stronnictwo Pracy a katolicy} (Stronnictwo Pracy and the Catholics) justifying

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\textsuperscript{566} On the Sodalicja, see \textit{Błękitne sztandary. Zarys dziejów Sodalicji Mariańskiej Akademików w Warszawie 1945-1949} (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo ASKON, 2008 ed.).

\textsuperscript{567} One of these was Tadeusz Przeciszewski, whose published recollections bring together in remarkable detail these various elements. See Przeciszewski, “Wspomnienia z dramatycznych lat 1945-1948,” in \textit{Błękitne sztandary}, p. 46-66, esp. p. 52-59.

\textsuperscript{568} The statement contains significant echoes of “Ku katolickiej Polsce,” from the first issue of \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny}. See, for example, “Ze Stronnictwa Pracy,” \textit{Tygodnik Warszawski}, 25 November 1945.
SP’s importance in the new conditions of revolutionary social and political transformation in Poland as the one official, legitimate political representation of Polish Catholics.\textsuperscript{569}

SP had not only the Episcopate’s seal of approval as the “party of Polish Catholics,” but indeed both Cardinal Hlond and Archbishop Sapieha also offered their personal support. These offers translated into action by the staffs of the weeklies whom they served as patrons. Tygodnik Warszawski published a series of brief informational notes reporting SP news,\textsuperscript{570} as well as a homily by Hlond moralizing the need for Polish Catholics to combine “Christian patriotism” with “the healthy revolutionary content of the times,” alongside other veiled nods in the direction of SP.\textsuperscript{571} The most significant element connecting Tygodnik Warszawski to the Christian Democratic party was, however, the ability to broadcast their shared ideology. Nearly a full half of the texts published in Tygodnik Warszawski between its first issue on 11 November 1945 and its last on 29 August 1948 concerned issues explicitly drawn from the domain of Catholic social teaching.

The authors of these texts were often former leaders of the wartime Unia movement, most notably Jerzy Braun and Kazimierz Studentowicz (1903-1992), as well as Konstanty Turowski, an SP executive committee member who had passed the bulk of the war as a prisoner of German labor camps. Ideologically, they formed a motley crew, with some cutting-edge in their social Catholicism, others suggesting a throwback to the social-charitable Catholicism that had predated Rerum Novarum. For example, Turowski’s articles – taking a page from the late Rev. Stojalowski – attempted to show that social Catholicism was far more suitable than socialism for peasants and farmers, while Studentowicz reminded Catholics that socialism was

\textsuperscript{569} The Ministry of Public Security kept an eye on the circulation of this pamphlet and immediately identified its author. See AIPN BU 1572/2419, which contains a copy of the pamphlet.

\textsuperscript{570} See, for example, “Ze Stronnictwa Pracy.”

\textsuperscript{571} Hlond, “Chrześćcijaństwo czy materializm.”
doctrinally at odds with the teachings of papal encyclicals. Meanwhile, Braun succeeded Kaczyński as editor-in-chief of the journal in 1947 in a jointly reached decision that it was simply too dangerous in the wake of the falsified 19 January elections to keep a priest on as the journal’s editor-in-chief.

Although Tygodnik Warszawski’s ties with SP politicized the journal, they also made it less of a clerical journal and increasingly a journal of the laity. Particularly given Popiel’s party’s progressive disappearance from the public stage following the failed negotiations with first Zryw and then Dzień i Jutro, Tygodnik Warszawski became the last public forum for extensive discussions juggling Catholic debates on the social question with a professed commitment to parliamentary democracy. The shift toward a journal of the laity approached completion with Braun’s ascension to the editorship. From that point forward, paradoxically, the journal also opened up much more to the Right: in other words, to those interwar National Democrats remaining in Poland who were unwilling to jump on board with Piasecki’s conversion to socialism and thus had nowhere else to turn if they wished to remain active in public life.

It is important to keep in mind that the mere fact that a piece of writing concerned the social question did not qualify the text as personalist. Indeed, perhaps paradoxically, the Polish lay writers publishing in Tygodnik Warszawski were far less in touch with developments in lay Catholic thought than the priests of their generation or the generation preceding theirs, including

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572 See, for example, Konstanty Turowski, “Ruch ludowy w Polsce a katolicyzm,” Tygodnik Warszawski, 6 January 1946; Kazimierz Studentowicz, “Radykalizm ruchu chrześcijańsko-społecznego w Polsce,” Tygodnik Warszawski, 12 January 1947. As we can see from an August 1948 response by Jan Piwowarczyk to an article published one month earlier by Studentowicz, the latter often wrote opaquely and unconvincingly, yet his articles initiated serious debates in the Catholic press over a burning question of the day: to what extent would the early “fathers” of Christianity (i.e. Anselm, Ambrose, Augustine) have approved of Communist socialism? Piwowarczyk evidently found Studentowicz’s laundry list of quotes from the Church fathers too equivocal. He thus followed up with an unambiguously meticulous reconstruction of the Catholic Church’s position that natural law’s requirement that all human beings have access to the goods of this world necessarily implies a second Christian precept of the human right to own property privately. See Kazimierz Studentowicz, “Ojcowie Kościoła a kapitalizm,” Tygodnik Warszawski, 18 July 1948; Jan Piwowarczyk, “Komunizm Ojców Kościoła,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 22 August 1948.
Piwowarczyk and Wyszyński. On the one hand, the interwar Polish Christian Democratic theorist Wojciech Korfanty, the movement’s lay political icon who had written prolifically throughout the 1930s, had, despite the anti-semitic bent of his personalism, manifested a clear awareness of Maritain’s Thomist writings. On the other hand, the postwar decade brought to the fore younger disciples of Korfanty’s – like Braun and Studentowicz – who had been in the interwar Odrodzenie network alongside the Tygodnik Powszechny lay leadership of Jerzy Turowicz, Stanisław Stomma, and Stefan Świężawski. The possibility of a side-by-side comparison of the two milieux showed the post-SP activists to be sorely lacking.573

Like their Cracovian counterparts, Odrodzenie had furnished some of the future Christian Democratic activists with a forum to debate cutting-edge trends in the personalist thought that was then informing the encyclicals of Pius XI. Rather than explore the intellectual premises of the institutional Church’s teachings, however, these future SP and Unia leaders stopped with the encyclicals themselves. As a result, the shift from mostly clerical to mostly lay authors, in the case of Tygodnik Warszawski, significantly lowered the quality and depth of published analysis. Not only did its deepening connection to SP politicize Tygodnik Warszawski, but it also made the actual content of the journal read more like a party-political bulletin than a locus of substantive cultural and intellectual debate.

The case of Tygodnik Powszechny was entirely different. True – Piwowarczyk occasionally used the journal’s pages to advertise his personal preference for SP, as when he wrote in support of the bishops’ call for the government to allow a confessional Catholic party into the elections, “We know that there are also Catholics in other parties. But we know, moreover, that, for the complete execution of a Catholic program, it is necessary to have a

separate political camp. For these reasons, we consider it the only proper and purposeful course of action to recognize the project of creating a separate political organization of Catholics.”

That said, there is a reason why Piwowarczyk used a penname when writing his pamphlet for SP: just as he was wary of imposing his views on his lay fellow editors and authors, so was he wary of hijacking the journal’s entire agenda with a foray into politics that was, after all, at odds with the mission statement declared in the journal’s first issue.

In mid-1947, Rev. Piwowarczyk left the editorial staff of Tygodnik Powszechny, staying on formally only as the journal’s liaison to the ecclesiastical hierarchy (asystent kościelny). He had received several visits at the journal’s offices in early 1947 from Adam Doboszyński, an interwar National Democratic politician who had returned from London via an illegal border-crossing to attempt to build up support for a new conservative movement in postwar Poland. Though he had only met briefly with Doboszyński, Piwowarczyk was caught in the crosshairs of the state security team surveilling him, and as a result he, too, became the subject of an arduous investigation, forced subsequently to testify at Doboszyński’s show trial. On the advice of Archbishop Sapięha, and to spare the journal the risks of being tied to a high-profile Public Security investigation, Piwowarczyk withdrew as editor and moved to the countryside. Although himself under constant scrutiny from the state security apparatus, he continued to write prolifically and contribute regularly to Tygodnik Powszechny until its forced shuttering in 1953.


575 We might remember Doboszyński from Chapter 2 as the author of the accusations published in Prosto z Mostu that Maritain was, in fact, Jewish. For a more complete picture of his agenda, see Adam Doboszyński, Adam Doboszyński o ustroju Polski, ed. Bogumił Grott (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1996).

576 Some of the documentation from this investigation is available at AIPN BU 0648/155.
What conclusions can we draw from the experiences of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Tygodnik Warszawski*? It would be a mistake to conclude simply that the sociological shift on both staffs toward autonomous lay control over the journals translated in the former case into depoliticization and in the latter into deeper politicization. Piwowarczyk had argued openly in the pages of *Tygodnik Powszechny* for an explicitly Catholic political party only when the fate of such a party hung in the balance; once it had become clear that the party was doomed, Piwowarczyk no longer wrote about SP. Unlike the laymen who took over *Tygodnik Warszawski*, Piwowarczyk wrote thoughtful and considered essays on Catholic social teaching before, during, and after the crisis of SP; his writings never smacked of political pamphleteering. Simply put, his specialty – and therefore the principal interest of his writing – was Catholic social thought. And, like the lay authors of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, he wrote about what interested him. Hanna Malewska also wrote about Maritain; Stanisław Stomma wrote about social relations, Gołubiew about literature, Turowicz about ecumenical philosophy and high culture, Zbigniew Herbert (1924-1998) about poetry and aesthetics, *etc.* The shift toward the laity in *Tygodnik Warszawski*, on the other hand, politicized the journal as its lay editors sought an ersatz press organ for the defunct SP. In contrast, *Tygodnik Powszechny* as a journal of the laity managed to be both socially minded and substantively culture-centered within the boundaries allowed by the censors without playing in the bloody sandbox of party politics subject to an increasingly authoritarian regime.

The fallout from the falsified parliamentary elections of January 1947 soon demonstrated to the *Tygodnik Warszawski* staff in particular just how dangerous that sandbox could be. *Tygodnik Powszechny* and its new affiliated monthly journal *Znak* (Sign), created in 1946 with a commitment to campaigning for social peace above all, suffered relatively little beyond
surveillance and threats on the person of Rev. Piwowarczyk. Meanwhile, Tygodnik Warszawski, in the wake of the falsified elections and the influx of disillusioned, angry SP activists onto its staff, tested ever more aggressively the boundaries of the new socialist establishment’s censorship and tolerance for political ideologies from outside the socialist fold.

What began as an unpleasant press campaign in the late spring and summer of 1947 against Jerzy Braun personally, accusing him of wartime collaboration with the German occupiers, soon turned into a brutal campaign of politically calculated libel against the entire milieu of “Tygodnik Wall-Street.” According to an unsigned August 1947 editorial in the newspaper Rzeczpospolita, everything Tygodnik Warszawski published was not only attributable to an “Anglo-Saxon orientation,” but indeed bought and paid for by American “Judas’s dollars.” The editorial continued, “Longing for the Anglo-Saxon order – alongside spies, speculators, and tax criminals – are journalists and essayists philosophizing on behalf of foreign agents about personalism, the sovereign rights of the individual, the autonomy of the spirit.”

Seeing the writing on the wall, Braun and his fellow lay editors at Tygodnik Warszawski decided to respond aggressively in the 100th issue of their journal, published on 19 October 1947. Here they laid out in a lengthy editorial all of what they considered to be the journal’s contributions to the building of the new postwar order. At the top of the list – in contrast with the “socio-cultural” approach taken by Tygodnik Powszechny – Tygodnik Warszawski “devoted a great deal of attention to Christian socio-economic and moral-political doctrine. Taking a stand on current problems and conflicts in public life, it was – of necessity – more ‘maximalist’ and therefore drew upon itself many insults and heavy thunderstorms from one side and another.”

Taking exception above all to the accusation that they were operating on behalf of a foreign

power, the Tygodnik Warszawski editors underscored, “Despite the stubborn libeling of us for some sort of ‘Anglo-Saxon orientation,’ we stand decisively on Polish ground, on a foundation of the eternal Christian tradition of our nation.”

The editorial reads today likely an emotionally colored attempt at institutional self-history: written as it was entirely in past tense, the editorial suggests a keen awareness on behalf of the journal’s milieu that their time of active participation in the debates over the face of Poland’s postwar transformation was almost up. Eight months later, in parallel with the Stalinist turn in the PPR that brought down its general-secretary Władysław Gomułka and his fellow “right-wing nationalist deviationists” in the Party, Tygodnik Warszawski was, in the words of Wiesław Chrzanowski, who went down as an editor of Kolumna Młodych, “locked up along with its editorial staff.” An extended wave of arrests touched both former SP activists and Tygodnik Warszawski writers and editors, including Braun, Hoppe, and Rev. Kaczyński.

Although the Kolumna Młodych staff like Chrzanowski were treated less severely than the older generations, it bears emphasis that the activists were subjected to two years of physically exacting interrogations and, at least in Hoppe’s and Kaczyński’s cases, extensive torture. In show trials held in January 1950, the Kolumna Młodych staff received from 3 to 8 years’ prison time for “anti-state, anti-people, illegal activities conducted in a legal manner.” In March-April 1951, the elder activists and editors of Tygodnik Warszawski – grouped together with the handful of SP’s national leadership who had not escaped back into exile – were given separate show trials with sentences ranging from 15 years to life in prison, their ordeal.

memorialized in a propaganda pamphlet entitled *Sojusznicy Gestapo* (Allies of the Gestapo). Kaczyński, the wartime minister of the London exile government, died in prison under mysterious circumstances two years into his sentence. The rest would be amnestied in 1955-1956 under the aegis of de-Stalinization, emaciated and often crippled.

**Warsaw: The Revolutionary-Personalist Version**

Of the three Polish Catholic weeklies, only *Dziś i Jutro* mentioned nothing in the headliner article of its first issue about “not only reconstruction, but indeed transformation” – this, despite the language of Piasecki’s original proposal to Gomułka for the journal. *Dziś i Jutro* declared a commitment to the “social Catholicism” that it advertized in its subtitle, yet from the outset its staff’s vision of what that commitment entailed would diverge from their colleagues in the other journals, and this divergence only grew more visible with the passage of time.

Linking, for example, the responsibilities of socially minded Catholics in revolutionary Poland to contemporary geopolitics, Piasecki proposed in his front-page article a set of “essential questions” that concerned, above all, where socialist Poland fit into the transformed world geography, in reference particularly to the USSR, the US, France, and Germany. Piasecki argued, “If we predict an impending Anglosaxon-Soviet conflict and we believe that it will determine decisively and exclusively the subsequent course of Polish history, then the situation is not easy. […] the expectation of an impending war has created a different situation: some Poles,

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582 Hoppe, for example, lost an eye during interrogations and would suffer from a serious heart condition for the rest of his life. Jerzy Kulczycki, Interview with Author, 26 March 2006. See also the biographical notes in Jan Hoppe’s security files: AIPN BU 02110/6, AIPN BU 01591/499/1.
though they live in Poland, find their hearts and minds already in the West, while others have long since emigrated psychologically to the East.”

Piasecki’s message – Poles, rather than worrying about who was behind the ongoing revolution in Poland, should focus on living in the everyday as both good Poles and good Catholics committed to social revolution. At the same time, Piasecki underscored the geopolitical benefits of the Polish-Soviet alliance, crediting the USSR with having secured for Poland “the return of the Western lands, the acceleration of socio-economic transformation in the spirit of social radicalism, and a tradition of shared struggle against the Germans.” In this respect, as Mikołaj Kunicki and Norbert Żmijewski have both observed, this first article of Piasecki’s in *Dziś i Jutro* was most consistent with his interwar fascist writings, in which – in the spirit of Dmowski’s pan-Slavic anti-Germanism and anti-semitism – Piasecki combined Catholic patriotism with Russophilic sentiment.

Although Kunicki is undoubtedly correct that that *Dziś i Jutro*’s declared commitment to the social question reflected a certain recycling and recasting of its ex-fascist elders’ interwar national-chauvinist rhetoric, this in and of itself is no reason to dismiss the journal’s “social-Catholic” label as nothing more than an ideological head-fake. Particularly serious and systematic in its attempts to elaborate an entire social-Catholic philosophy and politics for *Dziś i Jutro* was the younger generation of non-fascist activists who had joined Piasecki either in shared clandestine struggle in Konfederacja Narodu or just after his release from prison in 1945. Wojciech Kętrzyński and Andrzej Krasiński, the most prolific writers among this group, contributed deeply analytical articles on the putative symbiosis of *Rerum Novarum* and the

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583 Piasecki, “Zagadnienia istotne.”
“Polish Revolution.” Moreover, they guaranteed that each issue of *Dziś i Jutro* brought to its Polish readers perspectives on European and global Catholicism, often taking France as a point of departure. Reprintings of Maritain, Mounier, and Father Yves Congar in the pages of Piasecki’s journal soon became commonplace, displaying both the journal’s emerging international contacts and its audacious advocacy of a heterodox Catholicism that, while born undoubtedly of Polish nationalism, was deeply embedded in broader European trends.586

The evolution of *Dziś i Jutro* will be covered in greater detail throughout the rest of our story, but it bears underscoring from the outset that *Dziś i Jutro* was as bound up – if not more so – in the questions of politics, Catholic social thought, and clerical vs. lay activism as *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Tygodnik Warszawski*. Piasecki was infamous for his young-fascist activism of the 1930s, and, despite the conviction that he seemed to demonstrate in the wake of his “conversion” from fascism to the vanguard of a social-Catholic pro-socialism that he was just beginning to articulate, his past was not easily forgotten by his contemporaries. A memorable piece of verse by the socialist poet Julian Tuwim underscores the widespread perception among postwar socialist elites that Piasecki was little more than an opportunist with a convenient case of amnesia: “Forgetting about their yesterday / With ‘Today and Tomorrow’ he flirts today.”587

It is easy to fall into the trap of viewing *Dziś i Jutro* exclusively through the lens of political instrumentality. The fact of the matter, however, is that a non-negligible amount of creative Catholic intellectual work was done by the younger generations assembled in *Dziś i Jutro*, above all in the journal’s attempt to revolutionize social Catholicism. This attempt would breed the first serious practical approach of Catholic-socialist syncretism, which, while strongly

586 See, for example, a translation of Yves Congar’s commentary on “Sainthood and sin in the Church”: Congar, “Świętość i grzech w Kościele,” *Dziś i Jutro*, 1–4 January 1948.
inspired and supported by the thought and activism of the French Catholic vanguard, would
develop uniquely – and ultimately become uniquely compromised – through the movement’s
political involvement in Poland’s evolving socialist revolution.

At the beginning of May 1946, the young writers of the Dziś i Jutro movement received a
pleasant surprise: news that one of their French heroes, Emmanuel Mounier, read avidly in their
KN clandestine circles, would be spending three weeks in Poland that month. The Dziś i Jutro
editors and authors whom Mounier encountered during his visit – Kętrzyński, Krasiński, and
Konstanty Łubieński, in addition to Piasecki himself – were well-versed in the foundational texts
of revolutionary personalism. After all, they themselves were living, so to speak, on the frontiers
of the Catholic and socialist worlds, leading the charge in pushing deeper integration of
Catholicism and socialism on both a theoretical and a practical level.

M. Mounier Goes to Warsaw

Given Mounier’s ideological profile, it is easy to understand the attraction of his
revolutionary personalism for Catholic activists in Poland seeking to become engaged in the
revolutionary transformation of their state and society. What’s more, the Manifeste au service du
personnalisme – so avidly studied during the war by young Polish Catholic resisters –
illuminates the common ground shared by Esprit with nouvelle théologie and the Mission de
France: an effective ministry to the proletariat. As Congar observed already in 1935, the Catholic
Church could not expect to promote an abstract Catholic social teaching, however strong the
discipline within the top-down hierarchy of Catholic Action, while hiding its head in the sand
from the reality of what made the de-Christianized industrial proletariat tick. Mounier, too,
believed that figuring out how to respond to socialism required an on-the-ground familiarity with
how it was reshaping daily life. And so it was that he ended up leading a 12-person delegation of
French Catholic and Communist intellectual luminaries on a three-week tour around postwar Poland, the newly christened hot-seat of the confrontation of Catholicism and socialism.\(^{588}\)

Goulven Boudic is right to describe postwar Poland as a “country of reference” for Mounier.\(^{589}\) According to Poles who interacted with the 1946 delegation in the course of its visit, Mounier became so emotionally engaged in the experience of visiting postwar Poland that he quickly became the *de facto* leader of the group.\(^{590}\) At Mounier’s side was Rev. Alexandre Glasberg, a Ukrainian-born Jewish convert to Catholicism who spoke fluent Polish and often doubled as Mounier’s translator.\(^{591}\) A detailed portrait is available of their travels, conversations, and reflections on the three weeks spent in Poland in May 1946 thanks to the surviving documentation: Mounier’s own private day-by-day diary of the journey, his public reflections printed in *Esprit* after his return, and eyewitness testimony from the sole delegation member alive as of the preparation of the present work, Angèle de Radkowski, *née* Fumet (1922-).\(^{592}\)

Between 6 and 31 May 1946, the delegation visited seven cities and several score towns and villages, making contact with statesmen, bishops (including Hlond and Sapieha), and industrial managers, among many other professional and social groups.\(^{593}\) The central event of

\(^{588}\) Angèle de Radkowski, Interview with Author, 22 October 2005. De Radkowski’s invitation to join the delegation is still in her possession, though without the accompanying letter that would permit the citation of a specific date. It is worth noting that the delegation was not designed to represent *Esprit*, *pace* the inaccurate claim by Christine Orsini that the visit to Poland was “a voyage by the staff of the journal *Esprit* to Warsaw and to Auschwitz.” Orsini, “Monde ouvert et pensée nomade. Présentation du séminaire consacré à Georges-Hubert de Radkowski organisé le 20 mai 1998,” in Yann Lepape, ed, *Monde ouvert, pensée nomade. En l’honneur de Georges-Hubert de Radkowski* (Paris: Harmattan, 1999), p. 7-20, at p. 9.


\(^{590}\) See all of the interviews collected in “Rozmowy o Emanuele Mounier.”


\(^{592}\) De Radkowski’s father, Stanislas Fumet, was editor of the Catholic journal *Temps Présent*, which inherited many of the authors from the Dominican *Sept*. Invited but unable to make the journey to Poland, Fumet sent his daughter, with a promise from his friend the abbé Glasberg that he would look after the 24-year-old Angèle Fumet. The substance of her ongoing conversations with Glasberg over the course of the trip makes for a useful corrective to Mounier’s views.

\(^{593}\) These details and dates are drawn from the private records kept by Mounier in his diary over the course of the voyage, held at IMEC MNR2.D5-06.01. I have verified these details to the greatest degree possible with the sole
the visit was a lecture delivered by Mounier in the Auditorium Maximum of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. On his return to France, Mounier devoted a long article in the June 1946 issue of *Esprit* to his travels in Poland, entitled “L’ordre règne-t-il à Varsovie?” In this article (quoted at the start of this chapter), he expressed his sympathy for the wartime suffering of the Polish people, whose misery had been evident to the French delegation.

At the same time, however, Mounier and his fellow French Catholic-vanguard tourists were by and large critical of the reticent, if not outright defensive, stance toward socialism that they found among Poles. In Mounier’s eyes, for example, Poland was falling prey to an “obsession with Russia” predominant among “the overwhelming majority of the nation.”

Unfortunately – Mounier argued – this majority failed to understand the “historical importance” of Poland’s status – “unique in the world”: that postwar Poland had a chance to achieve the unprecedented, namely, to “reconcile the Catholic Church and socialism.”

For Mounier, the unique opportunities afforded to Poland at the same time demanded certain compromises. In his view, Poles should not insist either on fidelity to the nation, nor on free and democratic elections in keeping with the letter of the 1945 Yalta agreement, for such elections “would be catastrophic if held today.” According to him, Poland was in any case in no danger of becoming the 17th Soviet republic; it ought, then, to surrender to history (one senses the Hegelian capital H), for it otherwise risked becoming responsible for denying the world the

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deeply needed harmonization of the Christian spiritual realm and the socialist project of transforming the temporal order.\textsuperscript{598}

It is difficult today, encountering Mounier’s article after 65 years, not to fall prey to a teleological reading: in the two years following his visit to Poland, Stalinist socialism achieved a stranglehold over Poland, attaining power on a wave of falsified elections and mass arrests. This was a decade of repressions, pogroms, and guerrilla fighting in Poland, what Jan T. Gross has called the “terrible decade” (1939-1948).\textsuperscript{599} Catholics — priests and laity alike — pigeon-holed by Mounier as “reactionary” during his visit would soon thereafter find themselves in prison, and they were hardly the only ones. In the present day, when historical research concerning the socialist period is so habitually instrumentalized in Central and Eastern Europe for political ends, it would be all the easier to consider Mounier’s \textit{Esprit} article to be a justification for these repressions, perhaps even for the Stalinism whose beginnings they signaled. John Hellman’s conclusion seems justified: “Mounier seemed rather short on memory and long on rationalization.”\textsuperscript{600} That said, supporting a socialist revolution is not \textit{a priori} the same thing as apologizing for a Stalinism that, let us emphasize, had not yet begun in Poland.

Should we, then, condemn Mounier according to the sentence pronounced on socialist-sympathizing intellectuals by François Furet, in other words, that these intellectuals “fell prey to the spirit of their times instead of attempting to shape it”?\textsuperscript{601} Without succumbing to a political overdetermination, we can use our knowledge of Mounier’s deep, albeit conflicted, sympathy for

\textsuperscript{598} Mounier, “L’ordre règne-t-il à Varsovie?” p. 976. Mounier’s honest belief in such a harmonization is even clearer in his private notes than in the published \textit{Esprit} article. He reached the conclusion that the pity he had come to feel while witnessing the postwar misery of Poles could only be useful as a motivation to find a radical solution to social problems, in other words, precisely the kind of harmonization in question here.

\textsuperscript{599} Gross, \textit{Upiorna dekada}.

\textsuperscript{600} Hellman, \textit{Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left}, p. 211.

socialist aspirations to investigate the consequences of the resultant naïveté that he manifested both in Poland and after his return to France, the high point coming when Maurice Thorez publicly offered Mounier membership in the PCF.

In his observations and his interpersonal dealings with Poland, Mounier was naïve. He believed that the clergy, factory directors, and even state officials whom he met were able to speak freely in conversation with him. Indeed, even some of Mounier’s fellow French delegation members criticized at the time his gullibility and failure to understand the extent to which the political had penetrated daily life in Poland. A particularly dangerous manifestation of his naïveté was his willingness to accept his official Polish guides’ notion of “reactionaries,” a term that he subsequently repeated in his own diary and published writings to denote anyone opposed to the revolution in progress in Poland. Mounier thereby homogenized anyone who fell outside the boundaries of his crystallizing vision of Poland’s Catholic-socialist future as a gray mass of political enemies.

**Mounier and Postwar Anti-semitism**

At the same time, Mounier was spot-on in his diagnosis of a perversely paradoxical consequence of the war’s end in Poland: the revival of Catholic anti-semitism. In his June 1946 article, Mounier wrote of the German extermination of Poland’s Jewish population,

One might have believed that this hecatomb would have put an end to racial antagonism, all the more so since most Poles behaved admirably in their protection of the persecuted. However, we found in almost every milieu, even Christian milieux, indeed even among the most generous or the most highly placed of Catholics, an anti-semitism as vigorous as if extermination had never touched the nation of Israel. [...] But the hardened attitude taken by all at the very moment this subject is broached, without anyone realizing that they are falling into the most common, worldwide

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602 This invitation came during Thorez’s speech to the Communist Congress at Montreuil on 10 April 1949. Hellman, “The Opening to the Left in French Catholicism,” p. 387.
603 de Radkowski, Interview with Author.
patterns of anti-semitism, all contribute to a climate of contempt, distance, and diffuse hostility, in which acts of violence whose roots lie elsewhere encounter here, whatever anyone says, a sort of complicity.\footnote{Mounier, “L’ordre règne-t-il à Varsovie?” p. 999.}

Mounier’s diagnosis is remarkably accurate. Perhaps the explanation for his perspicacity is his own experience watching friends, mentors, and disciples of his, first in Action Française – including, as John Hellman has noted, Jacques Maritain\footnote{Hellman, “The Jews in the ‘New Middle Ages.’”} – then in Ordre Nouveau, and finally in the Vichy regime wrestle with (and often fail at) overcoming an institutionally and ideologically entrenched Catholic anti-semitism.

What is most striking, however, is that interwar mental mappings of Catholic anti-semitism retained their currency in Poland even after the Shoah despite the fact that a significant portion of its victims perished in the geographical proximity of – or, indeed, alongside – Polish Catholics. The scale of human trauma seemed to elude even many Catholic activists who could otherwise claim a modern worldview as well as significant humanitarian accomplishments. Just as the interwar era had featured a spectrum of anti-semitism ranging from simple belief in the existence of a “Jewish problem” to an eliminationist anti-semitism, so this same spectrum survived into the postwar. Thus far, we know Jerzy Braun as a postwar Tygodnik Warszawski editor and, before that, as the founder of Unia, a heroic anti-German resistance movement responsible, among other things, for protecting many Polish Jews during the war years. Key members of the movement included Jerzy Turowicz, Karol Wojtyła, Zofia Kossak-Szczucka (1889-1968), and the bulk of the postwar SP leadership.

Yet Braun was also a disciple of SP founder Wojciech Korfanty, whose exclusionary-nationalist advocacy of removing Jews from Polish territory dragged his sociopolitical advocacy
down into the realm of anti-semitic personalism. Braun, the wartime underground leader devoted to continuing Korfanty’s legacy, expressed in writing in July 1945 what sounded like a sense of ethno-national relief that the war had “(finally!)” transformed Poland’s social and demographic structures. By this he meant that economic power had passed from Poland’s exterminated Jewish populations to Polish “peasant sons [...] to whom Jews could not even compare in terms of courage.” Anticipating that his position might be described as anti-semitic, Braun wrote, “Nonetheless, what some take to be anti-semitism are simply economic laws of nature for which there is no alternative.”

The bizarre Catholic Hegelianism of Braun’s continuing belief in the “Jewish problem” shows that Braun’s mentor Wojciech Korfanty’s inability to escape the national question in his sociopolitical advocacy died neither with him nor with the end of the Second World War. Postwar anti-semitism thus grew out of wartime experiences as well as a religious-ideological admixture that incorporated both what Jan T. Gross has identified as “Catho-National Democracy” (katoendecja) in the popular domain and, among otherwise cutting-edge thinkers and social activists, the sort of anti-semitic personalism that we have seen in the interwar writings of Korfanty and Stefan Swieżawski. Among the consequences of this anti-semitism was the 4 July 1946 Kielce Pogrom, which came just over a month after Mounier’s departure from Poland, resulting in the murder of approximately 40 Polish Jews.

Gross is right to underscore that not all postwar Catholic activists in Poland remained captive to Catholic anti-semitism. Indeed, the milieu of Tygodnik Powszechny responded strongly and unequivocally to the July 1946 Kielce Pogrom: “As Catholic writers and journalists, we declare that no conditions can justify the trampling of divine law and the shaming of Poland’s

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606 Quoted at Gross, Strach, p. 62-63.
607 Gross defines the term katoendecja at Gross, Strach, p. 185 n. 26.
good name in the world. Yet the Polish bishops themselves – and, supporting them, their most closely affiliated lay Catholic weekly, Tygodnik Warszawski – virtually ignored the human tragedy and its underlying root causes. Rather than consider the pogrom as a gross violation of the Catholic social ethics that they were so ardently trying to keep alive in an era of socialist revolution, almost all of the bishops – Teodor Kubina of Częstochowa being the notable exception – took the line subsequently delivered by sources at Tygodnik Warszawski to the British Catholic weekly The Tablet to be broadcast in English to the world. Namely, The Tablet reported the pogrom above all as a provocation: a case of the establishment’s “exploitation” of “first shots [fired] against the Church in Poland.” The British journal reprinted lengthy quotations from several Polish bishops, particularly Cardinal Hlond, including the following telling example of Hlond’s own persistent, even if non-racialist, Catholic anti-semitism: “I deeply desire that the Jewish problem of the postwar world shall at last find its proper solution.”

Amidst the fallout from the Kielce Pogrom, somehow no one thought to revisit Mounier’s diagnosis, despite extensive, year-long debates that Polish Catholic activists would devote to discussing other portions of his June 1946 Esprit article. Indeed, Mounier seemed in subsequent dealings with Polish Catholic activists to have forgotten his own analysis, and the portion of his text devoted to Polish Catholic anti-semitism evaporated from Esprit’s institutional memory.

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608 Catholic Writers’ Appeal, Tygodnik Powszechny, 28 July 1946, quoted in Gross, Strach, p. 214. It is not clear to what extent this appeal was consulted first with Cardinal Sapieha, the journal’s patron archbishop, or what his reaction was. Accessible archival documents indicate only that Rev. Piwowarczyk was away from Kraków in a sanatorium at the time, recovering from an illness, and that he advised Jerzy Turowicz in a 10 July 1946 letter to consult either the cardinal or his second-in-command in the archdiocese “in the event of pressure on Tygodnik Powszechny to take a position regarding the events in Kielce.” Jan Piwowarczyk, Letter to Jerzy Turowicz, 10 July 1946, Jan Piwowarczyk Correspondence, AJT.

609 The Hlond quotation is from “First Shots against the Church in Poland: The Exploitation of the Kielce Pogrom,” The Tablet, 20 July 1946, p. 30-31, at p. 30; see also “The Attempt to Implicate the Church,” The Tablet, 10 August 1946, p. 66.
Mounier’s evident preference expressed in the *Esprit* text for *Dziś i Jutro* – with its anti-semitic ex-fascist leadership – over the Cracovian milieu of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak* begot a curious French mythologization of the Catholic ex-fascists. Namely, Mounier’s willingness to overlook Bolesław Piasecki’s past as a veritable icon of racialist anti-semitism translated into a free pass for *Dziś i Jutro* among French lay activists.\(^6\) Piasecki’s staff would become known in their travels to Western Europe in the postwar decade as the most open and tolerant among Polish Catholics. And yet it would be *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak* whose authors and editors (including the future John Paul II) would be at the start of Polish Catholic-Jewish dialogue beginning in the early 1960s, while the post-1956 *Dziś i Jutro* would slide toward ultimate complicity in an official state anti-semitic campaign launched by Władysław Gomułka in 1968. Thus, Mounier, whose accurate 1946 analysis based on eyewitness testimony put him in a unique position to do something about Catholic anti-semitism in Poland, ended up only reinforcing the milieu in which it persisted, however latently, while failing to follow up at all in the aftermath of the Kielce Pogrom.

**Taking Sides: “Aristocratic” Kraków and “Hardy” Warsaw**

One might be tempted to conclude that, as a public intellectual, albeit an influential one, Mounier could nonetheless do no real damage with his exhortations to Polish Catholics to hasten with their support for the new socialist establishment. In fact, however, Mounier’s position of authority in French Catholic culture, the long-standing reference point for Polish Catholic culture, translated into direct consequences for Catholic activism in Poland, particularly for the three nascent Catholic weeklies. What Mounier had to say was a big deal for them, with Poland

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\(^6\) While making open declarations renouncing anti-semitism in their journal’s first issues, the *Dziś i Jutro* staff remained ambivalent on the question of Jews’ place in postwar Poland, resorting at times to some barely intelligible casuistry in an attempt to appeal to all sides. See, for example, Witold Bieńkowski, “Ani antysemityzm – ani filosemityzm. Sprawa ludzka,” *Dziś i Jutro*, 18 August 1946.

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in the midst of a revolutionary transformation of state and society from which publicly minded Catholics could hardly absent themselves. As Janusz Zabłocki would later put it, “The influence of Mounier’s stay in Poland cannot be measured only in terms of articles published or lectures given by him. His contacts with representatives of Catholic milieux bringing a direct and open confrontation of traditional Polish Catholicism with the thought and attitudes of French Catholics occasioned a certain creative intellectual ferment bearing fruit for a period long after his departure from Poland.”⁶¹¹ As a consequence, Mounier was in no small part responsible for fissures within the milieu of Polish Catholic lay activists that would drive some into partnership with Stalinism (Dziś i Jutro); others into Stalinist prisons (Tygodnik Warszawski); and still others into an apolitical but principled modus vivendi (Tygodnik Powszechny).

In 1946, the bulk of the Mounierian “true believers” among the Polish laity were concentrated in Kraków around Jerzy Turowicz and his Tygodnik Powszechny milieu. Rev. Piwowarczyk, the clarion voice of interwar social Catholicism, disapproved of Mounier’s revolutionary brand of personalism. Piwowarczyk and Józef Marian Święcicki were, however, alone among Tygodnik Powszechny staff and sympathizers in their lack of enthusiasm for Mounier. Loath to even the slightest hint that he was the archbishop’s ersatz puppetmaster pulling the strings of the weekly’s predominantly lay staff, Piwowarczyk took himself out of the equation when Turowicz, along with Hanna Malewska and Stanisław Stomma, came forward with the initiative of creating a new Catholic monthly journal modeled on Esprit and designed for a more intellectually minded, selective audience than Tygodnik Powszechny, with its 50,000-strong circulation.

Turowicz’s pointperson on the initiative was the 22-year-old philosophy student Jerzy Radkowski (1924–1987), who was both a disciple of Kraków’s Archbishop Sapieha and an avid reader of *Esprit*. When Mounier and his fellow French visitors came to Kraków, it was Radkowski who shuttled them around town, and Radkowski pitched the Polish monthly project to a delighted Mounier, who offered a pledge of public support for the new journal *Znak* in the introductory remarks to his lecture at Jagiellonian University.\(^{612}\) This was the absolute zenith of *Tygodnik Powszechny*’s fascination with Mounier. And yet, twelve years later, a more cautious Turowicz would reach the following regretful conclusion: yes, Mounier had been one of his intellectual “*maîtres,*” yet, while he was visiting Poland – in other words, when it mattered most – “Mounier saw very little from the Wawel [Castle].”\(^{613}\)

What soured Turowicz and his Cracovian colleagues on Mounier and *Esprit* was the article that Mounier published on his return to Paris. On reading those pretentious, condescending reflections published within weeks of their conversations with him, the editors of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and the new *Znak* found themselves disappointed and disillusioned.\(^{614}\)

This was no longer the Mounier whose 1934 article in *Wiadomości Literackie* had delighted Turowicz for its rejection of “Stalinism and fascist-inclined nationalism,” who had declared in his *Manifeste au service du personnalisme* that personalism was the best platform for anti-Marxist struggle. Instead, this was a Mounier who, on his return to France, would defend Soviet

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\(^{612}\) Radkowski and Angèle Fumet fell in love in the course of her visit to Kraków with Mounier’s delegation, leading Radkowski to escape Poland illegally in 1947 to France, where he settled, married Fumet, and changed his name to Georges-Hubert de Radkowski. He would be a crucial contact for Polish lay activists of all milieux passing through Paris or attempting to channel information to French contacts there. See the letters exchanged between Turowicz and Radkowski in Jerzy Radkowski Correspondence, AJT; for an example of Radkowski’s mediation for *Dziś i Jutro*, see Wojciech Kętrzyński, Letter to Emmanuel Mounier, 12 February 1950, AKSCC V/87.

\(^{613}\) Jerzy Turowicz, Interview in “Rozmowy o Emanuelu Mounier,” p. 43. The Wawel Castle overlooks the Vistula River in Kraków.

\(^{614}\) Sixty-one years later, Jacek Woźniakowski retained a severe opinion of Mounier, explaining that “He was very nice, but incredibly naïve. We were in awe of him; his thought had been a source of inspiration for us. And yet, he understood nothing of what he had seen, and this greatly disillusioned us.” Woźniakowski, Interview with Author.
policy in Eastern Europe, entangle Esprit with political Communism, and receive a warm invitation to join the PCF.

Fascinated as they were with Mounier’s promise of a communitarian personalist revolution, the writers of Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak had a very practical approach to Catholic ministry born of their familiarity with and affection for the model of personal catechetical dialogue pioneered by Rev. Korniłowicz. In their minds, this was the first step toward figuring out Catholic activists’ place in the new socialist order, not some dramatic rallying cry from above about the imperative of immediate, uncritical action. Simply put, Turowicz and his fellow activists, a generation weaned on interwar debates over whether Thomism’s practical consequences allowed lay Catholics to do anything more than simply participate dutifully in Catholic Action, were philosophically and psychologically unprepared for the postwar Mounier. They did not want to allow the French personalism to which they had held dearly before and during World War II to push them over the edge into active political participation in the establishment of socialist rule.

Dziś i Jutro, on the other hand, was headed in precisely this direction. Whether the intention was instrumental or principled, whether Dziś i Jutro and, subsequently, the PAX movement really sought to pioneer a universalistic Catholic-socialist syncretism, or rather wanted to serve as a sort of “Trojan horse” eating away at the new establishment from the inside, are questions for which the source base does not permit an unequivocal answer. What is clear, however, is that, if we remove Piasecki and his elder ex-fascist intimates (Janina Kolendo, Zygmunt Przetakiewicz, etc.) from the equation, we are left with several generations of young Catholic activists come of age during the war or in its immediate aftermath whose intentions are easier to interpret, not having been tainted by previous political affiliations or ideologies.
It is among these younger generations — led by Wojciech Kętrzyński and Andrzej Krasiński of Konfederacja Narodu, with their younger colleagues Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Janusz Zablocki leading the postwar arrivals — that we find Catholics who had read Mounier for the first time in Strzelecki’s clandestine wartime translations. For them, Mounier’s personalism had acquired a certain mystical aura, all the while clearly remaining both Catholic and anti-capitalist in its inspiration and pursuit of moral and social justice. Far more than Turowicz, Hanna Malewska, Stanisław Stomma, or the other older Cracovian thinkers educated in the interwar, it is these young Catholic firebrands whom Mounier found most appealing of all of the individuals encountered in the course of his three weeks in Poland. As Mounier put it in his June 1946 *Esprit* article, “Kraków, the aristocratic citadel of old Catholicism, is more timid than Warsaw.” And, by Warsaw, Mounier specifically meant *Dziś i Jutro*.

By examining the diaries that Mounier kept during his travels, we can gain an even deeper understanding of the extent to which Mounier reflected *in situ* on the structural differences between the *Dziś i Jutro* milieu and that of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and its new sister publication *Znak*. Namely, as of 1946, Mounier saw the following points of commonality between *Esprit* and *Dziś i Jutro*: a desire to link Catholicism with revolutionary socialism; a difficult relationship with the Church hierarchy; and an expanding network of sociopolitical discussion circles signifying a deep, energetic engagement of the youth. In the notes taken down in his diary at the time, Mounier compared his Cracovian colleagues, “encrusted in their ferocious patriotism and this same manner of being, despite their declared open attitude, in bitter opposition, which threatens to derail their project” (19 May) thus with the young activists of *Dziś i Jutro*: “They even seemed rather shy to us, these people reputed for ‘being paid off by the

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615 Mounier, “L’ordre règne-t-il à Varsovie?” p. 998.
Marxists.’ They constitute, in any event, the hardiest young Catholic group” Mounier had ever encountered. Indeed, “we promised each other that we would maintain very close ties” (29 May).616

The difference in these two characterizations is evident. Even though the Cracovian milieu had openly devoted itself to founding a monthly journal explicitly patterned after *Esprit*, it was the staff of *Dziś i Jutro* that had made the greater impression on Mounier. Mounier was aware of the complex past and present of Bolesław Piasecki — his bizarre conversion from fascism to philo-socialism and his attendant reputation as a Communist, or even a Soviet, “agent” — and this awareness rendered the genuine passion of Piasecki’s young followers all the more seductive in Mounier’s eyes. Moreover, Mounier was willing to forgive Piasecki and the other *Dziś i Jutro* elders their dubious conversions to revolutionary socialism. His own wartime experience of an anti-Vichy hunger strike following a stint as an instructor at Vichy’s École des Cadres had taught Mounier that, with respect to one’s worldview and politics, war can bring fundamental disillusionment and radical re-orientation.

On the other hand, compared to the *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak* editorial staffs, whose younger members found themselves firmly under the wing of Turowicz and his fellow established Catholic editors, the younger generations of *Dziś i Jutro* lacked an analogous older generation of interwar personalists to indoctrine them in personalism. Piasecki and his closest colleagues, having spent the 1930s in fascist paramilitary leagues, had no such education. Paradoxically, then, the fact that Turowicz had a long history of studying personalism and engaging directly with its authors (Mounier included) was, in Mounier’s eyes, a strike against him and his milieu. Namely, they were less malleable for having retained their historical memory.

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616 Emmanuel Mounier, Diary, IMEC MNR2.D5-06.01.
of interwar personalism, which, in turn, afforded them a more critical eye on Mounier’s leftward inclination. Mounier’s unpublished diaries thus clearly demonstrate that John Hellman was incorrect to suggest that “Mounier returned to France convinced that the handful of left Catholics around Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak could play a vital role in the second half of the 20th century.”617

Rather, Mounier’s expressions of affinity with Jerzy Turowicz’s circle were a mere courtesy, while the French thinker understood that he could exert a much more direct influence on the intellectual, spiritual, and political education of the Dziś i Jutro milieu. Strictly speaking, Mounier was correct: even in 1963, seven years after Poland’s de-Stalinization, eight years after his break with Piasecki, the ex-Dziś i Jutro Young Turk Janusz Zabłocki would write glowingly about Mounier’s June 1946 Esprit article, “It would not be an exaggeration to conclude that it was one of the first reports from postwar Poland in the Western press that acquainted international opinion in an all-encompassing, objective way with the situation and problems of our country.”618

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617 Hellman, “The Prophets of Solidarity.” Equally untenable is Jean-Marie Domenach’s 1982 description of the trip’s significance – “Mounier visited Poland, where he was welcomed by young personalist Catholics whom the authorities were not yet persecuting” – which makes it sound as though Mounier’s visit was a rallying point for a homogeneous bloc of political dissidents, rather than a catalyst for fragmentation and support for one side’s pro-establishment leanings. Indeed, Domenach explicitly highlights Tygodnik Powszechny as a “dissident group” while describing the Dziś i Jutro crew as “progressive Catholics who served as Soviet allies [trying] to place themselves in Esprit’s good graces.” Domenach’s falsification of the past is intelligible only as an expression of a political strategy on his part – in the years of Poland’s martial law and suppression of the Solidarity trade union movement – to bring Esprit onto the bandwagon of Solidarity supporters and to make Mounier out to have been a godfather to Solidarity rather than a de facto collaborator of Stalinism. In this enterprise, Hellman, whose preparation of the “Prophets of Solidarity” essay coincided with his participation in the Esprit 50th anniversary conference at which Domenach made his remarks about Mounier’s voyage, became Domenach’s unwitting accomplice. See Domenach, “L’Internationale personnaliste : L’influence d’Esprit hors de France,” in Le Personnalisme d’Emmanuel Mounier, p. 165-176, at p. 171, 172, 173.

618 Zabłocki, “Myśl Mouniera w Polsce,” p. 23. Zabłocki in this passage went on to disagree with Turowicz’s assessment of how much Mounier had managed to “see” from the Wawel Castle in 1946. Zabłocki’s manuscript went unpublished because it contained material that he intended to use in a Ph.D. dissertation that the philosopher Leszek Kołakowski had agreed to supervise at Warsaw University, but that Zabłocki shelved after being elected an MP in 1963.
Meanwhile, Turowicz and his closest colleagues never openly broke with their erstwhile mentor, but they were disheartened, to say the least. By the time the June 1946 issue of *Esprit* reached them, they had already slated the text of Mounier’s Jagiellonian lecture for publication in *Znak*’s third issue, and they went ahead with it. Subsequently, however, neither *Tygodnik Powszechny* nor *Znak* published a single article by or about Mounier until his death in 1950, when Turowicz offered him an affectionately written, front-cover obituary.\(^{619}\)

In fact, four months before Mounier’s death, Turowicz wrote him a deeply emotional letter that, as Turowicz himself admits, he had struggled with writing for a long time. Opening the letter with a statement of “regret still that you could not extend your stay [in 1946], for there were still so many things for us to say to each other to be able to understand each other better, and I held out great hope for this understanding.” Turowicz then, without mincing words, articulated the sense of disappointment that had remained with him since Mounier’s visit to Kraków: “Today, just like three years ago, it is impossible for me to share certain among your political opinions and positions, however well I might understand their origins; this is, undoubtedly, a consequence of our quite different experiences and situations.” In the end, however, Turowicz explained that he continued to hold out hope to “meet again some day, to talk more” about personalism, so that Turowicz might be able explain to Mounier the reality of the situation in Poland and the socialist world more broadly. However, this hope was in vain: four months later, Mounier was dead of a heart attack, before even having had a chance to reply to the letter from Kraków.\(^{620}\)

Whatever Turowicz’s private confessions to Mounier, in print, in tandem with their silence on Mounier and *Esprit*, the editorial staff of *Tygodnik Powszechny* went out of their way


\(^{620}\) Jerzy Turowicz, Letter to Emmanuel Mounier, 7 December 1949, IMEC ESP2.C1-02.06.
to raise the profile of Jacques Maritain, as well as other prominent French Catholic writers, including Daniel-Rops (1901-1965), Georges Bernanos, and François Mauriac.\textsuperscript{621} This strategy seemed to find affirmation in an October 1948 decision by the \textit{Esprit} staff to discontinue the Cracovian milieu’s free subscription to \textit{Esprit} – supposedly out of budgetary concerns – while \textit{Dziś i Jutro} would continue to receive free issues of \textit{Esprit} without interruption until the day of its shuttering.\textsuperscript{622}

Unlike Mounier, Maritain was no longer in fashion in postwar Poland, quite the opposite in fact. Namely, the personalist vocabulary toward which he had helped to guide Catholic social teaching assumed increasingly political overtones in the eyes of the new socialist establishment. During the war, Maritain had turned away from a humanist eclecticism – including open support for the Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War – to an advocacy of Christian Democracy and a postwar French ambassadorship to the Vatican. \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny} thus exposed itself to political retribution by promoting Maritain rather than Mounier between 1946 and 1948, with the latter year marking a time when Maritain became less objectionable upon resigning his ambassadorship.\textsuperscript{623} Nonetheless, the emphasis on Maritain paired with silence on Mounier was a statement of principle by the \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny} staff, an unwillingness to go along with Mounier’s hardening Catholic-socialist syncretism.

\textit{Tygodnik Powszechny} and \textit{Znak} were not anti-socialist \textit{per se}, but they objected to Mounier’s enthusiastic, politically engaged personalist foray into socialist revolution. Turowicz’s


\textsuperscript{622} See Jean-Marie Domenach, Letter to Jerzy Turowicz, 29 October 1948, \textit{Esprit} Correspondence, AJT.

\textsuperscript{623} See the fifth chapter of Doering, \textit{Jacques Maritain and the French Catholic Intellectuals}. 

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wartime affiliation with Unia may not have made him into a Christian Democrat or an outspoken defender of Catholic social teaching, but it cemented interwar commitments that he, Stomma, Hanna Malewska, and other lay activists at Tygodnik Powszechny had taken away from Odrodzenie. Namely, the Tygodnik Powszechny staff set boundaries for themselves in their public engagement, rejecting political ideology *tout court* in favor of their own understandings of Polish *raison d’État*, which they styled as “national interest.” Particularly evident in Stomma’s interwar writings about a non-National Democratic “Christian nationalism,” this approach took on an entirely new meaning in the postwar decade, fundamentally linked though it was to interwar beliefs and experiences. The unwitting bridge between these two was Mounier.

*Between Minimalism and Maximalism*

After the French delegation’s visit to Kraków, the newly constituted editorial staff of Znak met to try to make sense of what they had heard from and discussed with Mounier and his colleagues. Mounier’s June 1946 *Esprit* article had provoked deep disillusionment in these circles with the French thinker and his journal. Nonetheless, alongside their planned publication of Mounier’s Jagiellonian lecture, the Znak staff published in its third issue, which appeared in the mid-fall of 1946, a lengthy essay by Stanisław Stomma with an accompanying editorial discussion by Malewska, Radkowski,Świeżawski, and Stomma himself. This was the last serious discussion that Mounier would receive for the next four years in either Tygodnik Powszechny or Znak, and it would define these journals’ ideological profile for the next 40 years – largely as a function of their contemporaries’ misunderstanding of what Stomma was trying to say.

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The title of Stomma’s essay – “The maximalist and minimalist social tendencies of Catholics” – introduced an unfortunate vocabulary that has survived to this day.⁶²⁵ In their respective commentaries on this essay, Norbert Żmijewski, Janusz Zabłocki, Christina Manetti, and Brian Porter-Szűcs in their writings on Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak have all taken as a given that the Cracovian activist milieu accepted Stomma’s essay as a definitive statement of collective identity, a profession of social “minimalism.” This reification of Stomma’s categories has led to a variety of analytical interpretations that miss the essence of his essay and the debate that it provoked among the Polish lay Catholic weeklies. The core question was, in fact, whether postwar Polish Catholic activism could and should continue to count on French activists to serve as models of intellectual, social, and political engagement given a new postwar order dominated by the project of building a socialist state and society.

Stomma himself did not make it easy for readers to understand what he was arguing. His essay began not with a concise introduction, but rather with a four-page excursus on Oswald Spengler’s Der Untergang das Abendlandes and the applicability of its arguments about “civilizations” to postwar Poland and France. Stomma then used Maritain (incorrectly) to show that Spengler’s thought carried clout among leading Western European Catholic thinkers.⁶²⁶ This led him, in turn, to a fairly opaque statement about the contemporary relevance of the discussion that he was initiating: “The recent visit of French Catholic writers in Poland occasioned lively discussions in the Polish press, and it’s hard to be surprised that the Polish Left took advantage of the opportunity to renew its accusations toward Polish Catholics, juxtaposing them with the Catholic intellectual elite of France, which it assesses according to the schematic qualities of a

⁶²⁶ Stomma, “Maksymalne i minimalne tendencje społeczne katolików,” p. 259. Stomma argues opaquely that Spengler’s thesis that “we find ourselves in a period of civilizational decline” is “accepted in large part by Jacque [sic!] Maritain, confirmed most clearly in his book Du régime temporel et de la liberté.”
recently encountered radical group.” Stomma went on to suggest that *Esprit* was ideal-typical of this sort of French radical group, and he took pains to underscore that such groups – unlike, for example, the Mouvement Républicain Populaire (MRP), France’s postwar Christian Democratic party – “do not constitute a basis for drawing conclusions about the entirety of French Catholicism.”

The debate in which *Esprit* had taken a “radical” stance, according to Stomma, concerned the fate of Catholics’ social and political engagement, above all of the Catholic social doctrine that had achieved ascendancy during the papacy of Pius XI. Stomma conceded that this doctrinal leadership of the Holy See was under attack in postwar Europe – both West and East – with Mounier bearing a good bit of responsibility for undermining it. Stomma summarized as follows the central thesis of so-called radical French Catholic thought as he encountered it during Mounier’s May 1946 visit to Kraków:

Thus Catholic social doctrine belongs to old European civilization, while socialism must be acknowledged as the beginning and the basis of a new civilization. [...] Personal conversations with our French guests have confirmed the thesis that radical French groups live under the presumption of the inevitable victory of socialism with all of its consequences. Anyone with a closer familiarity with the attitude of the French masses knows how well this type of historiosophy corresponds to predominant French attitudes. The French proletariat, in large part consciously Communist, aims purposely toward a great historical transformation and lives by a vision of the new socialist era.

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628 Stomma drew a noteworthy analogy here between the MRP and SP, which, according to Stomma, tried to go for “power-sharing” with Poland’s new socialist establishment just as the MRP had opted for power-sharing with the SFIO and PCF in France. Stomma, “Maksymalne i minimalne tendencje społeczne katolików,” p. 261-262.
630 Stomma, “Maksymalne i minimalne tendencje społeczne katolików,” p. 265-266.
While the French proletariat was pushing for socialism, the French middle classes, according to Stomma, were inclined to “capitulate immediately” in favor of the “inexorable” socialist revolution. This attitude on the part of French bourgeois Catholics Stomma designated as “minimalist and pessimistic” and a “retreat to the last line of defense,” particularly “compared with that of Polish Catholics.”

Instead, Polish Catholic activists, according to Stomma, fell prey to a different flaw, “thoughtlessness,” which Stomma described as “Poland’s national trait.” Because Poles, as “maximalists,” rejected any “Catholic ideology torn from the living tissue of the national organism,” they risked increasingly with the passage of each successive day “a conflict in the immediate future.” Concerned that “We do not know if, when, and how a conflict will play out in Poland between the Catholic camp and the camp of warring socialism,” Stomma – again, opaque – intimated that Znak intended to stand as at least one bulwark of “reservists” in the Catholic cause. As one such reservist, however, Stomma would be looking to “the truly Catholic stance” of Maritain and Mounier, “truly Catholic” precisely because it was at odds with the overall “greater civilizational maturity” of French Catholics following from their greater capacity for the strict separation of “sociopolitical” and “religious-moral” issues. Poles’ failure to recognize this separation, meanwhile, resulted from their relative “civilizational youth” (a shared trait with Russian “civilization”) vis-à-vis France.

Parsing this essay is no small task. Stomma’s equivocation and ambivalence are extreme, alternating as he did between genuflection and slaps across the face for both French and Polish Catholic thinkers and activists. His deterministic “civilizational” argument, in addition to being

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an anachronistic holdover from his interwar student years, seemed to negate any possibility of normative or prescriptive argumentation. It is thus entirely unclear what the “reservists” of Znak would actually do if called upon to defend Catholicism in Poland. Most fundamentally, his homogenization of Frenchmen and Poles alike into overdetermined social categories – at least France got a “proletariat,” “middle classes,” and “radical groups,” while in Poland there were only a “Catholic camp” and “warring socialism” – makes it unclear what lessons Stomma intended for Polish readers to take away from the French example. Nonetheless, what is clear is that Stomma feared that civil war would be the inevitable consequence of dogged “maximalist” persistence in advancing Catholic social teaching as the guiding principle of social and political organization of Poland’s postwar transformation. That said, one would be hard pressed to see in Stomma a fan of “minimalism.” What the essay constituted, above all, was a declaration that Znak rejected the national orientation embedded in Polish Catholic “maximalism” in favor of a self-definition conditioned by the social question.

It is perhaps a bizarre accident of history that such an ambiguous exercise in circumlocution as Stomma’s essay was received by Polish Catholic activists outside the Cracovian milieu as Znak’s definitive mission statement. What’s more, given the passing of the editorial torch at Tygodnik Powszechny from Piwowarczyk to Turowicz later that same year and

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636 The category of Catholic “radicalism” had its own separate history of elaboration in debates internal to the corpus of Dziś i Jutro authors, and these debates informed both Stomma’s and his critics’ respective uses of the term. The term was coined by a so-called “patriot-priest” to the left of even Dziś i Jutro, Rev. Henryk Weryński, who criticized Piasecki’s movement as not going far enough on behalf of the socialist revolution against the political dictates of the Vatican: see Weryński, Katolicy radykalni (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1946). What was at stake in the broader discussion among Catholic activists was the question of whether it was, simply put, good or bad to be “radical,” with Stomma trying to distance the Cracovian milieu from traditionalist accusations of radicalism while Dziś i Jutro clarified and embraced its own specific version of Catholic radicalism that was not yet socialist. For example – “I could not be more convinced personally that the thought and action of radical Catholics will in the near future become the common ground for the whole of realistic, socially active Catholic society in Poland.” Witold Bieńkowski, “Wstęp do rozważań politycznych,” Dziś i Jutro, 12 May 1946. See also Wojciech Kętrzyński, “Radykalizm i katolicyzm,” Dziś i Jutro, 9 June 1946: “Victory under present conditions can be achieved only through the harmonization of action in two separate domains: work on deepening and perfecting our internal spiritual lives and work on consistent, radical realization of Catholic principles in the life of society.” Italics mine.
the fact that almost all of Znak’s editors would subsequently double as editors for Tygodnik Powszechny, “minimalism” was thrust upon both Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak as the watchword of their ideology. Norbert Żmijewski and Janusz Zablocki, in particular, have reified the use of this category in their writings on the journals, for the most part simply redeploying the critiques launched against Stomma in 1947 in the Polish Catholic press in response to his essay. In March 1947, Jerzy Braun, for example, chided Stomma for “overreaching indifferentism,” a consequence – Braun surmised – of “how strong an influence Mounier’s argumentation has had on Stomma’s reasoning.” Braun argued that “social maximalism” must fight on, despite the French-inspired concerns of Stomma and his ilk. Braun’s goal was for Polish lay activists to avoid the sort of collaborationism advanced in France by Mounier, “with his thesis that the system can be Communist while the spirit will remain Catholic. This is a horrible misunderstanding of which the entire modern civilizational catastrophe is a consequence.”

Unlike Stomma’s reasoning, Braun’s was straightforward and strongly argued, with serious substantive criticisms of Stomma. For example, Braun correctly chided Stomma for ignoring the fundamental distinction made by Maritain and Mounier alike between “the individualistic” and “the personalistic.” Tadeusz Przeciszewski, too, offered incisive criticism of Stomma, pointing out the arbitrariness of the social categories deployed by the latter in his

637 The exception is Jerzy Radkowski, who left Poland for good in late 1947 to marry Angèle Fumet.
638 For a collection of all of the seminal articles from this debate, see Janusz Zablocki and Jędrzej Bukowski’s untitled, unpublished dactylograph (1963) in AAN KIK 224.
639 Zablocki, for example, repeats accusations published by Jerzy Braun and Tadeusz Przeciszewski in the pages of Tygodnik Warszawski. Meanwhile, Żmijewski repeats Piwowarczyk’s commentary in Tygodnik Powszechny on the question of minimalism vs. maximalism in Catholic engagement with society. See also Zablocki, Chrześcijańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji, p. 38-42.
641 These claims are more a testament to Braun’s anti-French sentiment than to the actual merits of Stomma’s claims. Braun laid bare his lack of patience for the French even more clearly in Braun, “Kryzys moralny Europy,” Tygodnik Warszawski, 23 March 1947.
analysis and drawing attention to Stomma’s failure to differentiate meaningfully “between the Church and the sociopolitical camp of the Catholic laity.” Even more than Braun, Przeciszewski manifested the moral indignation of a principled commitment to ideological-political struggle:

It is impermissible to conduct a discussion with Marxists on the level of the question of whether the Church — as E. Mounier understands it in France — is to swear off the attempt to fight for its own idea of the social order and capitulate on this line before Marxism and retreat to the last line of defense of exclusively religious-moral values, or be tempted by its own program of social transformation and proceed to fight for its fulfillment over and against the Marxist program.

These brief excerpts from articles by Braun and Przeciszewski suffice to demonstrate that their aims differed fundamentally from Stomma’s. As lay Catholic political refugees from the co-opted SP flooded the staff of Tygodnik Warszawski in 1946-1947, the journal took on an aggressively political tone. Indignant about the co-optation of their political party and its aspirations of giving a direct voice in the political establishment to Catholic social teaching, SP supporters like Braun and Przeciszewski sought a target for their indignation. The target needed to be a fellow Catholic activist, someone whom they could attack without incurring the wrath of press censors. In this respect, Stomma was an ideal scapegoat.

What’s more, it is worth underscoring that several months elapsed between the fateful Znak issue’s publication and the spring 1947 articles criticizing Stomma in Tygodnik Warszawski (with Piwowarczyk and Święcicki also publishing critiques in Tygodnik Powszechny). It is not
the case that Braun read Stomma’s essay and immediately responded to it: rather, what really
inflamed his sensibilities and motivated him to return to Stomma’s essay were the falsified
elections of 19 January 1947, the final nail in the non-exiled SP’s coffin, the proof of the bad
faith underlying the Yalta Accords. Stomma became the post-SP activists’ whipping boy for
their crushed hopes of a political voice for Catholic social thought. Far though they knew
Stomma to be from active alliance with the socialist establishment, they saw in the new Znak
journal a permissiveness, an unwillingness to fight, that they understood as emblematic of all of
the factors enabling their own exclusion from postwar Poland’s revolutionary mainstream.

Despite a number of sound, direct criticisms of Stomma’s thought, then, the passionate
press debates surrounding his essay were not really about the essay itself. Indeed, Braun seemed
unable to make up his mind as to whether Stomma was actually a minimalist (like his presumed
hero Mounier) or rather a “social indifferentist.” The latter, according to Braun, implied belief
that the temporal realm was relatively insignificant because true life would come only with God
in the supernatural realm. These metaphysical reflections, however, were a far cry away from
what Stomma had actually written. Stomma may have described Mounier’s thought as “truly
Catholic,” but nowhere did he identify himself or Znak with Mounier, or for that matter even
laud Mounier for his social stance.

A close reading of Stomma’s essay betrays more than a hint of bitter irony in Stomma’s
ascription of “greater civilizational development” to France, all the more so because the precise

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644 As the British Catholic weekly The Tablet – well-informed thanks to regular reports passed from Poland by SP
activists serving as anonymous foreign correspondents for the journal – insisted in the week following the elections,
its editors trying to influence British Foreign Office policy, “Sunday’s palpably and insolently fraudulent elections
in Poland leave the Yalta policy in ruins. [...] Meanwhile, Eastern Europe is being slowly absorbed, and we gaze and
gape and protest. No doubt at first the Soviet leaders, who profess themselves abundantly satisfied (as well they may
be) with what is happening in Poland, will refuse further discussion. But it is fortunately not true that the West has
no bargaining power.” “Yalta in Ruins,” The Tablet, 25 January 1947, p. 49.
role of the “radical” Catholics like the staff of *Esprit* was unclear vis-à-vis a French society defined by “pessimism” and a sense of the “inexorable.” The passivity and the surrender by lay French Catholics constituted no source of joy for Stomma. Rather, it was only by comparison with the looming threat of civil war in Poland between the “Catholic camp” and “warring socialism” that France began to look good to Stomma. This was an expression of regret, not an affirmative statement of purpose.

Without keeping in mind the contingent circumstances conditioning Stomma’s essay and its subsequent reception in the Polish Catholic press, it is possible to miss entirely the point of the discussion. Part of the explanation of Stomma’s tone of regret is his milieu’s disillusionment with the “radical” French Catholics of *Esprit*. Having just pledged his support in May 1946 for the nascent *Znak* monthly, Mounier turned around in June and publicly discredited its milieu in the pages of *Esprit* as “timid” and an “aristocratic citadel.” It was *Dziś i Jutro* upon which Mounier looked with favor, not *Znak* or *Tygodnik Powszechny*. Stomma’s essay thus mourned a personal betrayal by a man whom his milieu had met, who had thereby judged them to be insufficiently revolutionary. The other driving factor behind Stomma’s regret was his genuine lack of certainty as to where the French were headed: French Catholics may or may not have believed that socialism’s victory was “inexorable,” but it was the Poles, not the French, who were facing the immediate reality of a new, Soviet-backed socialist establishment.

*A Third Way?*

If it seems that Jerzy Braun could not quite tell whether Stomma was advocating minimalism or indifferentism, it was in part because Stomma himself did not know. Failing to provide any explicit definition of minimalism, Stomma left his readers to infer that “minimalism” corresponded to the type of agenda advanced by *Esprit*: in Janusz Zabłocki’s
words, “a rejection of the means of confessional political associations dependent on clerical elements, and instead cooperation with non-Catholics in organizations and movements of a mixed nature.”

What this meant, in principle, was not a renunciation of living in the world en chrétien, but simply of the confessional politics of, for example, SP. It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that Norbert Żmijewski has argued that Stomma was attempting a “‘third way’ between support and confrontation.” Braun, too, had seen in Stomma’s essay a misguided attempt at finding a third way. Christina Manetti, meanwhile, has linked the 1946 essay to what she describes as Stomma’s thinking on “civil society” (though Stomma never used that particular phrase). Finally, Brian Porter-Szűcs has suggested that Stomma was, intentionally or unintentionally, retreating from democracy in his argumentation, encouraging his readers to pull “religion entirely out of the political realm because he feared what the voice of the people might say.”

We encounter in these arguments the same problem that we found in Chapter 3 in André Mandouze’s attempt to present Mounier as a “third way” advocate. Quite simply, these are reductive simplifications that, consciously or unconsciously, draw the text away from the context in which it was written toward the critic’s larger normative agenda. To suggest that Stomma was proposing a “third way” is to impute to him a clear advocacy that simply is not there in the text. If personalism had existed only on paper and not in the real world, then the label “third way”

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646 Żmijewski, The Catholic-Marxist Ideological Dialogue in Poland, p. 27.
647 Braun wrote, “The more severe his critique of Catholic social ‘maximalism,’ the more arguments he provides in favor of the third thesis, i.e. Mounier’s view that Catholicism should limit itself to concern for spiritual development, while leaving the field of organizing collective life to Marxists, and even aiding them actively in the creation of the ‘new era’ of social justice that they are building.” Braun, “W cieniu dekadencji.”
648 Manetti, “Sign of the Times,” e.g. p. 12. Manetti views the personalism of Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak instrumentally, implying that its importance lay in restoring “the basis of civil society.”
649 Porter-Szűcs, Faith and Fatherland, p. 190. This is just one element of a fascinating larger argument by Porter-Szűcs about the unexpected sources of voices against “popular sovereignty” in Polish Catholic discourse. In my view, however, the issue of democracy is entirely beside the point for Stomma: what mattered to him was not the vox populi, but the divisions between two warring camps within “the people” that might easily breed civil war.
might have been appropriate. However, a foundational element of personalism was engagement with and in the world, and so by definition personalism could not remain on paper, but rather had to confront actual political choices. However, Mandouze tried to spin Mounier’s choices, in the real world, Mounier leaned leftward. Stomma, in turn, was not claiming that he was navigating a path between integralism and socialism, or building the foundations of a civil society, or even bridging the gap between “support and confrontation” with the socialist establishment. What he sought to do, however paradoxically, was to maintain social peace in a time of revolution.

Porter-Szűcs, then, perhaps comes closest to Stomma’s actual intent with his claim that Stomma was afraid of the people. Yet this was not an exercise in political theory for Stomma, nor a rejection of the principle of popular sovereignty, but rather an attempt at principled confrontation of political reality in such a way as to filter political ideology – even Christian-inspired ideology like Christian Democracy – out of the discussion. Pace Źmijewski, this was neither “ideological indifferentism” nor “political pragmatism.” Porter-Szűcs, then, perhaps comes closest to Stomma’s actual intent with his claim that Stomma was afraid of the people. Yet this was not an exercise in political theory for Stomma, nor a rejection of the principle of popular sovereignty, but rather an attempt at principled confrontation of political reality in such a way as to filter political ideology – even Christian-inspired ideology like Christian Democracy – out of the discussion. Pace Źmijewski, this was neither “ideological indifferentism” nor “political pragmatism.” "650 Manetti is closest to the mark with her succinct description of Znak’s personalism as “an ideology of anti-ideology.”651 There was a clear principle at stake for Stomma, Turowicz, Malewska, Świeżawski, and their Cracovian colleagues, as there had been a principle at stake in their interwar Odrodzenie activism.

A Balancing Act

If Stomma, Świeżawski, and Turowicz, despite their milieu’s firm commitment to personalism, had all betrayed more than a hint of nationalism or even anti-semitism in their interwar writings, this was a function of how they understood Polish national interest, the raison d’État. In some sense, this was, avant la lettre, antipolitics in the sense of György Konrád’s 1983

650 Źmijewski, The Catholic-Marxist Ideological Dialogue in Poland, p. 35.
651 Manetti, “Sign of the Times,” p. 11.
manifesto. What the *Tygodnik Powszechny* milieu maintained was a principled commitment to
drawing boundaries that excluded political ideology from their *en chrétien* public activism. As in
the interwar period, these Odrodnienie graduates advanced a deeply subjective, yet firmly
principled, ethics of public engagement whose task was the triangulation of Christian faith,
national interest, and personalism. A decade later, writing under different political
circumstances, Stomma would embrace “neo-positivism” as the name for this thinking.
Curiously, it was *Tygodnik Warszawski* – notably Wiesław Chrzanowski of the *Kolumna
Młodych* – that turned the very idea of neo-positivism into a hot-button issue in print polemics in
1947 with both the Cracovian milieu and the socialist academic bulletin *Przegląd Akademicki.*
Chrzanowski’s background in National Democracy and Christian Democracy led him to the
conclusion that neo-positivism above all “blurred the lines between good and evil.”
What Stomma proposed for *Znak* was thus not “minimalism” in the sense of
disengagement motivated by cowering fear, but rather a firm commitment to attacking the
maximum variety of issues possible without compromising the journal’s stance vis-à-vis either
the Catholic Church or the governing powers of the Polish state. This was a balancing act, not
some phantom “third way.” Its intention was neither surrender nor simple survival, but rather a
program of engagement in the new postwar order that sought to preserve the space of Polish
national interest at the crossroads of geopolitics and principle.

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654 See, in particular, Andrzej Żur [Wiesław Chrzanowski], “Neopozytywizm na tle rzeczywistości,” *Tygodnik
Warszawski,* 8 June 1947.
655 Chrzanowski, Mierecki, Kiernicki, *Pół wieku polityki,* p. 174. Chrzanowski had the following to say five decades
later, looking back on the emergence and development of neo-positivism within *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak:*
“The Catholicism of *Tygodnik Powszechny* is an elitist Catholicism, not without certain elements of
cosmopolitanism. Its supporters doggedly hunted any nationalist elements in the Church. The state closed off all
avenues of reply to representatives of those under attack. This was, therefore, a soccer match with only one goalpost.
And the *Tygodnik* editors must have been well aware of this.” Chrzanowski, Mierecki, Kiernicki, *Pół wieku polityki,*
p. 182.
To what extent was this essay, and the debate that followed it, really about Mounier?

Following a long tradition of Polish Catholic cultural and intellectual deference to the French, the staffs of Tygodnik Powszechny and the newly created Znak had sought Mounier’s guidance and felt betrayed when his attentions went elsewhere. Stomma’s claim about France’s “greater degree of civilization” was only partly ironic. His essay makes plain the dilemmas of living in a world defined by the choice between a Polish suicidal maximalism (in the best tradition of its Romantic messianic nationalism) and a French pessimistic defeatism (with the mists of Vichy still hovering). It is not clear to what extent Stomma considered civilization to be a good thing. Indeed, the “maturity” that he sought for Poland through his mournful, ironic borrowings from Oswald Spengler was one conditioned by national interest: for Polish Catholics to see the difference between martyrology and raison d’État, so that they might choose the latter.

Even a brief glance at the editorial discussion transcribed in the pages immediately following Stomma’s text reveals the essential reason for the Polish fascination with the French. Znak’s editors wanted not to make Poland more like France, but to learn from France’s longer experience with the core question confronting Christians in the modern world. This was, simply put, “monde chrétien vs. monde moderne” (the Christian world vs. the modern world), a theme that Radkowski borrowed verbatim from the August-September 1946 special double issue of Esprit in order to pose the question of how postwar Poland should address this foundational matter.656 As Radkowski put it, the Second World War had prevented Poland from overcoming

656 This special double issue of Esprit featured texts by an extraordinarily diverse range of Francophone thinkers and activists (both Catholic and not), including but not limited to Julien Benda, Nikolai Berdiaev, the abbé Jean Boulier, Father Henri de Lubac, Denis de Rougement, Étienne Gilson, François Mauriac, and Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. The Esprit staff’s goal was to compile and offer to their readers answers to a set of questions constituting a sweeping “survey” of the interaction between Christianity and modernity, centered on how permanent or impermanent the long-standing “chasm” between the two might be and how the Francophone world might go about attempting to bridge that chasm. “Monde moderne, monde chrétien : Enquête,” Esprit, 8-9/1946, p. 185-187, at p. 185.
its “civilizational retardation” vis-à-vis, among others, France. It thus placed several generations of unprepared Polish Catholics in the vanguard of a revolution on the possibility of which at least some French Catholics had already been meditating for decades.\footnote{In interpreting Radkowski’s analysis of the war’s consequences for Poland, it is useful to keep in mind his own experience of World War II. The Franco-American philosopher René Girard, who became one of Radkowski’s closest friends following his escape to France, has summarized succinctly his friend’s encounter with the war: “The ferocious hostility that he felt toward the notion of need was more than a matter of theory. Georges-Hubert [Jerzy] had passed the entire Second World War in the European country whose occupation by Germans had been the longest and the most terrible, Poland. And he lived through this period in conditions certainly rendered more harrowing by his participation in the Polish national resistance.” René Girard, “Le désir dans l’œuvre de Georges-Hubert de Radkowski,” in Lepape, ed, Monde ouvert, pensée nomade, p. 21-34, at p. 22.}

The quintessence of this unpreparedness was the Polish maximalists’ “illusory conviction regarding the interior conquest by Polish Catholics of the modern crisis of values.” Instead, Radkowski suggested, “The resolution of the conflict of ‘monde chrétien – monde moderne’ lies in the Christianization of the modern world and not passing it by and declaring disinterest toward it.”\footnote{Jerzy Radkowski in “Z dyskusji redakcyjnej,” p. 280.} In other words, rather than seek by political prerogative to institutionalize Catholic social teaching in Poland, Radkowski was suggesting that Poles learn from the French prioritization of mission in the modern world. Znak, then, was to serve the cause of dialogue, the cause of catechumens, and the same goals animating the activities of the Mission de France and the nouvelle théologie.

This complex story of ties between Esprit and the Catholic activists of Kraków is also one of broken promises. Namely, Turowicz and his friends remained true to their principles even as they fell out with Mounier and his milieu over the normative question of what form the political revolution in progress in Poland should properly take. By 1950, these Mounier-inspired activists — the survivors from among the luminaries of the interwar period — were driven to the margins of the Polish Catholic avant-garde. If this analysis points us to the deepening incompatibility between Mounier’s intellectual evolution and that of the milieu centered around...
Jerzy Turowicz and his Catholic publishing enterprise, we also find a whole network of left-leaning Polish Catholics for whom Mounier’s leftward leaning made him a cornerstone of their own activism. This is why the focus of our story now shifts entirely to Dziś i Jutro.
CHAPTER 7

1948: Progressive Catholicism and the Pursuit of “Peace”

I have no intention of laying foundations for or justifying a Communist Christianity or a Christian Communism, but I collaborate closely with Communists in political combat: in other words, I am what it is today known as a progressive Christian.
-- André Mandouze, 1948

Socialism is in the present era the most perfect form of material order. Catholicism is the only form of spiritual order. Just as there exists in the realm of worldly life a burning momentum carrying us toward socialism, so in the realm of spiritual life does Catholicism achieve impressive feats. Catholicism and the socialist movement constitute two forces, which, coordinated, will lead humanity to a great future, will create a new “golden era,” while if turned against one another will lead to a catastrophe such as history has not yet seen.
-- Konstanty Lubieński, 1948

The Marshall Plan proposed in June 1947 by the United States and the creation of the Cominform in September 1947 drew unofficial battle lines at the boundaries of the space governed by the Yalta Accords of 1945. Conflict over the reunification of the various Allied occupation zones of both Berlin and Germany led to the Berlin Blockade, which lasted for most of 1948 and half of 1949. Alongside the blockade came the Communist coup d’état in Czechoslovakia in February 1948, the heated electoral contest between Christian Democrats and Communists for the Italian Parliament in April 1948, and Stalin’s decision to announce at the Second Cominform meeting in June 1948 that Yugoslavia had been excluded from the Cominform for “nationalist deviation.” In July 1948, PPR general-secretary Władysław Gomułka was accused of “right-wing nationalist deviation” and stripped of his duties. Finally, in November 1948, Polish president Bolesław Bierut combined the PPR and the remaining vestiges

660 Konstanty Lubieński, “List otwarty do Pana Juliusza Łady (Na marginesie notatki w The Tablet),” Dziś i Jutro, 5 December 1948.
of the Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (Polish Socialist Party) into a new Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (PZPR, Polish United Workers’ Party), taking the last step toward open one-party rule in Poland.

1948 thus marked a definitive turning point not only in the genesis and entrenchment of the Cold War between “American” and “Soviet” geopolitical camps, but within Eastern Europe’s socialist establishments as well. The policy of “gentle revolution,” which had, among other things, allowed each country’s socialist establishment to run its own revolution, was replaced by a tightly coordinated, Moscow-centered international Stalinism. It was this international turn that explained the sudden metamorphosis of “national-Communist” general secretaries into prisoners and show-trial defendants. The Cominform, founded in 1947, proved its usefulness in 1948 as a weapon of discipline and exclusion. In a nascent Cold War environment, internationalism within the parameters of a bipolar world was the order of the day.

This was true of Western Europe as well as Eastern Europe. In the West, Marshall Plan money funded the beginning of European integration, with a fledgling Organization for European Economic Cooperation as well as partisan “internationals” – like the Christian Democrats’ vibrant Nouvelles Équipes Internationales (NEI, New International Équipes) – that pioneered the transnational political cooperation at the foundation of Western European integration. In part, these trends continued the policy of postwar reconstruction on both halves of the continent, but they also reflected new fears of the potential nuclear catastrophe that might result from a conflict between the camps. Fear defined the psychology of the early Cold War

661 See, for example, Kramer, “Stalin, Soviet Policy, and the Consolidation of a Communist Bloc in Eastern Europe, 1944-53.”
years, arising out of an awareness that recent memory had seen organized genocide perpetrated on millions and atomic bombs used to snuff out life on a massive scale in a matter of seconds. The USSR did not yet have atomic weapons technology in 1948, and this asymmetry became one of the driving forces behind a socialist-driven global peace movement that would flourish even after the Soviet Union got the bomb.664

Among European Catholics, too, fear-mongering and peace activism took turns animating the agenda of social and political activism. Suddenly, it became clear to new generations of activists that the interwar intellectualized PR campaign on behalf of the dignity of the human person – seminal though the idea itself would remain in postwar Catholicism – was utterly inadequate to meeting the demands of a world defined by the geopolitics of the early Cold War. These younger generations sensed that Pius XII had come to the same conclusion. Furthermore, it seemed that the pontiff, abandoning his predecessor Pius XI’s priority of passionately defending the personalist ideal, had gone all-in politically with the American camp against socialism.665

By 1948, Catholic activists in Europe – like their secular counterparts – thus had to navigate a new intellectual, cultural, and sociopolitical Cold War landscape that was continually in flux. As in an M.C. Escher painting, the key features of this landscape – an iron curtain, two

camps, and a nebulous yet ominous Stalinist storm – kept leading back to each other and reinforcing each other via paths paved with fear.

In a now-classic thesis, Stephen Kotkin has proposed that we should see the Soviet Union of the 1930s as a Stalinist civilization under construction. Neither a nebulous cloud of evil nor an abstract set of ideas, Stalinism in the Soviet Union brought a lived reality, oppressive and all-encompassing yet dynamic and personal. This notion of Stalinist “civilization” is crucial to any study involving state socialism in the Soviet Bloc in the years 1948-1956. The Stalinist “civilizations” of Eastern Europe were in some sense merely faint shadows – or even caricatures – of the Soviet Stalinism built in the 1930s, yet Czesław Miłosz’s Captive Mind illustrates elegantly the real dilemmas facing Soviet Bloc subjects in the various faces of their public lives. Those inclined toward activism – whether intellectual, social, or political – needed to learn a new language and adapt themselves to a new political calculus.

Though Poland’s Stalinism may have been light in comparison with that of its fellow Soviet satellite states – with no better illustration of this fact than Gomułka’s survival of the Stalinist years – the country’s persistent commitment to Catholicism made for unique forms of Catholic adaptation to the new realities of public life. Dziś i Jutro went from being a marginal crew of ex-fascist, Francophile entrepreneurs to playing a seminal role in mediating between the Stalinist establishment and the institutional Church. With divided Germany becoming the focal point of Cold War hopes and fears, Dziś i Jutro’s residual anti-Germanism – presented as a

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668 The most original study of Poland’s “socialist revolution” as civilizational transformation is in Marta Brodala, Anna Lisiecka, Tadeusz Ruzikowski, Przebudować człowieka. Komunistyczne wysiłki zmiany mentalności (Warszawa: TRIO, 2001). For the most detailed insider story of the shifting power dynamics in the PPR beginning in June 1948, coinciding with the beginning of Władysław Gomułka’s fall from power and the creation of the Polish United Workers’ Party, see Jakub Berman, Interview with Teresa Torańska, in Torańska, Oni (Warszawa: Iskry, 2004 ed.), p. 289-418, at p. 362-370.
stalwart, vanguard defense of the “Polishness” of the Recovered Territories of Silesia and Pomerania – located the milieu in between an establishment playing up the prospects of German revanchism and an ecclesiastical hierarchy ashamed of its pope’s refusal to recognize that the Territories were now in Polish hands.669

_Dziś i Jutro_ in 1948 – the year of the Stalinist turn in Poland – went from pursuing a pro-establishment social Catholicism to articulating an outright Catholic-socialist syncretism. One particular valence of this syncretism involved “progressive Catholicism,” in other words, a principled Catholic justification of alliance with and unfailing support of Soviet-backed state socialism. Two related stories thus played out in parallel: that of _Dziś i Jutro_ – and particularly its leader Bolesław Piasecki – as a privileged power-broker in Stalinist Poland; and that of a rich ideology of Catholic-socialist syncretism that found conversation partners and ardent fans across the Iron Curtain in Francophone Western Europe. _Dziś i Jutro_ thus became a unique link between Western European Catholic activists interested in developing an entirely new approach to the social question and a socialist establishment in Poland that claimed to have already done just that. Its editors were nonetheless careful to retain the “social-Catholic” label in an attempt to underscore the continuity of Catholic social concerns dating all the way back to Leo XIII and _Rerum Novarum_. Instead of breaking with the Vatican, they chose to take a stand by pioneering an alternative model of Catholic sociopolitical activism: the Christianization of socialism from within.

In their mostly French-inspired agenda, the theological priority of labor merged with a philosophical accent on the human person and a sociological emphasis on the proletariat as the center of gravity of any Catholic activism. As Gerd-Rainer Horn has put it, “Catholic theology

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669 See, for example, Marcin Zaborowski, _Germany, Poland, and Europe: Conflict, Co-operation, and Europeanization_ (New York: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 27-55.
and philosophy paid central attention to dimensions and desires of the human experience which had previously never obtained such a central place.\(^{670}\) This Francophone-inspired personalist theology of labor defined the intellectual and spiritual horizons for postwar European pursuits of Catholic-socialist syncretism, and Poland’s place as a Catholic country at the forefront of socialist revolution made it an ideal testing ground. The proletariat was to be the ultimate Catholic catechumenate, and though some of the French initiators of this postwar catechism of mission-as-proletarian-revolution were men of the cloth – Congar, Chenu, Augros, Suhard – ultimate responsibility for the proletariat would fall to lay activists.

Seminal to cementing *Dziś i Jutro*’s dual status as transnational intermediary and proponent of an entirely new form of Catholic social activism was the early-Cold War agenda of global peace activism. Hardly alone among socialist sympathizers in the world in actively militating in this movement, *Dziś i Jutro* nonetheless had the rare distinction of simultaneously offering two principled justifications for this participation – Catholicism and socialism\(^{671}\) – whose confluence in the movement’s international peace activism deepened its relationship with *Esprit* and other Western European partners. The practical consequence was the emergence of a transnational social-Catholic network developed with the knowledge and backing of Poland’s Stalinist establishment.

**The Polish Singularity: The German Question and Church-State Relations**

Little has been written about the relationship between Pius XII’s Holy See and the Polish Episcopate of the postwar decade, but we do know that the relationship was, by and large, not a

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\(^{670}\) Horn, “Left Catholicism in Western Europe in the 1940s,” p. 14.

good one. Pius XII knew Primate Hlond well: although the pontiff was incensed by Hlond’s decision to express public support for the Polish claim to the Recovered Territories, he continued to respect the man he knew from his own years as Vatican Secretary of State under Pius XI.

When Hlond died in October 1948, however, Pius XII lost all direct contact with Poland: Hlond’s replacement, Rev. Stefan Wyszyński, was an inexperienced and little-known bishop, on the job hardly 18 months at the time of his succession to the primate’s seat. Prior to his elevation to the bishopric of Lublin, Wyszyński had been neither a politician nor a diplomat, but rather an academic. We know Wyszyński from his friendship with Korniłowicz, his national-personalist writings, and his admiration for papal personalism as expressed in the pages of Tygodnik Warszawski. Nonetheless, expressing support for the Vatican as an academic and toeing the Roman line as head of a national episcopate were two very different exercises.

In December 1948, József Cardinal Mindszenty (1892–1975), primate of Hungary, was arrested for the second time in a year. Rather than simply threaten him, the Hungarian socialist secret police imprisoned and tortured him, compiling a dossier, including a confession, used at his February 1949 show trial. In June 1949, Archbishop Josef Beran (1888–1969) of Prague met the same fate. Pius XII, for whom Mindszenty was a close friend, exploded with rage against the socialist establishments of Eastern Europe, excommunicating on 12 February 1949 anyone involved in the Mindszenty affair and ordering the Holy Office to threaten with excommunication anyone collaborating with Communists anywhere in the world. Published on 1 July 1949, the Holy Office decree seemed to shut the door not only on active Catholic-

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672 See the second chapter of Antoni Dudek and Ryszard Gryz, Komuniści i Kościół w Polsce (1945–1989) (Kraków: Znak, 2003).
673 Pius XII also actively supported the distribution throughout Western Europe of an anti-Communist propaganda pamphlet anchored in the story of Mindszenty’s passion: József Közi Horváth, La vérité sur le cardinal Mindszenty (Paris: Comité international de défense de la civilisation chrétienne, 1949). For terse summaries of the Mindszenty and Beran stories, see Kent, The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII, p. 217-236; Chenaux, Une Europe Vaticane?, p. 31-43.
socialist cooperation, but indeed even on the pursuit of a *modus vivendi*. The decree, formulated as a series of four questions, culminated in the statement that “His Holiness Pius XII, pope by Divine Providence, in an ordinary audience accorded to the assessor of the Holy Office, approved the decision” that any Catholic “faithful professing materialist and anti-Christian doctrine as Communists and, above all, those who defend or propagate such doctrine incur, as apostates of the faith, the excommunication specially reserved to the Holy See.”

Mindszenty’s second arrest came two months after the elevation of his young Polish counterpart. Called to grow up fast as an ecclesiastical administrator in a time of particular peril for Catholicism behind the Iron Curtain, Wyszyński found himself going the opposite way from Pius XII and his Holy See. At the very time when the pontiff was recasting the Catholic hierarchy as precisely the sort of “resistance church” of which George Weigel would have been proud, Wyszyński was negotiating with Poland’s socialist establishment, backing their claims to the Recovered Territories and relying on every possible intermediary – especially Bolesław Piasecki – to secure the position of Catholicism in Stalinist Poland. In seeking a *modus vivendi*, Wyszyński was himself arguably violating the spirit, if not the letter, of the July 1949 Holy Office decree.

At the same time, however, he was actually faithfully representing the opinion of the overwhelming majority of Poland’s Catholic faithful, who sought simply to practice their faith unencumbered. Everyone on Polish territory could agree that the Polish claim to the Recovered Territories (*Ziemie Odzyskane*) – along with the attendant expectation that the Vatican would reassign the formerly German dioceses to Polish bishops – was non-negotiable. Indeed, all of

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675 This is the central theme of “Czerwony kardynał czy strateg” (Red Cardinal or Strategist), the third part of Czaczkowska, *Kardynał Wyszyński*, p. 85-172.
Poland’s Catholic circles, regardless of political or philosophical leanings – from SP and Tygodnik Warszawski through Dziś i Jutro, encompassing also Tygodnik Powszechny and the Episcopate itself – came out of the war with a firmly anti-German stance. There followed an extensive propaganda campaign, in which virtually the entire Polish nation became complicit, to retell the history and present of the Recovered Territories as unquestionably, eternally Polish. Even before the onset of the Cold War, a widespread fear predominated in Poland that the international community would try to wrest these lands away from Poland.

In the face of this apparent threat, the Soviet Union quickly became attractive as a guarantor of Poland’s new western borders on the Oder and Neisse Rivers. Poland only became more dependent on the USSR for border guarantees with the definitive division of Germany following the Berlin Blockade. When the Federal Republic of Germany was declared in 1949, with a Soviet-backed German Democratic Republic in opposition, it became clear that the German question would remain Poland’s defining national issue for some time. In this situation, the purely juridical matter of territorial boundaries soon bred an all-out nationalist ideology that, while distinguishing from 1949 onward between the “bad” (West) Germany and the “good” (East) Germany, manifested most often as a wholesale anti-German nationalism.

The lay Catholic press had been vocal in its affirmation of the postwar border solution since its first issues appeared in 1945, and this line was upheld consistently thereafter. Indeed, perhaps Tygodnik Warszawski’s only saving grace in the eyes of the new socialist establishment

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676 It is important to remember that this propaganda campaign accompanied and followed mass deportations and population transfers. With the re-allocation of Silesia, Pomerania, and the interwar “free city” of Danzig/Gdańsk to Poland, German former inhabitants of these lands were expelled wholesale, sometimes given the chance to leave voluntarily, sometimes removed by force. See, for example, Norman M. Naimark, “The Expulsion of Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia,” in Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-century Europe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 108-138.
677 See, for example, Paczkowski, The Spring Will Be Ours, p. 151-154.
had been the journal’s unswervingly anti-German stance. Catholic or no, the journal advocated ample worldly punishment of the German people and German state for their wartime crimes against Poland. This line of reasoning brought the journal closer to official Polish foreign policy. Perhaps paradoxically, its chief exponent in the pages of Tygodnik Warszawski was Rev. Zygmunt Kaczyński, who, going against the stated policy of the Polish government-in-exile, applauded both Poland’s new borders and the forcible resettlement of ethnic Germans living on those territories.

In the very first issue of Tygodnik Warszawski, Kaczyński wrote, “We must pay special attention to the problem of our lands on the Oder and Neisse, for without these lands we would become something along the lines of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, a creature incapable of standing opposed to the regenerated German hydra.” Kaczyński did nod toward the Christian ethics of reconciliation to which he was putatively bound by faith and vocation, noting, “I am not an advocate of revenge and ‘eye for an eye’ repayment by Germans.” Yet, he declared, following their plans of “biological extermination of the Polish nation,” the Germans simply could not be allowed to “live in one house with Poles.”

Indeed, one could argue that much of the rhetoric about “reconstruction” and “transformation” in the first issues of Tygodnik Warszawski, Tygodnik Powszechny, and Dziś i Jutro masked a subtext recognizable to Polish readership of the time: a call to hurry above all the reconstruction and transformation of the Recovered Territories into recognizably “Polish” territory, demonstrating through Poland’s rapid material reconstruction and spiritual assimilation of those lands that they belonged “organically” to Poland. Such was the intention behind

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680 See, for example, Mieczysław Kurzyna, “Polska prawda Wrocławia,” Dziś i Jutro, 8 August 1948. The claims about Wrocław’s “true” Polish identity made in this front-page article are juxtaposed with a front-page bubble quotation from a 1948 book-length propaganda piece about Lower Silesia that claimed, among others, “For most of
Bolesław Piasecki’s front-cover editorial in the first issue of Dziś i Jutro, with the added exhortation to welcome postwar alliance with the Soviet Union as the sole willing international backer of the permanence of the existing settlement of the Recovered Territories.

Once the Cold War had begun in earnest, the Stalinization of Eastern Europe in no way tempered Polish Catholic thinking on the German question. Indeed, in keeping with this peculiar but constitutive quality of the emerging Polish Stalinist consensus, Polish Catholic activists only developed deeper, supposedly ever more principled justifications for the Potsdam settlement.

_Tygodnik Powszechny_ devoted a special issue on 27 June 1948 to the German question, with a front-cover editorial by Rev. Piwowarczyk entitled “The collective responsibility of the German nation.” Drawing on the writings of Karl Jaspers about German guilt as well as the writings of Heinrich Scholz and Eugen Kogon in _Frankfurter Hefte_, (West) Germany’s answer to _Esprit_, Piwowarczyk explained,

> there is no reasonable justification for releasing the majority of the German nation from all responsibility. Responsible are the German worker who produced weapons (Bauer), who supplied the army with the aid of “slaves” taken by force from neighboring nations; the trader, whose services as intermediary enabled fighting Germans to supply themselves; the functionary, whose work enabled the entire criminal regime to persist without the slightest crack for so many years.

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The same _Tygodnik Powszechny_ issue contained an article by Poland’s renowned Nuremberg Trial correspondent Edmund Osmańczyk offering a blueprint for how to strengthen (Polish)

Tygodnik Powszechny

trial correspondent Edmund Osmańczyk offering a blueprint for how to strengthen (Polish)

the past century Silesia has served as the fertilizer of German culture, while Berlin’s trade and industry have grown for the most part on the ruins of Silesia.” _Dolny Śląsk: praca zbiorowa_ (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 1948), II, quoted in Dziś i Jutro, 8 August 1948.

681 As Scholz put it, “We must admit that their crimes became possible only in virtue of the fact that we tolerated Hitlerism for so long that it was able to do whatever it wished.” Heinrich Scholz, _Frankfurter Hefte_, April 1947, quoted in Jan Piwowarczyk, “Zbirowa odpowiedzialność narodu niemieckiego,” _Tygodnik Powszechny_, 27 June 1948. The canonical volume by Karl Jaspers that Piwowarczyk had in mind appeared in English as Jaspers, _The Question of German Guilt_, trans. E.B. Ashton (New York: Dial Press, 1947).
Catholicism in the Oder River Valley, part of consolidating Poland’s empirical claim of entitlement to the Recovered Territories.\textsuperscript{682}

The postwar anti-German consensus arguably reflected a bizarre re-tooling of the National Democratic legacy: in a country in which most of the Jewish population had only just been either annihilated or pressured into exile, anti-Germanism replaced the default anti-semitic impulse inhabiting Polish exclusionary nationalism. Thus, what ultimately proved to be the Polish Catholic consensus, spanning the full ideological spectrum from Catholic-socialist syncretists to national-chauvinist guerrilla fighters rejecting the legitimacy of the socialist establishment, formed around the national question.

The national question thereby also became a guiding force of \textit{Dziś i Jutro}’s global peace activism – paradoxically finding its counterpart in the French Catholic vanguard’s own deep-set anti-Germanism. This commonality also shielded \textit{Dziś i Jutro} from episcopal sanction and kept the hierarchy and Piasecki’s group on the same page for years even as \textit{Dziś i Jutro} began to diverge from the hierarchy on almost everything else. As late as December 1951, even after having seen a bishop imprisoned and the 1950 Church-State agreement violated many times over by the establishment, Wyszyński still believed the Recovered Territories so important to Catholic Poles that he publicly declared, “If Divine Providence wished it that we find ourselves, precisely at the present moment, in the Recovered Territories, that is a fact in which I see not only a recognition of our historical rights, but also a demonstration of justice driving their restitution [to us].”\textsuperscript{683}

\textsuperscript{683} Stefan Wyszyński, Interview with Jerzy Turowicz, \textit{Tygodnik Powszechny}, 16 December 1951.
Boleslaw Piasecki, The Polish Primate’s Right-hand Man?

In the wake of the Polish government’s September 1945 unilateral abrogation of the interwar concordat, Church and State needed to reach a *modus vivendi* as soon as possible to resolve a host of questions regarding Catholicism’s legal status in the postwar order. In this area, *Dziś i Jutro*’s involvement played out at the very highest levels through the person of its leader, Bolesław Piasecki, who kept the political strategizing out of the pages of his movement’s journal. Thus, virtually all of what we know comes from either Primate Wyszyński’s published writings or second-hand testimony published by Piasecki’s intimates. Piasecki and Wyszyński had met at the *Dziś i Jutro*-affiliated writer Jan Dobraczyński’s home in February 1946, prior to the priest’s appointment as bishop of Lublin. Subsequently, Piasecki and Wyszyński maintained regular personal contact until September 1953.684 Informally, Piasecki could promise the primate his earnest efforts to secure support of Catholic initiatives through his closest contacts in the establishment, Public Affairs minister Władysław Wolski and Col. Julia Brystygier (1902-1975) of the Public Security Ministry.

One of the key problems with this relationship, besides a deep-set lack of trust on both sides, was that, in Wyszyński’s early years as primate, unsure of his footing and ill-experienced in both episcopal and state politics, the hierarch was wont to send mixed signals. He complained to the *Dziś i Jutro* editors in 1949 that they were acting like “social-Catholic schismatics,” yet he

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684 Micewski, *Współrządzić czy nie kłamać?*, p. 28. Polish ecclesiastical archives at all levels remain virtually inaccessible to historians from outside the Polish clergy, with the Episcopate’s files from Wyszyński’s tenure off-limits for the additional reason that the process of evidence-gathering for his beatification is still in progress. As a result, the most credible available documentation concerning Wyszyński and his Episcopate comes from the published testimony of two historically minded former *Dziś i Jutro* activists who, after leaving the movement, became relatively close confidants of Wyszyński – Andrzej Micewski and Janusz Zablocki – as well as studies by the historian Peter Raina. Though heavily ideologized and polemical, Raina’s work is most valuable for the extensive excerpts that it contains from Wyszyński’s private archives, which no historian besides Raina has ever seen. Janusz Zablocki, *Prymas Stefan Wyszyński. Opór i zwycięstwo, 1948-1956* (Warszawa: Grupa Wydawnicza Bertelsmann Media/Fakty, 2002); Peter Raina, *Kardynał Wyszyński. II: Losy więziennne* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo von borowiecky, 1999).
continued both to receive Piasecki and to act on his advice. Indeed, in a single sermon delivered at St. John’s Cathedral in Warsaw on 23 February 1950, Wyszyński sent two completely contradictory messages to Piasecki’s movement. First, he complained again that a “certain faction of the press and the people concentrated around it, who call themselves ‘progressive Catholics,’ worry us by their lack of Catholic sense and theological ignorance, and yet today they want to play the incomprehensible role of teacher and mentor to the bishops.”

Having thus publicly upbraided Dziś i Jutro, Wyszyński then did an about-face, making the very same group a seemingly lucrative offer: “We will gladly accept every offer of joint responsibility for the affairs of the Church, but our condition is that it be premised on an understanding of Church teachings and an awareness of the order of things in the hierarchy.”

Janusz Zabłocki has defended Wyszyński’s apparently outstretched hand as a testament to the fact that the primate, pace the claims of his later detractors, practiced a theology of the laity that allowed him to treat laymen as full members of the Church responsible for its future. Whether or not this is true, there a simpler, contingent explanation. Agonized as the primate was over Piasecki’s attempts to manipulate the Episcopate, go behind his back, and promote an ideologized reinterpretation of Catholic doctrine in the pages of Dziś i Jutro, even this option was preferable to another tendency that had emerged within Catholicism in Poland.

The worse option involved the księża patrioci (patriot-priests) organized in the Główna Komisja Księży (GKK, Main Commission of Priests) that served as an auxiliary arm of the...

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685 Stefan Wyszyński, Pastoral Letter of Concern to Bolesław Piasecki and Dziś i Jutro, 8 September 1949, quoted in Micewski, Współrządzić czy nie kłamać?, p. 35.
686 Quoted at Zabłocki, Prymas Stefan Wyszyński, p. 145. The term “Catholic sense” (zmysł katolicki in the original Polish) is undoubtedly a reference to Father Jacek Woroniecki’s concept of sensus catholicus, discussed in Chapter 2: in simplified form, a sensitivity to the balance between Catholic social ethics and the institutional function of the Church in the world. Woroniecki was one of Wyszyński’s mentors in the latter’s years as a student at KUL and then as a young seminary professor.
687 Quoted at Zabłocki, Prymas Stefan Wyszyński, p. 148.
688 Zabłocki, Prymas Stefan Wyszyński, p. 140.
national World War II veterans’ organization created in 1949 under the name of Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację (ZBoWiD, Union of Combatants for Freedom and Democracy). 689 These were ordained Catholic priests, most of whom had been military chaplains during World War II, with many also having spent time as prisoners of German concentration camps. Organized into regional diocesan units coordinated centrally out of Warsaw, they created their own ecclesiastical power structure parallel to the official Church hierarchy and became increasingly more schismatic until their ultimate excommunication. 690

Unlike the wider ZBoWiD network, which had at least some grassroots inspiration and fulfilled an actual social need for the veterans who joined the union, the GKK was, as the Polish historian Jacek Żurek has shown, created and maintained on a tight leash by the Public Security Ministry. 691 It thus represented a challenge both to the Episcopate – whom the patriot-priests systematically ignored, denounced, and shamed, all while publicly condemning Pius XII and the Holy See for siding with the American camp in the Cold War – and to the Dziś i Jutro movement. Piasecki wanted his own influential and sympathetic priests who would help him to market Dziś i Jutro’s political agenda to Episcopate and establishment. He had no intention of seeing his plans threatened by a competing institution. 692

A shared enemy in the form of the GKK thus helped to bind the Episcopate and Dziś i Jutro together, but the bond was always tenuous. On the one hand, Piasecki played a clear role as

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692 On the dynamics between the GKK and Dziś i Jutro/PAX, see Jacek Żurek’s case study of the Komisja Duchownych i Świeckich Działaczy Katolickich (Commission of Catholic Clergy and Lay Activists), a Public Security Ministry-coordinated institution that existed solely to give the appearance of official public declarations of support by a unified body of activists rubber-stamping religious policy decisions made by the establishment. Żurek, Ruch “księży patriotów,” p. 164-167. According to Andrzej Micewski, news of the GKK’s creation occasioned a jealous Piasecki to exclaim, “We need our own priests.” Micewski, Współrzędni czy nie klamać?, p. 41.
a behind-the-scenes architect of the Accord signed between the Episcopate and the Polish government on 14 April 1950. This agreement – of which the Vatican quietly but firmly disapproved – obliged the Episcopate to rein in priests supporting any remaining clandestine guerrilla groups and to “oppose any activities antagonistic toward Poland.” These obligations, in turn, earned the government’s *de facto* acceptance – in lieu of a formal concordat – of the pope as the highest authority to which the Episcopate answered. Of almost equal importance from the Episcopate’s standpoint was the government’s declaration that religious education would remain in schools, to be governed by joint Church-State commissions.693

Given this *modus vivendi* achieved by the Episcopate and the State, Piasecki’s advice continued to be useful to Wyszyński as the latter learned to navigate the ever-narrowing straits of Church-State cooperation in the early years of People’s Poland.694 As a result, Wyszyński was exceedingly patient and accommodating with Piasecki’s movement. Indeed, he was even willing more or less to overlook the fact that a scandalous governmental seizure of the ecclesiastical *Caritas* charity on suspicion of financial corruption directly benefited the *Dziś i Jutro* movement. Indeed, the establishment simply replaced *Caritas’s* ecclesiastical governing board with a combination of patriot-priests and PAX members hand-picked by Piasecki, rendering the charity simply another source of income for Piasecki’s movement.695

693 See “Porozumienie zawarte między przedstawicielami rządu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i Episkopatu Polski w dniu 14 kwietnia 1950 roku,” reproduced, for example, in Zabłocki, *Prymas Stefan Wyszyński*, p. 233-236.

694 Piasecki related to a closed-session meeting of the *Dziś i Jutro* leadership in 1950 an alleged conversation between himself and the primate. While perhaps apocryphal, it nonetheless accurately illustrates the relationship between the two men: “‘So you believe that I am a bad politician? – the primate once asked him. ‘Your Excellency, very bad,’ Piasecki recalled his reply. He accused his ecclesiastical partner of backing down only when the pressure was so strong that he could no longer withstand it. That – Bolesław concluded – only radicalizes the Marxists, for it accustoms them to using force. Meanwhile, it is best to act in such a way that this pressure will never be applied; this can be achieved by anticipating the pressure and heading it off with a concession presented as if it were coming of one’s own initiative, not under duress.’” Zabłocki, *Prymas Stefan Wyszyński*, p. 147.

695 Micewski, *Współrządzić czy nie kłamać?*, p. 43-45. In his capacity as movement-participant-*cum*-historian, Micewski includes his own name among those chosen by the Ministry of Public Administration to replace the ecclesiastical governing board of *Caritas*. In so doing, Micewski makes no attempt either to excuse or explain his
Even as Piasecki was shuttling back and forth between the primate and his contacts in the state security apparatus, *Dziś i Jutro* was moving far afield of Catholic orthodoxy as defined by the Polish Episcopate. If Emmanuel Mounier had been attracted to *Dziś i Jutro* for precisely this reason, he seemed to have no idea that, as of the summer of 1947, *Dziś i Jutro* was officially excluded by the Polish Episcopate from the official registry of “Catholic press.” The list, which included 32 names— with the exception of *Tygodnik Powszechny, Tygodnik Warszawski,* and *Znak,* all small-scale, parish-level publications or liturgical gazettes—excluded both *Dziś i Jutro* and its new sister publication, the daily *Słowo Powszechne* (Universal Word), founded in March 1947 with Kętrzyński as editor-in-chief.696

The significance of this classification was not limited to the staff’s humiliation and pastoral concern, but it indeed extended to *Dziś i Jutro*’s permission to continue to use the term “social-Catholic weekly” as its subtitle. This authorization automatically lapsed, yet *Dziś i Jutro* through its final issue in 1956 would continue to sport this subtitle. In the interim, *Dziś i Jutro* was chastized for “failure to submit to regular pastoral consultation,” and it remained off of the official ecclesiastical list. Then again, no sanctions followed the journal’s official self-identification as “social-Catholic,” and the primate continued to receive Piasecki and his fellow *Dziś i Jutro* leaders regularly without making a serious issue of the journal’s status.

It is important to keep in mind when considering the behavior of the *Dziś i Jutro* activists following Poland’s Stalinist turn that Catholic canon law gave them a backdoor option out of compliance with the July 1949 Holy Office decree. On the one hand, the decree threatened excommunication for collaboration with Communism. Yet the threat of excommunication

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applied only to those Catholics “consciously and freely choosing such acts” of collaboration. Arguably, given the everyday reality of the sociopolitical situation in which they found themselves, Catholic activists living in the people’s democracies could be construed as not being able to choose “freely” the nature and degree of their support for the Stalinist-socialist establishments gaining control over their various homelands. The Poles of Dziś i Jutro never faced any claims under canon law, but it was their French contacts who armed them just in case with this argument in their own defense.  

The National Idea and Catholic Anti-Communism

It is to the consequences of the Dziś i Jutro leadership’s 1946 meetings with Mounier that we now turn. On his return to France from Poland, Mounier found himself at a fork in the road of his own Catholic activism, finding it necessary to move toward the Catholic-socialist syncretism that he had just demanded of his Polish counterparts in his June 1946 Esprit article on the Polish voyage. In the same month that he published this text, there appeared in print a book-length manifesto by the Jesuit priest Gaston Fessard, a wartime mentor of postwar Esprit Young Turks Jean-Marie Domenach and André Mandouze. Fessard, the spiritus movens behind the anti-Nazi, anti-Vichy call to arms of the first issue of the Cahiers du Témoignage Chrétien – France, prends garde de perdre ton âme (France, be on your guard against losing your soul) – had accepted Catholic-socialist cooperation in the Resistance.

With the Liberation, however, elections to the first postwar French constituent assembly had split largely among the MRP, the PCF, and the SFIO, with Christian Democrats and Communists neck in neck.  

An attempt to create a unified Troisième Force (Third Force) government incorporating all three of the major parties led to rancorous bickering, culminating in

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de Gaulle’s withdrawal from public life and the radicalization of the PCF. This was the political backdrop for Mounier’s visit to Poland – where he retained in his mind his sympathies for the PCF against the SFIO and the Christian Democrats – and it also motivated Fessard to pick up his pen and launch into an anti-socialist, anti-Communist diatribe.

The result was *France, prends garde de perdre ta liberté* (France, be on your guard against losing your liberty). Dedicating the book to the “memory of the executed and the deported dead in Germany” and “all of the activists of the clandestine *équipes* of Témoignage Chrétien,” Fessard attempted to appropriate the narrative of universal wartime Resistance that had become the founding mythology of the French Fourth Republic. In the second paragraph of the preface, Fessard wrote, “Today, 18 months after the Liberation, we must point out a new peril that, under the cover of the Resistance, menaces France: Communism.”

Each chapter of the book began with a brief invocation juxtaposing the imperative of anti-socialist and anti-Communist resistance with the richly mythologized anti-Nazi struggle. Fessard depicted the Communist as a “red Nazi,” at the same time anticipating and rejecting leftist critiques of his argumentation as fascisant, proclaiming, “Just as denouncing the hypocrisy of Nazism did not make us pro-Communist, we do not become pro-fascist by unveiling that of Communism.” The core message of Fessard’s book, however, was the emphasis on the atheism at the heart of Marxism, which Fessard explored in rich detail and analogized with Nazi atheism via both political and theological analysis. Fessard’s declared hope, in so doing, was to redeem those Catholics who had strayed, the “Catholic fellow travelers and *communisant* Christians,” before it was too late.

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700 Fessard, *France, prends garde de perdre ta liberté*, p. 22, 10.
Fessard’s manuscript was completed before Mounier had returned from Poland, yet, based on Mounier’s argumentation in his June 1946 article on Poland, it is difficult to imagine a better or more prominent example of the kind of individual Fessard claimed to want to redeem. Enamored with the PCF and disillusioned by Polish Catholics’ resistance to socialism to such an extent that he felt the need to lecture them at length in the pages of *Esprit*, Mounier by mid-1946 was falling deeper into the orbit of the “Catholic fellow travelers and communisant Christians.” Mounier and Fessard knew each other well, and the former took the book very seriously, bringing out his own “heavy artillery” against the Jesuit in a review essay published in *Esprit* in October 1946 of Fessard’s book and several other anti-Communist manifestos. Mounier accused Fessard of “confounding once again exemplary testimony with an instrument of social transformation” and of trivializing “the real drama of those Christians who feel themselves torn between a total and lucid Christian fidelity and certain, no less constricting, historical or political considerations [specific to] the society in which they live.” Among others, Mounier had in mind the drama of those friends he had just made during his time in Poland.

Mounier showed in this review essay that he was no minimalist. Rather than, as Stomma had described it, simply anticipating socialism’s self-construction *ex nihilo* in virtue of its inexorability, the *Esprit* editor instead took a decisive step forward. His June 1946 reflections on the trip to Poland, his retort to Fessard, and his increasing interest in leftist movements in the French empire led him as close as he had ever been to open identification with a political formation: not Communism or socialism *per se*, but progressive Catholicism.

Fundamentally anti-American, Mounier, given the choice by the Zhdanov “two camps” doctrine of 1947 between the American “imperialist” camp and the Soviet “democratic” camp,

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703 Mounier, “Récents critiques du communisme,” p. 478, 479.
chose the “people’s democracies” of Eastern Europe, a choice he had already defended fervently in the tract *Qu’est-ce que le personnalisme?* published one year earlier. He would receive help from his younger colleague André Mandouze in 1948 with an ideological tract outlining “progressive Christianity” as the principled path down which Mounier might lead personalism into the reality of socialist revolution in the Soviet Bloc. The “progressive” ideology implied, in Mandouze’s view, both principled and pragmatic justifications for political alliance with Communist institutions and parties. As such, it produced a differentiated, complex transnational formation. The question then arises, how to describe that formation using the actors’ own language? Whom did it represent, besides Mounier as an individual?

After Mounier’s May 1946 visit to Poland, *Esprit’s* interest in Poland deepened considerably. For the first time ever, *Esprit* established a press exchange with Poland, involving the respective editorial offices of both *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Dziś i Jutro*, *Tygodnik Warszawski*, which Mounier had described in his June 1946 article as a Polish equivalent of *Temps Présent* for its place at the crossroads of Catholic intellectual life and confessional political and social activism, held no interest for Mounier. For their part, none of its editors had shown interest in meeting with Mounier either during his Polish visit. For *Esprit*, then, there existed two centers of Catholic lay activism in postwar Poland: the “aristocratic citadel” of Kraków (*Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak*) and the “bold youthfulness” of Warsaw (*Dziś i Jutro*).

Jerzy Braun of *Tygodnik Warszawski*, in his March 1947 published critique of Stomma’s essay, included also several observations on points of commonality between *Esprit* and *Dziś i Jutro*. Braun had seen the *Esprit* article in which Mounier lauded the milieu assembled by Piasecki, yet Braun went considerably beyond the scope of Mounier’s analysis in his considerations of the two journals’ shared interests, focusing on the question of nationalism and
the nation. By spring 1947, the systematic crossover in authorship among the three Polish Catholic weeklies had largely become a thing of the past. Braun’s aim was to compromise Stomma by associating Mounier – Stomma’s presumed hero, according to Braun – with Bolesław Piasecki. To Piasecki, Braun attributed “neo-positivism,” already a controversial term among Catholic activists as a result of the overwhelmingly pejorative connotations assigned to it by Braun’s younger editorial colleague Wiesław Chrzanowski.\(^704\) Braun claimed to observe common threads of organic nationalism in Mounier’s thought that linked him to Piasecki and, by extension, to the interwar writings of Roman Dmowski: “Mounier’s arguments in favor of cooperation with Marxism are identical to those of Polish nationalists from the Dziś i Jutro group and related groups (‘it is necessary to save the biological existence of the nation’).”

At first glance, Braun’s parenthetical quotation from Mounier is truly striking: Mounier seemed to have served up a perfect example of the ideological commonalities of Nazism and Communism as presented by Fessard. A closer attention to context shows, however, that Mounier had been discussing the Nazi attempt to “eradicate the Polish nation’s biological existence.” He was thus not making a racialized argument himself, but rather condemning racial definitions of the nation. It is in this spirit that members of the Dziś i Jutro milieu subsequently repeated the phrase.\(^705\)

Curiously, it was the nationalist-turned-socialist-sympathizing activists of Dziś i Jutro who argued most forcefully in their first issue that Poland needed the strength of the Soviet Union in order to survive, having lost so much matériel and manpower during World War II. Braun attempted to translate an observation about these views into an argument that the Dziś i

\(^704\) Compare Braun, “W cieniu dekadencji”; Żur [Chrzanowski], “Neopozytywizm na tle rzeczywistości.”

\(^705\) For example, in his closed-session remarks for Dziś i Jutro’s anniversary celebration in 1949, Łubieński justified the movement’s involvement in international peace efforts by appropriating old anti-Nazi phraseology in order to suggest that German revanchism continued to menace “the Polish nation with biological holocaust.” Łubieński, “Referat,” p. 5, AIPN BU 0648/118/1.
Jutro staff were also minimalists: “France is not equipped for struggle against the new order, so it must adapt to it. Isn’t this the same message broadcast by our neo-positivists from Dziś i Jutro who do not believe that Poland, after such a loss of blood, can still be a real political force? And thus it is precisely minimalism that arises from the call of nationalism, mixing the current situation of the nation with the universal matter of Catholicism, while, in contrast, social-Christian maximalism is born of faith in the nearby universal Christian civilization.”

Braun’s argument is, however, rather disingenuous. Tygodnik Warszawski featured a number of present and former National Democrats on its staff. One would be hard-pressed to find a single editor or author for that journal who believed that “maximalism,” in virtue of its ties to “universal Christian civilization,” precluded the “call of nationalism.” Quite the opposite – Piasecki’s group may have included many ex-fascists, but it is the Christian Democrats of SP and Tygodnik Warszawski whom apologist authors like Waldemar Bujak and Janusz Zabłocki have made out to be the “true patriots” of postwar Polish Catholic press activism, in contrast with the Cracovian “minimalists” and Piasecki’s “collaborators.” In other words, Braun was trying to have his cake and eat it, too.

At the same time, Braun’s argument glossed over a major theme in the Dziś i Jutro writings of 1946-1947, namely, “the national idea” (idea narodu). The instigator of this discussion was none other than Tygodnik Warszawski, which published an article by Stanisław Kozicki in its Easter 1946 issue entitled “Nationalism and Imperialism,” arguing for a return to the “national idea” as a guiding force of postwar Poland’s social transformations.706

A month later – just over two weeks after Mounier’s departure from Poland – Andrzej Krasiński published a response in Dziś i Jutro, expanding on Kozicki’s ideas by presenting the

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“national idea” as Poland’s “only durable and creative social bond.” We might recognize in this article some of what Braun and Chrzanowski meant by “neo-positivism”: a non-romantic definition of the nation as a “concrete entity” consisting of “the sum of spiritual and material goods, interests, and needs of millions of people.” Indeed, Krasiński explicitly rejected the “old-fashioned rhetoric of patriotic hurrah slogans” and the “absurdity of biological nationalism.”

Pace Braun’s suggestion a year later, however, Krasiński’s argument was anything but minimalist. Indeed, he went so far as to argue that any socialist revolution needed nationalism, for “the value of class solidarity is transient and insufficient.” And the coup de grâce – “The proletariat nearly everywhere, despite the radical postulates of its internationals, has planted itself firmly on national grounds.”

The lesson of the “national idea” discussion is that Dziś i Jutro and Tygodnik Warszawski, in fact, shared more ideological and political ground than the editors of either journal cared to acknowledge. Unlike Tygodnik Powszechny, both lauded Roman Dmowski, and both discussed the nation at length, opting in each case for “concrete” definitions rather than the principally cultural and literary referents served up by their Cracovian colleagues. Indeed, Krasiński was pushing Dziś i Jutro toward a national brand of Catholic-socialist syncretism tied to the “national Communism” for which Gomułka would be deposed in 1948. This ideology was consistent with Piasecki’s attempt to carve out political territory courtesy of SP’s disintegration in an attempt to bring a Catholic voice to the table for a revolution that was national in form and socialist in content.

Arguably, Popiel’s SP had been pursuing the same path, with the caveat that it refused to trade Catholic social teaching for socialism as the basis for social revolution in the temporal

708 See, for example, also Bolesław Szczepkowski, “To i owo o R. Dmowskim,” Tygodnik Warszawski, 9 December 1945.
order. Dziś i Jutro, meanwhile, would continue to play both sides of the field, while SP, already by mid-1946, and certainly by the time of Braun’s ascendancy to the Tygodnik Warszawski editorship following the elections of 1947, had evaporated as a national political presence.

Braun’s voice, then, is more that of a sore loser acting out his frustration with Dziś i Jutro’s more effective political maneuvering than a principled opponent of the ideology of Piasecki’s weekly.

Braun’s text is useful also for a horizontal comparison across the newly formed “Iron Curtain.” In particular, placing Braun in conversation with Gaston Fessard sheds light on the dilemmas of attempting to unravel the national and universalistic threads of postwar Catholic activism. Fessard’s rhetoric rivaled, if it did not indeed surpass in passion, the rhetoric of Braun in his firmly confessional politics. As the very title of his book – addressed to “France” – suggests, the nation was central for Fessard, yet the values on which he predicated his indictment of Communism were universalistic, not French, by virtue of being Christian tout court.

Fessard was a nationalist, yet, pace Braun’s suggestion, he was no minimalist, if we take minimalism indeed to mean freedom from confessional entanglements in social or political activism. Moreover, Braun’s imputation of “minimalism” to the Dziś i Jutro milieu seems downright foolish given even the most basic information about Piasecki’s political machinations, including his attempt to cash in on the 1946 co-optation of SP by forming an alternative Catholic political front. Braun may not have liked the political game that Dziś i Jutro was playing, but that did not make its staff a group of minimalists, if the term is to have any analytical purchase at all.

**The Transnational Roots of Polish Progressive Catholicism**

The debate on the national idea was but one example of emerging joint Franco-Polish conversations on the future of Catholic thought and activism in a socialist order. The Dziś i Jutro staff quickly learned to play the game of international diplomacy in order to match their leader’s
profiency and good fortune in domestic politics. In the spring of 1947, Piasecki nominated one of his former KN lieutenants, Wojciech Kętrzyński, as director of foreign affairs for *Dziś i Jutro*. Kętrzyński, a young man of aristocratic background with an excellent command of the French language, had already been tasked since Mounier’s departure from Poland with keeping the *Dziś i Jutro* correspondence with *Esprit*. From 1947 onward, his responsibilities expanded significantly as *Dziś i Jutro* sent its first representative to the United States (Janina Kolendo).

What made *Dziś i Jutro* so attractive was its placement at the crossroads of religion and politics, intellectual and political activism, Western and Eastern Europe. Its international profile increased over the first half of 1947 because of unfavorable press in the English Catholic journal *The Tablet*. Auberon Herbert (1922-1974), a Polonophile British Catholic landowner, possessed a larger-than-life personality that lent itself to his lasting mythologization. Karol Popiel, for example, believed him to be a nephew of Irish Taoiseach (prime minister) Éamon de Valera, while Stefan Kisielewski was convinced that Herbert was secretly a cousin of Winston Churchill; both men were mistaken.

Nonetheless, as a fluent speaker of Polish who served during World War II in a Polish uniform and spent time in Warsaw in the immediate postwar, Herbert was in a unique position to provide informed commentary for *The Tablet*. Traveling around Poland in February 1947, Herbert found himself courted by both Piasecki and Kętrzyński, who lobbied for the Brit to cast a favorable eye on *Dziś i Jutro*.

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709 Micewski, *Wspórządzić czy nie klamać?*, p. 32.
Partly under Karol Popiel’s counsel, however, Herbert became deeply critical of the movement. Although the articles that Herbert published on his return to the British Isles were not directed specifically against Piasecki’s organization, Herbert dramatized the confrontation between Catholicism and socialism, writing, “At this moment two systems profoundly opposed to one another, Christianity and Marxism, are existing side by side in Poland. It is difficult to see how such a situation can endure for any length of time. [...] Should a conflict arise, however, it is not with the Church alone that the Communists must reckon, but with the entire Polish nation.”

*The Tablet* then followed up on Herbert’s general commentary with a series of explicit attacks on Piasecki and *Dziś i Jutro* over the spring of 1947, notably spreading the word that Piasecki had allegedly “admitted in private conversation that he has been sentenced by a Soviet court and released on condition that he would co-operate with the Communists.” Word of *The Tablet’s* claims reached Esprit; in Mounier’s eyes, however, *The Tablet* were simply a crew of unimaginative traditionalists, and the British journal’s campaign against Catholic-socialist cooperation in general and *Dziś i Jutro* in particular only brought *Esprit* and *Dziś i Jutro* closer together.

While their “maximalist” colleagues from *Tygodnik Warszawski* were being rounded up in 1948, the staff of *Dziś i Jutro*, with Bolesław Piasecki leading the way, made a political gambit to demonstrate their independence not only from the reputed “imperialists” of SP and *Tygodnik Warszawski*, but also from the “right-wing nationalist deviation” of Gomułka, who had personally given Piasecki the green light to start his journal. *Dziś i Jutro* succeeded in turning

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712 For Herbert’s articles, see Auberon Herbert, “Poland in the Doldrums: Impressions of a Recent Visit,” *The Tablet*, 19 April 1947, p. 192-193; Auberon Herbert, “Poland in the Doldrums II: The Extent of Communist Penetration,” *The Tablet*, 26 April 1947, p. 204-205. The quoted passage is from the second article, p. 204-205.

bad international press into a successful campaign to refashion itself. More than pure politics, however, this gambit involved an actual conversion by the journal’s staff from a left-leaning variant of social Catholicism to outright advocacy of socialist revolution.

Kętrzyński started the offensive with a June 1948 article tackling head-on the question of what Catholic encyclicals on the social question implied in practice for Catholic lay activists living under the reality of a revolutionary socialist order. Kętrzyński made three basic claims. First, Catholicism could not be a “third force”; although it possessed an “unimpeachable moral and ideological position,” it “lacks the resources to function on the world stage in the form of a third partner of equal stature.” Second, as a result, Catholics seeking, as any good personalist should, to become socially and politically engaged, must “choose such methods of conduct as correspond to today’s reality.” Finally, Catholics must invest their energies in the “Christianization of existing forces.”

The principal intent behind the article is clear: to state explicitly that the Dziś i Jutro milieu had no aspirations of creating a Christian Democratic confessional movement like Stronnictwo Pracy or the Western European Christian Democratic parties that had flourished since 1945. Indeed, without explicitly saying as much, Kętrzyński seemed to be reacting to Kaczyński’s essay published in the 100th issue of Tygodnik Warszawski, making a point of drawing the exact opposite conclusions from Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno. Given the patently and declaredly anti-socialist intent of both of those encyclicals, this involved a measure of intellectual gymnastics on Kętrzyński’s part, yet it was not necessarily disingenuous.

Kętrzyński elsewhere in the article invoked “Gallicanism,” the tradition of French Catholics’ relative autonomy from Rome whose origins dated back to the early-14th-century

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conflict between Pope Boniface VIII and Philip IV of France, which eventuated in a temporary transfer of the papacy to Avignon. Andrzej Micewski has indeed confirmed that the Gallican tradition of autonomy from Rome was very much on the minds of the Dziś i Jutro core group in 1948. 715 This is how Dziś i Jutro authors justified considering themselves loyal and faithful Catholics even as they were making a decisive turn toward open partnership with a socialist establishment, in clear violation of the letter and spirit of both Quadragesimo Anno and Divini Redemptoris. According to Kętrzyński, this was acceptable behavior for a Catholic because it corresponded “to today’s reality.”

It is, moreover, essential to keep in mind Kętrzyński’s phrase “Christianization of existing forces.” This was no mere rhetorical turn: rather, this was Kętrzyński’s attempt, again relying on France as a model, to develop a principled interpretation of the sensus catholicus of Dziś i Jutro’s political direction. The examples of the nouvelle théologie and particularly the Mission de France are absolutely central to understanding Kętrzyński’s thinking. The reference recalls Jerzy Radkowski’s discussion of Znak’s aspirations for shedding light on how to break down the wall between monde moderne and monde chrétien. What in 1946 had been a serious aspiration for Radkowski and Znak, however, was no longer in the cards by 1948: Radkowski had escaped to France, and Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak contented themselves with informing their readership of the French trends rather than trying to create Polish versions of the evangelical mission. It was thus left to Dziś i Jutro to appropriate on its own terms Catholic France’s great experiment in evangelizing the proletariat.

Unlike the Mission de France, however, Kętrzyński’s proposal was top-down rather than focused on grassroots action, for, supposedly, the proletariat had taken control of governance in

715 Micewski, Współrządzić czy nie klamać?, p. 32.
postwar Poland. The focus was clearly centered on maintaining a declaredly Catholic presence within the upper echelons of the newly constituted Polish dictatorship of the proletariat. The goal was thus to prove Dziś i Jutro’s loyalty to the Polish socialist revolution in order to give the Catholics a point of entry for the “Christianization” of that revolution.

As Konstanty Łubieński would explain a year later in a closed-door meeting with his editorial colleagues, it was “necessary to revise Catholic socio-economic doctrine, which no longer had any grounding in prevailing socio-economic conditions.” Rather than follow the “corporatism” attached to Pius XI’s encyclicals, Lubieński lauded his milieu for having “accepted the fundamental socioeconomic principles of the socialist order,” with the caveat that they nonetheless “categorically reject” materialism. As the Dziś i Jutro leaders themselves understood it at the time, this was the path to applying successful pressure of their own to the socialist reality in Poland, to “basing the socialist socio-economic order on the Catholic worldview.”

Mounier could hardly have done better himself at proposing a Catholic-socialist syncretism.

**Progressive Catholics Unite: France and Poland**

Yet Dziś i Jutro was, after all, not alone among European Catholic lay activist milieux in defying the letter and spirit of key documents presented by the Vatican as binding precepts for the Catholic encounter with the modern world. Concerned as Mounier was by the February 1948 Prague coup and the falling-out between Stalin and Tito – and some of his Esprit collaborators, like the French Resistance author Vercors, were even more so – Esprit held to its leftist

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716 Łubieński, “Referat,” p. 4, AIPN BU 0648/118/1.
717 See the special issue of Esprit devoted to the “Crisis of the People’s Democracies,” Esprit, November 1949. For the Vercors text, see Vercors, “Réponses,” Esprit, December 1949, p. 949-953. Esprit had earlier reacted immediately to the Cominform’s condemnation of Tito’s Yugoslavia, its authors expressing surprise at the confrontation and immediately siding with Tito. See the “Journal à plusieurs voix” rubric in the August 1948 issue of Esprit, as well as François Goguel, “Tito, ou les surprises de l’histoire,” Esprit, August 1948, p. 241-249.
agenda of promoting both Communists in France and people’s democracies abroad. Yet, prior to 1948, neither the French nor the Poles had a coherent text to which they could point that would explain their larger aims as well as how they saw the Catholic Church fitting into them. A principled statement for Catholic-socialist syncretism was thus essential both as a positive programmatic statement and as a response to Communist rhetoric, yet writings like Fessard’s book were far too dogmatically anti-Communist to serve as an effective retort.

The solution that suited Esprit and Dziś i Jutro alike was “progressive Christianity,” propounded by former Témoignage Chrétien editor and newly minted Esprit writer André Mandouze. Mandouze contributed a 41-page essay entitled “Prendre la main tendue” (Take the outstretched hand) to a multi-author volume published in the spring of 1948 by the Temps Présent publishing house under the title of Les chrétiens et la politique. From the outset of the essay, Mandouze made it clear that he intended to propound not a new ideology but a principled justification of the Catholic-socialist alliance of which he already felt himself to be part: “I have no intention of laying foundations for or justifying a Communist Christianity or a Christian Communism, but I collaborate closely with Communists in political combat: in other words, I am what it is known today as a progressive Christian.”

Making explicit the reference in his title to Maurice Thorez’s interwar “main tendue,” Mandouze declared, “A hand has been extended toward me, and I have taken hold of it.”

Nonetheless, he took pains to underscore that this did not imply the dissolution of Christian identity within a Communist identity: “We are marching hand in hand, but that means that there are two of us.” Indeed – evoking Kętrzyński’s language about the Christianization of the current reality – Mandouze justified becoming a “progressive Christian” by explaining that,

718 Mandouze, “Prendre la main tendue,” p. 41.
in his eyes, in the contemporary world it was the necessary path for “a Christianity striving to become whole.”\textsuperscript{719} Indeed, Mandouze batted away arguments like French Communist thinker Roger Garaudy’s, noting, “I will always resent those who pretend to be better Communists than Stalin or better Christians than Pius XII.”\textsuperscript{720} Nonetheless, Mandouze explained that he could not simply follow the politics of the institutional Church, which “has in fact accepted the good as well as the bad of the capitalist regime,” thereby entering “dangerously into capitalist business.”\textsuperscript{721} Mandouze thus counted himself among those “individual Christians who have less difficulty than the institution as a whole in feeling themselves to be ‘Christian persons’ and not ‘Western pawns.’”

Mandouze explained that, in partnership, Christians and socialists must be true to themselves, be honest in their recognition of the other, and take the other seriously on his own terms. To legitimate his advocacy of a progressive Christianity, he drew, like Fessard, on the myth of the Resistance, calling it “the crucible in which all of these tendencies have taken form and the occasion of foundational encounters between Christians who previously had no idea about the political and Marxists who previously had no sense of the importance of the spiritual.”\textsuperscript{722}

Even more foundational to the principle of Mandouze’s progressive stance, however, was personalism, which Mandouze explicitly contrasted with anti-Communism. Mandouze argued

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\textsuperscript{719} Mandouze, “Prendre la main tendue,” p. 42.
\textsuperscript{720} Mandouze, “Prendre la main tendue,” p. 44. Compare with Roger Garaudy, \textit{L’Église, le communisme et les chrétiens} (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1949). Garaudy not only took seriously but, in fact, appropriated Mounier’s personalist vocabulary, devoting 52 of the 368 pages of his 1949 tract \textit{L’Église, le communisme et les chrétiens} to “the human person.” Garaudy approved wholeheartedly of personalism, with the caveat that Catholics recognize that Pius XII was a fascist who had turned Catholicism into a “religion of the dollar,” allied the cross with the atomic bomb, and turned the Vatican into a “banking trust.” Roger Garaudy, \textit{L’Église, le communisme et les chrétiens} (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1949), esp. p. 366. Garaudy also published in that same year a brief pamphlet containing a lecture of his concerning Marxism’s putative compatibility with the concept of the human person; see Garaudy, \textit{Le Marxisme et la personne humaine} (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1949).
\textsuperscript{721} Mandouze, “Prendre la main tendue,” p. 51.
\textsuperscript{722} Mandouze, “Prendre la main tendue,” p. 56.
forcefully that “Anti-Communism is a sort of attack on the human person that could qualify as political neo-Malthusianism. It sterilizes every place it touches, and the worst is that, most of the time, it works thanks to unintentional complicities.”723 Thus, despite his distaste for Catholics claiming to be more Catholic than the pope, Mandouze, without naming Pius XII, indicted his politics and particularly the “moral theology” – one understands here the reference to Parente and Ottaviani, the critics of nouvelle théologie and the Mission de France – holding Catholicism back from moving “from a clerical conception to a Christian conception.”724 This was an advocacy of lay activism.

At the crossroads of personalism, lay activism, and geopolitics came anti-Americanism and support, like Mounier’s, for the people’s democracies of the emerging Soviet bloc. The essence of progressive Christianity, for Mandouze, lay in “recognition that no revolution is possible without the Communists but that the Communists cannot do it alone.”725 Citing a variety of examples of progressives from France (including Esprit and elements of Témoignage Chrétien) as well as the world (Henry Wallace’s American Progressive Party, but also manifold examples from the French empire, including the Viet-Minh), Mandouze openly advocated “a policy of friendship with the USSR and of ferocious resistance against the ideological and military encroachments of the Marshall Plan.”726

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723 Mandouze, “Prendre la main tendue,” p. 52.
Indeed, Mandouze argued forcefully against the symbolic trope of the Iron Curtain advanced two years earlier by Winston Churchill, chastizing other Catholics for seeking “to instrumentalize the iron curtain of time or space.” As Mandouze could attest from the testimony of friends of his like Mounier who had traveled recently to Eastern Europe, for those traveling between Western and Eastern Europe, the Iron Curtain seemed little more than a hot-button rhetorical instrument of geopolitics. Mandouze wrote of “numerous Christians and even priests who can speak with familiarity of the religious situation in the people’s democracies because they themselves have traversed the iron curtain without being able to say where it was, while others, for the needs of their own cause, imagine it to be impermeable."727

This was exactly the right ideology at the right moment for Esprit, and even more so for Dziś i Jutro. Mandouze himself was wary of the term “progressivism” – he underscored the need for the “Christian” to remain the noun, not the adjective – yet he succeeded in clearly delineating principled grounds for Catholic-socialist partnership based on a syncretic common ground. The term “progressive” was not new – a party of the same name had existed in the United States since before the Great War, and the term had existed in the political discourse of the French Third Republic since the beginning of the Dreyfus Affair – but for the first time it assumed an explicitly Christian incarnation.

In December 1948, Konstanty Łubieński, inspired in large part by Mandouze’s essay, published what was widely received as a programmatic declaration for Dziś i Jutro.728 It came in the form of an open letter printed as a front-page, full-page response to the latest installment of bad press given by The Tablet to Catholic-socialist cooperation in Poland. Łubieński used the word postępowy (progressive) to describe the Catholic movement coalescing around his journal.

727 Mandouze, “Prendre la main tendue,” p. 46.
728 Mandouze’s essay was also reprinted in Polish translation by Dziś i Jutro as a front-page article: André Mandouze, “Chrześcijanin społecznie postępowy,” Dziś i Jutro, 19 February 1950.
Arguing for the necessity for Catholics to shed wartime “inferiority complexes” in order to achieve an “objective assessment of the Marxist camp’s activities thus far,” Łubieński insisted equally heavily that Marxists must look to Catholicism as a “fundamental source of strength” for the project of “building a new order that would be based on justice and peace, in other words, on the same ideals for whose realization the Marxist camp has been fighting.” The ultimate statement of Catholic-socialist syncretism came toward the open letter’s end, with the following dramatic declaration:

Socialism is in the present era the most perfect form of material order. Catholicism is the only form of spiritual order. Just as there exists in the realm of worldly life a burning momentum carrying us toward socialism, so in the realm of spiritual life does Catholicism achieve impressive feats. Catholicism and the socialist movement constitute two forces, which, coordinated, will lead humanity to a great future, will create a new “golden era,” while if turned against one another will lead to a catastrophe such as history has not yet seen.729

In his closed-session remarks the next year for the anniversary of Dziś i Jutro, Łubieński elaborated his demand for Catholic-socialist syncretism under a banner of progressive Catholicism by demonstrating that his milieu considered progressive Catholicism to be a necessarily transnational force. Without naming Esprit, Mounier, or Mandouze, Łubieński alluded to “progressive movements in the capitalist camp” standing their ground against “governments that, in reality, smother social movements.” He went on to declare not only that Dziś i Jutro would continue to support and affiliate itself with these progressive movements, but indeed that such support was “a function both of Polish raison d’État and our socio-economic

729 Łubieński, “List otwarty do Pana Juliusza Łady.”
Esprit, in Łubieński’s eyes, thus became an ally not only for the staff of his weekly, but for all of People’s Poland.

As we see here, the Catholic use of the term “progressive” by Dziś i Jutro had, in fact, explicitly French roots. Yet the term was not exclusively French: as Mandouze’s essay shows, its new function was the product of a novel awareness on the part of French Catholic lay activists seeking to collaborate in the Eastern European project of building socialism. It was Mounier’s visit that helped to convince Mandouze of the need to postulate a Christian conception that would debunk the “iron curtain” and “anti-Communism” as political concepts, and Esprit’s connection to Dziś i Jutro in turn furnished the Poles with the ideological label that became their watchword for the duration of the Soviet Bloc’s existence.

Symbiotic as the relationship between Esprit and Dziś i Jutro had become by 1948, Mounier, Kętrzyński, and their colleagues found the relationship threatened by clashes between the worlds of institutional Catholicism and established socialism.

Mounier’s public response to the July 1949 anti-Communist decree of the Holy Office, which appeared in the pages of Esprit less than two weeks after the decree’s promulgation, was calm and equivocal, noting that “it is a matter of individual conscience.” Yet his own personal conviction as to the correctness of the enterprise of Catholic-socialist syncretism was firm: “socialism and the Church can cohabitate, each disposing of its own domain and, in their

731 Existing scholarship has failed to examine the cross-Iron Curtain, transnational dimension of Catholic progressive thought and activism emerging at this time. Gerd-Rainer Horn, for example, has argued, “Christian progressivism emerged out of the creative confluence of Catholic social movements and the communist experience. [...] Only France had both: new vibrant Catholic social movements like the worker priests and a visible presence of Communists in all walks of life.” Horn, Review of Yvon Tranvouez, Catholiques et communistes, International Labor and Working-Class History, 60 (Fall 2001), p. 226-229, at p. 227. Italics in the original.
progressive Catholicism would prove seminal to the enterprise of exchange and cooperation between French and Polish Catholic lay activists across the emerging Iron Curtain. Rather than dampen this cooperation, the Holy Office decree seemed to accelerate it. Yet that decree, and the larger concern of how progressives could continue to operate putatively Catholic movements while professing politics flying in the face of the Vatican’s Cold War policy, haunted the entire Catholic-socialist-syncretist enterprise. Although progressive Catholicism offered an ideological justification of their support for and active participation in building and living socialism, the Poles of Dziś i Jutro and their French supporters soon found it to be inadequate as a mobilizing enterprise, something that would give actual substantive content to Kętrzyński’s promise of “Christianization of the current reality.”

**The Activist Agenda of Catholic-Socialist Syncretism**

It was Mounier’s thought – as well as the doctrine of “progressive Christianity” laid out by André Mandouze – that structured the Catholic-socialist syncretism of Dziś i Jutro. Nonetheless, with the movement’s entry into an overt partnership with Poland’s new socialist establishment, the intellectual realm no longer sufficed to secure the Dziś i Jutro movement’s place in revolutionary-socialist Poland. Wojciech Kętrzyński’s announcement on the movement’s behalf in 1948 of the project of Christianizing the socialist revolution from within

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732 Emmanuel Mounier, “Le Décret du Saint-Office,” *Esprit*, August 1949, p. 305-314, at p. 312, 313. Mounier’s observation that the Holy Office decree was a matter of “individual conscience” was remarkably similar to his guarded reaction – in the sense that he refused to criticize the papacy outright for what he actually believed to be an overstepping of its bounds – to *Divini Redemptoris*. In 1937, Mounier had written, “On the Encyclical on Communism that His Holiness Pius XI promulgated last month, we can speak of it in this forum only as a document proposed for consideration to every man, unbeliever as well as believer.” Mounier, “Chrétiens et communistes,” *Esprit*, 1 May 1937, p. 306-310, at p. 309. Curiously, this was the same issue of *Esprit* that denounced the “Great Terror” in progress in the USSR at the time as “Stalinocracy,” reprinting recent sycophantic homage poems to Stalin as a parody of the leader’s abuse of power over society. See, especially, Georgy Fédotov, “La stalinocratie,” *Esprit*, 1 May 1937, p. 227-243.
needed not only further elaboration through discussion and debate, but also a practical program of concrete social and political action.

Following the 19 January 1947 elections to the Polish parliament, Dziś i Jutro had three MPs. In an assembly of over 400 MPs coordinated by the iron fist of first the PPR and then the PZPR, the practical capacity of these MPs to get anything done was non-existent. Nonetheless, the mere existence of these MPs as official state functionaries who were also prominent Catholic activists carried particular symbolic weight in their movement’s international dealings. For this reason, Dziś i Jutro’s approach to Catholic social and political activism in Poland of necessity threaded a delicate balance between the national and the international, between raison d’État and broader conversations about the human race.

Moreover, even after the socialist establishment began clearly and publicly – not just through censorship – to manipulate the structure and content of the Catholic press in Poland, Dziś i Jutro in fact expanded its usage of the term “social-Catholic” to identify its press, parliamentary group, and ideology. The goal was to try to play both sides of the field: to go all-in with the new revolutionary-socialist civilization and, simultaneously, to present this choice as the one and only doctrinally viable option of loyal Catholics living in societies undergoing socialist revolution. In so doing, the Dziś i Jutro activists were standing Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno on their heads, while earnestly maintaining that only they, as organized Catholic activists actually living under conditions of revolutionary socialism, understood the correct way to apply those encyclicals. As Kętrzyński put it in June 1948, “The encyclicals were written for Catholics living in liberal-capitalist orders, illuminating the correct path of reforming those orders, not falling into the opposite extreme.”

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733 Micewski, Współrządzić czy nie klamać?, p. 29.
734 On the “Social-Catholic Club” in the Polish parliament, see Zabłocki, Chrześcijańska Demokracja w kraju i na emigracji, p. 14.
Meanwhile, revolutionary socialism supposedly demanded a revised interpretation of those encyclicals in order to preserve the “objective” progress made by socialism relative to the “liberal-capitalist” order. Therefore, Kętrzyński declared, “In our specific conditions, we demand that Catholics immediately undertake this work, taking as their point of departure the current social forms as they have emerged. For we see in them, aside from errors to be corrected, also values whose preservation is just as much the proper task of Catholics.”735 Clearly, this attempt by Dziś i Jutro to appropriate for itself the right to interpret Catholic doctrine set it on a collision course with the Episcopate under Stefan Wyszyński, to say nothing of the Vatican.

Every plank of the sociopolitical platform advanced by Dziś i Jutro came packaged as a “Catholic” policy, almost as though the movement were presenting itself simply as the “progressive” version of SP, the Christian Democratic party that had been co-opted and dismantled, its leadership consigned to either exile or prison. Even before the shuttering of Tygodnik Warszawski, Kętrzyński, the principal ideologue of Catholic-socialist syncretism, was laying the foundations for the movement to re-fashion itself as the definitive guardian of Catholicism in Poland. Putting distance between his journal and both Tygodnik Powszechny and Tygodnik Warszawski, Kętrzyński declared on 18 April 1948 – noteworthy also as the day of the heated Italian parliamentary-election face-off between Christian Democrats and Communists – that “The contemporary Catholic press in Poland is drowning in a flood of theoretical, abstract debates, erudite but entirely divorced from real life. [...] As though all were well in this best of all possible worlds.” Relying on this Voltairean quip to ground his complaint about an influx of unhelpful

735 Kętrzyński, “Konsekwencje encyklik społecznych.”
-isms – maximalism, minimalism, defeatism, etc. – into the Polish Catholic vocabulary, Kętrzyński attributed the “pseudo-academic exoticism” of Polish Catholic activism to the age and lack of imagination of its authors and editors.

Luckily for Polish Catholicism, then, Kętrzyński noted, the staff of Dziś i Jutro were “we, the young,” more invested in the future and thus more inclined “to undertake a methodical examination of the most burning issues framing the reality of the everyday life of Catholic society in Poland.”736 There was one overriding message for the Catholic reader of Kętrzyński’s analysis amidst Poland’s 1948 socialist revolution: carpe diem!

More than just advertising themselves as the Catholic political option in socialist Poland, the Dziś i Jutro group tackled specific questions of policy, explicitly stating that the answers that it was offering to questions broached by the PZPR followed from a progressive, personalist Christian doctrine. And, indeed, these declarations are marked by evidence of keen study of the French personalist theology of labor, acknowledging the priority of work as the sole path to valuing the dignity of the human person. For example, with Gomułka deposed, the PZPR announced a six-year plan for the Polish economy incorporating also elements of agricultural collectivization. Gomułka had objected to this plan, arguing that Poland’s specific national conditions should rule out the need to follow exactly the pattern of economic planning pursued in the USSR since Lenin’s death. These objections, among others, landed him a one-way ticket out of the leadership and, three years later, into handcuffs. One of the pressing propagandistic orders

736 Wojciech Kętrzyński, “Rzeczywistość,” Dziś i Jutro, 18 April 1948. Eight months later, Kętrzyński would reinforce these claims with a historical analysis of fin-de-siècle Catholic France as a breeding ground of wasted opportunities for Catholics to take a stand on the class struggle, indicting, for example, the late-19th-century social Catholicism of count Albert de Mun for “deleterious conservatism.” See Wojciech Kętrzyński, “Któredy droga,” Dziś i Jutro, 12 December 1948.
of the day was thus to sell agricultural collectivization as an unquestioned necessity of the next stage of Poland’s socialist revolution.737

The Dziś i Jutro author chosen to tackle this question was, curiously, Andrzej Krasiński, the scion of a long line of Polish landed nobility dating back through, among other ancestors, the renowned conservative Romantic poet Zygmunt Krasiński. In the course of World War II and its aftermath, however, Krasiński had become a committed disciple of Mounier. From 1948 onward, he served as a sort of deputy to Kętrzyński for personalism-informed interpretations of policy questions. On the matter of collectivization, Krasiński began his study for Dziś i Jutro by reframing the question as one of the “cooperative organization of work.”

This spin on collectivization allowed Krasiński to kill two birds with one stone: at once, he pegged Dziś i Jutro’s support to both ethical and eschatological reasons derived from revolutionary personalism, and he suggested that this interpretation reinforced his movement’s claim to loyalty to Church doctrine. His application of personalist thought to the policy question at hand revolved around the following key precept: “A fundamental assessment of the cooperative organization of work from the personalist standpoint demands its recognition as perhaps the highest form of action, in which the creative individual, in possession of his individual aspirations, voluntarily binds himself to the collective with the aim of multiplying his strength and achieving a better result of his action.”

Taking a page on the one hand from Mounier’s Révolution personnaliste et communautaire and on the other from the Dominican nouveaux théologiens’ emphasis on the priority of labor, Krasiński suggested that People’s Poland had an ethical imperative to aggregate individual farmers into collectives. With a head-fake toward his Catholic audience, Krasiński

then claimed, “Unbecoming as it may be of us to negate the existence [of class struggle], the efforts of people acting on their religious worldview must nonetheless aim toward moderating its effects.” Krasiński was, in fact, not negating class struggle at all, only underscoring the ethical imperative of Catholics to support collectivization as a means of ameliorating the conditions responsible for that struggle. Why? Both as a condition of salvation in the Christian kairos and as a declaration of supposed loyalty to Church doctrine, Krasiński conditioned Catholics’ “fate of the individual and the family in the world to come” on adherence to “the personalist worldview that we declare,” which in turn necessarily implied political advocacy of “cooperative forms of organizing agriculture.”

The clearest statement of the re-centering of the Catholic political agenda on Polish anti-German raison d’État came from Wojciech Kętrzyński at Dziś i Jutro. In a piece designed to lay out the journal’s priorities for 1948, Kętrzyński put the German question at the very top of the journal’s progressive-Catholic agenda: “The defining task of our generation is the complete binding of the Recovered Territories to Poland, their assimilation into our economic, national, and political whole. And, what is most important and most difficult – to convince the entire world that these Territories need not and indeed must not be taken away from Poland.”

Kętrzyński freely admitted that, as of 1948, this had become a task dictated in part by Cold War alliances, in which the “fascist,” western portion of German territory had secured American protection and could thus no longer be truly “vanquished”: “Our task is to lead the status quo in western Poland through the years of uncertainty. This will be accomplished when Germany will finally be vanquished and when the German question will no longer be a bone of contention between the two basic world powers: the USSR and the USA.” The progressive

Catholic agenda only made it easier to develop a foreign-policy advocacy that recognized the “logical necessity” of “alliance with Soviet Russia,” for the homeland of socialism could only reinforce Poland’s – and especially the Dziś i Jutro movement’s – truly “Christian” goal of assimilating the Recovered Territories into the most progressive possible Christian future.\(^{739}\)

Paradoxically, it was this consensus agenda of anti-German nationalism that served as the point of departure for the most important plank of Dziś i Jutro’s policy platform. Realistically, after all, outside the realm of Catholic-specific policy, the progressive Catholic movement’s ability to shape domestic policy was quite limited. In the international arena, however, the movement could make a name for itself that would then reflect well also on People’s Poland, first and foremost by capitalizing on its existing and potential contacts among Western European lay activists. The best hope for the immediate future was, then, to build international progressive-Catholic initiatives that, in the process of advocating concrete issues, would also make socialist Poland look ever more attractive.

**Peace**

Even before Andrei Zhdanov’s September 1947 announcement of the two-camp doctrine at the founding meeting of the Cominform, advocacy of international peace moved to the forefront of Dziś i Jutro’s agenda.\(^{740}\) In a 1946 editorial, the Dziś i Jutro staff declared simply, “Poland needs peace. International peace is necessary [...] Only against the backdrop of the normalization of international relations will it become possible to normalize the life of our

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nation. That is, nonetheless, a necessary condition of completing the work of the reconstruction of our injured statehood.”

Campaigning for peace was tied from the beginning to progressive-Catholic attempts to articulate a vision of Europe’s future role in the world. Dominik Horodyński (1923-2008), for example, reported from Paris in late 1946 that the French understood well the dilemmas of the new postwar international order, of its catastrophic threats, and of the particular challenges for the European continent: “they were the first to realize how difficult the situation is in which they and Europe alike have found themselves since the war’s end. They were the first to understand the radical re-imagining undergone by the notion of sovereignty, that this re-imagining is currently taking place to the detriment of Europe above all, that it must nonetheless continue, and that it carries along with it a range of unpleasant consequences and fatal dangers.” That said, Horodyński anticipated great challenges in motivating the French nation to any sort of collective advocacy in the international arena, for, after the disillusionment of war and the Vichy collaboration, “Exhausted by fears, catastrophism, and nonsense, the Frenchman withdraws into the quiet of his own home.”

Horodyński’s article betrayed a measure of defeatism, yet there was also a clear implication of Poland’s role to play in mobilizing France. Given France’s exhaustion and its distrust of Russia, Poland was in a unique position to take advantage of the fact that the French “fear Americans, whom they have come to know and consider barbaric. [...] They fear Germans, regarding whose fate they have almost as little to say as does Poland today.” Particularly the shared anti-German sentiment created the basis for believing that, working in concert, Frenchmen and Poles would no longer have so “little to say” about Germany’s fate, but would

741 “Pokój jest niepodzielny,” Dziś i Jutro, 18 August 1946.
indeed be able to influence Europe’s future shape, and particularly Germany’s place in it. As the single milieu most likely to facilitate cooperative initiatives, especially between Catholic activists in the two countries, Horodyński pointed to *Esprit*.\textsuperscript{742}

Horodyński proved prescient in his underscoring of the changing face of sovereignty in Europe. Even as the Iron Curtain crystallized ever more clearly between 1946 and 1948, Western Europe played host to a series of initiatives aimed at developing a system of shared sovereignty. The intellectual and identitarian implications of such initiatives provoked heated and inconclusive discussions. Nonetheless, the potential practical pay-offs were clear: to increase European bargaining power with the looming giant of the United States and to share material resources across national boundaries on the assumption that everyone on the continent could help everyone else to rebuild back to a certain minimum threshold of material wealth. And the ultimate pay-off – another war would be far less likely.

The precise nature of the wealth threshold proved elusive, yet the first steps to be taken toward “European integration” were clear. It was the United States that gave Western Europe its initial push toward economic integration, stipulating as a condition of Marshall Plan aid with the program’s announcement in 1947 the formation of a consultative Organization of European Economic Cooperation.\textsuperscript{743} This organization achieved little on its own, but its creation breathed new life into languishing transnational movements for shared sovereignty like the Pan-European Union and the European Federalist Union – the former of which had existed since the early 1920s.\textsuperscript{744} Allowing for significant differences in ideology and advocacy, the common thread

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linking these groups was the call for transnational political cooperation by national parties across the continent. This cooperation was to be a first step toward some sort of supranational “European” entity formalized under international law, with fixed juridical competencies amounting to a coordinated sharing of sovereignty by Europe’s nation-states.

Amidst the chaos of postwar reconstruction and rapid geopolitical realignment, political Christian Democracy took the first steps toward precisely this progression of transnational political integration. Moreover, it immediately pushed to bring (West) Germany into the mix. Although the initiative came from the Parti Conservateur Populaire Suisse, the first meeting of the so-called Nouvelles Équipes Internationales took place in Chaudfontaine, Belgium, in 1947, and it became a network for France, Italy, the Benelux countries, and émigré groups (including Karol Popiel’s SP group) from across the emerging Soviet Bloc, as well as Salazar’s Portugal and Franco’s Spain.745

The next year, the NEI incorporated a German delegation headed personally by Konrad Adenauer, the esteemed, elderly Catholic leader of the German territory’s budding Christliche Demokratische Union (CDU, Christian Democratic Union). This center-right party had emerged in the war’s aftermath as the only acceptable mainstream alternative to the Left, given that virtually the entire Right had been compromised by association with Hitler’s regime.746 That same year, the new European Movement lobby group, with cooperation from the NEI and

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745 Franciszek Gałązka, Interview with Author, 20 February 2006. Gałązka (1920–) is one of the last living participants of the first NEI congress, as well as a leader of Popiel’s émigré Stronnictwo Pracy group from 1947 through the moment of the party’s self-liquidation in 1990. See also, for example, Centre Belge des Nouvelles Équipes Internationales, Invitation to Konrad Sieniewicz [to attend NEI], [n.d.] 1947, APIASA 9.26. On the Soviet Bloc exiles’ role in the NEI, see also Goddeeris, “Exiles’ Strategies for Lobbying in International Organisations.”

several other transnational networks, put on a major international “Congress of Europe” at The Hague in May, with Winston Churchill as the keynote speaker and a variety of other political, cultural, and intellectual luminaries – from Bertrand Russell to Étienne Gilson – as active participants. Once again, Adenauer personally led the German delegation.

On the other side of the Iron Curtain, the process of European integration was seen as something disconcerting, though few imagined how quickly and how concretely this chaotic universe of seemingly acephalous lobby groups would bear fruit in the form of the 1953 European Coal and Steel Community. What was of particular concern, however, was the German participation. Artur Zatopiński wrote in April 1948 in Dziś i Jutro, for example, of the potentially profound deleterious consequences of “legitimization” of the unrepentant portion of the German nation, of which Adenauer, in Polish eyes, seemed to have become the political symbol. Looking several steps down the line, Zatopiński saw this as the beginning of a pan-European campaign to placate and revive “fascist” Germany that could well end in war over the Recovered Territories.

The Western European transnational moves toward reincorporating Adenauer’s Germany into the international mainstream were only the most recent, most convincing reason for Polish Catholic activists to get serious about the international campaign for peace. Their immediate goal was to reframe that campaign around setting conditions on Germany’s future role in the international arena. Moreover, from their French friends across the Iron Curtain on the Esprit staff, the Dziś i Jutro leadership would hear an echo only a few months hence of their own fears. In a scathingly Euroskeptic article published in the November 1948 issue of Esprit, Jean-Marie Domenach warned against the profoundly threatening prospect of German rearmament as a

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logical consequence of (West) Germany’s strings-free entry into European political cooperation. 749

Contingent circumstance had thus laid certain ideological foundations for the Catholic-socialist syncretists’ own brand of more systematic transnational cooperation across the Iron Curtain. Both Poles and their Francophone friends would, however, first need to develop institutional groundwork and an agenda that was more than simply a knee-jerk impulse to reject whatever transnational political developments were afoot in Western Europe. The Polish-initiated Catholic-socialist effort at European transnational cooperation began with participation in the Communist-initiated global peace campaign.

**Peace in the Recovered Territories**

The global peace campaign was, in some ways, an unplanned result of initiatives taken by the PPR leadership in early 1948. The most significant of these was the Congress of Intellectuals in Defense of Peace organized in Wrocław (formerly Breslau), the largest city of the Recovered Territories, on 25-28 August 1948. 750 It was none other than Jerzy Borejsza, Gomułka’s czar for intellectual and cultural life, who designed the congress and brought it to fruition at the very moment when his fortunes in the Party had begun to turn. Indeed, by mid-1948, it had become clear that the “gentle revolution” advocacy would prove to be Borejsza’s undoing. 751

With socialist establishments on guard against “national deviation” in light of Tito’s defection, Borejsza became a man with a target on his back, and the peace congress became his great hope of providing, as Marci Shore has put it, “fantastic evidence that he was one with the new, post-‘gentle revolution’ era,” all while, it must be noted, he remained true to his original

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749 Domenach, “Quelle Europe?”
750 The congress as such has received only summary treatment in Wittner, One World or None, p. 175-177; Shore, Caviar and Ashes, p. 270-273; Judt, Past Imperfect, p. 224.
751 Shore, Caviar and Ashes, p. 269-270.
desire to juggle Soviet culture with Western culture in a Polish context. The May 1948 Congress of Europe at The Hague fortuitously offered Borejsza both a model to be emulated and a counterexample to be derided. The Wrocław congress thus became the supposedly peace-loving socialist camp’s answer to the capitalist economy-obsessed Western European supranationalists, with both sides pulling out all of their biggest intellectual and cultural guns for a decisive public showing to launch much longer-term campaigns.

The PR campaign in the run-up to the congress was a great success. Borejsza offered the co-chairmanship of the upcoming event to Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz (1894-1980), an active avant-garde poet since the fin-de-siècle. It was Iwaszkiewicz who ran point on the Polish-initiated global peace campaign’s international promotion, and he was extremely good at it. Iwaszkiewicz was one of the committed socialist literati of the interwar era whose sudden postwar elevation into the Polish sociopolitical mainstream Marci Shore has described in Caviar and Ashes.

Amidst the postwar socialist revolution, he and his fellow prominent interwar socialist literary figures, as Shore puts it, “now appeared as decidedly engagé poets on the correct side of the ‘red barricade.’” Namely, this activism was heavily conditioned by its counterpart in official, revolutionary regime-sponsored socialist activism. The leaders of this movement were the interwar writers and activists of the Left who, having spent years as chain-smoking Warsaw café nighthawks, overnight became prized spokesmen for the political mainstream. With the emergence of the postwar socialist establishment, meanwhile, Iwaszkiewicz became the literary icon of choice to promote socialist Poland’s interests abroad, and he would travel extensively in this capacity throughout Poland and the world.

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752 Shore, Caviar and Ashes, p. 270. Former top PPR and PZPR official Jakub Berman’s account of the Wrocław Congress and Borejsza’s intentions matches this interpretation. See Berman, Interview with Torańska, p. 364-366.

753 Shore, Caviar and Ashes, p. 271.
In 1948, Iwaszkiewicz criss-crossed Europe several times, exhorting the cultural and intellectual elites of Western Europe to come to Wrocław in August. He was very good at this task: in May 1948, he gave a tear-jerking speech in Marseille about Polish postwar children’s art, talking about how the children, their psyches deformed by war, continually “return to the topic of Warsaw the leveled city, giving plastic and poignant form to the ruins.”\textsuperscript{754} A month later, in Rome, he delivered a passionately propagandistic speech lauding the Polish socialist revolution’s accomplishments in the fields of culture and education, and warning against it all coming crashing to the ground in the event of another war:

Books reach the peasant and the worker, the newspaper and the literary weekly have become his most basic need. [...] You can thus imagine how disturbing to such peaceful work are even the vaguest of whispers about a new war, how frightening are concrete predictions and clear preparations for the new cataclysm, with what terror we follow the declarations of statesmen in the West who speak of a new war with no qualms.\textsuperscript{755}

However much hope Borejsza may have invested in the congress as a way to distance himself from his “gentle revolutionary” image, the advance promotional campaign came across in exactly this way. In fact, official invitations to the congress were written on behalf of the “Franco-Polish Executive Committee.” The official transcript of the congress was recorded in French. Iwaszkiewicz promised that pluralism and tolerance would be the watchwords of the congress, exhorting his Roman and Parisian audiences in June 1948 to “come join us in the greatest numbers possible, without prejudice for political or religious convictions – keeping in sight only the discussion of the question currently most important to humanity, the question of


\textsuperscript{755} Iwaszkiewicz, “Rzym” (June 1948), in \textit{Sprawa pokoju}, p. 8-11, at p. 9-10.
securing the peace.” The official invitations called for “intellectuals of good will [...] to come in a climate of mutual understanding.”  

In the end, approximately 500 participants representing 46 countries – including Pablo Picasso, who designed a “dove of peace” that became the congress’s official symbol, Julien Benda, Aimé Césaire, Paul Éluard, Julian Huxley, and György Lukács – converged on Wrocław in August 1948. Iwaszkiewicz even attempted to appeal to the spiritual dimension of peace in his inaugural speech, recognizing that “many among you beginning these discussions will sigh, asking for the blessing of the ‘God of Peace, who has led us through the valley of death.’ And everyone without a shadow of a doubt will decide to devote all of their strength and heart to triumphing over the curse of the modern Tower of Babel.”  

Whatever positive impressions this speech left, however, went to the four winds when, three speeches later, Soviet author Alexander Fadeev, a member of the congress’s executive committee, gave what by every existing account of the congress was a brutal, crass, Soviet-chest-beating speech calculated above all to separate out the less pro-Soviet from among the Western participants. As the Polish novelist Maria Dąbrowska (1889-1965) – a prominent socialist intellectual – noted in her diaries, “He spoke for an-hour-and-a-half like an industrial traveling salesman praising his own wares and heaping insults upon a competing store. The content was nothing more than the high-flutant slogans of any establishment newspaper, while the tone and delivery were below the level not only of an intellectual, but any normal human being.”

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756 “Congrès Mondial des Intellectuels pour la Paix,” Invitation Template, reprinted in Odra, 2/1978, p. 3.
Fadeev’s worst crime in the eyes of Western participants had been to insult Sartre, the icon of the French intellectual Left. According to the official congress transcript, Fadeev lumped Sartre in with “literary agents of imperialist reaction” and blamed him in particular for the “spiritual depravity” predominant in the West, inspired by “some Sartre’s ‘new philosophy’ [existentialism], which seeks to reduce man to an animal crouching on all fours.”\(^{759}\) Marci Shore invokes French Communist journalist Dominique Desanti’s account of Pablo Picasso “tearing off his headphones [...] Éluard takes his off slowly and starts to note something. Vercors and Léger remain motionless. For me, it’s a shock.” And in the background was poor Borejsza, his hopes of redemption dashed, telling Desanti, “This is it, they’ve smashed my congress to pieces.”\(^{760}\)

With some intrepid damage control by PPR Central Committee member Jakub Berman, who put in a call to Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov, and some fortuitous timing – Zhdanov, who had given Fadeev instructions to take such a hard line in his speech, died in Moscow while the congress was in session – Borejsza was able to convince almost everyone to remain at the conference. Ilya Ehrenburg then gave a conciliatory speech on behalf of the Soviet delegation.\(^{761}\) Nonetheless, the Poles who participated in the congress – Iwaszkiewicz perhaps being the “cynical” exception – left the congress with a sour taste in their mouths. Dąbrowska recorded in her diary her impression that every second person sitting in the Wrocław lecture hall was a functionary of the Public Security Ministry, in other words, a plainclothes plant (tajniak).

\(^{759}\) Alexander Fadeev, “La science et la culture dans la lutte pour la paix, le progrès et la démocratie,” 25 August 1948, in *Congrès Mondial des intellectuels pour la paix*, p. 20-31, at p. 24. This is the statement that Fadeev made according to the official congress transcript, corroborated also by the account of Kingsley Martin, the American editor of *The New Statesman* and another delegate to the congress. Marci Shore provides a slightly different version of the speech, quoted via the account of French journalist Dominique Desanti, who was actually fusing together two separate portions of the speech. The other, even more controversial, passage in Fadeev’s speech – “If jackals could learn to type on typewriters, and if hyenas knew how to use pens, what they would ‘compose’ would doubtless resemble the books of the Millers, the Eliots, the Malraux, and, among others, Sartre.” Fadeev, “La science et la culture dans la lutte pour la paix, le progrès et la démocratie,” p. 25. Kingsley Martin’s version is quoted at Wittner, *One World or None*, p. 175.

\(^{760}\) Quoted at Shore, *Caviar and Ashes*, p. 272.

\(^{761}\) Berman, Interview with Torańska, p. 365.
This impression stemmed from the fact that at least four times on any given day of the congress she was asked for identification by a plainclothes officer who just happened to be sitting next to her.\textsuperscript{762} Meanwhile, Tygodnik Powszechny journalist Jacek Woźniakowski recalls the congress with disgust as an event that his wife attended only in a desperate attempt to gain the ear of a prominent cultural figure who would help her get her parents out of prison.\textsuperscript{763}

Fadeev or no, most of the Western participants in the congress left with positive impressions, and the Catholic activists in attendance were particularly pleased. Dziś i Jutro’s congress correspondent Andrzej Krasiński, too, was inspired by the days spent in Wrocław. He and his fellow progressive Catholics had their own vision of partnership with revolutionary socialism that made them the exception to Dąbrowska’s observation that, unlike the congress participants from the West – many of whom continued to “look at Russia with adulation as the herald of a better world of tomorrow” – Poles had “already lost their naïveté and innocence.”\textsuperscript{764}

The most prominent Catholic activists in attendance from abroad were André Mandouze – fresh off the publication of his treatise on progressive Christianity – and the abbé Jean Boulier (1894-1980), an unorthodox, pro-socialist firebrand whose memoirs would be entitled \textit{J’étais un prêtre rouge} (I was a red priest).\textsuperscript{765} Mandouze had created a press storm extending far beyond French Catholic activist milieux with a July 1947 \textit{Esprit} article on the French metropole’s policy toward Algeria.\textsuperscript{766} Overnight, Mandouze was offered and accepted the additional role of leader of the Comité d’Action des Intellectuels Algériens pour la Liberté et la Démocratie (Action

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{762}{Dąbrowska, Diary entry for 29 August 1948, p. 275.}
\footnotetext{763}{Woźniakowski, \textit{Ze wspomnień szczęściarza}, p. 141.}
\footnotetext{764}{Dąbrowska, Diary entry for 29 August 1948, p. 273.}
\end{footnotes}
Committee of Algerian Intellectuals for Freedom and Democracy). He also accepted a university position in Algiers, to which he relocated to become involved in on-site campaigning on behalf of Algerian independence. Mandouze was thus wearing two hats at once in Wrocław, for “my Algerian struggle combined on the one hand with my progressive convictions, acquired and confirmed earlier in France, but drawing strength on the other hand from my independent participation in the international fight waged for peace.”

Mandouze’s recollections from the Wrocław trip are full of giddy observations about the fun of a road-trip with a “constellation of French intellectuals, writers, and artists whom I would otherwise have never dreamed of being able to approach.” His roommate was Aimé Césaire; Picasso gave them a personal commentary on artwork seen at the Wawel Castle Museum. Mandouze was pleasantly surprised, indeed overjoyed, to find Catholicism vibrant and alive everywhere he looked: sacral artwork in Kraków, masses for schoolboys in Wrocław, chapels and devotional figures made of salt in the mines at Wieliczka. He and the rest of the French delegation requested of their Polish guides to be taken to Auschwitz, and it was his conversations there with Aimé Césaire that inspired the substance of his speech at the peace congress.

With Césaire having drawn his attention to the fact that the congress’s official invitation contained no mention of “colonialism as a cause of war,” Mandouze reflected on the fact that the congress had, while indeed replete with anti-American, anti-German, and anti-atomic accents, not yet featured a single comment about colonialism. For example, American Progressive Party leader Henry Wallace’s recorded message to the congress congratulated the Poles on Wrocław’s return to “its legitimate proprietors” after “so many years of cruel German

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767 Mandouze, Mémoires d’outre-siècle, I, p. 185.
768 Mandouze, Mémoires d’outre-siècle, I, p. 186.
occupation,”769 where, by years, he evidently meant centuries, not the six years of World War II. The Hungarian philosopher György Lukács, meanwhile, had spoken of “the imperialism of the United States” patterned on German imperialism, with the difference that, while the Nazis had acted out of “cynical nihilism,” Americans were following “a nihilist hypocrisy.”770 And Borejsza himself had specified the exceptional welcome given at the congress to “democratic Germans,” the only “Germans of good will, with whom we have found and continue to find a common language.”771

Mandouze, meanwhile, offered in his speech a passionate cry for decolonization as the only way to avoid the war and holocaust produced by colonial racism, which Mandouze pegged to Nazi racial thinking and the genocide that it produced. He began with the simple statement: “at the present hour, there is no peace. [...] There is no peace, or it is near death, in those countries to which the West, reclaiming the heritage of Athens and Jerusalem, has pretended to bring peace and even more: I mean by this the so-called colonial countries.”

Evoking the wartime destruction of Wrocław to reinforce the existential claim made connecting Nazism and colonialism more generally, Mandouze continued, “While, standing before the ruins of Wrocław, we speak of peace, colonialism continues its massacres in Vietnam, triumphs in the trials in Antananarivo, fills prisons in Algeria, wears down the bodies of Black Africa. And I could continue for a long time in this macabre litany.”772 Finally, Mandouze exhorted his audience to rethink the category of war itself in order to understand the foundational importance of anti-colonialism to any struggle for global peace:

770 György Lukács, Speech, 26 August 1948, in Congrès Mondial des intellectuels pour la paix, p. 79-84, at p. 80.
771 Jerzy Borejsza, Speech, 26 August 1948, in Congrès Mondial des intellectuels pour la paix, p. 89.
772 Mandouze, Mémoires d’outre-siècle, I, p. 187.
let us at last expunge from the world this hypocrisy that lies in thinking that colonial wars are less serious than so-called international wars and that they fall under different legal criteria. If this were the case, we would already have made a significant contribution to peace simply in revealing to the world that, though the ovens at Auschwitz have gone cold, there remain still to be extinguished the colonial furnaces that, though distant, reveal to no lesser degree how humanity, with a slow and continuously burning fire, tranquilly commits its crimes.773

Only several hours before Mandouze’s call for de-colonization, the abbé Jean Boulier sounded the clarion call of a progressive Catholic seeking to take a stand against “Christian alliance with the forces of reaction.”774 For Boulier, a priest who attended the congress without consulting any ecclesiastical superiors – as he put it in his speech, “with neither mission, nor commission, nor permission of any sort” – the Wrocław congress was but the first in a long series of unorthodox activist stands that would lead to his suspension from clerical vocation in 1953 by decision of the archdiocese of Paris.775 A long-time law professor at the Institut Catholique de Paris, where Jacques Maritain had taught for two decades before World War II, Boulier was committed to pushing the envelope on priestly engagement in social and political movements.

Although the desire to voice at every possible opportunity his staunch support for the worker-priests of the Mission de France was part of the explanation for his demonstrative activism,776 Boulier’s intention was less to serve as a model to other potential activist priests than to offer his spontaneous reflections on the changes in the model of Catholic lay activism ushered in by the Second World War. This – despite the fact that it was precisely at that moment that

773 Mandouze, Mémoires d’outre-siècle, I, p. 188.
774 Jean Boulier, Speech, 26 August 1948, in Congrès Mondial des intellectuels pour la paix, p. 77-78, at p. 78.
775 Boulier, Speech, p. 77.
776 On Boulier and the worker-priests, see, for example, Cole-Arnal, “The Témoignage of the Worker Priests,” p. 135.
Pope Pius XII sought to tighten the discipline within Catholic activism, loosened as it had been by wartime chaos.\textsuperscript{777} Indeed, given Boulier’s “demotion” to the laity in 1953, his case might be construed to have been more representative of trends in lay activism rather than developments among the clergy.

At the Wrocław congress, Boulier spoke simply and briefly, and the message that he delivered could hardly have been more in line with Catholic-socialist syncretism if Kętrzyński or Mandouze had written it themselves. Declaring at the outset his intention “to connect the proceedings to Christian thought, more precisely, Catholic thought, held under lock and key by a particularly vigilant authority,” Boulier launched a between-the-lines attack on Pius XII that none of his audience would have overlooked. This was merely a prelude: Boulier then offered a simplified, synthetic re-reading of Catholic social ethics, reduced to the following dictum: “The Christian is not an escapist. He should take his place beside his brothers in the workshop where humanity is forced to build its destiny.” On its own, this would simply be a more colorful version of Maritain’s call to Catholics to engage themselves \textit{en chrétien} in building a new Christendom.

Boulier, however, rapidly turned away in his remarks from Thomist personalism to a radical progressive Catholicism, arguing – exactly as Kętrzyński had only months earlier in the pages of \textit{Dziś i Jutro} – that Catholics must build the sociopolitical order in which they live as it is given to them, before they can even think about Christianizing it. For this reason, “The Christian will thus be a good citizen of the modern temporal realm, and it is to be understood that, if this temporal realm is Communist, he will work with all his heart toward the building of a socialist order, such as it is proposed to him.”\textsuperscript{778}

\textsuperscript{777} Boulier, \textit{J’étais un prêtre rouge}.
\textsuperscript{778} Boulier, Speech, p. 77.
At the same time that Boulier emphasized the putative value of first building and only then Christianizing socialism, he recoiled in horror from the idea of building capitalism: “The only truly godless man, for a Christian, is the lover of money. For a heart in which God reigns, how can money reign there as well?” The struggle for peace, in Boulier’s projection, was thus but a thinly veiled argument for Catholic-socialist internationalism, with emphasis on the latter element. To make explicit his implication that capitalists were continuing the Nazi wartime effort, Boulier closed by saying, “Thus, so long as Hitler’s war continues, so continues the Resistance.”

Understandably, Andrzej Krasiński from Dziś i Jutro was, unlike most of his fellow Poles in attendance at the Wrocław congress, ecstatic when he heard these statements. The new ideology and policy program that his milieu was only beginning to articulate had been handed a foreign-policy agenda on a silver platter by, among others, Mandouze, the author of one of its foundationally inspiring French-language tracts. In addition to speaking briefly with Mandouze at the congress, Krasiński made contact with Boulier and established a lasting correspondence that would bring Boulier to Dziś i Jutro headquarters in Warsaw two years later for a major conference of Catholic activists from across Europe. In the pages of Dziś i Jutro, devoting an entire paragraph of his article to Boulier’s brief speech, Krasiński noted in closing, “it is a good thing that this question was broached precisely at the Peace Congress.”

In his published report on the congress, meanwhile, Krasiński addressed these issues, but he first tried to make sense for the journal’s readership of the new task of promoting global peace. Specifically, he set out to present the Wrocław congress as having been a successful first step toward a much larger, more durable international movement. To this end, Krasiński dealt

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779 Boulier, Speech, p. 78.
head-on with the fuss caused by Fadeev’s speech, arguing that “Fadeev does not fall prey to fascination with [cultural] authority figures and has no qualms about launching the sharpest of attacks against people of a different opinion.” Granting that the speech was “strongly political,” “uncompromising,” and “brutal,” Krasiński nonetheless justified it by arguing that, to reject it on grounds of the incivility of Fadeev’s approach, of “good manners in the bourgeois sense of the word,” would be intellectually dishonest.

Krasiński could not have known what Maria Dąbrowska wrote in her diary the evening after Fadeev’s speech, yet he was present when Iwaszkiewicz and Borejsza both spoke of “tolerance” and “mutual understanding” as core precepts of the conference. And yet he chose not only to defend Fadeev for having failed to conform to “bourgeois” good manners – read: tolerance and mutual understanding – but indeed also to attack by name Fadeev’s strongest critic at the congress, British historian A.J.P. Taylor, as blinded by “apostolate to the 17th-century [sic!] doctrine of Adam Smith.”  

The explanation for Krasiński’s hypocritical stance, which was at odds with both Christian ethics and Borejsza and Iwaszkiewicz’s stated intentions for the congress, is the specific nature of the line adopted from 1948 onward by Dziś i Jutro in its stance on peace: a dogged, even bellicose approach of “declaring war on war.” This approach – worked out over the first half of 1948 behind closed doors by the Dziś i Jutro staff – encompassed overtly political, moral, and social elements. In programmatic terms, it profited greatly from the Wroclaw congress. As a result of the congress, Krasiński could report back to Piasecki and the

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781 This is a phrase that would return into Polish peace-activist discourse just over a year later through the so-called “patriot-priest” movement, which we will discuss later, the salient point being that not only memory of World War II, but indeed outrage and resentment at its conduct were keenly present in the tenor of the peace campaign. See, for example, the section entitled “Bojownicy walki o pokój” (Warriors in the fight for peace), in Wawrzyniak, ZBoWiD, p. 114-119, esp. at p. 115.
rest of the Dziś i Jutro leadership on the success of the combination of anti-American, anti-atomic, anti-German, and anti-colonial elements as an interlocking foundation of global peace activism.

Indeed, anti-colonialism, which had not, in fact, been on the movement’s RADAR prior to the Wroclaw congress, provided the perfect opportunity to bring Catholic social ethics back into the progressive-Catholic political agenda. As Krasiński portrayed Mandouze and the other anti-colonial congress speakers, “This same voice, albeit coming from different parts of the world, reveals and unmasks a basic contradiction that allows people and indeed entire countries to apply two different moralities, limiting the dictates of Christian principles to the narrow field of their own country, to the field of people with the same skin colors as theirs.” The basic lesson was that the Catholic activists of Dziś i Jutro could not make the same mistake, and thus had to apply their understanding of the “dictates of Christian principles” the world over.

The final lesson of the congress was what it taught regarding what was going on at the same time in Western Europe: namely, post-Marshall Plan first steps toward European integration. In this respect, Krasiński set the tone for the remaining eight years of the Dziś i Jutro weekly’s existence with his claim that “We have not only grown in Europe’s eyes, but indeed drawn closer to it.” Rather than discoursing at length on the injustice of socialist Europe’s exclusion from congresses on the subject of “European” unification – which, for ideological reasons, Polish representatives would neither want nor be permitted to attend at any rate – Krasiński simply used the pages of Dziś i Jutro to construct a different Europe for his readers.

And this construction was in perfect synergy with the socialist establishment’s official interpretation of the congress. Iwaszkiewicz became Poland’s international spin doctor of choice.

782 Krasiński, “Pokongresowe notatki.”
for the post-congress peace campaign, and he set out once again on a European tour in the fall of 1948. In a November speech in Paris, he rewrote the entire narrative of the Wrocław congress around the normative question that Jean-Marie Domenach posed that same month in the pages of *Esprit*: what kind of Europe (*quelle Europe*)? Iwaszkiewicz put it thus:

> Europe is a very good idea, but it depends, what kind of Europe?
> The entire Wrocław Congress served as one single answer to this question. There met the representatives of this best Europe, the Europe of great humanist traditions and a great revolutionary past, fighting for a better tomorrow. They decided that they will fight for peace. [...] a Europe of work, of reconstruction and transformation, a Europe of progress, a Europe of international solidarity is undoubtedly a Europe of good will.\

Here we see not only the socialist preferential option for the proletariat, but also points of convergence with the cutting edge of postwar Catholic activism: the focus on work borrowed from *nouvelle théologie*, as well as the code of “reconstruction and transformation” used to communicate the need to continue making the case for Poland’s claim to the Recovered Territories. Lawrence S. Wittner, Weston Ullrich, and others have written about the Wrocław Congress as the point of departure for Communist-led peace activism, but no one has yet pointed to its significance as the genesis of a related, yet still autonomously functioning progressive-Catholic activism. And yet, two years after the Wrocław congress, celebrating the inauguration of the first “Polish Peace Congress,” *Dziś i Jutro* would publish a front-page editorial leading off with the declaration: “The Movement of the Defenders of the Peace was born in Poland. In Wrocław.”

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783 Iwaszkiewicz, “Paryż” (November 1948), in *Sprawa pokoju*, p. 29-30.
For the next eight years, Polish Catholic activists would appear genuine in their ongoing commitments to the anti-atomic and anti-colonial causes. Yet it would be their alternative vision of Europe – anti-American and anti-German, in defiance of both the Marshall Plan and the Schuman Plan – that would drive them to undertake extensive initiatives toward lasting transnational Catholic-socialist cooperation. Kętrzyński, Krasiński, Łubieński, and Horodyński set to the task of establishing a variety of durable, bilateral, cross-Iron Curtain linkages with like-minded Catholic activist groups in France and Belgium, while Piasecki undertook a systematic adaptation of nouvelle théologie to the conditions of socialist Poland. The global peace effort became the signature trademark of Dziś i Jutro’s efforts to build a “Catholic-socialist international.” It thus piggybacked not only on the Communist-led peace movement’s core theses, but also on the personalist theology of labor to which Dziś i Jutro had committed in the same year that it committed to the cause of peace.786

At the risk of stating the apparently – and misleadingly – obvious, it bears saying that, as Dziś i Jutro entered into sociopolitical activism on terms defined by Stalinist discourse, it put at risk the very ethical precepts that it claimed to be translating into action: namely, the dignity of the human person expressed through collective revolution. The anti-German component – however putatively offset by encomia for the “good Germans” of the nascent GDR – revived the interwar specter of exclusionary-nationalist personalism, fusing it with the fascist-chauvinist interwar models of behavior pioneered by the eldest, Falanga-turned-KN-turned-Dziś i Jutro leaders. Given the anti-Germanism and anti-Americanism at the heart of the global peace campaign, the personalism brought to KN during World War II and cemented as Dziś i Jutro’s

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ideological core by Kętrzyński, Krasiński, and the movement’s other Young Turks threatened to fall prey to the exclusionary impulses of Piasecki and his fellow interwar fascists.

The reason why this tension is misleading in its obviousness is that it in no way inhibited the activists of Dziś i Jutro from finding enthusiastic partners in Western Europe. Residual fear of German revanchism – what Jean-Marie Domenach, for example, considered to be a lesson learned the hard way from the Great War and interwar period – translated into eagerness on the part of Belgian and French Catholic-socialist syncretists to follow the lead of their Polish counterparts. The Poles had, after all, the dual distinction of already living under revolutionary socialism and, moreover – in the case of Poles in Silesia and Pomerania – on the lands arguably most under threat in the event of another war. Activists on both sides of the Iron Curtain proceeded from the assumption that these beliefs were not only compatible with revolutionary personalism, but, indeed, its necessary consequence. It would take eight years, the gutting of the Polish hierarchy by a series of show trials, and a set of condemnations from the Vatican to teach any of the partnered activists on either side of the Iron Curtain the errors of their ways. And many would never learn.
CHAPTER 8

European Integration and Stalinist Personalism:

The Polish Project of a Catholic-Socialist International, 1949-1953

*Let me do my job as a man and a priest and preach to all men the Lord’s precept “Thou shalt not kill.” Where is the Communist game in this? [...] your house and the house of the Communist, both equally, your wife and his, your children and his children, all of us together, are menaced by the atom bomb. This danger can only be eliminated by millions of signatures. Why refuse yours on this petition? Because the Communists have put theirs? Must you be evil because they have been good?*

--Abbé Jean Boulier, 1950

*Do not waste precious time chasing Europe – you will never catch up with it. Do not try to become the Polish Matisse – your lack will give rise to no Braque. Instead, attack European art, be the ones who unmask; instead of pulling yourselves up to someone else's maturity level, try rather to expose Europe’s immaturity.*

--Witold Gombrowicz, 1953

The 1948 Wrocław congress was but a key first step on the path followed by *Dziś i Jutro*’s progressive Catholics to the concrete decision to undertake construction of a Catholic-socialist international. Along the way, the activists engaged in a series of Communist-led peace initiatives, conditioned by Moscow-directed policy handed down to Communist parties across European through the Cominform, active from 1947 to 1949. It was, moreover, the Cominform that first gave *Dziś i Jutro* ideologue Wojciech Kętrzyński the idea for an “international,” modeled both on socialist internationalism, which it was intended to complement, and on the Western European Christian Democrats’ NEI, with which it was to compete.

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The core object of our analysis, however – the structural changes in Catholic activism inspired by transnational contacts and partnerships conditioned by the interaction between Catholicism and socialism – offers a rare window into the convictions of the progressive Catholics. Over years of personal contacts – indeed, often yielding deep friendships – and ideological and institutional partnerships across the Iron Curtain, this Catholic dimension of Poland’s emerging Stalinist order proved itself deeply influenced by and perhaps even more influential for its counterparts in Francophone Western Europe. Progressive Catholic activists in Western Europe, testing the limits of both Catholicism and socialism in their partnerships with the Poles of Dziś i Jutro/PAX, eagerly jumped on this bandwagon.

For the Western Europeans, Catholic-socialist syncretism afforded above all an opportunity to voice organized Catholic discontent with the Cold War into which they felt that their new postwar governments, in partnership with the United States, had undemocratically driven them. Paradoxically, it was mostly politicians claiming, like the Polish progressives, to be acting en chrétien – Western Europe’s postwar Christian Democrats – who were at the heads of these governments. In joining forces with Dziś i Jutro, then, the Western European progressive Catholic activists were, above all, lodging a protest against the agenda of Christian Democrats ascendant across Western Europe.

In particular, they opposed the project of (Western) European integration that the Christian Democrats of France, Italy, and West Germany had initiated through transnational political cooperation.\footnote{For a terse analysis of the French thinking that led to this position, see Bent Boel, “France’s Role in the World in 1945: Back to the Future?,” in Joachim Lund and Per Øhrgard, eds, \textit{Return to Normalcy or a New Beginning: Concepts and Expectations for a Postwar Europe around 1945} (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press/University Press of Southern Denmark, 2008), p. 77-92.} Taking a page from their Western European opponents, Dziś i Jutro activists conceptualized and attempted to structure their cross-Iron Curtain contacts by means of
a self-described “Catholic-socialist international.” Paradoxically, then, the transnational cooperation of Catholic-socialist syncretists entailed a cross-Iron Curtain, Europe-wide, explicitly Catholic rejection of both the Vatican’s geopolitics and the emerging juridical structures of an integrated “Europe.”

The Catholic-socialist international based out of Warsaw seemed to have a chance of success until it encountered two major roadblocks. The first was a decisive anti-Catholic turn on the part of Poland’s Stalinist establishment, which entailed, among others, the show trial of Kielce bishop Czesław Kaczmarek (1895-1963) and the arrest and isolation of Primate Wyszyński.

The second involved the Young Turks of Dziś i Jutro – the generation of Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Janusz Zablocki – who in their handful of years in Dziś i Jutro/PAX had become the movement’s most radical devotees of revolutionary personalism. Young firebrands under the age of 30, these activists were nudged by Piasecki and the other movement elders to channel their Catholic radicalism into a sort of Stalinist personalism crossed with anti-German and anti-American nationalism. The paradoxical result was that they signed on to persecute their own national ecclesiastical hierarchy in the name of the dignity of the human person, an ideal that, for them, was religious in origin.

Nonetheless, these activists reached a tipping point in 1953-1954 that broke their willingness to continue blindly believing in the unity of their movement’s political goals with the progressive Catholicism that it had taught them to live and breathe. By the time of Primate Wyszyński’s arrest in September 1953, a movement that had promised a revolution in the European Catholic pursuit of social justice, that had attracted followers on both sides of the Iron Curtain, that had commanded some of postwar Poland’s most imaginative and energetic Catholic
activists – this movement, PAX, was left little more than a cynical, self-deluding game profiting only a handful of opportunists.

**The Partisans of Peace**

The Wroclaw congress was only the beginning of a tightly-packed series of peace-campaign events that resulted in an explosion in the number of *Dziś i Jutro*’s personal and institutional contacts in Francophone Western Europe. That congress had represented the sweat and toil of one imaginative PPR luminary: Jerzy Borejsza. Gomułka’s trusted advisor on cultural and intellectual life had proposed the Wroclaw congress on his own, yet it was still not enough to save him from disgrace at the moment of his party’s Stalinist turn.

The congress’s failure to redeem him from accusations of “right-wing nationalist deviation” may be part of the reason why, even though the Poles had done virtually all of the work in preparing the 1948 congress, the initiative was taken away from them and entrusted to the French Communists. Lawrence S. Wittner has – credibly – assumed that the Cominform was responsible for this shift, though the only documentation cited to support this contention is the 15 September 1948 issue of the tellingly named Cominform bulletin *For a Lasting Peace, for a People’s Democracy*, which credited the Wroclaw congress with launching the “people’s” peace movement.\(^{790}\) One month later, *Pravda* published an interview with Stalin affirming Moscow’s full support for the new “forces in favor of peace” emerging at recent international congresses.\(^{791}\) The Cominform did not meet again in 1948 after the infamous June session that included the ejection of Tito’s Yugoslavia, setting the people’s democracies on a radicalized Stalinist path to suppress national Communism. Yet a hand from above seemed to have made the decision to spin the Wroclaw congress as the launching pad for a new movement.

\(^{790}\) Wittner, *One World or None*, p. 177.

\(^{791}\) *Pravda*, 29 October 1948, quoted at Wittner, *One World or None*, p. 177.
For this reason, Weston Ullrich’s pronouncement that the Wrocław peace congress “created a leadership” for the Communist-led peace movement is both correct and misleading.\(^{792}\) True – its closing session included a vote to create an International Liaison Committee of Intellectuals for Peace (ILCIP), but the membership of this committee was only determined later. Indeed, the leadership of the Wrocław peace congress appeared intentionally marginalized. Borejsza’s fall from grace continued. Though Iwaszkiewicz became the most prominent Polish contributor to the newly constituted peace movement, its leadership fell to the eminent French radiochemist and PCF luminary Frédéric Joliot-Curie (1900-1958), who had not even made it to Wrocław.

Clearly, then, it was not the Wrocław congress’s leadership who assumed control of the new peace movement. Instead, the committee headed by Joliot-Curie included, for example, the rabble-rouser Fadeev, who had caused such trouble in Wrocław. As a result, the Communist-led peace movement lost any semblance of spontaneity from the very moment that it was organized, coming to appear, as the British Foreign Office put it in December 1950, “a Cominform racket.”\(^{793}\)

The Catholic activists of Dziś i Jutro, however, were not privy to these backroom machinations. When the ILCIP in February 1949 issued a joint call for a World Peace Congress with the Women’s International Democratic Federation, an all-French committee led by Joliot-Curie became responsible for preparing the April 1949 congress. One of the executive committee members was the abbé Boulier. The “red priest,” though not a member of the PCF, had the French party’s highest confidence, and he thus proved an extremely lucrative contact for Dziś i Jutro. Through Boulier, among others, the Polish weekly could bypass official establishment

\(^{792}\) Ullrich, “Preventing ‘Peace,’” p. 5.
channels in obtaining information in advance of the World Peace Congress. Krasiński’s networking in Wrocław had thus paid off handsomely for his entire milieu.

Wojciech Kętrzyński, as Dziś i Jutro’s designated “foreign affairs” specialist, attended the Paris congress – one of 2000 delegates from 72 countries – while a parallel congress took place in Prague, assembling those who had been refused French visas.\textsuperscript{794} Paris and Prague together gave the peace movement a name – the Partisans of Peace – and a mission statement, directed principally against the new North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and articulated succinctly by Joliot-Curie: “We are not here to ask for peace, but to impose it. This congress is the reply of the peoples to the signers of the Atlantic pact. To the new war they are preparing, we will reply with a revolt of the peoples.” The greatest threat to the peace came from “one of the most spectacular misappropriations of science,” the atomic bomb, intended by the United States and its Western European allies “as a weapon of mass destruction.”\textsuperscript{795}

Indeed, it was the Paris congress’s closing resolution, which called for a complete ban on atomic weapons, that set up the greatest success of the Communist-led peace movement: the Stockholm Appeal.\textsuperscript{796} More importantly for our purposes, the Stockholm Appeal would become the glue holding together Dziś i Jutro’s own international initiative, which the Polish movement undertook soon after the appeal’s announcement on 15 March 1950. What follows is the full text of the appeal, written by Ilya Ehrenburg and accepted by acclamation by the assembled Permanent Committee of the Partisans of Peace:


\textsuperscript{795} Quoted at Wittner, One World or None, p. 178.

We demand the absolute prohibition of the atomic weapon, the weapon of terror and of mass extermination of populations. We demand the establishment of a rigorous international control to assure the application of this measure of prohibition. We consider that the government which first would use the atomic weapon against any country whatsoever would commit a crime against humanity and should be treated as a war criminal.\footnote{Reprinted in Frédéric Joliot-Curie, “A Proposal toward the Elimination of the Atomic Danger,” \textit{Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists}, June 1950, p. 166-167, at p. 166.}

This text, predictably, triggered an international uproar, the first front-page controversy inspired by the Partisans of Peace. For NATO-affiliated countries, the problem centered on one basic question: the harsh application of the Nuremberg Trial language of “crimes against humanity” to any deployment of atomic weaponry whatsoever, with no allowance for defensive warfare. With NATO having been established only the previous year, backed by the American atomic arsenal, the United States and its allies were at precisely the moment of maximum sensitivity to this sort of propaganda. This – even though US president Harry S. Truman had revealed to the world nearly four months before the Stockholm Appeal that the Soviet Union, too, had successfully detonated an atomic weapon.\footnote{On the Soviet detonation and the American information campaign in its wake, see Gordin, \textit{Red Cloud at Dawn}, p. 247-284.}

Frédéric Joliot-Curie was the right man at the right moment to lead the Stockholm Appeal propaganda campaign. As a Nobel Laureate in Chemistry for work bearing, among other things, on atomic energy, Joliot-Curie carried serious weight in global discussions concerning atomic weaponry, even those focused more on its legal and political ramifications than on the science. For his announcement that he would refuse to work on a weapon to be deployed against the USSR, he had been dismissed in April 1950 as the head of the French Commissariat à l’Énergie Atomique (CEA), which he had co-founded in 1945 with de Gaulle’s support to pursue the
peaceful development of nuclear technology.\(^{799}\) Joliot-Curie, despite his political affiliation, nonetheless had the substantive credentials to put an acceptable mainstream face on what was essentially a Cominform-backed appeal to the UN to promise sanctions against future American aggression.\(^{800}\)

The Stockholm Appeal shrewdly targeted religious constituencies as well as political ones. As Joliot-Curie wrote in June 1950, “We have come to a problem which involves all humanity, the American citizen as well as the English, the French, or the Russian citizen, whatever his political or religious opinions may be.”\(^{801}\) Lawrence Wittner is thus entirely wide of the mark when he suggests, “the Catholic church, for the most part, dodged the issue of the Bomb.”\(^{802}\) Indeed, Yvon Tranvouez has called 1950 “the year of the birth of Christian progressivism” precisely because of the Stockholm Appeal. Tranvouez was consciously taking liberties with both chronology and terminology to make a point; he himself has admitted elsewhere that it was really 1948 – rather than 1950 – that constituted the launching point for progressive Christianity. Nonetheless, Tranvouez’s decision to zoom in on 1950 has proven extremely fruitful.\(^{803}\)

The abbé Jean Boulier published in Paris within a month of the appeal’s announcement a widely circulated pamphlet subsequently translated into English under the title “Why I Signed the Stockholm Appeal.” In this text, he attempted to convince Catholics that their adherence to


\(^{800}\) Joliot-Curie’s memoirs of his peace activism offer a wealth of personal, institutional, and ideological insight: see Frédéric Joliot-Curie, *Cinq années de lutte pour la paix* (Paris: Éditions Défense de la paix, 1954).


\(^{802}\) Wittner, *One World or None*, p. 193.

Christianity translated into an ethical obligation to affirm the contents of the appeal. The point of departure for his reasoning was the condition of world politics, tending toward a conflict between the American and Soviet camps that, if taken from “cold” to “hot,” would have cataclysmic results: “from the very first moment of a conflict, atomic death threatens thousands of innocent victims, in the United States, in Europe, in the world. This abominable situation must be done away with.” On the one hand, as a Christian, Boulier conceded that “Prayer can accomplish miracles.” At the same time, however, the practical course of action that this priest counseled followed a basic maxim of the doctrine of free will: “God helps those who help themselves.”

The best way for Christians to help themselves, Boulier argued, was to sign the Stockholm Appeal, “an appeal by peoples to governments – by people who command to governments who claim to serve them. The governing authorities must hear this appeal like a thunderclap through the snug and tight doubledoors of the chancelleries. Millions of voices must lend themselves to this appeal. That is why I have given my name. [...] One must choose and be counted.” To Christians arguing that the appeal was a socialist “publicity trap,” Boulier responded that “sophistry and equivocation” were luxuries that present-day Christians could not afford. And to Christians impugning Boulier personally as a “Moscow spy in a priest’s frock,” the abbé replied, “This danger can only be eliminated by millions of signatures. Why refuse yours on this petition? Because the Communists have put theirs? Must you be evil because they have been good?”

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804 Boulier published the original in French, but a group within the Australian Communist Party translated the pamphlet into English and circulated it widely within months of its original publication in France. My citations are from this English-language translation. Boulier, Why I Signed the Stockholm Appeal to Ban the Atom Bomb, p. 4.
805 Boulier, Why I Signed the Stockholm Appeal to Ban the Atom Bomb, p. 6.
806 Boulier, Why I Signed the Stockholm Appeal to Ban the Atom Bomb, p. 7.
807 Boulier, Why I Signed the Stockholm Appeal to Ban the Atom Bomb, p. 8-9, 10-11.
As his *ultima ratio*, Boulier made a case for ecumenism consisting not only of interfaith dialogue, but dialogue with all men of good will, even atheists. Clearly at odds with Pius XII’s teachings, this sort of thinking would not receive ecclesiastical approval until the Second Vatican Council: “As a Christian I owe it to myself to welcome truth and justice whatever their source, making exceptions of nobody.” Invoking Saint Paul, Boulier declared succinctly, “I rejoice with the Communists for the good they do and that is why I am attacked and insulted.”808 In the end, Boulier explicitly referenced the interwar Catholic ghetto as a place unfitting for Catholic activism in the modern world. Boulier’s choice, charitably interpreted, was a refusal to “remain silent and shut ourselves into a ghetto with the integrists.”809

*The Vatican and the Progressive Catholics*

Boulier was hardly representative of the Catholic Church at large – laymen or priests – yet the arguments that he advanced complemented and resonated with the rising tide of progressive Catholicism washing over Europe in the early years of the Cold War. The degree to which the Stockholm Appeal succeeded in culling a broad spectrum of Christian support away from the American camp to back a key Soviet-camp initiative frightened Pius XII, who publicly condemned “pacifist efforts or propaganda originating from those who deny all belief in God” as “always very dubious.”810 While thus casting aspersions on Communist-inspired peace activism, Pius XII unwittingly left the door ajar for progressive Catholicism, for whom the Stockholm Appeal proved an enormous boon.

In Paris, the floundering Union des Chrétiens Progressistes (UCP), founded in 1948 with André Mandouze’s endorsement and occasional leadership, had flagged as he relocated to Algiers and subsequently devoted all of his time to anti-colonial activism. In 1950, inspired by

809 Boulier, *Why I Signed the Stockholm Appeal to Ban the Atom Bomb*, p. 15.
810 Quoted at Wittner, *One World or None*, p. 189.
the Stockholm Appeal campaign, its most engaged members jumped ship to join the staff of a new progressive-Catholic biweekly called \textit{La Quinzaine} (Fortnight).

Also reinvigorated by the Appeal was the progressive theological network meeting under the name of Jeunesse de l’Église. Born of wartime contact and reflections with Marie-Dominique Chenu, Henri Godin, and other luminaries of \textit{nouvelle théologie} and the Mission de France, the Jeunesse de l’Église teetered constantly on the verge of what the Vatican at the time considered to be open heresy. Indeed, their proposals, going beyond an emphasis on mission to the proletariat to an explicit theological “preferential option” for the working classes, brought the Jeunesse de l’Église dangerously close to the liberation theology that Rev. Gustavo Gutiérrez would propagate in Latin America two decades later.\footnote{On the Jeunesse de l’Église, see Thierry Keck, \textit{Jeunesse de l’Église : 1936-1955, aux sources de la crise progressiste en France} (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2004); François Leprieur, \textit{Quand Rome condamne : dominicains et prêtres ouvriers} (Paris: Plon/Cerf, 1989). On possible lessons learned by Gutiérrez from Western European predecessors, see the conclusions to Horn, \textit{Western European Liberation Theology}. On Latin American liberation theology, see, among others, Paul E. Sigmund, \textit{Liberation Theology at the Crossroads: Democracy or Revolution?} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).}

Separately, the French Dominican-run Catholic political economy think-tank of laymen and priests assembled as Économie et Humanisme was already in the process of shifting its focus toward the Third World, becoming the definitive center of Catholic \textit{tiers-mondialisme}, a blend of anti-colonialist social science and \textit{nouvelle théologie}.\footnote{The definitive study of \textit{Économie et Humanisme} is Denis Pelletier, \textit{Économie et Humanisme : de l’utopie communautaire au combat pour le tiers-monde, 1941-1966} (Paris: Cerf, 1996).}

This French progressive-Catholic renaissance thus came at a time when the Stockholm Appeal seemed poised to convince some Catholics that maybe the Soviet camp did, after all, have a valuable role to play in what the Catholic Church saw as its exclusive terrain: the pursuit of peace. It is thus perhaps no surprise that Pius XII was throwing up his hands in frustration already by mid-1950. Wladimir d’Ormesson (1888-1973), Jacques Maritain’s successor as
French ambassador to the Holy See, witnessed in May of that year what he considered a deeply disconcerting conversation at the Vatican between Pius XII and Cardinal Pierre-Marie Gerlier of Lyon (1880-1965). With Gerlier complaining to the pontiff at length about the rising tide of “reckless and dangerous” progressive currents among French Catholics, “Pius XII responded, smiling, ‘How many condemnations would you have me issue?’”\(^{813}\) The pontiff’s smile, bitter at the start, would turn to acid by the middle of the 1950s.

Pius XII’s exasperation with progressive Catholicism is understandable. Even after Quadragesimo Anno, Divini Redemptoris, Pius XII’s excommunication of those involved in imprisoning Cardinal Mindszenty and Archbishop Beran, and the Holy Office’s 1949 decree threatening excommunication of Catholics collaborating with Communism, there remained Catholics who believed that the most holy path to fulfillment of Catholic social doctrine led through Catholic-socialist syncretism. Mounier’s waffling response to the July 1949 decree was a case in point: though his commentary on the decree suggested some understanding for the Holy See’s position, he in no way distanced himself or Esprit from the syncretist course on which he had set his journal in its contact with like-minded Catholics in the people’s democracies. And these contacts had been considerable, extending far beyond simple correspondence.

**The Logistics of Peace Activism**

Less than a year after Mounier’s visit to Poland, Konstanty Łubieński, the future co-author (with Kętrzyński) of Dziś i Jutro’s syncretist ideology, came to Paris on official business for the Polish Ministry of Finance. On Esprit’s invitation, he spent several days in the journal’s editorial offices getting to know Mounier better and establishing a personal rapport with

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\(^{813}\) Wladimir d’Ormesson, Report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 9 May 1950, quoted at Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes*, p. 46.
Łubieński, as a Finance Ministry official, could travel abroad on a diplomatic passport, and he began to do so frequently on behalf of Dziś i Jutro. Łubieński thus paved the way for Kętrzyński, who made his first trip to Paris in late 1947 as the newly minted Dziś i Jutro foreign affairs coordinator. In addition to visiting his journal’s friends at Esprit, Kętrzyński took advantage of his perfect spoken French to introduce himself – sometimes on Mounier’s recommendation, sometimes on his own – all over Paris, and in Lyon and Brussels as well: to the Dominicans of Le Saulchoir, to the Union des Chrétiens Progressistes, and to the Lyon-based Semaines Sociales de France, among others.

Kętrzyński’s options for turning these contacts into something more than courtesy visits and exchanges of pamphlets and journals expanded considerably in the wake of the Wrocław congress. Mandouze and Boulier, as the only self-proclaimed Catholic activists from Western Europe to come to the congress, had constituted the limited pool of contacts to whom Andrzej Krasiński had access there on Dziś i Jutro’s behalf. Yet, as an official Polish delegate from 1949 onward to sessions of the Permanent Committee of the Partisans of Peace, Wojciech Kętrzyński benefited from considerably wider operational parameters in establishing cross-Iron Curtain partnerships.

No longer an obscure representative of a journal from a far-away land known only to Mounier’s Esprit staff, Kętrzyński became a leading Catholic peace activist functioning in a transnational network. What’s more, with a decision by the Communist-led peace movement in advance of the 1949 Paris congress to call for the formation of national peace committees in all

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participating countries, Kętrzyński became a key player in the Polski Komitet Obrónców Pokoju (PKOP, Polish Committee of the Defenders of Peace), delegated on behalf of *Dziś i Jutro*.

The Polish committee included both establishment socialists like Iwaszkiewicz and progressive Catholics. Although the practical reality of voicing Catholic opinions in the committee involved a bitter, back-stabbing tug of war between the *Dziś i Jutro* delegation and the GKK “patriot-priest” faction – with the Episcopate frowning on both sides – all of the reports published in the pages of *Dziś i Jutro* maintained a propagandistically laudatory tone. Aside from the delegates to these respective movements, then, the truth about the committee’s inner workings got out to no one. As a result, Kętrzyński was able to brag in Paris and Stockholm without any voice to the contrary about the great achievements of the PKOP, with particular self-congratulations in order for Polish Catholics’ idea of using Catholic-socialist cooperation as a means of mobilizing the Polish nation for peace.

**The Catholics and the Cominform**

The kind of argumentation that Kętrzyński presented on behalf of Catholic-socialist cooperation in the PKOP gained even more weight – indeed, making the Poles seem the veritable vanguard of Catholic-socialist cooperation – after the third conference of the Cominform, which took place on 16-19 November 1949. Palmiro Togliatti (1893-1964), the iconic head of the Partito Comunista Italiano, gave a speech at this conference that, doubtless, haunted Pius XII and deepened his sensitivity the following year to the Stockholm Appeal and its attendant support from progressive Catholics. The title of Togliatti’s speech – “Working-Class Unity and the Tasks of the Communist and Workers’ Parties” – foreshadowed nothing particularly noteworthy. The

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816 On the *Dziś i Jutro*-GKK dynamics within the PKOP, see Żurek, *Ruch “księży-patriotów,”* p. 147-163; on the Stockholm Appeal campaign in the PKOP, see Żurek, *Ruch “księży-patriotów,”* p. 230-249.
817 For his published reflections from these trips, see, for example, Wojciech Kętrzyński, “Zagadnienie szwedzkie,” *Dziś i Jutro*, 23 April 1950.
speech’s content, however, was a veritable re-invention of his French counterpart Maurice Thorez’s *main tendue* of 13 years earlier.

While sticking to the well-worn Communist rhetorical tactic of placing the proletariat on a pedestal at the expense of every other social group, Togliatti took into account the historical fact of cooperation across party lines in the anti-fascist resistance of World War II. While crediting above all “the Soviet people and their army” for victory over fascism, Togliatti lauded also the efficacy of national resistance movements throughout Europe, in which “Communists and Socialists, Democrats and Catholics” had come “to know one another.”

Lamenting the divisions emerging since the war’s end, Togliatti – in good Leninist fashion – blamed the “Social-Democratic parties,” Western Europe’s acceptable, diluted form of socialism, which, in Togliatti’s parlance, were nothing but “a crude deception,” pretending to offer a third way between “a sincere socialism” and “the interests of monopoly capitalism and the privileged castes.” Arguing that only the Soviet Union was pursuing a “consistent policy of peace,” Togliatti termed Western European Social Democrats “the most active supporters of atomic diplomacy and cold war against the land of socialism.” As the cardinal example of this atomic diplomacy Togliatti held out the Marshall Plan and its resultant transnational political project, European integration: “When they talk of ‘uniting’ Europe the agents of American imperialism are really trying to disrupt co-operation between the peoples of Europe, to set up a barrier between them in order to isolate the Soviet Union and the people’s democracies.”

This last point was perfectly in line with the “alternative Europe” agenda first proposed at the Wroclaw congress. Indeed, the *Dziś i Jutro* activists, in an internal, narrowly circulated

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commentary on Togliatti’s speech produced in early 1950, would make this connection and use it as a point of departure to propose their own structured transnational project. Even more significant as a cornerstone of that project was the next section of Togliatti’s speech, which examined closely the potential role of Catholics in socialist revolution. Togliatti insisted, “In the fight for working-class unity particular attention should be paid to the masses of Catholic workers and working people and their organizations.” Noting the growing importance of “Catholic trade unions” and “Catholic parties” across Western Europe, Togliatti lamented that Western Europe’s “Catholic parties are the principal bourgeois parties and direct the state.”

With Western European Christian Democracy and its pro-European integration stance in mind, Togliatti took the ultimate step: distinguishing between the institutional Church and Catholics as members of that Church, and appealing to Catholics as lay activists rather than to the Church as a whole. This was a prescient rhetorical strategy, extending far beyond the bounds of political propaganda, that unwittingly put Togliatti in the same camp with Yves Congar in calling for the Catholic laity to step up and claim their role in their faith. The relevant passage bears citation in full:

> In all the Catholic organizations, however, there is a profound contradiction between the policy of the leading circles of the Church, who are allies of imperialism and reaction and enemies of social progress, and the working masses, even the most backward, who want peace and defense of their vital interests. This explains why it is that, despite the repressive measures taken by the church authorities, nevertheless left-wing, progressive trends constantly appear in the Catholic movement, which instinctively seek co-operation and unity with the non-Catholic workers’ movement.

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The clear message of Togliatti’s appeal was for Catholic laymen to ignore their reactionary, imperialism-allied pontiff, Pius XII, and to indulge “left-wing, progressive trends.” As numerous historians have demonstrated, the pope campaigned heavily on behalf of Christian Democracy: indeed, in the case of the 1948 Italian parliamentary elections, the pontiff literally turned Catholic Action into a grassroots electoral organization for the Democrazia Cristiana Italiana. Pius XII’s attempts to insure Europe’s “Christian future” extended to systematic interference in secular politics in hopes of dictating policy to both national Christian Democratic leaders and the NEI as a whole. Western Europe’s top Christian Democratic politicians – particularly Italian prime minister Alcide De Gasperi – had the immensely challenging task of trying to keep the pontiff in his place, politically speaking at least.823

However “bourgeois” Western Europe’s Catholic parties were in Togliatti’s eyes, the politicization visited upon Catholic activism by Pius XII’s anti-Communism had failed to achieve a stranglehold over that activism. For those laymen already inclined toward Catholic-socialist syncretism, Togliatti seemed far more persuasive than Pius XII. Furthermore, his speech was considerably more convincing than the deeply polemical, even tasteless attacks on Pius XII published earlier the same year by PCF philosopher Roger Garaudy in an attempt to co-opt Catholic personalism for the PCF’s purposes.824

What Togliatti proposed seemed, rather than co-optation, to center on partnership in the service of the most exalted among temporal causes, most convincing in its presentation because tempered with a dose of humility: “Bringing a large section of the Catholic workers and working people into the united front for the defense of peace, freedom, and the living standards of the

823 For an illuminating case study of De Gasperi’s successful balancing act of welcoming papal support and limiting papal encroachment, see Andrea Riccardi, Pio XII e Alcide De Gasperi: una storia segreta (Roma: Laterza, 2003).
824 I have in mind here particularly Garaudy, L’Église, le communisme et les chrétiens.
working people is one of the pre-conditions for rendering this defense effective.” What was undoubtedly, on the Italian Communist leader’s part, a scripted reaction to the decree against Catholic collaboration with Communism issued only four months earlier by the Holy Office seemed more convincing than a pontiff organizing congresses of the laity with one hand and swatting down nouvelle théologie with the other. The mobilizing power of the Stockholm Appeal campaign launched less than four months after the Third Cominform congress only magnified the reach of Togliatti’s new and improved, Cold War-proof main tendue.

**A Polish-led Catholic-Socialist International**

For Dziś i Jutro, Togliatti’s speech inspired a document circulated among the movement’s leadership and pitched by Kętrzyński with Piasecki’s apparent approval. This document was nothing less than a blueprint for a “Catholic-socialist international” dedicated to the pursuit of global peace through transnational cooperation at the European level. Beginning with a half-page excerpt from Togliatti’s speech, the document framed its proposed initiative as a project in the spirit of the Italian leader’s call, but adapted to Poland’s unique situation as the most firmly Catholic country in the socialist bloc:

> In fulfillment of the goals set out by Togliatti, it is clear that Poles, Marxists and Catholics alike, have a role to play as bringers of a sea change in the Catholic political attitudes of the masses of Western Europe: Poland is, after all, the first larger country with a predominantly Catholic population to become consistently engaged in laying the foundations of socialism.

Praising the Dziś i Jutro movement without identifying it by name, the document observed that, since “there have emerged in these years in Poland essentially Catholic organizations clearly

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founded on an acceptance of the new order” – read: Dziś i Jutro – “[t]hese considerations make Poles uniquely responsible to the Catholics of the Western world.”

There followed a declaration of the purpose of the new “international”: “Within this state of affairs emerges a design for the creation of an international movement of Catholic socialists.” Next came the designation of an appropriate set of starting points, countries whose progressive Catholics were deemed likely to form bonds most easily with each other, who would thus constitute the new international’s geographic foundation: Poland, France, and Italy. The Dziś i Jutro leadership would soon replace Italy, which would prove harder to penetrate than anticipated, with Belgium. Indeed, beginning with France, the blueprint enumerated specific organizations with which the Polish activists should begin, given the greatest likelihood of achieving the crucial first bilateral commitments: “the progressives [Union des Chrétiens Progressistes], Mission de Paris, Jeunesse de l’Église, L’Esprit, Témoignage Chrétien, Mouvement Populaire des Français, L’Économie et Humanisme.” Despite the intellectual or pastoral, rather than political, nature of most of these organizations, the document assigned the larger proposed international’s activities above all to the “political realm, with the reservation that ideological elements will also constitute a consolidating factor.”

For the initial stages of the international’s construction, the blueprint recommended secrecy, avoidance of “too ostentatious contact with Catholic groups openly condemned by the Vatican,” and initial incorporation only of organizations with “significant reach.” Nonetheless, the blueprint made clear the proposed international’s ultimate goals: “1) A campaign within the Catholic camp against reactionary elements; 2) Direct action against capitalism; 3) Cooperation
with the socialist camp.” Over the course of its functioning, the Catholic-socialist international was to seek “to reach, in the end, all progressive-Christian elements.”

This was, quite simply, a revolutionary proposal. Taking one page from the Cominform and another from its sworn opponent, Western European political Christian Democracy, the Dziś i Jutro leadership adopted a design aiming at nothing less than an institutional foundation for its alternative, anti-Marshall Plan vision of European integration. It was thus a logical consequence at once of the Wrocław congress, of Togliatti’s speech, and of Polish Catholic activism’s long and complex evolution toward Catholic-socialist syncretism. Indeed, it was in recognition of the debt owed to French Catholic thought and sociopolitical activism that the Dziś i Jutro blueprint advised going first after long-term partnerships in France. It is important to underscore, however, that Franco-Polish Catholic relations were not the full extent or ultimate goal of the proposed Catholic-socialist international: rather, the goal was an integrated, peace-advocating Europe aligned with the Soviet camp.

It was almost as though the Dziś i Jutro leadership had anticipated what Witold Gombrowicz would note to himself in his diary in March 1953 out of frustration with thoughtless Polish efforts to copy the European cultural mainstream: “Do not waste precious time on chasing Europe – you will never catch up with it. Do not try to become the Polish Matisse – your lack will give rise to no Braque. Instead, attack European art, be the ones who unmask; instead of pulling yourselves up to someone else’s maturity level, try rather to expose Europe’s immaturity.”

Dziś i Jutro thus set itself on the attack against the specific Schuman-Monnet-

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826 “Notatka w sprawie możliwej roli Katolików polskich na terenie Europy Zachodniej,” 1950 [likely January], AKSCC V/87.
827 Gombrowicz, Dziennik, 1953-1956, p. 44-45. The second reference is to Pablo Picasso’s fellow Cubist, Georges Braque.
Adenauer-De Gasperi model of European integration and the American Cold War camp writ large.

It must be noted from the outset that, in the end, the plan failed. Yet what is truly surprising is that it failed neither immediately nor completely. Indeed, it would take both contingent and structural obstacles inherent to the larger dynamics of interaction between the Soviet sphere of influence and the Vatican-centered Catholic world to doom Kętrzyński’s project. Undoubtedly, on some level, the project was launched – as Antoni Dudek and Grzegorz Pytel have suggested in the case of a different Dziś i Jutro project that proposed cooperation with East German Christians – in part to satisfy the ego of Bolesław Piasecki. Piasecki did, after all, have a megalomaniacal side that led him to believe in earnest that Dziś i Jutro had the potential to become the definitive Catholic-socialist power-broker not only in Poland, but indeed in all of Europe.828

Yet the fantastic quality of these larger aspirations in no way prevented Kętrzyński, Krasiński, Łubieński, and the rest of the Dziś i Jutro network from preparing the international’s foundations exactly as proposed in its blueprint: via close, lasting partnerships built on personal trust and political common ground with progressive-Catholic centers in France. With the overarching goal of global peace as a backdrop, the immediate goal was to multiply the number of Catholic-socialist international nodes as rapidly and as durably as possible. With respect to Italy – which we henceforth set aside – nothing was achieved, but solidly prepared groundwork in France and fortuitous contacts in Belgium turned both of those countries into initially promising centers of transnational Catholic-socialist-syncretist cooperation.

Assembling the various nodes of this international required a differentiated, systematic approach on the part of the *Dziś i Jutro* activists. The first step involved deepening and consolidating existing contacts. The Poles’ anchor was *Esprit*, whose editor had, after all, provided the inspiration for *Dziś i Jutro*’s Catholic-socialist syncretism. Kętrzyński and Łubieński then built on this ideology with contacts made between 1947 and 1950. Mounier’s death in March 1950, little more than a week after the Stockholm Appeal’s announcement, proved to be an important catalyst for considerable deepening of the *Dziś i Jutro-Esprit* partnership.

The second step of the planned international’s construction was pegged to the Partisans of Peace movement. The appeal swelled the movement’s ranks in time for its Second World Peace Congress, which, through a combination of sabotage and happenstance, fell at the last possible minute to Warsaw to host. *Dziś i Jutro* then took full advantage of the opportunity to integrate into its expanding network the various Catholic activists in attendance.\(^829\) Finally – and most damagingly to their cause once Stalinism turned decisively against the institutional Church in Poland – the *Dziś i Jutro* activists incorporated a spontaneous element that involved welcoming Western European interest in socialist Poland. Together, these approaches provided for a budding transnational support network that grew remarkably between 1950 and 1953 and, despite a significant downturn in 1953, persisted until the movement experienced its defining crisis in 1955-1956.

**Esprit and Anti-Germanism**

The week that the Stockholm Appeal was announced, a harried Wojciech Kętrzyński was in a creative tailspin. Running back and forth each day across the Swedish capital, he juggled

\(^829\) The story of the congress’s last-minute relocation to Warsaw is told complementarily by Deery, “The Dove Flies East”; Ullrich, “Preventing ‘Peace.’”
Partisans of Peace deliberations and informal meetings with Western European delegates as well as émigrés. The latter included one-time Znak co-founder Jerzy Radkowskí, who had come to Stockholm from Paris just to see Kętrzyński and to get news of Catholic activism back home in Poland. Kętrzyński only found time to write one letter during the entire time that he was in Sweden: its recipient was Emmanuel Mounier.

Despite several warm welcomes given to Kętrzyński and his Dziś i Jutro colleague Konstanty Łubieński at Esprit headquarters since 1947, the Pole had been at loggerheads recently with his icon. In February 1950, he had written to Mounier to express Dziś i Jutro’s regret, first, that a misunderstanding between the Polish and French foreign ministries had resulted in closure of the Institut Français de Varsovie, and second, that Esprit had printed over the course of the previous year a number of texts singing the praises of Tito’s Yugoslavia. Most noteworthy among these were pro-Tito articles by the literary icons of the French Resistance, Jean Cassou and Vercors (Jean Bruller).\(^{830}\) Heavily attacked in the Polish socialist establishment’s mainstream press, Esprit received a polite public defense from Dziś i Jutro, but Kętrzyński’s February letter contained a strong private rebuke:

> it seems to me that you ought to take care that your ideological position be intelligible also to the Communist circles of our part of the world, a good portion of which are attentive to the logic of your ideas as representative of honest, advanced Christians who, on the other hand, from time to time deign to reproach you in respect of your anti-Communism as being either born of opportunism or a “bourgeois mentality.” For my part, I would like simply to draw your attention to the fact that you now have readers all over the world and that you have a great role to play as representatives of the point of view that should be that of all Christians who do not want to see prevail a derisive Catholic crusade against Communism.\(^{831}\)

\(^{830}\) See, for example, Vercors, “Réponses,” Esprit, December 1949, p. 949-953.

\(^{831}\) The original is at Wojciech Kętrzyński, Letter to Emmanuel Mounier, 15 February 1950, IMEC ESP2.C1-02.06. A copy was retained in Kętrzyński’s master file of outgoing correspondence, which I cite extensively throughout the remainder of this chapter, particularly in cases where the archives of Kętrzyński’s correspondents are currently
Kętrzyński’s brutal honesty had a dual purpose: first, to express genuine ideological concern with the turn in *Esprit*’s political commentary; and, second, to gauge *Esprit*’s continued viability as a cornerstone of the proposed Catholic-socialist international, given the French journal’s somewhat softening support for the people’s democracies of the Soviet bloc. Remarkably, the Pole’s gambit paid off: rather than take exception, Mounier replied in early March in a conciliatory tone, “I thank you for understanding that, if we have had to enter recently into polemics with certain of the Communist positions, that in no way signifies a change in orientation on our part.”

Kętrzyński took the letter with him to Stockholm, re-read it, and evidently felt badly enough about the way that he had confronted Mounier to write him a quick, cryptic, but earnestly apologetic note from Stockholm. Promising extensive discussion of a new joint initiative – *Dziś i Jutro*’s new transnational political initiative, we may surmise – on his return to Warsaw, Kętrzyński sent the letter off and returned to his committee meetings to sign off on the Stockholm Appeal. Yet those further discussions with Mounier would never come to fruition; eight days after the appeal was issued, Mounier was dead of a heart attack.

A great deal of bitter invective has been hurled at *Dziś i Jutro* by its contemporaries and its historians alike. According to Adam Michnik, for example, “In the PAX [*Dziś i Jutro*] way of thinking, ‘dialogue’ is an encounter between totalitarians, drawing inspiration from a peculiarly understood Catholicism and a specific, very Soviet understanding of Marxism.” The conventional wisdom is that *Dziś i Jutro*’s ideology was an instrumental means to a political end, driven by cynical intentions unaccompanied by positive ethical or political content. Nonetheless,

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832 Emmanuel Mounier, Letter to Wojciech Kętrzyński, 8 March 1950, AKSCC V/88.
tempting as it might be to reduce the personalism of Dziś i Jutro – Stalinist though it was – to mere “totalitarianism,” this terminology is deeply problematic, particularly when crossed with the analytical vocabulary of religious studies. The Italian Fascist ideologue Giovanni Gentile famously referred to the Fascist State and the Catholic Church as “two totalitarian states” inevitably locked in competition.\footnote{834 Giovanni Gentile, Speech to the Italian Senate, 12 April 1930, in Giovanni Gentile. Discorsi parlamentari, ed. Francesco Perfetti (Bologna: il Mulino, 2004), p. 157-172, at p. 171.} Likewise, the Swiss Protestant theologian Karl Barth, in an extended reflection on the practice of Christian faith in a Marxist society, observed wisely, “‘Totalitarian’ also, in a way, is the grace of the gospel which we all are to proclaim, free grace, truly divine and truly human, claiming every man wholly for itself. [...] Indeed, grace is all-embracing, totalitarian.”\footnote{835 Karl Barth, “Letter to a Pastor in the German Democratic Republic,” in Karl Barth and Johannes Hamel, How to Serve God in a Marxist Land (New York: National Board of Young Men’s Christian Associations, 1959), p. 45-80, at p. 58.}

Seen at the level of individual thinkers and activists, Dziś i Jutro/PAX is neither simply a smokescreen deployed by Piasecki nor a “totalitarian” political movement denigrating religious faith. Even a quick glance at the personal correspondence between the staffs of Dziś i Jutro and Esprit reveals that these people liked each other and respected each other not only as brothers in arms, but indeed as friends. We must not forget this very real human element when reflecting on the reasons for Dziś i Jutro/PAX’s success in the international arena. In the end, there was genuine interpersonal affection underlying the intellectual and political projects of progressive Catholicism. A monocausal thesis about indoctrination or cynicism cannot suffice to explain the Polish progressive Catholics and their transnational partnerships.

Kętrzyński may not have been representative of the entire Dziś i Jutro movement, but he and the half-dozen or so other movement leaders who dealt most extensively with Dziś i Jutro’s friends from abroad felt utterly crushed by Mounier’s death. Their emotional response is clear in
the coverage devoted by the journal to commemorating the French thinker, including almost an entire special issue of *Dziś i Jutro*. Mounier’s death, moreover, bound them ever more profoundly to his successors at *Esprit*, who reciprocated the bond in no uncertain terms.

On hearing of Mounier’s death over Polish radio on his return from Stockholm, Kętrzyński immediately sat down to draft two letters, one to Jean-Marie Domenach, the young *Esprit* editorial secretary whom Kętrzyński had first met in 1947 in Paris, and one on behalf of the entire *Dziś i Jutro* movement to the entire *Esprit* staff. In the latter letter, he wrote,

> It is incumbent upon us all, among Christian activists for the right of Christendom to participate in the making of history, to prevent the abysses of misunderstanding from opening among the working masses who, by the socialist road, seek the path to liberty – and Christian thought, which points them in this pursuit to the path that leads to God. Such was, according to our own understanding of the phenomenal body of work of Emmanuel Mounier, the message that, in defiance of the everyday difficulties and contradictions of our era, he attempted to bring to fruition for *Esprit* and for the personalist movement. We wish for our brothers, the staff of *Esprit*, that they will continue to carry out this message. We will participate in this effort in all solidarity as companions in work and combat.

Moreover, Kętrzyński pledged the balance of *Dziś i Jutro*’s credit with *Esprit* – 4200 unclaimed francs for article reprints and permissions – to aid Mounier’s widow and children, left suddenly without income.

> The reply from Domenach – who received a promotion to rédauteur-en-chef, or managing editor, of *Esprit*, alongside Swiss philosopher Albert Béguin’s elevation to directeur

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837 *Dziś i Jutro* Staff [Wojciech Kętrzyński], Letter to *Esprit* Staff, 28 March 1950, AKSCC V/87.

de la revue, or executive editor—made it immediately clear that Dziś i Jutro could count on him for close, lasting contact.\footnote{This division of labor is common in French-language journals: the French rédacteur-en-chef corresponds more accurately to the English-language “managing editor” (rather than, literally, “editor-in-chief”), while the directeur de la revue position corresponds to that of “executive editor.” Domenach would become directeur on Béguin’s death in 1957, but for the seven years that he served as lieutenant to Béguin, he nonetheless overshadowed somewhat the latter’s public reputation with his political and social activism.}

Thanking Kętrzyński and his fellow Dziś i Jutro personnel for their condolences, which have “truly touched our hearts,” Domenach added, “I hope that you will want to maintain with me the amicable contact that you have shared with Emmanuel Mounier.”\footnote{As mentioned briefly in Chapter 6, Jean-Marie Domenach insisted in 1982, looking back on decades of Esprit’s activities and influence outside France, that “the progressive Catholics of PAX, who served as allies” of the Soviet Union, had “presented themselves to be allowed into the good graces of Esprit.” According to Domenach, trips made to Poland in the early 1950s “put him on his guard against these advances.” However, Domenach’s correspondence with Dziś i Jutro and the record of his voyages to Poland – covered in the next chapter – demonstrate that, more than a simple error of fact, Domenach’s 1982 printed recollection was a gross distortion of the truth intended to distance himself and Esprit from the Stalinist period of Polish Catholic activism. Esprit was Dziś i Jutro’s most dependable, enthusiastic partner in the Catholic-socialist international, and Domenach, in particular, presented himself in the early 1950s as being completely in line with Dziś i Jutro’s intellectual and political pursuits. See Domenach, “L’Internationale personnaliste,” p. 175.}

Indeed, the emotional bond that Domenach and Kętrzyński developed almost overnight combined with certain qualities of Domenach’s personality to create a situation in which Dziś i Jutro and Esprit entered into an overtly political alliance without Kętrzyński ever even needing to make an explicit pitch to the new rédacteur-en-chef. Here, Domenach and Kętrzyński’s shared experience as active young members of the anti-Nazi resistance in their respective countries helped to bring them almost immediately onto the same page. Though Kętrzyński was six years older, they shared the same core generational event: World War II.\footnote{The notion of “generations” that I adopt here follows from Karl Mannheim’s classic argument with respect to the need to look beyond biology to shared “sociology of knowledge” as the basis for any periodization of “generations.” In turn, the specific notion of a consciousness-defining “generational event” comes from Lewis S. Feuer. See Mannheim, “The Problem of Generations”; Feuer, The Conflict of Generations, p. 25-26.} Moreover, they shared similar experiences of loss and Christian martyrdom at German hands: for Domenach, his best friend Gilbert Dru; for Kętrzyński, the young KN fighter Włodzimierz Pietrzak. These two
young personalists died only weeks apart at the hands of the same enemy, albeit on opposite sides of Europe.

Unlike Mounier, then, who had managed to position *Esprit* on the cutting edge of current events while nonetheless keeping everyone guessing as to his exact policy agenda and partisan affiliation, Domenach left nothing hidden. Though he was the junior editor to Béguin, his anti-Germanism quickly set the tone for *Esprit’s* new political agenda and entered into the welcoming embrace of the *Dziś i Jutro* movement. An opponent of both European integration and the re-militarization of Western Europe, Domenach wrote to Kętrzyński already in his fifth month as an *Esprit* editor, “We are entering a difficult period, and the rearmament will aggravate France’s situation even further. We are going to regroup our forces in order to fight against fanaticism and the spirit of war, but in spite of the confidence that we have, there are days when the future seems deeply ominous.”

Three months later, Domenach could only nod his head in agreement with the anti-colonialist agenda espoused by Kętrzyński in a *J’accuse*-style rant against Western European Christians, who, the Polish activist argued, had capitulated to the false premise of Christian Democratic political action. Namely, “out of fear, evidently, of suffering and chaos that await them on the path toward a better tomorrow,” even the most pious of “Catholic opinion in the West” warmly embraced “‘an established, yet odious, order,’ i.e. the Angers verdict, the Algerian conspiracy, the alliance with Bao Dai.” Meanwhile, Kętrzyński argued, Western Europeans needed to summon up courage as Christians morally obliged to struggle for social justice in the temporal realm.

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The courage that Western Europeans needed, the Polish activist argued, was to accept the chaos of revolution as a way-station en route to a much better tomorrow than the present chaos of colonialism and cold war could ever allow one to imagine. Kętrzyński thus advocated for France to follow Poland’s path of “revolutionary, tragic disorder,” from which could only spring forth the framework for a new, better order – in other words, the path of revolutionary socialism. In enthusiastic agreement with his Polish colleague, Domenach lobbied Béguin to organize a public event for all of Esprit’s collaborators and broader network in France to meet with Kętrzyński and also Łubieński. This public event came to fruition in the early fall of 1951.

In addition to facilitating continued expansion of Dziś i Jutro’s contacts among Francophone Catholic activists, the Esprit-Dziś i Jutro axis of partnership yielded tangible policy-related consequences bearing directly on the global peace campaign. Namely, while the Stockholm Appeal partisans were converging on Warsaw in November 1950, Domenach was helping to launch a Comité Français pour la Solution Pacifique du Problème Allemand (French Committee for the Peaceful Solution of the German Problem). In 1952, Domenach signed on as co-chair – with Michel Bruguier, a Parisian appellate court prosecutor – for an international conference sponsored by this committee and its German partners in a neutral location, for which Odense, Denmark was selected. Invited in March 1952 to join the conference executive

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845 Albert Béguin, Letter to Konstanty Łubieński, 17 August 1951, AKSCC V/90.
committee, Kętrzyński, however, could not attend its meeting in West Germany for lack of a visa.\footnote{Jean-Marie Domenach and Michel Bruguier, Letter to [Wojciech Kętrzyński], 10 March 1952, AKSCC V/92.} In the end, the conference was something of a disaster: held only three months after its executive committee first met, its leadership dropped the ball on coordination with the Danish government, which ended up refusing visas to almost all invitees from Austria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland.\footnote{Of the many invited Poles, only the PAX-affiliated biblical scholar Rev. Eugeniusz Dąbrowski received a visa to attend.}

The fact that the East German delegation was limited to two lesser figures was particularly bad news for a conference designed to convince Germans above all to enter into collective sociopolitical action against Europe’s remilitarization. In October 1950, this had become a concrete political prospect, following the public presentation by French prime minister René Pleven of plans for a “European defense community.”\footnote{On the Pleven Plan, see Sutton, France and the Construction of Europe, p. 64-68.} Intended as a rapid-fire follow-up to the economic integration announced in the Schuman Plan of June 1950, the Pleven Plan raised over half of Europe up in arms on the premise that the creation of NATO had endangered the world sufficiently without giving the West German government, only five years after Hitler’s fall, a share in governance over Western Europe’s military arsenal.

As the working document produced by the Odense Conference declared, the goal was not to strip Germany of its rights, but to “impede the renaissance of militarism in Germany” by means of a collective “neutralization” of the region. The declaration suggested that a definitive disarmament of Germany should lead to the (voluntary) “disarmament of Germany’s neighbors,” which, in turn, could result in “general simultaneous, progressive, and controlled disarmament” of the entire world.\footnote{“Document de Travail élaboré à l’occasion de la Conférence d’Odense en vue de la recherche d’une solution pacifique du problème allemand,” 15 June 1952, AKSCC V/92. For a published (revised) version of the document, 392}
The goals were entirely unrealistic, going fundamentally against the grain of Cold War Realpolitik, yet their spirit was attractive at least as a statement of principle for peace activists behind the Iron Curtain. The one Pole who had made it to Odense was Rev. Eugeniusz Dąbrowski (1901-1970), a theology professor closely tied to Dziś i Jutro, whose retranslation of the New Testament, reprinted by the PAX publishing house, sold out in 50,000 copies almost overnight. Though Dziś i Jutro activists could never get away with proposing Polish, let alone Soviet disarmament, Dąbrowski and Kętrzyński together took the document back to the PKOP.

One particular plank in the declaration, calling the reunification of a demilitarized Germany a “legitimate exigency of the German people acquired in the course of history,” gained the approval of the Polish socialists in the committee, led by long-time Communist partisan Ostap Dłuski. With the blessing of as yet-unidentified higher-ups in the PZPR, Dłuski invited Dominik Horodyński from PAX – the Dziś i Jutro movement’s new name since April 1952 – to co-chair beginning in the summer of 1953 a Polish Committee for the Peaceful Solution of the German Problem. It was for the purposes of launching this committee that Domenach would make his first trip to Poland, in January 1954. Paradoxically, Domenach would thus be setting up the perverse political legacy of Dziś i Jutro and Esprit’s joint Catholic-socialist collaboration: anti-German, anti-European Catholic activism at a time when the institutional Catholic Church was under heavy attack in Poland.

**Catholic Peace and the Progressive Core**

*Dziś i Jutro*’s first direct connection to the network of self-proclaimed French “progressive Christians” came in Wrocław in 1948 in the person of André Mandouze, who,

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before moving to Algeria, had been the early *spíritus movens* behind the UCP.\textsuperscript{852} Though Mandouze’s move to Algeria and engagement in anti-colonial activism prevented him from being physically present at the movement’s first meetings, he was its definitive ideologue. In addition to the Éditions du Temps Présent text on progressive Christianity already known to us as a key source of inspiration for *Dziś i Jutro*’s ideological evolution, Mandouze printed a truncated version of his arguments in a fall 1948 issue of *Esprit*. This text became a mission statement for the UCP: “We progressive Christians, who have not faltered in our denunciation of American imperialism and its varied henchmen, think that it is inaccurate to transpose into the realm of the spiritual the ‘East-West’ opposition that is only too evident on political terrain.”\textsuperscript{853}

Underlying this rejection of the East-Wide divide was the French progressives’ core tenet that the Catholic Church should keep its hands off of their politics. As Mandouze put it, “The position of progressive Christians is clear, as much in the religious realm as in the political realm. As members of the Church, we are subject to no prohibition to accept from Caesar things that pertain to the kingdom of God. As citizens, we are subject to no order to receive representatives of God when the question at hand pertains to the domain of Caesar.”\textsuperscript{854}

The UCP, a small political action-group launched with the intention of creating a new Christian Left in France, instead spent most of its time anticipating and preparing for attacks from the Church.\textsuperscript{855} Although Mounier accepted the UCP members’ activism as “legitimate,” he refused to ally *Esprit* with them.\textsuperscript{856} Meanwhile, *Témoignage Chrétien*, the nominally “progressive” Catholic weekly that, in fact, was experiencing a tug of war between its old, anti-Communist editor Father Gaston Fessard and its new, more center-left editor Jean Baboulène,

\textsuperscript{852} Mandouze’s version of the story of the UCP’s creation is at Mandouze, *Mémoires d’outre-siècle*, I, p. 188-191.
\textsuperscript{854} Quoted at Mandouze, *Mémoires d’outre-siècle*, I, p. 189.
\textsuperscript{855} See, for example, Domenach and de Montvalon, *The Catholic Avant-Garde*, p. 168-169.
\textsuperscript{856} See, for example, E.M. [Emmanuel Mounier], “Les chrétiens progressistes,” *Esprit*, November 1948, p. 744-746.
steered clear of the UCP. Indeed, Mandouze had broken with \textit{Témoignage Chrétien} quite notoriously in November 1945 over Fessard’s increasing intolerance toward socialism. Association with the prominent but controversial Mandouze thus proved to be a double-edged sword for the UCP from its very inception.

The keen awareness on the part of UCP leaders like Marcel Moiroud and Max Stern of their precarious position in political and religious domains alike translated into a wariness to enter into any sort of partnership with the Polish activists. Quite simply, Mandouze aside, the UCP activists were afraid of being associated with Eastern European Catholic socialists – with good reason, as would subsequently become clear. Yet there was contact between \textit{Dziś i Jutro} and the UCP, and the form that it assumed only underscores the significance of the global peace campaign as the bedrock of \textit{Dziś i Jutro}’s international activism.

By the fall of 1950, the Stockholm Appeal had become a matter of principal significance not just for the progressive Catholics, but indeed for Polish society as a whole in the wake of a months-long incessant barrage of leaflets, canvassing, and pressure in the workplace and elsewhere to sign the appeal. According to the PKOP’s own statistics, 136,000 three-person canvassing teams; four million printed copies of the appeal; and 88,000 local peace committees by late June 1950 had yielded 18 million signatures from adult Poles, with only 190,000 failing to sign.\footnote{Wittner, \textit{One World or None}, p. 237.} Even allowing for significant inflation of these statistics, impressionistic evidence alone tells us that the campaign was extensive and effective.\footnote{As Lawrence S. Wittner wryly observes, “Indeed, at one point the announced number of signers from Bulgaria exceeded that country’s population, and in other countries, such as Hungary, children under five years of age would have had to be included to justify the figures.” Wittner, \textit{One World or None}, p. 183.}

With the start of the Korean War in late June 1950 – less than a year after Mao Tsetung’s declaration of the People’s Republic of China – the appeal campaign took on a sense of
particular urgency. The predominant fear was that East Asia might prove to be the spark igniting an American-Soviet atomic showdown.\footnote{See also Moro, “The Catholic Church, Italian Catholics and Peace Movements.”} Bolesław Piasecki, for example, wrote that the Korean conflict only underscored that, “for Polish Catholics, their place is wherever the living interests of the Polish nation lie. [...] The engagement of Catholics in the global movement of the defense of peace follows the line of national interest and thereby builds the proper perspective for their co-existence with Marxists.”\footnote{Bolesław Piasecki, “Za pokojem – jedność narodu,” Dziś i Jutro, 1-8 October 1950.} Worldwide, by year’s end, upwards of 500 million signatures had supposedly been gathered.

Faced with an apparently successful Stockholm Appeal campaign pulled off by the Partisans of Peace, Western governments began to view the Communist-led peace movement as a tangible threat. The Second World Peace Congress, scheduled to be held in mid-November 1950, first in London, then in Sheffield, was torpedoed at the last minute by the British Foreign Office, which refused almost 50% of prospective participants’ visas.\footnote{Ullrich, “Preventing Peace,” p. 16.}

Five days before the congress was to have opened, Frédéric Joliot-Curie and his fellow executive committee members, who had been turned back at the port of Dover, secured the PKOP’s enthusiastic support for Warsaw to host the congress.\footnote{Deery, “The Dove Flies East,” p. 463.} The Dziś i Jutro editorial staff scurried to re-write the cover for their 19 November issue, acclaiming their government for “not being afraid of world peace” – this, in contrast with the Brits, who had chosen to “seal the lips” of the World Movement of Defenders of Peace while seeking the approval of “American editors.”\footnote{W.K. [Wojciech Kętrzyński], “Kongres Pokoju odbędzie się w Warszawie,” Dziś i Jutro, 19 November 1950.} Unsurprisingly, hosted as it was by a people’s democracy, the congress turned into a carefully choreographed “Communist conference,” complete with cheering crowds “who threw
flowers and money” at arriving delegates. Polish president Boleslaw Bierut delivered an address lauding the congress as “this most illustrious assembly in the history of man.”

For our purposes, the congress itself, which lasted 16-22 November, is of far less consequence than the opportunity that it created for Dziś i Jutro to host an unprecedented conference of Catholic-socialist peace activists on the socialist soil of Warsaw. Given how hastily the congress was prepared, the Dziś i Jutro meeting, which took place on the congress’s second day, amounted to a spontaneously arranged celebration coinciding with the fifth anniversary of Dziś i Jutro itself. With Piasecki hosting the celebratory dinner and Kętrzyński running the substantive meeting that preceded it, the goal of the gathering – clear in Kętrzyński’s typed post-game report for Piasecki – was to push the project of a Catholic-socialist international as aggressively as possible on selected activists from Western Europe.

For this reason, though he played host to a total of 80 Catholic participants from around the world, Kętrzyński in his notes virtually ignored the delegations from Canada, Korea, Madagascar, and Vietnam. Instead, he focused his attention almost exclusively on Catholic activists hailing from Belgium, France, and Italy, who were not only an object of Polish interest, but indeed themselves fascinated by socialist Poland. As Kętrzyński put it, the delegates from these countries in particular “demonstrated a deeper interest in the ideological situation of Catholics in Poland, particularly Catholics concentrated in or around our milieu.”

Lauding the abbé Boulier as the ideal-type of a Western European partner for Dziś i Jutro, Kętrzyński nonetheless focused his attention on individuals and groups less well known to

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864 The first quotation is from Roger Wilson, an Australian participant of the 1950 congress interviewed and quoted in Deery, “The Dove Flies East,” p. 466. Bierut is quoted at Wittner, One World or None, p. 184.
the Polish movement. In particular, he sought out “Max Stern and his group of *Chrétiens progressistes*,” who “represent a thesis of peaceful enracination of Catholicism within socialism.” Lauding the French progressives’ stance, Kętrzyński summarized their attitude as “Let us participate in the political undertakings of Communists, and the ideological complications will fall away.” In other words, the UCP delegation to the Second World Peace Congress demonstrated an almost identical attitude to the *Dziś i Jutro* pursuit of “Christianizing” socialism from within. The potential for cooperation born directly of a meeting occasioned by the peace congress seemed promising.

However, on their return to Paris, Stern and the other UCP delegates learned from their organization’s secretary general Marcel Moiroud that the union was falling apart. As Yvon Tranvouez has pointed out, the Stockholm Appeal campaign revealed the diversity of the progressive Christian milieux.867 Those more inclined simply toward making good on *nouvelle théologie*, *Jeunesse de l’Église*, and the Mission de France’s promises of mission to the proletariat disapproved of a faction growing in number and vibrancy under the elusive Ella Sauvageot (1900-1962).868 Author of an appeal called “Christians against the atomic bomb” published in the PCF journal *L’Humanité* in May 1950, Sauvageot and her supporters were denounced by every Catholic journal in France. As Moiroud put it, because of the UCP’s overt engagement in the Communist-led peace movement, “we were often on the defensive for having supposedly locked ourselves into an exclusively political perspective, relegating religious concerns to the status of something less than accessories.”869

869 Marcel Moiroud, “La participation des chrétiens français au Mouvement de la Paix,” quoted at Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes*, p. 89. On the UCP’s decline and collapse, see Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes*, p. 84-89; and, more extensively, Tranvouez, “1950.”
It is for this reason that it took Moiroud several months to respond to Kętrzyński’s proposal to organize a joint Franco-Polish Catholic debate on the relationship between Catholicism and Marxism. Moiroud’s answer underscores just how effective the anti-UCP campaign had been. Although glad to organize “an international gathering of Christians on the problem of peace,” Moiroud categorically refused to sanction a debate on Catholicism and Marxism – after all, it was this issue that was actively killing the UCP at that very moment – for “The Christianity-Marxism question is thus not politically correct in France. To pose it would be to perform an act of fragmentation and to retard the development of the peace movement.”

Though Moiroud might easily have spun his answer to Kętrzyński as a heroic refusal to collaborate in a debate whose terms were set by Catholic-socialist activists thriving under Stalinism, he instead passed the buck, citing political correctness. As clear as his desire was to work together with Dziś i Jutro, even clearer was the weakness of the UCP: indeed, within six months, it folded under pressure from the French Episcopate.

Nonetheless, the air that had gone out of the UCP was immediately taken in by La Quinzaine, a biweekly journal that began appearing in Paris in November 1950, as part of the progressive-Catholic groundswell triggered by the Stockholm Appeal. The journal’s circulation was low, its reach limited, but the entire French Catholic world of the early 1950s heard its call. As Yvon Tranvoieze has put it,

For this biweekly born in – and largely of – Cold War contingency, the struggle for peace was a foundational element of a broader struggle to resolve the great problems of French society and of the postwar world: the exploitation of the working class and the oppression of colonial peoples. One could even say that one of the principal preoccupations of this journal was to render intelligible the logical linkage between these problems.

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870 Marcel Moiroud, Letter to Wojciech Kętrzyński, 24 May 1951, AKSCC V/90.
871 As Michel Winock has put it, “La Quinzaine became, between 1950 and 1955, the rallying point for the entire Catholic extreme Left.” Winock, “Les générations intellectuelles,” p. 31.
Likewise, anticipating the activities of Domenach’s committee, *La Quinzaine* advocated “building a Europe with a disarmed Germany.”

This is precisely the same agenda that the *Dziś i Jutro* movement set out for itself in the wake of the Wroclaw congress. Indeed, while *Esprit* remained principally a cultural and intellectual journal even after Mounier’s death opened the door for Domenach to push his own political agenda, *La Quinzaine* was born as a political journal. It was thus the newer journal that seemed to be the most ideologically obvious partner for *Dziś i Jutro* among French Catholic activists. Even when *Esprit* did speak out on international politics, *La Quinzaine* was still more radical in its Catholic-socialist syncretism. The two journals occasionally found themselves in conflict, particularly on philosophical grounds, rejecting as *La Quinzaine* did Jacques Maritain’s distinction between the spiritual and the temporal realms. Jean Lacroix of *Esprit* thus accused the *Quinzaine* staff of taking an integralist approach to socialism, believing not only that everything socialist should be made Christian, but indeed that everything Christian should be made socialist.

When Max Stern and the other activists who had impressed Kętrzyński in Warsaw jumped ship from the UCP, it was to *La Quinzaine* that they went. There they joined Ella Sauvageot’s anti-atomic PCF-sympathizers as well as a wide variety of progressive refugees from across the French Catholic world. Indeed, as the Vatican, operating principally through the French Episcopate, slowly derailed more and more progressive movements, ideas, and individuals over the first half of the 1950s – clamping down on *nouvelle théologie* in 1950,

872 Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes*, p. 139.
873 Jean Lacroix, “Intégrisme et liberté,” *Esprit*, February 1953, p. 293-306. Jean-Marie Domenach later offered a half-hearted apology for Lacroix’s article in a letter to the staff of *La Quinzaine*: “I am glad that the too-strong words of Lacroix in his *Esprit* article have not given rise to an inopportune controversy.” See Domenach, Letter to Jacques Chatagner, 9 March 1953, quoted at Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes*, p. 181.
pulling the last card from the UCP’s deck in 1951, shutting down the worker-priests and the
Jeunesse de l’Église in 1953, defrocking Boulier that same year, and banning Chenu and Congar
from teaching in 1954 – it was La Quinzaine that became their refuge.

Were these all “Stalinist Christians”?\(^\text{874}\) Undoubtedly, no – but they were all willing to go
to great lengths with their pens and their typewriters to make the Soviet camp look good, ideally
at the West’s expense. Their unwitting partners in this enterprise included other Catholic journals
inspired by revolutionary personalism, among them, Dorothy Day’s accomplished and socially
intrepid, US-based Catholic Worker.\(^\text{875}\) This commonality of philosophical and political goals
made La Quinzaine immensely attractive to Dziś i Jutro, and the feeling was mutual.

One of La Quinzaine’s staff writers, Geneviève Clairbois, visited Poland in the spring of
1951 and prepared a series of articles for the journal relating her first-hand observations. Her
argumentation was perhaps most reminiscent of Iwaszkiewicz’s promotional tour in advance of
the Wrocław congress, for she emphasized peace as a necessary condition of maintaining and
deepening the achievements of the socialist reconstruction of postwar Poland: “Poland of 1951?
Ruins, an immense construction site, a new atmosphere consisting of austerity and enthusiasm.
One objective: reconstruction. One means: planning. One condition: peace.”

On the questions of whether Poles were free and happy under Stalinist socialism,
Clairbois equivocated, explaining, “It is impossible to respond to these questions if one does not
put oneself in the shoes of a new society in the process of forging itself.” Finally – and, one

\(^{874}\) I take this term from the title of Yvon Tranvouez’s fifth chapter – “Des chrétiens staliniens?” – in Catholiques et
communistes. See Tranvouez, Catholiques et communistes, p. 137.

\(^{875}\) Indeed, Catholic Worker editorial board member Michael Harrington wrote a piece for La Quinzaine in
November 1952 accusing many Americans of having difficulty “distinguishing Christ from NATO.” See Michael
Harrington, “Il y a des Américains qui distinguent difficilement le Christ du NATO,” La Quinzaine, 15 November
1952. On the Catholic Worker, see, for example, James Terence Fisher, The Catholic Counterculture in America,
1933-1962 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Anne Klejment and Nancy L. Roberts, eds,
American Catholic Pacifism: The Influence of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement (Westport: Praeger,
1996). On Michael Harrington in particular, see Maurice Isserman, The Other American: The Life of Michael
Harrington (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000).
might even say, scandously – Clairbois insisted that Stalinist Poland featured universal “attachment and respect for the person of the priest” – this, at a time when the Polish establishment, in violation of the Accord concluded with the Episcopate one year earlier, had begun imprisoning priests in ever larger numbers, and a bishop as well.\footnote{Geneviève Clairbois, “Impressions de Pologne, I : La paix et le Plan de 6 ans,” \textit{La Quinzaine}, 15 May 1951; Clairbois, “Impressions de Pologne, II : Les Polonais travaillent....,” \textit{La Quinzaine}, 1 June 1951; Clairbois, “Impressions de Pologne, III : Peut-on conduire?,” \textit{La Quinzaine}, 15 June 1951. See also Geneviève Clairbois, “Problèmes religieux de la Pologne nouvelle,” \textit{La Quinzaine}, 15 June 1951. Yvon Tranvouez offers informative commentary on this series of articles at Tranvouez, \textit{Catholiques et communistes}, p. 148.}

Indeed, perhaps \textit{La Quinzaine}’s greatest utility as part of \textit{Dziś i Jutro}’s Catholic-socialist project was its staff’s willingness to stand by \textit{Dziś i Jutro}. In fact, \textit{La Quinzaine} subsequently became a platform used by the \textit{Dziś i Jutro}/PAX activists to distract from the increasingly compromising fact of the Poles’ alliance with the same Stalinist establishment that was making a hard, shameless turn against the institutional Church.\footnote{\textit{La Quinzaine}, for example, reprinted in 1954 and 1955 a number of political-advocacy texts in translation from the PAX movement’s \textit{Dziś i Jutro} weekly and \textit{Słowo Powszechne} daily. See, for example, “Traduire la notion d’amour du prochain en langage du XXe siècle,” \textit{La Quinzaine}, 15 June 1954; Jerzy Krasnowolski, “Valeur du catholicisme dans le monde socialiste?,” \textit{La Quinzaine}, 15 January 1955.} Down the stretch, then, and in times of crisis, \textit{La Quinzaine} proved indispensable. For the day-to-day, however, Kętrzyński on behalf of the \textit{Dziś i Jutro} movement and its PAX successor took care to pursue a moderate approach, always privileging \textit{Esprit} over \textit{La Quinzaine}, and avoiding the appearance of paying disproportionate attention to \textit{La Quinzaine} during his visits to Paris. \textit{La Quinzaine} constituted a perfect match for the Catholic-socialist international, but it alone would not suffice to get anything done.

\textbf{The Peace of Christ and the Society of Jesus}

Catholic peace organizations were slower to grow and flourish in postwar Europe than their Communist-led counterparts. A Francophone Mouvement International des Étudiants Catholiques based out of Fribourg, Switzerland, had been founded in 1921, but the movement –
unlike the JOC, JÉC, and JAC movements of Belgium and France – shut down completely for the duration of the Second World War. By the time that the Vatican green-lighted the movement’s reactivation in 1947 under the name of Pax Romana – adding also a second section, called the Mouvement International des Intellectuels Catholiques – the movement had completely lost touch with the pressing geopolitical and social problems of the postwar decade. It would take until 1956 for Pius XII, his health in decline, to stop pressuring the Holy See to treat Pax Romana like an auxiliary unit of Catholic Action. The movement would subsequently blossom, re-centering itself on mission in the Third World and incorporating also a significant Catholic lay contribution from the Soviet Bloc. 878

By 1950, however, there was a second, more substantial transnational Catholic peace network on the rise: Pax Christi. Initiated in 1945 and run locally out of Tours for five years by one laywoman backed by one bishop, both of whom had spent time in STO camps, Pax Christi had one overarching goal: Franco-German rapprochement. 879 In 1950, the French Episcopate took control over the movement, incorporating into its statute the stipulation that its president would be the cardinal-primate of France, its vice-president a leading lay activist, and its movement secretary a frocked activist from a religious order. The first individuals to whom these

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878 Virtually no scholarship has been devoted to Pax Romana. Philippe Chenaux discusses its roots briefly in Chenaux, Une Europe Vaticane?, p. 67-74; and former Pax Romana secretary-general Ramon Sugranyes de Franch published a thin study of Catholic international organizations using Pax Romana as his case study: Ramon Sugranyes de Franch, Die internationalen katholischen Organisationen (Aschaffenburg: Paul Pattloch Verlag, 1972).

tasks fell were, respectively, Cardinal Maurice Feltin (1883-1975) of Paris, Maurice Vaussard (1888-1978), and the Jesuit priest Robert Bosc (1909-1979).

Much could be said about each of these men, but, given Feltin’s largely symbolic role as the movement’s new head, it was to Vaussard and Bosc that the real responsibility fell of shaping the new face of transnational Catholic peace activism in Europe. More will be said momentarily of Bosc, who cut his teeth as an activist in Pax Christi, but Maurice Vaussard came to the movement with a long and distinguished career of Catholic lay activism. A prolific author of anti-nationalist and anti-war treatises since 1908, he had known Giuseppe Toniolo, the father of Italian social Catholicism; flirted briefly with Action Française; and found himself devastated by the human and material losses of the Great War. Already in 1915, inspired by the need to expose, as Ilaria Biagioli has put it, “the perils of nationalism for humanity and the means of combatting it,” Vaussard published Pour ceux qui survivront, demanding that the powers concluding the war make of their “victory a durable victory constituting also a Christian victory.”

Though lacking formal training as a historian, Vaussard drew on his activist’s understanding of French and Italian language and politics, as well as the Catholic traditions of both countries, to begin producing a series of histories of Franco-Italian Catholic life. Over the next three decades, Vaussard produced cornerstones of the Franco-Italian historiography of Catholic knowledge, nationalism, Christian Democracy, and Jansenism. With an approach to social Catholicism that would locate him somewhere between Toniolo and Korniłowicz, Vaussard repeatedly underscored in his writings his belief that nationalism was “one of the most

serious, if not the most serious” problems facing the modern world, and Catholics in it. Following a series of anti-Action Française tracts published in the early 1920s – his writings on the need to be “catholique, d’abord,” rather than “politique, d’abord,” would later help his friend Jacques Maritain to take the final decision to break with Maurras’s movement – Vaussard received financial backing for a Bulletin Catholique International, which he edited from 1925 to 1933, advocating “international Catholic solidarity.” Vaussard was, in other words, the consummate Catholic peace activist, seasoned in both its theory and practice.

It is important to underscore Vaussard’s background as an anti-nationalist activist who “always sought the comfort of the sitting pope” because this background would seem to be completely at odds with the course that he subsequently pursued with respect to Dziś i Jutro/PAX. Pierre Debray, a member of the French permanent national commission of the (secular) Mouvement pour la Paix, had attended the Dziś i Jutro anniversary meeting at the 1950 Warsaw Peace Congress. Afterward, he corresponded with Wojciech Kętrzyński, and – though Kętrzyński chose not to attempt incorporation of the Mouvement pour la Paix into the Catholic-socialist international project – Debray put Kętrzyński and Vaussard in touch. This Pax Christi contact would prove to be almost as lucrative for Dziś i Jutro as the Esprit contact.

Indeed, long after the Vatican had shone its spotlight on Dziś i Jutro’s Catholic-socialist

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884 In advance of the peace congress, Debray’s writings had received a resounding endorsement in a front-page commentary by Dziś i Jutro: Dominik Horodyński, “Świadectwo konieczne,” Dziś i Jutro, 12 November 1950.
885 Debray was clearly sold on the merits of cross-Iron Curtain cooperation in Catholic peace activism. In a 1951 proposal for a future Franco-Polish activists’ meeting in Warsaw, he suggested to Kętrzyński that “especially the experience of the World Congress, where we were installed in the homes of workers, was very satisfying. Even though from the standpoint of comfort it was not very good, it would thus be extremely beneficial from all points of view to house the French Catholic intellectuals in presbyteries or religious houses, or in the homes of Polish Catholic intellectuals.” Nonetheless, Kętrzyński did not think so highly of Debray, describing him as “plagued by fundamental doubts.” For the Debray quote, see Pierre Debray, Letter to Wojciech Kętrzyński, September 1951, AKSCC V/90; for Kętrzyński’s opinion of Debray, see “Notatka sprawozdawcza ze spotkania katolików.” For the introduction, see Maurice Vaussard, Letter to Dziś i Jutro Editor, 8 March 1952, AKSCC V/92.
syncretism in mid-1955 and condemned it as such, Vaussard would remain one of the Polish movement’s most ardent advocates.

Unlike the Communist-led peace movement, Pax Christi was interested in bringing Christians – in the interdenominational sense of both Catholics and Protestants – in both the FRG and the GDR into conversation with the French Catholic world. In this pursuit, its leadership sought all available channels to access and persuade those Christian communities to come to the table. As Vaussard put it in 1952, “Nothing would be worse for ‘peaceful coexistence’ than closed doors, for then one can believe or imagine that anything and everything is taking place behind them.”886 In the spirit of opening doors, then, and building East-West connections that would reinforce his organization’s quest for a durable Christian foundation of Franco-German reconciliation, Vaussard proposed the following to Dziś i Jutro:

As direct contact would in any case be extremely desirable between Catholics of the East and the West of Europe, especially between Polish and French Catholics, an analogous invitation could be addressed to you by an organization of a more official nature, presided at the international level by His Eminence the Archbishop of Paris and at the national level by a different French bishop, on the occasion of the Congress and pilgrimage that is being organized next September to Assisi. I speak of Pax Christi, whose manifesto that I have enclosed will explain briefly its goals and means of action.887

As a result, Kętrzyński, Konstanty Łubieński, and Dominik Horodyński all participated in public meetings organized by Pax Christi in Paris in November 1952.888 Łubieński, elected an MP in 1952, was obliged in that capacity to file official reports with the Public Security Ministry on his return from any trips abroad regarding contacts made and maintained in the course of his journey. In his report for the November 1952 trip, Łubieński commented that he was pleasantly

887 Vaussard, Letter to Dziś i Jutro Editor.
888 Maurice Vaussard, Letter to Wojciech Kętrzyński, 8 July 1952, AKSCC V/92.
“surprised by the degree of progressive social tendencies” within Pax Christi.  

In the interest of leaving his security officers with a good impression of the French movement – among others – he downplayed its interest in Franco-German reconciliation, noting only that better propaganda was needed in France to “strengthen convictions regarding the merits of our borders on the Oder and Neisse.”

Indeed, astonishing in the three-year correspondence between Kętrzyński and Vaussard as representatives of their respective organizations is the concerted effort that both men seemed to make to avoid any mention of German issues. After all, the Poles of Dziś i Jutro/PAX had been and continued to be unabashedly, vocally anti-German, while Pax Christi, though strongly critical of the Pleven Plan and the idea of remilitarizing Germany, refused to issue categorical demands for German “neutralization” of the sort that Domenach’s committee had set forth at Odense.

Vaussard and Kętrzyński covered a wide variety of other issues: Franco-Polish cultural relations; education; the increasingly complex situation of, on the one hand, the Catholic hierarchy in Poland and, on the other, French initiatives intent on mission to the workers. Though his immediate superior was nominally the primate of France, responsible for dismantling in 1953 the Mission de France’s worker-priest initiative, Vaussard leaned heavily toward approval of progressive Catholicism. What seemed to attract Vaussard most was its struggle against class-based and nation-based divisions – in the context of which he conveniently overlooked the incessant anti-German thrust of the Catholic-socialist peace campaign.

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Pax Christi thus seemed a functional, creative, and highly beneficial partner for Dziś i Jutro/PAX, not least because it turned a blind eye to the most “un-Christian” element of the Polish movement’s ideology: its partiality to exclusionary-nationalist personalism. The only logical explanation for Vaussard’s choice to avoid the German question entirely was a cost-benefit analysis on his part that led him to conclude that it was better to win the Poles over slowly to the ethical precepts underlying his movement’s cause than to risk alienating the Polish activists all at once with a firm Non possumus. The trouble with this reasoning is that Vaussard never actually tried to win the Poles over to reconciliation or to alleviate their wartime trauma-conditioned memory of Germany. Rather, Vaussard remained constant in his attitude toward the Poles. Perhaps his distrust of Pius XII – as opposed to earlier popes, in whom he had easily placed trust – contributed to this state of affairs. If this was the case, then Pius XII’s ultimately firm turn against progressive Catholicism in its various forms led Vaussard to choose the progressive Catholics, as the apparent facilitators of a real “international Catholic solidarity,” over the NATO-backed solidarity propounded by the Holy See.

Though Vaussard thus chose – apparently for the first time in his long and distinguished activist career – a distinctly accommodationist line, his subordinate, Father Robert Bosc, pursued a more complex path. After joining the Pax Christi board, Bosc pursued an inclination toward People’s Poland that had begun as an academic interest. He had written one of the most widely read French-language commentaries of the April 1950 accord between the Polish government and the Polish bishops’ conference. Publishing his analysis in Études, a widely read Jesuit journal of current events, Bosc nonetheless attempted to maintain a balanced narrative.

Acknowledging the “campaign of calomnies” preceding the seizure of Caritas in January 1950 as a troubling prelude to the ultimate Church-State agreement, Bosc nonetheless credited
both sides with a historic achievement: “For the first time, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church has signed an accord with the government of a resolutely Marxist people’s democracy.” Bosc acknowledged the dangers, citing as an example condemnations of the Episcopate by the Soviet newspaper Pravda for failing to sign the Stockholm Appeal. In fact, the Polish bishops did issue a statement supporting the appeal, even though individual bishops did not actually sign the appeal itself. Nonetheless, suggesting that “the majority of Catholics” in Poland considered the accord “useful and constructive,” Bosc advanced a credit-line of confidence to the Polish Episcopate, instructing “the rest of the Catholic world, incapable of appreciating the particulars of the situation, but witness to the Church leaders’ wisdom and courage” that it “owes them respect.”

When he wrote this article, Father Bosc was appealing to a specific audience: the moderate sociopolitical activists of the Society of Jesus in France. As of 1950, the French Jesuits had a remarkably differentiated activist milieu: the Conférence Olivaint, whose roots lay in the late 19th century, which offered regular academic-year seminars and a star-studded summer camp off the coast of Corsica to budding Catholic-activist university students, especially at the growing École Nationale des Sciences Politiques (Sciences Po); Études, a journal with a

893 Bishop Zygmunt Choromański, Secretary of the Polish Episcopate, issued the following statement on the entire Episcopate’s behalf on 22 June 1950: “With respect to the Stockholm Appeal as a factor in the peaceful conduct of international relations, the Episcopate assumes a positive stance and will support the peace campaign begun with the gathering of signatures in support of the appeal. Atomic energy is the greatest discovery of human genius and ought to contribute to making humanity happy, not to its extermination.” See, for example, “Oświadczenie Episkopatu Polski w obronie pokoju,” Dziś i Jutro, 2 July 1950.
895 A June 1950 internal draft of an informational note for circulation to potential Conférence Olivaint members described the organization thus: “Nearly 100 years old, the Conférence Olivaint, with spiritual and professional goals in mind, has assembled students in Paris in the fields of law, humanities, and political science. New circumstances have obliged it to narrow its objectives. Ever faithful to its traditional orientation, it will advertise itself from now on as ‘A PRIVATE CENTER FOR POLITICAL EDUCATION, EXTERNAL TO ALL PARTIES.’ Its demanding recruitment process calls for signs of VOCATION: a taste and aptitude for disinterested, competent
socially conservative background that nonetheless, as Konstanty Łubięński would put it, projected a “politically realistic” voice;\textsuperscript{896} and the Action Populaire, a movement in existence since 1905 that produced its own monthly journal, the \textit{Revue de l’Action Populaire}, devoted to studying and offering pastoral guidance to the most cutting-edge social-Catholic initiatives inside and outside France.\textsuperscript{897} In addition, the Jesuits dabbled unofficially in \textit{Témoignage Chrétien} (supplying its founders, Chaillet and the infamous Fessard) and \textit{Esprit} and \textit{nouvelle théologie} (accepting into the ranks of their order Jean Daniélou, who had been an influential participant in both ventures). Though lay activism emerged unequivocally ascendant in France in the postwar decade, few Catholic activist ventures could be found on which the Society of Jesus was not at least keeping tabs.

Although movement secretary of Pax Christi, Bosc was thus serving two masters at once. The \textit{Études} article aside, his real home in the French Jesuit activist galaxy was the Action Populaire, headed by Father Pierre Bigo. Known mostly for his \textit{tiers-mondialiste} activism in the post-decolonization social campaigns of the 1960s, Bigo nonetheless debuted as a top-shelf Catholic thinker, producing an award-winning doctoral dissertation at Sciences Po, published in 1953 as \textit{Marxisme et Humanisme}. Eminent French historian Étienne Fouilloux has portrayed Bigo as an impassioned anti-Communist whose fervor was almost like that of his \textit{confrère} (supplying its founders, Chaillet and the infamous Fessard) and \textit{Esprit} and \textit{nouvelle théologie} (accepting into the ranks of their order Jean Daniélou, who had been an influential participant in both ventures). Though lay activism emerged unequivocally ascendant in France in the postwar decade, few Catholic activist ventures could be found on which the Society of Jesus was not at least keeping tabs.

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Gaston Fessard, yet Bigo’s writing belies this characterization.\textsuperscript{898} A nuanced, honest consideration of what made Marxism tick, in the words of its preface author Jean Marchal, Bigo’s analysis looked at “Marxism in order to see what positive things one can take away from it for the edification of the modern world.”\textsuperscript{899} Bigo recognized parallels – which Bolesław Piasecki, too, would evoke in his theology – between Christianity and Marxism, not from Eric Voegelin’s “political religion” school, but rather emphasizing the shared ontology of “creation” in both worldviews: “the creational act, constituted by work, is closely tied to the act of man’s alienation in work. Sin is to be found at humanity’s very origins.”\textsuperscript{900}

Interpreting Bigo’s key treatise is important to understanding his motivations for sending his subordinate, Father Bosc, to Poland in May 1953 on a so-called voyage d’étude (study voyage) designed to facilitate information-gathering. The stated purpose for Bosc’s visit was to gain insight into the heart of the German question, in other words, the very problem that Bosc’s Pax Christi superior Vaussard did everything in his might to avoid. Shepherded for the duration of his visit by Wojciech Kętrzyński, Bosc was a guinea pig for Kętrzyński to use to decide whether or not to attempt expansion of PAX’s Catholic-socialist international project to include men of the cloth. Indeed, Bosc would prove critical to PAX’s Western European damage-control campaign in the wake of Primate Wyszyński’s arrest in September 1953. We will return to this question in the next chapter.

\textit{The Revolutionary Young Turks of PAX}

While Kętrzyński was building Dziś i Jutro/PAX’s Catholic-socialist international, People’s Poland was changing around him and his fellow progressive Catholics. Revolutionary

\textsuperscript{900} Bigo, \textit{Marxisme et Humanisme}, p. 141.
socialism had turned almost overnight into Stalinist socialism. Constituting the vanguard of Catholics actively shaping Poland’s Stalinist order, the Dziś i Jutro staff found themselves in a situation where they had to put not only a positive, but indeed an ideologically necessary spin on the arrests of their co-religionists. These arrests, after all, were carried out by the establishment whose praises they were heartily singing each year at peace congresses, each month in correspondence with their Western European counterparts, each week in print, and each day in contacts with that establishment. With Kętrzyński busy trying to garner legitimacy abroad, Łubieński and Horodyński acclimating to the obligations attendant on MPs and national peace committee chairs, and Krasiński contracting a case of chronic tuberculosis that virtually took him out of circulation for four years, the movement needed a new generation of energetic young activists to follow in the footsteps of those who had joined Piasecki in the wartime days of Konfederacja Narodu.

The roots of this new generation – almost all of whose members were born between 1926 and 1929 – were diverse. While most of the KN-era activists were – perhaps paradoxically, given that they became the pioneers of a Catholic-socialist syncretism – of aristocratic derivation, most of their successors were petit-bourgeois or farmers’ sons. Janusz Zabłocki, Tadeusz Myślik (1928-2011), Rudolf Buchała (1927-2010), Ignacy Rutkiewicz (1929-2010) – these young men were shopkeepers’ sons from small towns a stone’s throw from Warsaw, Lwów, Katowice, and Vilnius. Some – like Zabłocki and Rutkiewicz – had, despite being only teenagers at the war’s end, served in the Home Army Underground. Others – like Myślik – had marched with the Polish People’s Army formed under Soviet supervision in 1944. Zabłocki lived and even attended university under an alias until 1947, when an official amnesty allowed him to “come
clean” without going to prison for his clandestine Szare Szeregi service.\textsuperscript{901} He met Myślik at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Like the new Wrocław University relocated and rebuilt with the surviving faculty of the old Jan Kazimierz University of interwar Lwów, the Jagiellonian, too, became a hub for youth attracted to \textit{Dziś i Jutro}’s energy and visible access to Poland’s revolutionary socialist vanguard.\textsuperscript{902}

Many of these younger postwar activists had felt qualms about signing on full-time with a group led by Piasecki, for the reason that we have seen again and again: concern with Piasecki’s interwar fascist past. Zabłocki carved out middle ground for himself, receiving a commission from Piasecki to publish – under the penname “Karol Zajczniewski” – a monthly student insert in \textit{Dziś i Jutro} that, debuting on 20 February 1949, appeared in print for close to a year.\textsuperscript{903} Beginning with informal debates in two student-run discussion clubs in Kraków concerning the thought of Maritain, Mounier, and German sociologist Karl Mannheim, the material that went into the \textit{Etap} (Stage) insert soon spawned an informal discussion network with nodes in Warsaw as well. Indeed, the network caught the personal attention of Col. Julia Brystygier of the Public Security Ministry, inspiring a serious security apparatus investigation into its aspirations of

\begin{itemize}
\item On the amnesty of 1947, see Paczkowski, \textit{The Spring Will Be Ours}, p. 196.
\item Tadeusz Myślik, Interview with Author, 3 August 2007; Janusz Zabłocki, Interview with Author, 31 July 2007.
\item See particularly Zabłocki’s lead-off article for the first issue of the insert, whose very title went to explaining the chosen name of the insert as the “Christian humanist stage” in the ultimate pursuit of Catholic-socialist syncretism: Karol Zajczniewski [Janusz Zabłocki], “Etap humanizmu chrześcijańskiego,” \textit{Dziś i Jutro}, 20 February 1949. Subsequent thematic articles in the insert included Karol Zajczniewski [Janusz Zabłocki], “Różne drogi (List do francuskiego przyjaciela),” \textit{Dziś i Jutro}, 10 April 1949; Karol Zajczniewski [Janusz Zabłocki], “Chrześcijaństwo a świat nowoczesny,” \textit{Dziś i Jutro}, 8 May 1949; Karol Zajczniewski [Janusz Zabłocki], “Jeszcze o humanizmie chrześcijańskim,” \textit{Dziś i Jutro}, 9 October 1949. The 8 May 1949 \textit{Etap} insert also reprinted an excerpt from Jacques Maritain’s \textit{Humanisme Intégral} overlapping with the sections of that text that he presented in the course of his August-September 1934 visit to Poland: Jacques Maritain, “Ideal historyczny nowego chrześcijaństwa,” \textit{Dziś i Jutro}, 8 May 1949.
\end{itemize}
developing and diffusing inside and outside Poland a non-mainstream philosophy combining Catholic personalism and secular humanism.904

It was Zablocki who controlled what went into the Dziś i Jutro insert, but significant input came from his fellow Kraków Catholic student activists Zygmunt Skórzyński and Andrzej Wielowieyski (1927-), as well as Warsaw-based academics grouped around, among others, sociology professor and clandestine wartime Mounier guru Bogdan Suchodolski.905 Particularly noteworthy among these were Czesław Czapów (1925-1980), Jan Józef Lipski (1926-1991), and Jan Strzelecki.906

With the conclusion of the 1950 Church-State Accord, the situation changed for the informal “humanist personalist” discussion network. Given Piasecki’s visible contribution to the Accord as a go-between who successfully advised both Wyszyński and Public Administration minister Władysław Wolski, Zablocki and others of his generation became convinced enough of his Catholic bona fides to overcome their initial reluctance and join Piasecki’s movement as full employees.

904 Julia Brystygier, Note to Józef Różański, 8 November 1951, AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1. “Streszczenie materiałów dot. agenturalnego opracowania pod krypt. ‘WILKI,’” 19 April 1951, AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1. According to the MBP team’s report to Julia Brystygier and her immediate subordinates, Czapów was responsible for compiling two different manuscripts, one devoted to “personalism and humanist socialism, intended for academic groups,” and the other an “ideological and political program for personalism entitled Foundations and principles of a politics of humanist socialism.” “Streszczenie,” p. 5, AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1. Zygmunt Skórzyński, who co-organized with Czapów many of the group’s meetings, has confirmed the accuracy of the MBP report: Zygmunt Skórzyński, “O klubach opozycyjnej młodzieży i popaździernikowych inicjatywach badawczych Czesława Czapowa,” in Czesław Czapów 1925-1980. Świadectwa trzech pokoleń (Warszawa: UW IPSiR, 2003), p. 64-69.

905 For documentation of the roles of those who subsequently joined Piasecki’s movement full-time – like Janusz Zablocki and Wojciech Wieczorek – it is necessary to look beyond the summary reports of the MBP officers to the transcripts of the individual interrogations conducted with the group in 1953: see, for example, Aleksander Matejko, “Zeznania własne,” 3 November 1953, AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1. The Kraków-based activists came mostly out of a group called the Klub Logofagów (Logophages’ Club). On this club, see Andrzej Rozmarynowicz, ed, Klub Logofagów. Wspomnienia (Kraków: Znak, 1996); Zygmunt Skórzyński, “Logofadzy i ciąg dalszy. Reduty polskiej inteligencji,” Rzeczpospolita 256 (1996).

906 F. Dwojak, “Wniosek o częściową likwidację agenturalnego rozpracowania kryptonim ‘Wilki,’” 29 August 1953, AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1. As the MBP final report put it – ignoring the fact that Piasecki’s movement was propagating the very same ideology – “The influence of personalism in this respect is doing great harm, poisoning the youth with a cunningly devised method like that used by spies in the workers’ movement, in which, under the banner of socialism, ideological sabotage is conducted.” Dwojak, “Wniosek,” p. 3, AIPN BU 01224/5/CD/1.
With this move, Piasecki’s reason for continuing the *Etap* insert evaporated: those who joined the movement received their own full-time positions, while Czapów, Lipski, and Skórzyński – who remained outside *Dziś i Jutro* – lost their institutional cover and found themselves with targets painted on their backs. In the resulting investigation, the MBP interrogated 27 young activists – but none of those who had joined *Dziś i Jutro* – and filed charges against Czapów, who managed the remarkable feat of escaping captivity and surviving in hiding until 1956. Thus did Piasecki’s movement solidify a monopoly for itself over personalist thought in Stalinist Poland.

Indeed, while their erstwhile colleagues were being interrogated, the new arrivals to *Dziś i Jutro* flourished, preserving their ideological commitment to marrying Stalinist socialism with revolutionary personalism while pledging also – for the moment, at least – an unswerving institutional commitment to their new movement. They worked in *Dziś i Jutro* enterprises, either as journal editors, publishing house executives, or factory inspectors for the movement’s various small money-making enterprises. In a sense, then – again, paradoxically – these “Young Turks” of *Dziś i Jutro* stepped out of university and into a Catholic-socialist-syncretist petite bourgeoisie of their own.

From the moment that he joined *Dziś i Jutro* in 1948, the unquestioned leader of this Young Turk generation was Tadeusz Mazowiecki. A refugee from SP attracted to *Dziś i Jutro* by its institutional coherence and the opportunity that it afforded for sociopolitical activism en
chrétien, Mazowiecki – a doctor’s son from Płock, a Mazovian town 100 kilometers northwest of Warsaw\textsuperscript{909} – almost overnight became a personal favorite of Piasecki. Hand-picked to run Dziś i Jutro’s summer camps for university students – where Mazowiecki met not only Zablocki, Myśliik, Buchała, and Rutkiewicz, but also his future brother-in-law Wojciech Wieczorek – the young Catholic activist, on Piasecki’s advice, prematurely quit his studies at Warsaw University to become Dziś i Jutro’s full-time youth coordinator. He held this position only briefly before Piasecki elevated him even further.\textsuperscript{910}

Though in terms of age not the senior member of this new wave of Dziś i Jutro recruits – Janusz Zablocki was a year older – Mazowiecki’s complete lack of wartime attachments gave him a political advantage over his colleagues. His German was better than his French, and he came to Dziś i Jutro never having heard of either Mounier or Maritain. That said, he proved an apt pupil, and beginning in 1949 he became one of the regular Dziś i Jutro commentators on ideology and its policy implications. If anyone from among the Young Turks had a position within the Dziś i Jutro movement from which to speak his mind, it was Mazowiecki.

The rationale behind this detailed introduction to the postwar wave of Dziś i Jutro recruits is that these were the figures in Piasecki’s movement who were in a position to cause trouble as Stalinist socialism began rapidly eating away at the Catholic activists’ maneuvering room. More specifically, they would be called to play a significant role as the Stalinist establishment began to attack the hierarchy of the very Church to which the PAX activists entrusted their spiritual salvation. Over the first half of the 1950s, the Western European Catholic activist partners secured by Wojciech Kętrzyński for the Dziś i Jutro/PAX movement invested a

\textsuperscript{909} Given Mazowiecki’s reluctance to discuss his youth, the only documentary evidence attesting to his experience of growing up in Płock comes from a 2011 ceremony granting him the title of “Honorary Citizen” of the town. See Hubert Woźniak, “Tadeusz Mazowiecki: W Płocku są moje korzenie,” Gazeta Wyborcza (Płock edition), 9 June 2011.

\textsuperscript{910} Wojciech Wieczorek, Interview with Author, 16 July 2007.
significant capital of trust in the Polish movement. Kętrzyński’s generation, however genuine its initial philosophical motivations, seemed prepared to wear increasingly all-encompassing ideological blinders as he and his fellow KN-derived activists found themselves confined simply to holding the line as passive recipients of policy handed down from above.

As a result, while the KN generation was playing for legitimacy for Piasecki’s movement in the international arena, the Young Turks – Mazowiecki’s generation – found themselves steering the movement ideologically, the vanguard of a vanguard. The story of how they did this is thus integral to the story of the Dziś i Jutro weekly’s ultimate collapse in the face of its leadership’s increasing fantastic mythologization of Stalinist-socialist Poland. Although Mazowiecki, Zabłocki, and their colleagues initially continued – and even radicalized – their elders’ ideological and political commitments in the pages of their movement’s publications, this generation would, between 1953 and 1955, reach a breaking point that then, in turn, helped to erode PAX’s international support network.

Mazowiecki’s generation would thus furnish the initial henchmen and subsequent saboteurs of the Dziś i Jutro/PAX movement’s turn against its own declared prioritization of the human person. Initially aiding Piasecki in his elaboration of a French-inspired personalist theology of labor adapted for socialist Poland, the younger generation would, by 1955, renounce Piasecki’s line, breaking with their movement and, in the process, helping to strip it of key elements of the Western European Catholic activist network that had been so persuaded of its efficacy and originality.911

911 The difficulty in documenting this generation’s role is that many historians and eyewitness-participants have discussed its members’ activities, but only in passing, and much has gone assumed rather than explicitly laid out or explained. The most complete treatment comes from Andrzej Micewski, who, nonetheless, provides a deeply subjective account. Although age-wise he belonged to this generation, he functioned apart from them in Piasecki’s inner circle from the moment of his entry into the movement until his departure from PAX in December 1956.
Already in 1949, Tadeusz Mazowiecki appeared to be leading a charge on behalf of the newest Dziś i Jutro acolytes toward integrating cutting-edge theses of French progressive Catholicism into the Dziś i Jutro ideology. Kętrzyński, who had rather abandoned these tasks in favor of his international travels and domestic peace-campaign politicking, thus passed the ideological torch to Mazowiecki, whose combined interest in personalism and labor theology would, in turn, inform Piasecki’s own thinking.\(^{912}\)

Unlike Kętrzyński, however, Mazowiecki reached all the way back past Mandouze and Mounier to incorporate Jacques Maritain’s Thomism as well into his argumentation, fundamentally incompatible though Thomist personalism was with the notion of collective revolution. As Mazowiecki wrote in April 1950 – in the process, crediting Father Montuclard of France’s theologically progressive Jeunesse de l’Église – “Catholics today have a great role to play in the construction of the new world. This is not ‘smuggling Christianity’ into Marxism, but rather the construction of a new, contemporary Catholic culture that will be capable of giving Christian content to the new social relations.”\(^{913}\) Two months later, Mazowiecki took his elaboration of Dziś i Jutro’s personalist theology even further, insisting on the integral, necessary synergy of personalism and socialism in postwar Poland:

In the context of its ideological conflict with Marxists, Catholic thought must undertake a debate concerning the most difficult point: the construction of man, the construction of the integral human person. This conflict plays out not only on a purely intellectual path, but above all through the formulation of the appropriate attitudes for man [requiring, among others,] holistic

Wherever possible, primary documents and oral-historical testimony are thus cited in this account to attempt to round out the picture.

\(^{912}\) For Mazowiecki’s earliest programmatic article drawing explicitly on progressive French Catholic thought – focused, in particular, on the right to “creative labor” – see Tadeusz Mazowiecki, “Prawo do twórczej pracy,” Dziś i Jutro, 14 August 1949.

\(^{913}\) Tadeusz Mazowiecki, “Konieczne wyjaśnienia,” Dziś i Jutro, 23 April 1950. Dziś i Jutro also featured an excerpt by Father Maurice Montuclard of Jeunesse de l’Église with the Polish title “Wiara i historia” (Faith and history), drawn from Maurice Montuclard, Lettre aux impatients (Petit-Clamart: Jeunesse de l’Église, 1947).
education of a new type of man, both in his individual and social dimensions, which, as Thomist philosophy teaches us, are integrally bound to the construction of the human person. Thus, it is not the defense of even the best elements of individualism but rather the complete development and integration of personalism into the content of the socialist revolution that ought to endow Catholic thought with the proper form. For it is the struggle for personalism in a socialist order that falls to us as our task.\textsuperscript{914}

Where Mazowiecki left off, his close friend Janusz Zablocki picked up, elaborating more thoroughly and explicitly than anyone before him in the Dziś i Jutro movement the intuitive reliance of the Polish progressive-Catholic activists on difficult terrain pioneered by French activists half a century earlier. In October 1950, Zablocki fired a warning shot across the journal’s bow, drawing his colleagues’ attention to the example of Marc Sangnier and his condemned fin-de-siècle Sillon movement. As we know from Chapter 1, Sangnier – who for several years in a row received explicit congratulations from Pope Pius X for his Sillon movement’s success in mobilizing lay Catholics – suddenly in 1910 found himself and his movement to be objects of papal ire. As Zabocki put it on the 40\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the anti-Sillon encyclical Notre Charge Apostolique, “This anniversary ought to remind us of the fate of this group, which, despite all of its errors and the insufficiency of its political program, can be considered to have been one of the precursors of the socially progressive wing of Catholicism today.”\textsuperscript{915}

In the fall of 1951, a new item of foundational importance hit the public-debate agenda of socialist Poland: a new constitution. Ultimately ratified on 22 July 1952, this document would

\footnote{\textsuperscript{914} Tadeusz Mazowiecki, “Kierunek myśli społecznej,” Dziś i Jutro, 2 July 1950. Boldface type in the original. \textsuperscript{915} Janusz Zablocki, “Sprawa ‘Sillon,’” Dziś i Jutro, 1-8 October 1950. Of the entire new generation of Dziś i Jutro activists, Zablocki was both the greatest Francophile and the most historically minded activist. His article for the anniversary of Sillon’s condemnation was itself a follow-up to a study done several months earlier of Mounier’s principal source of philosophical inspiration, Charles Péguy; Zablocki paired the Sillon-centered article with an analogous portrait of its troubled leader, Marc Sangnier. See Janusz Zablocki, “Sąd nad Péguy,” Dziś i Jutro, 13 August 1950; Janusz Zablocki, “Tragiczne dni Marka Sangnier,” Dziś i Jutro, 1-8 October 1950.}
replace the much-outdated, interwar Piłsudskite compact while, among others, proposing to formalize Poland’s socialist revolution by renaming the state as the “Polish People’s Republic” (*Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa*). The floating of the proposed new constitution in the mainstream press provoked, on the part of *Dziś i Jutro*, a range of reflections on the principal policy agenda of the PZPR, which – as the unquestioned controlling force in public life – stood behind the new constitution.

Indeed, the 25 November 1951 issue of *Dziś i Jutro* provided a veritable showcase of Young Turk reflections on the principal political “achievements” of socialist Poland. All of these texts – some explicitly, some more opaquely – linked up to the Mounier- and Mandouze-inspired personalist ideology that their movement elders Kętrzyński, Łubieński, and Krasiński had attempted to teach them. Addressing the Soviet-inspired planned economy model adopted by socialist Poland, the Kraków-based journalist Tadeusz Myślik performed a marvelous casuistic hybrid analysis, drawing on personalism on the one hand and, on the other, on Marxist-Leninist political economy. With an implicit accent on the “communitarian” aspect of Mounier’s personalism, Myślik argued that any change in the socio-economic order fundamentally impacts the capacity of the human person to flourish in that order as a metaphysical being possessed of its own dignity. It was a socialism-directed economy that best safeguarded that dignity, for “in a free-market economy there emerge, independently of will and consciousness, means of production engendering individual efforts with an unintended consequence of removing all space for their cooperation in the creation of the human personality. In contrast, in the planned economy, the means of production are shaped by conscious means.”

Myślik reflected on the various putative ethical benefits of a planned economy, in other words, that it engendered feelings of responsibility for the fruits of one’s labor as well as a
willingness on the part of its actors to sacrifice some of their own individual gains for the good of society at large. Although he admitted – unsurprisingly – that a Marxist-Leninist planned economy alone was not enough to help Catholics achieve “spiritual salvation,” he nonetheless concluded, “the basic principle of planning an economy – consciously and mindfully examining well-being – develops rather than marginalizes the human personality.”

In the same issue of Dziś i Jutro, Rudolf Buchała and Janusz Zabłocki were even more explicit than Myślił in grounding Dziś i Jutro’s adherence to PZPR policy in French Catholic personalism. Buchała led his readers on an extensive tour through French Catholic thought: from the fin-de-siècle priest-theologian Antonin-Dalmace Sertillanges – author of, among others, Socialisme et Christianisme – through Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier. The core point, however, was that any internally consistent personalist consideration of the nature of private property – a fundamental tenet guaranteed by St. Thomas Aquinas – revealed the possession of said property to be an ethical choice faced by each Christian. According to Buchała, then, the surrender of an absolute right to private property to the good of the community represented the highest ethical calling on the part of the Christian. It was for this reason that, with full awareness and satisfaction with his position, he could declare, “We must therefore choose, and we choose the socialist order.”

In the front-cover article of this special issue, meanwhile, Janusz Zabłocki, masking his analysis as an open letter to an anonymous erstwhile colleague, cited Maurras, Maritain, and

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917 See Sertillanges, Socialisme et Christianisme.
Mounier – eliding their various contradictions – along the way to his conclusion, which sounds remarkably like a Marxist personalism:

The revolutionary transformation of society is impossible without the awakening of the personality in each of the individuals constituting the masses. Before each of these individuals, there stands the task of casting off the crushing weight of yesterday’s words and answering the call of history. For this reason, class struggle, which precedes revolution, ought to be a struggle for the human person. The classes that derived their greatness from the conquest of the remaining part of society are doing everything so as not to allow the awakening of the spirit in that which has thus far been only a part of nature.  

Kętrzyński and Łubieński, the founding ideologues of Dziś i Jutro’s Catholic-socialist syncretism, had never been so explicit in their endorsement of “class struggle.” Indeed, a close reading of the early texts of Dziś i Jutro’s Young Turks leaves one with the impression that one is reading Marxists experimenting with Catholicism, rather than the other way around. And this impression carries over into the more Stalinist-inclined aspects of the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinism taught in Polish schools and universities from 1948 onward. In the editorial headlining the special November 1951 issue devoted to progressive-Catholic commentary on socialist Poland’s policies, the Young Turks – with Piasecki looking over their shoulders – on the one hand defended the journal’s continued use of the subtitle “Social-Catholic Weekly,” and, on the other, declared,

We are also going to defend the integral interests of the Polish nation against the bellicose, sabotaging provocations of all foreign secret agencies and those Poles whose backward attitudes have set them on the path of service to foreign interests. In the great struggle taking place all over the world against the attempt to force a third war upon humanity, we have made clear our place in the Peace Camp, for it is on this side that the infrastructure is emerging of a more progressive world, and here there emerges the objective will for peace.  

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If “Stalinist Christians” – Yvon Tranvouez’s term – is an apt way of describing the staff of *La Quinzaine*, reading a passage like this one makes “Stalinist Christians” seem far more natural for the *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX activists. There is the obvious chronological dimension: the height of their movement’s activism mapped precisely onto postwar Poland’s Stalinist turn away from construction and transformation to repression and consolidation. After years of the *Dziś i Jutro* leadership tailoring its embrace of Catholic-socialist syncretism to the political platform of the PPR/PZPR – from collectivization to global peace, to defense of the Recovered Territories against German revanchism – the notion that they had become Stalinist Catholics hardly seems such a great leap.

Finally, there is perhaps the most controversial matter, namely, their participation in – or at least acceptance of – the perpetration of Stalinist crimes against officers of the Catholic Church, not only unfamiliar regular priests, but prominent bishops and indeed the very cardinal-primate himself. The arrests and show trials of key ecclesiastical officials that played out in Poland over the course of 1953 constituted the real test of *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX’s emerging transnational partnerships. With a few exceptions, the movement would, remarkably, pass this test, but not without dire ideological and political consequences for themselves at both the institutional and international levels.

Indeed, it was the anti-Germanism of *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX that proved its ultimate undoing precisely through the activism of its new Young Turks. The Polish establishment’s anti-German obsession with the Recovered Territories led the *Dziś i Jutro* leadership to apply inordinate pressure to Mazowiecki’s generation to seek out and persecute putative pro-German sympathies within the Polish institutional Church itself. On the one hand, then, in the wake of the Church-
State Accord of 1950 that he had himself helped to orchestrate, Boleslaw Piasecki committed his movement to “responsibility for honoring the Accord,” as lying “not only with the Hierarchy and the Government, but also with those progressive Catholic milieux whose program was the normalization of relations between Church and State. This responsibility should be understood as something concrete.”

On the other hand, the movement’s center of gravity split between Francophone Western Europe and the radicalism of the Young Turks, who began to carry the brunt of the burden of justifying PAX’s complicity in the Stalinist establishment’s attack on the Church. This burden would add the final nail in the coffin of PAX’s principled “social-Catholic” advocacy. What ultimately overwhelmed the movement’s defining exercise in principled Catholic-socialist vanguard experimentation was an unprecedentedly pointed framing of the national question. Going beyond attacking Germans and Americans, the exclusionary nationalism built into Stalinist personalism ultimately forced PAX’s Catholic activists to go after their own Church.

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CHAPTER 9

Discrediting Stalinist Christianity:

The Vatican, Stalinism’s Anti-Catholic Offensive, and
the Marginalization of Progressive Catholicism, 1953-1958

On the eve of our departure, one of the leaders of PAX […] took me aside and told me, “Father, I beg of you, do not let this voyage remain for you only a picturesque memory; bear witness to the fact that there is in progress here an experiment in which the Universal Church holds great interest; tell those you meet that you have seen here men who feel themselves to be authentically Catholic, and at the same time sincerely loyal to the new People’s Poland. Our situation is not easy, and it is far from universally understood. We want at all costs to remain loyal to the Church; we wish to be able to do this without being forced to defend our faith as martyrs, for if martyrdom is glorious for individuals, systematic persecution might, in fact, bring to the Church in this country as great a chance of ruin as of schism. We fight in order to maintain for the Church in Poland the right to live and to express itself in these days of a State with a socialist structure.

--Robert Bosc, S.J., 1953922

PAX’s function as an association of progressive Catholics crystallized really in the years 1950-1955, when, as a consequence of then-prevailing Church-State relations, PAX developed a monopoly over Catholic publishing and progressive organizations of the clergy, becoming a serious ombudsman of lay Catholic affairs in Church-State relations as well as their sole representative to the outside world.

--Polish Security Service Report, 1960923

On 19 October 1958, Jean-Marie Domenach began the day’s entry in his diary with the sentence, “The Stalin of the Church is gone. It is a joy.”924 Indeed, Pius XII, who had reigned over the Catholic Church since March 1939, had succumbed to heart failure only 10 days earlier. To a casual observer, the remark might be quite shocking: one of the most prominent figures of the French Catholic laity not only speaking ill of the late head of his Church, but indeed

924 Domenach, Beaucoup de Gueule et peu d’or, p. 190.
pronouncing an extreme judgment on the entire 19-year period during which the late pontiff had ruled the Church.

Yet Domenach’s comment helps us to make sense of a mystery that we will explore over the course of this chapter: why it was that most of PAX’s Francophone Catholic vanguard partners were not bothered when, in the fall of 1953, it became painstakingly clear that PAX was complicit in the Polish Stalinist establishment’s attack on the institutional Church. Instead, PAX’s Western European contacts – Domenach, Vaussard, even Father Congar – reacted to the revelations with a combination of sympathy for PAX and fear in anticipation that the Holy See might retaliate by condemning PAX. It was this potential outcome – not the show trial of a bishop or the arrest of a cardinal-primate – that the Francophone vanguard feared for its Polish counterparts, whom they continued to consider major pioneers of postwar “social-Catholic” activism.

And yet, between 1951 and 1953, the institutional Church in Poland suffered through the arrests of three bishops (including Primate Wyszyński), a show trial of Bishop Kaczmarek of Kielce, and another of the Kraków Archdiocese’s top priest-administrators, assistants of the late Cardinal Sapieha. Not only did PAX fail to speak out against these repressions, but indeed it attempted to pressure Wyszyński, among others, to accept passively anything the establishment asked of him. Furthermore, after Kaczmarek’s sentencing and again after Wyszyński’s “suspension” as primate, PAX ran its own propaganda campaign of “indignation” and “sadness” targeting the institutional Church, rather than defending it.

None of this phased Domenach, Vaussard, or the staff of La Quinzaine. Indeed, in in their correspondence with Kętrzyński and Łubieński, they suggested possible ways of heading off attacks by Western Europe’s more conservative Catholic journals, particularly La Croix and The
Tablet. We will see that, if not for deteriorating relations between the PAX elders and the Young Turks on the one hand and Piasecki’s hubris on the other in seeking to promote a deeply heretical work of his own in the face of an increasingly anti-progressive Holy See, PAX might well have persisted in the near-monopoly that it acquired over Polish Catholic activism in the Stalinist years.

By the mid-1950s, the Catholic activist vanguard of Western Europe had become accustomed to authoritarian lashing-out by Pope Pius XII. Given his place in that vanguard, Domenach was not exaggerating when he confided to his diary his personal judgment that this pontiff really was no different than Stalin. Having sided with the American camp in the Cold War, promoted European integration, and, by mid-1955, either condemned or arranged for the condemnation of nouvelle théologie, the UCP, Jeunesse de l’Église, the worker-priests, and La Quinzaine, Pius XII had done almost everything he could to discourage and dishearten lay Catholic activists experimenting with mission to the proletariat. Faced simultaneously with Stalinism in the Soviet Bloc and what they saw as “Stalinism” in the Church, many of the Catholic activists of Western Europe were willing to give their Eastern European lay counterparts the benefit of the doubt over and against their pope.

With Pius XII seeming to close all avenues to ministry to the working poor in favor, rather, of focusing Catholicism’s attention on early-Cold War geopolitics, European Catholicism lost entirely its sense of rooting in the balance between the social and national questions that had defined its encounter with the modern world since the papacy of Leo XIII. This is why even developments revealing one of their own movements to be opportunistic, hypocritical, and an accessory to Stalinist crimes did not phase most of Catholic Europe’s activist vanguard, in whose eyes this movements – Dziś i Jutro/PAX – retained its perceived status as a trendsetter.
A vanguard could only move so far out ahead of its central institutional point of reference before entirely losing all sense of proportion. With Pius XII acting in the name of Cold War diplomacy to reverse decades of progress in the growth of social-Catholic ministry into a mass-mission to the working poor, it would take a geopolitical shock on the order of the de-Stalinization campaigns of 1956 – accompanied by the declining health and subsequent 1958 death of Pius XII – to refocus the perspectives of socially minded Catholic activists across the continent.

The Parting of Ways between PAX and the Polish Primate

The relationship between the Episcopate and the Dziś i Jutro movement worsened steadily after the establishment intensified at the start of the 1950s its long-standing campaign against “reactionary” clergy, defined as such on suspicion of having aided post-Home Army guerrilla groups that remained in hiding and in armed opposition to People’s Poland. In January 1951, the Public Security Ministry arrested and imprisoned Bishop Kaczmarek of Kielce on charges of espionage for the United States; one year later, Katowice’s bishop Stanisław Adamski (1875-1967) met the same fate, albeit for a lesser charge.925 With Kraków’s universally respected Cardinal Sapieha having died in July 1951, the archdiocese lost its protector, and the Public Security Ministry began to gut it from the inside with arrests and a network of monitoring agents. Show trials for Kaczmarek as well as key figures in the Kraków archdiocese followed in 1953.926

After Piasecki took responsibility in the pages of Dziś i Jutro for the Church-State Accord that he had orchestrated between Primate Stefan Wyszyński and President Bolesław

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925 One priest who has succeeded in obtaining access to Kielce diocese archival materials concerning Kaczmarek’s postwar fate as diocesan bishop is Jan Śledzianowski, Ksiądz Czesław Kaczmarek – biskup kielecki 1895-1963 (Kielce: Kuria Diecezjalna, 1991).

926 On the ecclesiastical show trials of 1953, see the second chapter of Dudek and Gryz, Komuniści i Kościół w Polsce. For the broader context of Stalinist show trials in Eastern Europe, see George H. Hodos, Show Trials: Stalinist Purges in Eastern Europe, 1948-1954 (New York: Praeger, 1987).
Bierut, the situation of the Church in Poland only worsened. PAX MP Dominik Horodyński gave an interview in late 1952 to a Belgian Catholic peace journal named *Routes de la Paix* in which he admitted that the socialist establishment was investigating “some members of the clergy,” but vowed that these investigations were limited to “subversive” elements under the influence of “foreign powers.” In reality, the “foreign power” in question was the Holy See, in which the Polish establishment saw only Pius XII’s firm support of the American Cold War camp.

Counting on backing from Rome, a few bishops of the Polish Episcopate – to a certain extent, breaking ranks with Primate Wyszyński, who indeed did his best to honor the Church-State Accord – ran their own counter-propaganda campaigns in their respective dioceses. In this sense, the socialist establishment was not misinformed in identifying as “counter-revolutionary” the particular prominent clergymen whom it arrested: Kielce bishop Kaczmarek, Katowice bishop Adamski, or the closest collaborators of the recently deceased Sapieha. Nonetheless, these arrests constituted not only a provocation, but indeed a declaration of war on the rights of the Vatican to determine the shape of the Polish Episcopate, rights ostensibly guaranteed by Article 5 of the Church-State Accord of 1950.

An even more flagrant provocation than the arrests came, however, on 10 February 1953, with a decree from the Polish prime minister’s office approved the same day by the Polish parliament. This document insisted on the state’s right to control every aspect of the institutional Church’s organizational life, beginning with veto power over appointments, resignations, and transfers among the clergy. Modeled on the successful strategy of ecclesiastical co-optation pursued in Hungary after Mindszenty’s imprisonment, the February decree portended no less

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928 Dudek and Gryz, *Komuniści i Kościół w Polsce*; Śledzianowski, *Ksiądz Czesław Kaczmarek*. This, of course, says nothing about their propaganda against the accused, whose absurdity in the cases of these particular show trials Peter Raina has demonstrated effectively. See, for example, Raina, *Kardynał Wyszyński*, p. 43-44.
than an evisceration of the hierarchy’s control over the people composing the institutional
Church in Poland.\textsuperscript{929} Unsurprisingly, the Episcopate responded by turning firmly against the
Polish establishment and announcing a policy of civil disobedience with respect to the decree.

\textit{Pace} the extensive hagiographical literature produced in Poland since 1989 regarding
Wyszyński’s supposedly eternal anti-Communism, the Belgian peace activist Jean-Pierre
Nivelles was correct to argue in an essay published in September 1953 that Wyszyński had
especially bent over backwards to accommodate the socialist regime.\textsuperscript{930} Having inherited control
over the Episcopate at a relatively young age, the Polish primate lacked the experience and the
brutality for an all-out face-off with Bolesław Bierut. As if Gomułka’s 1948 disgrace at the
hands of his Party leadership had not sufficed to underscore the change in direction by the newly
enlarged and rechristened PZPR, his arrest and imprisonment in mid-1951 demonstrated to
Wyszyński the need to tread carefully and follow exactly the letter of the April 1950 Church-
State Accord. Indeed, as PZPR \textit{éminence grise} Jakub Berman has underscored, the PZPR
leadership consistently interpreted Wyszyński’s moves between 1950 and 1953 as signs of a
good-faith desire to bring the institutional Church in Poland in line with the ever-more stringent
expectations of Bierut’s Stalinist-socialist establishment.\textsuperscript{931} Despite all this, by the end of
September 1953, Wyszyński would find himself under arrest.

\textsuperscript{929} On the Hungarian case, see, for example, Nicolas Bauquet, “Les élites religieuses de la Hongrie communiste, de
la contre-élite à la proto-nomenklatura,” in Nicolas Bauquet and François Bocholier, eds, \textit{Le communisme et les
\textsuperscript{930} In between falls Peter Raina’s lionization of the primate on the premise that Wyszyński’s supposedly innate anti-
Communism did not prevent him from doing everything that he could to save the Church’s official status in socialist
Poland – Church-State Accord included – and that his good faith shown to the socialist establishment was a
testament to his honorable character. For example – “In the Stalinist period, no one besides the primate, the
Episcopate, and a handful of intellectuals bothered to concern themselves with the rule of law in Poland.” Raina,
\textit{Kardynał Wyszyński}, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{931} See Berman, Interview with Torańska, p. 401-403.


**PAX’s Betrayal of the Church**

By the spring of 1951, Kielce bishop Czesław Kaczmarek was acclimating himself to a holding facility to which he had been secluded on suspicion of treason against People’s Poland. Kaczmarek’s case was rather conspicuous: as the responsible hierarch of the diocese in which the 1946 Kielce Pogrom had taken place, he had, in fact, gained a certain amount of international as well as national notoriety. Having been in contact with American ambassador Arthur Bliss Lane during the Second World War, and having subsequently spoken out regularly in diocesan pastoral letters against Poland’s 1948 Stalinist turn, Kaczmarek did not shy away from the line of fire. As Andrzej Micewski has put it, this was “the first act of a longer drama.”

What forced a confrontation with the hierarchy in the eyes of the Party leadership was a series of contingent events in the international arena that created pressure for the Polish socialists to make some dramatic changes at home. Josef Stalin’s 5 March 1953 death created uncertainty with respect to his succession and – from the Polish standpoint – how the PZPR should best go about anticipating the demands of the inimitable Soviet leader’s successor. While a power struggle was playing out among Nikita Khrushchev, Gyorgy Malenkov, and Lavrentiy Beria, a workers’ revolt erupted in East Berlin on 17 June 1953. Although suppressed within a week, the so-called Berlin Crisis of 1953 instilled a fundamental sense of anxiety among the emerging Soviet Bloc leaders, unsure also of how the new Soviet leadership would react.

By the fall, Khrushchev had emerged as Stalin’s successor. Nonetheless, while the Kremlin power struggle was playing out, Bierut vacillated strongly as to how best to deal with

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932 Micewski, *Współrządzić czy nie klamać?*, p. 58.
933 For *Dziś i Jutro*’s official reaction, see the editorial entitled “Stalin – the Name of our Times”: Dominik Horodyński, “Stalin – imię epoki,” *Dziś i Jutro*, 15 March 1953.
the hierarchy’s promise of disobedience with respect to the February decree. Once Khrushchev had established himself in the USSR as the definitive successor to Stalin, however, Poland’s socialist establishment turned hard-about against the Catholic hierarchy. Granted, the PZPR did not immediately move to decapitate the Episcopate – breaking, then, with the pattern established by the earlier arrests and show trials of Yugoslav primate Aloysius Stepanic, Czechoslovak primate Beran, and Hungarian primate Mindszenty – but the mid-September trial of Kaczmarek sufficed to throw the Polish hierarchy into turmoil. Kaczmarek, like so many show-trial defendants, “confessed” to “his” crimes. On 24 September 1953, he and four co-defendants – his closest assistants in the diocese of Kielce – were convicted of treason and given double-digit prison sentences.

It is important to note here that, throughout the entire period of Bierut’s vacillation over how the PZPR should proceed with the Kaczmarek trial, Piasecki met regularly with Wyszyński and offered the primate his counsel. Indeed, Piasecki seems to have remained extremely well-informed as to the direction of ongoing debates within the PZPR leadership. While holding his poker hand close to his chest, he consistently pushed Wyszyński toward a conciliatory line that would have forced the primate to issue on the Episcopate’s behalf an utter disavowal and condemnation of Kaczmarek for his alleged crimes. This Wyszyński consistently and categorically refused to do.

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934 Jakub Berman considered the events in East Berlin to have been of central importance in Bierut’s decision to move against the Polish primate. Bierut, Interview with Toranśka, p. 404.  
935 Peter Raina implies that a more explicit directive from “Moscow,” with Khrushchev as the implied source, was behind the hard course taken by the PZPR against the institutional Church: Raina, Kardynał Wyszyński, p. 89. However, no documents have yet come to light to dispute Jakub Berman’s contention that “the primate’s arrest was our decision and that of our [PZPR] leadership. Specifically, Bierut’s decision, as the Church was ultimately his domain, and this was no minor issue, but [the fate of] a primate in a Catholic country.” Berman, Interview with Toranśka, p. 403.  
936 For a detailed, document-based account of Piasecki’s dealings with the cardinal-primate in these days, reproducing significant excerpts from Wyszyński’s private notes from the meetings, see Raina, Kardynał Wyszyński,
More than simply continuing in his well-established role as Church-State mediator, however, Piasecki in fact fueled the anti-Church campaign. It was this contribution of his that constituted the root cause of his Young Turks’ impending break with the PAX movement. One of the principal institutions that came into play as PAX turned its anti-American, anti-German brand of revolutionary personalism against its own ecclesiastical hierarchy was a new weekly journal founded in Wrocław in August 1953 to spearhead PAX’s propaganda efforts on behalf of the Recovered Territories.

Although Pius XII still refused to re-draw diocesan maps to reflect the postwar shifts in territory, one of the prerogatives of the Polish primate as interrex in the absence of a mutually binding concordat involved the capacity to appoint temporary “vicars-general” to administer diocesan territory in the absence of an ordinary bishop. In principle, the choice of these vicars-general should have been entirely up to Wyszyński, but, given the geostrategic importance of the territories in question, the establishment usurped the primate’s prerogative even in the wake of the Church-State Accord, replacing or blocking any appointment that didn’t appeal to Bierut, PZPR religious affairs specialist Franciszek Mazur, or the relevant responsible officer of the security apparatus. This was one of the principal points of contention that led to the Episcopate’s 8 May 1953 pointed memorandum to the Polish Council of Ministers – known henceforth by its closing words, “Non Possumus!” – rejecting state usurpation of ecclesiastical appointment prerogatives with the simple rationale, “We cannot place what belongs to God on the altar of Caesar.”\(^{937}\) The game of Church-State relations in socialist Poland’s early years had generally involved some give-and-take, but where the Recovered Territories were concerned, the establishment left the hierarchy little or no room for discussion.

At the same time, establishment figures did occasionally consult Piasecki on their preferences with respect to ecclesiastical personnel. Thus, there emerged a bizarre situation in which Piasecki sometimes had more of a say than Wyszyński in the choice of a vicar-general. This was the case with Rev. Kazimierz Lagosz (1888-1961), a former prisoner of the Stalinist security apparatus released in 1952 and immediately appointed vicar-general of the Wrocław archdiocese, with a commitment made to the MBP to help steer Church structures their way. Closely tied to PAX and indebted to Piasecki for support in the selection process, Lagosz set aside archdiocesan resources to help Piasecki get a PAX-run weekly off the ground in Wrocław. The result was the creation of the *Wrocławski Tygodnik Katolicki* (WTK), for which none other than Young Turk leader Tadeusz Mazowiecki was imported from Warsaw to serve as editor. *WTK*, which debuted on 30 August 1953, alternated in its content between exposés of the putative “eternal historical belonging” of Silesia to Poland and political commentaries reinforcing the PAX line over and against the Polish Episcopate. Devotional in its graphic design, even containing comics and brain-teasers for children, the *WTK* nonetheless helped to push Catholicism in Poland toward schism.

The definitive drive in this direction came in the form of a 27 September 1953 editorial by Tadeusz Mazowiecki, who had less than a month earlier assumed the position of executive director of the journal, as well as various other positions within the Polish Catholic Party. His editorial, titled “W sprawie Niemiec,” was the most explicitly pro-German statement made by a Polish Catholic figure in the postwar period, and it served as a catalyst for the division between the Church and the Polish state.

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editor of the new weekly. In his editorial on the Kaczmarek show trial, Mazowiecki managed to combine anti-German, anti-American, and anti-Vatican sentiment with a fundamental negation of both social Catholicism and the legal tenet of presumption of innocence. While admitting the “pain for Catholics of seeing pastors as defendants,” and, in particular, “a bishop whose apostolic office possesses in the Catholic Church a dogmatic character whose supernatural mission obliges us all to the greatest respect and religious obedience,” Mazowiecki had not a single sympathetic word for the defendants.

Rather, his condescension became a register for the sadness and indignation that he claimed to feel at Kaczmarek’s alleged treasonous activity. Mazowiecki insisted that, despite the “ranks of millions of faithful in our country who each day offer up a self-sacrificing, creative contribution to the new socio-economic edifice,” Poland’s Catholics were subjected to the disgrace of a bishop who had indulged in “criminal activity” consisting of “activities antagonistic toward the national interest and toward social progress, in the interwar era, during the occupation, and in People’s Poland.” Most devastating was Mazowiecki’s imputation to Kaczmarek of “entanglement in collaboration with institutions of the American intelligence network that would wish to use representatives of the clergy as tools for the fulfillment of their anti-Polish plans.”

What is particularly curious about Mazowiecki’s editorial commentary is the distinction made between “sociopolitical activism” and “pastoral dignity.” According to the WTK editor, then,

The office of a bishop and his pastoral dignity constitute for Catholics the object of great respect. There is, after all, no Catholicism without the indefatigable, dogmatically defined Church structure, whose foundation is constituted by the bishop’s office [...], while, on the other hand, the political attitudes of a bishop or pastor are subject to the same judgment as the attitude of any other citizen. This is why we not only
express our sorrow but indeed renounce the erroneous views of Bishop Kaczmarek, which have driven him to sabotage People’s Poland.

Mazowiecki thereafter enumerated the various cornerstones of Dziś i Jutro/PAX-approved socialist policies to which Kaczmarek had publicly expressed opposition, with particular emphasis on agricultural collectivization and the nationalization of industry.

Key to Mazowiecki’s analysis was the category of raison d’État. An unequivocal condemnation of the bishop of Kielce thus followed from Mazowiecki’s argument that Kaczmarek was, objectively speaking, a foreign agent, inspired as he putatively was by the “imperialistic, war-directed policy of the United States government” as well as “the political views of certain members of the Roman Curia.” It is to these unnamed Curia figures that the WTK editor attributed views “antagonistic toward [Polish] national interest and social progress, as well as an attitude harmful toward the religious mission and future of the Church in Poland.” Indeed, Mazowiecki went so far as to lecture the pope, insisting that, “with all due respect to our total religious unity with the Head of the Church – the Holy Father – it is necessary to distinguish decisively the ecclesiastical authority in Poland – the Episcopate – and its religious mission entrusted by the Holy See from the political attitude taken by the highest-ranking members of the Church.”

If there were ever a definitive indication of the PAX movement’s break with fidelity to the institutional Church to which its activists professed to look for guidance toward salvation, Mazowiecki’s text would be it. First, he refused even to consider the possibility that Kaczmarek and his alleged co-conspirators were innocent, and his comments completely denied them not only their subjecthood as acting human persons, but indeed the basic legal consideration of presumed innocence. Second, Mazowiecki crystallized sentiments long latent – but never before
so acidly expressed – in the PAX movement attributing Pius XII’s generally negative sentiment toward socialism to sympathy for American imperialism. Most astonishingly, however, Mazowiecki’s presentation of this linkage imputed to both Kaczmarek and the Holy See the implicit desire “by means of a new war, and thus the deaths of millions of people, to force an order defined by profiteering and social harm upon countries that have chosen a new historical path.”

Third – and most decisively, given PAX’s global peace activism – Mazowiecki associated Kaczmarek with the prospects of a “new war, a war carried out in Poland with the help of a neo-Hitlerite Wehrmacht.” As Mazowiecki put it, “With each day of effort and self-sacrificing work by millions of Poles residing in these [Recovered] territories, these lands are strengthened in their ultimate assimilation into the Motherland.” In this year of the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community, which seemed to legitimate West Germany’s return to the status of a full-fledged power-broker in the international community, Mazowiecki thus felt the need to underscore that there had never, since the war’s end, been a more important time to protect Poland’s claim to the Recovered Territories. It was this reason, then, that led the new WTK editor to conclude that Kaczmarek himself was to blame for his misfortunes. The conclusion was necessary, moreover, because, “with all due respect to the office and dignity of a bishop, a clear assessment is required of his erroneous sociopolitical attitude.” Mazowiecki’s only regret from the Kaczmarek trial concerned the emotions that it provoked: “painful, creating a deep conflict within our consciences.”

The editorial thus constitutes the sum-total of the most moralistic and most deleterious political propaganda set forth by the Dziś i Jutro/PAX movement since 1945. Not only

disrespectful of its ecclesiastical superiors, it denied flat-out the premises of social Catholicism that had dictated the basis of Vatican-inspired sociopolitical and pastoral attitudes since Leo XIII. Indeed, the very notion of separating sociopolitical beliefs from pastoral activities among the Catholic hierarchy itself constituted a fundamental misunderstanding of how the Vatican had always operated. Perhaps this was an opportunity to underscore that the Vatican needed to shift gears in its approach to the emerging socialist world, yet this amount to kicking a bishop in the face while he was down simply to make a political statement about the Holy See’s Cold War stance.

Moreover, implicit in Mazowiecki’s positing of a distinction between pastorship and sociopolitical activism was a fundamental rejection of pluralism, a suggestion that the mere fact that Kaczmarek held non-mainstream views was sufficient to condemn and sentence him. Reluctant as I am to use the term, applied to this facet of PAX’s activism, Michnik’s characterization of the movement is correct: Mazowiecki’s article expressed totalitarian aspirations.\footnote{Michnik, \textit{The Church and the Left}, p. 176. Michnik is uncharacteristically forgiving with respect to the one-time Young Turks of PAX: “The problem was that their work within PAX did not contribute to the building of a personalistic reality. In the name of honest personalist ideals, they served totalitarianism. Thinking they were serving the Church, they actually worked against it. For people of the secular Left, and so also for the author of these words, it is hard to pass judgment on their activities.” Michnik, \textit{The Church and the Left}, p. 174.} And – at the heart of those aspirations – was a distrust of West Germany and a nationalistic desire to protect the Recovered Territories at all costs that negated the very essence of personalism in all its varied forms, though we know from his earlier \textit{Dziś i Jutro} publications that Mazowiecki was, indeed, a personalist. Arguably, Mazowiecki’s article represented the apogee of a Stalinist personalism whose very articulation revealed the untenability of its position, philosophically, politically, and morally.

The goal here is not to indict Mazowiecki personally but rather to showcase a turning point in the fate of the \textit{Dziś i Jutro}/PAX movement. Indeed, Andrzej Michewski has argued
persuasively that Piasecki sent his former protégé Mazowiecki to Wrocław not as a promotion, but rather to distance the latter from Warsaw once Piasecki began to see his younger colleague as a threat to his own monopolistic control over the movement’s leadership.\textsuperscript{943} Piasecki may well have simply instructed Mazowiecki as to the line that he was to take in his condemnation of Kaczmerek, which was thus intended to compromise Mazowiecki as a Catholic activist almost as much as Kaczmerek himself.\textsuperscript{944}

It is not clear whether Wyszyński read Mazowiecki’s commentary on the Kaczmerek show trial. What is certain is that Piasecki saw Wyszyński twice over the course of the week-long proceedings, and on the second occasion Wyszyński categorically rebuffed his visitor. Having orchestrated the Episcopate’s 8 May declaration of “\textit{Non possumus}” with respect to the government’s 10 February decree, Wyszyński wrote to the Council of State on 20 July demanding Kaczmerek’s release, filed an official note of protest with the government immediately after Kaczmerek’s sentencing, and resolved to stop negotiating compromises that the state would never bother to respect.\textsuperscript{945} He explained to Piasecki on 24 September that, rather than choose one of four presented options for the shape of the next stage of Church-State cooperation in socialist Poland, he would prefer a “fifth option”: prison.\textsuperscript{946} Indeed, apparently expecting to be arrested the next day, he delivered an uncharacteristically inflammatory homily during the evening mass at the Church of St. Anne in Warsaw, insisting, “The Church will eternally demand truth and freedom. Perhaps this is why the Church has so many enemies, for

\textsuperscript{943} Micewski, \textit{Współrządzić czy nie klamać?}, p. 75.
\textsuperscript{944} For example – Wieczorek, Interview with Author.
\textsuperscript{945} For the text of the \textit{Non possumus} declaration – a statement of civil disobedience pursuant to the establishment’s decision to renege on its earlier commitments – see Stefan Wyszyński, Letter to Bolesław Bierut, 8 May 1953, reprinted as “\textit{Non possumus}: Memoriał Episkopatu Polski do Rady Ministrów na ręce prezesa Bolesława Bieruta,” at Raina, \textit{Kardynał Wyszyński}, p. 57-76. For Wyszyński’s July 1953 request that Kaczmerek be released, see Stefan Wyszyński, Letter to Council of State, 20 July 1953, reprinted at Raina, \textit{Kardynał Wyszyński}, p. 85. The 24 September note of protest following Kaczmerek’s conviction and sentencing is at Raina, \textit{Kardynał Wyszyński}, p. 93-95.
\textsuperscript{946} See, for example, Zabłocki, \textit{Prymas Stefan Wyszyński}, p. 150.
Christianity will always call for resistance, for struggle against every calumny and every *modus vivendi*. The Church will always call out: ‘sell what you have, do not carry your ballast with you.’”

Four hours later, the cardinal-primate of Poland was in transit to a holding cell, under guard by functionaries of the Public Security Ministry.

Nonetheless, this was neither Stalinist Czechoslovakia nor Stalinist Hungary. Wyszyński suffered neither torture nor a show trial, and the long-term solution chosen by Bierut was to confine him – with a priest and a nun to attend to him – to an isolated, vacant monastery rather than a prison cell. Already on the second day of his internment, Wyszyński noted in his diary, “Certainly, martyrdom is deeply ennobling, but God leads the Church not only down the extraordinary path of martyrdom, but also the ordinary path of apostolic work. Indeed, I was of the opinion that what we need today is a different kind of martyrdom: martyrdom through work, not blood.”

And so Wyszyński continued to work, preparing himself for a return to pastoral duties, reviewing the agenda that he had pursued since becoming primate. Reciting to himself advice that he had received over the past two decades from various Catholic sources – especially from Rev. Korniłowicz – Wyszyński devoted himself to prayer. In the course of his internment, the primate experienced a mystical awakening centered on veneration of the Polish national cult of the Virgin Mary. While in isolation, he could receive no visitors, but he maintained a regular

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949 I owe my thinking about the timing of this conversion in part to conversations with Damien Thiriet.
The correspondence with his father, and he also received press materials (ironically, mostly PAX journals).950

The story of show trials and arrests employed against the institutional Church in Poland points us to one overarching conclusion about PAX. The arrest of Primate Wyszyński, which followed directly from the conviction and sentencing of Bishop Kaczmarek, constituted a point of no return for Piasecki’s movement. The progressives not only went about their daily business without the slightest hint of speaking out in the primate’s defense, but indeed Piasecki had done everything he could to get the primate to capitulate to the establishment’s position.951

In the end, Dziś i Jutro was one of the Polish journals to publish the government’s official decree banning Wyszyński from exercising his duties – news of the arrest was not officially publicized in Poland – along with a statement forced on the Episcopate affirming its commitment to the 1950 Accord. Faced with no choice, the Episcopate also selected a “replacement” for the suspended cardinal-primate: Łódź bishop Michał Klepacz, who would lead the Church in Poland until Wyszyński’s ultimate release in October 1956.952 Alongside these third-party declarations, however, the Dziś i Jutro editorial staff – following in the footsteps of Mazowiecki’s commentary on the Kaczmarek sentence – published an official statement in which the editors went all-in with the establishment against their national Catholic leader:

These conflicts, whose full intensity became clear only during Bishop Kaczmarek’s trial, required immediate resolution in the name of national interest. At a time of victory by the most reactionary, pro-Hitlerite forces of Adenauer in West Germany,

950 The cardinal-primate kept a systematic record of his reflections, his correspondence, and his readings, noting in particular his growing devotion to the Virgin Mary. Korniłowicz’s name appeared throughout these notes as a “source of solace” to Wyszyński’s mind, and a model to follow in the primate’s selections of reading and meditation, which often returned to the Belgian Cardinal Mercier, a particular icon of the great pastor of Laski. See Wyszyński, Zapiski więziennes.
952 Communiqué of the Council of Ministers of the Polish People’s Republic, printed in Dziś i Jutro, 4 October 1953; Declaration of the Polish Episcopate, 28 September 1953, reprinted in Dziś i Jutro, 4 October 1953.
when a campaign of immense proportions has been unleashed there against the most vital interests of Poland – we cannot allow ourselves further equivocation in the face of such a harmful orientation. [...] The fact of the removal from office of an ecclesiastical leader of the rank of Primate of Poland cannot fail to touch the emotions and the Catholic conscience. All the more so given that we are bound to the person of the Cardinal-Primate not only by respect for the dignity of his ecclesiastical office, but also by respect for his pastoral stance, full of passion in the service of Christ. This decision has, nonetheless, become fact, for the objective consequences of the ecclesiastical policy conducted in recent times cut at the basic principles of national unity, thereby threatening the prospects of the development of the very Church whose Hierarchy ought to carry out first and foremost its religious and apostolic duties.

This point of no return had both domestic and international ramifications, which were intimately intertwined. Following the Polish primate’s arrest, Mazowiecki’s Young Turks would slowly move toward a break with their movement elders. Meanwhile, PAX’s Catholic-socialist international partners, though concerned with the situation created by Wyszynski’s removal, continued to support PAX as a force worth emulating throughout Europe.

**PAX’s International Partners Respond**

In the wake of Wyszynski’s forcible removal from his duties, Catholic press across Western Europe and the United States featured the story, with the more anti-Communist among the publications – France’s *La Croix*, the United Kingdom’s *The Tablet*, the United States’s *Commonweal* – roundly condemning the Polish People’s Republic. To understand the reception of news of Wyszynski’s “suspension” – news of his arrest was not immediately reported – it is useful first to backtrack a few steps, reintroducing Father Bosc of Pax Christi and Action Populaire and his May 1953 week-long visit to Poland. Coming three months after the 10 February decree arrogating to the state the right to veto any internal ecclesiastical personnel

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decision, Bosc and his small Pax Christi delegation arrived in Warsaw right in the thick of one of the stormiest six-month periods of the Polish institutional Church’s history.

Originally proposed by Vaussard as an opportunity for Bosc to shepherd a group of 10 or so French Catholic university students around Poland, Bosc ended up traveling only with two companions from the Pax Christi International office. He tried, unsuccessfully, to gain an audience with Wyszyński, who was at the time occupied preparing the Episcopate’s Non possumus declaration. Étienne Fouilloux has credited Bosc with publishing, on his return, “a chronicle critiquing, albeit with a certain level of decorum, the toadying of the PAX movement with respect to the regime.” Bosc did indeed publish an extensive account of his journey in the Revue de l’Action Populaire, but Fouilloux is very wide of the mark in his assessment of Bosc’s conclusions. In fact, the article demonstrates the extent to which the Jesuit felt himself to be torn between multiple loyalties. Bosc acknowledged the Vatican’s reservations toward both the Polish Church-State Accord of 1950 and the more general fact of Catholic-socialist co-existence in the Soviet Bloc, yet he heaped praise on the Polish bishops’ “calm courage of men who know themselves to be successors of the Apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit to lead the Church through a difficult passage.” Though Bosc noted the “difficulty” created for the Episcopate by the February decree, this priest said not a word about the show trials: this – even though his analysis, unlike that of his Polish colleagues, appeared in an uncensored French journal.

954 Maurice Vaussard, Letter to Wojciech Kętrzyński, 26 January 1953, AKSCC V/94.
956 Fouilloux, “L’Action populaire au temps de la reconstruction.”
958 Bosc provides a footnote with a lengthy citation from the Polish legal code, referencing simply “law number 10” from 10 February 1953, whose second and third articles, in particular, were in clear violation of both the letter and spirit of the 1950 Accord: “Article 2: The creation, transformation, and suppression of ecclesiastical ministries as well as their modification of the limits of their competence require the prior agreement of competent organs of the State. Article 3§1. The filling of a vacant ecclesiastical ministry requires the prior agreement of competent organs of the State. §2. The prescriptions of §1 are valid also for vacation of a post and transfer to another post.” See Journal
Bosc also clearly felt torn between the need to tell the larger story of postwar Poland and the case study that he found utterly fascinating for its deep engagement in building the new sociopolitical order: PAX. Attempting to establish credibility for himself as an analyst, the priest noted that, out of a total of seven days spent in Poland, he and his fellow travelers had spent one day in Lublin, one in Wrocław, and five in Warsaw, concluding that this experience was “sufficient to understand the difficult experiment in which our Polish Catholic brothers find themselves engaged and to gain a sense of responsibility and obligation toward them.”\textsuperscript{959} In order to reconcile the stories of the Polish nation and the PAX movement, Bosc attributed to the majority of Polish Catholics a conviction “that the current regime has done real service to the homeland in terms of social and economic order (reconstruction, industrialization, the struggle against public immorality, defense of the Western borders).”\textsuperscript{960} By implication, then, the PAX project of Catholic-socialist syncretism was, in Bosc’s eyes, at minimum in synergy with the majority Catholic will, if not indeed its quintessential expression.

Although the Jesuit chronicler was not uncritical of Poles belonging to PAX, his criticism concerned only the dangers of an unspecified “certain nationalism,” which Bosc implicitly tied to the risk of repeating certain past “grave doctrinal deviations” like those of the Action Française.\textsuperscript{961} Astonishingly, not a word appeared in the context of this potential “nationalism” problem about the committed anti-Germanism of the PAX leadership. Indeed, Bosc, the secretary of an international Catholic peace movement dedicated to Franco-German reconciliation, had this to say about the Polish activists’ obsession with defending the Recovered Territories against West Germany: “The declared intention of the heads of state of West...""
Germany to recover the territories on the Oder and the Neisse presses upon Europe a menace that it would be vain to try to deny. Whatever one’s opinion on the matter, it is urgent for the sanctity of peace that a treaty intervene as soon as possible, fixing definitively the fate of these regions that Poland considers to be indubitably its own.” In practice, thus, Bosc came down on PAX’s side, calling for protections for the Recovered Territories without saying a word about the aggression latent in the Polish Catholics’ approach, only that a hard line seemed to reflect “unanimity on the part of the Polish nation.”962

As for PAX, in addition to tackling the tough questions and attempting to keep the peace between Church and State, its activists emerged in the French Jesuit’s account as having the right priorities – social justice, international solidarity, “our common obligation toward world peace”963 – as well as tangible pastoral accomplishments (Bosc particularly lauded them for mass-publishing and disseminating Rev. Dąbrowski’s New Testament translation) and “intellectual honesty.” As the greatest achievement of his visit, Bosc bragged of sharing “our concerns in the spirit of brotherhood with our friends at PAX, and certainly not the least interesting part of our voyage were the long discussions pursued late into each night with one another, in all sincerity.”964 For this willingness to talk through the objections and concerns of outsiders, Bosc asked French Catholics to reward PAX with invitations to enter deeper into the French Catholic world, for “exchanges among Catholics, to bear fruit, must never go in only one direction. [...] Are we ready to receive something from our brothers in Poland?”965

Clearly, the PAX activists were doing something right: a French Jesuit representing both a clerical social-Catholic think tank and a peace movement devoted to Franco-German

964 Bosc, “Catholiques de Pologne,” p. 611.
reconciliation had not only signed off publicly in print in France on their activism, but indeed exhorted his co-religionist readers to swell the ranks of Catholic exchanges with Poland. Kętrzyński could not have hoped for anything better when he first conceived his Catholic-socialist international. What is particularly noteworthy in Bosc’s case is that, in contrast with Vaussard, who for health reasons never traveled to Poland, the Jesuit went to Poland on the express invitation of, of all people, PAX’s Dominik Horodyński in his capacity as co-chair of the new, Domenach-inspired Polish Committee for the Peaceful Solution of the German Problem. Thus, Bosc went to Poland to study how to fit Poland into the broader matrix of postwar ethical reconciliation in Europe, and he returned to France convinced that the Poles were right and the West Germans wrong, ready to advocate as much.

Bosc may have been extremely naïve in his reading of PAX’s relationship to Poland’s Stalinist-socialist establishment, yet, in contrast to the conspiracy of silence maintained between Kętrzyński and Vaussard on the German question, Bosc heard out what the Poles had to say and agreed with them. This did not cause him to leave the Pax Christi organization on his return to France, but rather to lobby for a more cautious line toward West Germany. He invited a PAX delegation to participate in the July 1953 Semaines Sociales de France at Pau, and he wrote to PAX to underscore how much he had enjoyed conversation with its leadership over dinner at Bolesław Piasecki’s home, a conversation that he hoped to continue at length soon.

And he was not alone. Jacques Mignon, responsible for youth affairs in Pax Christi, who had accompanied Bosc around Poland, published his own reflections on the trip in which he noted with regard to PAX: “our Catholic friends live tout court, but in particular they are living their faith, not in comfort, sometimes under duress, but as witnesses to truth. What reason would

967 Robert Bosc, Letter to Konstanty Łubieński, 3 June 1953, AKSCC V/94.
we have to condemn them?\textsuperscript{968} In sum, through its contacts with Pax Christi, Dziś i Jutro/PAX succeeded not only in acquiring a powerful node for its projected Catholic-socialist international, but indeed in effecting a change in political attitudes within perhaps the key center of Catholic peace activism in postwar Europe.

Étienne Fouilloux, while incorrect in his interpretation of Bosc’s article, is right to recall that Kętrzyński, on behalf of the PAX leadership, sent Action Populaire a note of protest in the wake of a news piece published in the Revue de l’Action Populaire concerning the 25 September 1953 arrest of Primate Stefan Wyszyński.\textsuperscript{969} Yet Bosc, presenting himself as one of “the best friends and defenders of the new Poland,” was one of the first to write to Kętrzyński as news of the arrest spread internationally, to console him while also trying to explain to him delicately and apologetically why so many Catholics were reacting negatively to news of the repression of the Polish primate:

we understand well that the primate has not always been as accommodating and understanding as he needed to be, this is possible; but he was a man who wanted the best for the new Poland, who made of himself one of the staunchest defenders (at least, in the eyes of French Catholics) of Poland’s new western borders. Thus, we are all waiting, and we hope that it will be possible to find an honorable means of restoring the primate to his functions.\textsuperscript{970}

Bosc – and with him, Vaussard and all of Pax Christi – remained a good friend to the PAX leadership in a time when traditionalist Catholic opinion was rapidly turning against the type of activism for which Piasecki’s organization stood. By the loyalty of this and other nodes that Kętrzyński succeeded in building into his Catholic-socialist international, PAX’s

\textsuperscript{968} Jacques Mignon, “Des Catholiques français et polonais se rencontrent,” L’Actualité religieuse dans le monde, 1 August 1953, p. 33-34, at p. 34. Italics in the original.

\textsuperscript{969} See Wojciech Kętrzyński, Letter to Action Populaire, 4 December 1953, quoted at Fouilloux, “L’Action populaire au temps de la reconstruction,” n. 59. The original document is at APJF F 1735.

\textsuperscript{970} Robert Bosc, Letter to Wojciech Kętrzyński, 19 November 1953, AKSCC V/94.
transnational network yielded remarkable dividends and in fact helped PAX’s activists to feel better about themselves despite their betrayal of their primate.

In the interest of allaying bad feelings toward Poland among Catholic activists of all political stripes, Maurice Vaussard – who, in addition to his Pax Christi activism, served as an editor at *Le Monde* from 1945 onward – convinced the paper’s executive editor Hubert Beuve-Méry to print a two-part series on the Polish Church. In early November 1953, Odette Laffoucrière, a philosopher trained in Catholic thought, prepared twin commentaries for publication in back-to-back issues of *Le Monde* under the heading of “The Church of Poland between Rome and the State.” Though nominally devoted to explaining the consequences of Wyszyński’s arrest, the articles in fact focused rather on the 1950 Accord, its context, and its implications, with Wyszyński’s arrest framed only as a point of entry into a broader conversation about Catholicism behind the Iron Curtain. Laffoucrière began her first article,

> For several years, and especially since the imprisonment of Monsignor Beran, a game is in progress in Poland whose interest bears on the Church: the point is to know if Rome and the people’s democracies can find a *modus vivendi*. It is paradoxical that this meeting has taken place in this country of profound faith that is, nonetheless, traditionalist and relatively poorly educated. On 25 September, a new episode in this drama played out. Around 10pm, as he was returning from preaching at the temporary cathedral, Cardinal Wyszyński, archbishop of Warsaw and primate of Poland, was apprehended by the police.\(^{971}\)

Reviewing the implications of the 1949 Holy Office decree and the Polish government’s negative response to it, Laffoucrière lauded the activists of PAX as “neither heterodox nor dissidents.” To those who would criticize PAX for “disloyalty” to the Church, she replied that such judgments reflected a “misunderstanding of the rooting of their position in the very history

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of the Church.” In other words, the accomplishment that Laffoucrière attributed to PAX was that of leading Church and State, despite wildly different points of departure, to a “certain ralliement” – even if achieving that ralliement necessitated the primate’s removal from office – particularly by means of its focus on the Recovered Territories and the Oder-Neisse border question.972

Indeed, despite the fact that it was precisely the question of the Recovered Territories that drove the most vehement, violent official criticism of the Church from mainstream and PAX press alike, this seemed to be the question around which Western European Catholic activists rallied most enthusiastically. In fact, La Quinzaine and Esprit even intensified their ties with PAX in the wake of Wyszyński’s arrest. Although La Quinzaine published in mid-October an article strongly critical of the Polish establishment’s anti-ecclesiastical policy, Quinzaine managing editor Jean Verlhac (1923-1995) wrote to Kętrzyński a month later to clarify the journal’s stance.973 In particular, Verlhac insisted that the journal was doing everything in its power “to stay out of the realm of the political” with its protest against Wyszyński’s imprisonment.

Rather, Verlhac asserted what was perhaps a counterintuitive link between Western coverage of Wyszyński’s fate and the blossoming prospects for (West) European integration: “the Cardinal’s suspension is one thing and the European army is something else entirely. There is, of course, on the part of milieux of the extreme Right an attempt to use the suspension of the Cardinal to justify a crusade, but this attempt is more limited than in the past.” So it seemed, then, that, in the face of show trials and trumped-up sentences against Church leaders behind the Iron Curtain, the Catholic-socialist international nonetheless had a good chance of surviving.

973 See “C’est l’Église qui est frappée en la personne du cardinal Wyszyński,” La Quinzaine, 15 October 1953.
It was, indeed, the most exclusionary, integralist of all of the shared convictions of progressive Catholics – anti-Germanism – on both sides of the Iron Curtain that made the international’s survival possible. Specifically, in advance of the French National Assembly’s vote on the Pleven Plan on 30 August 1954, public debates concerning the project of a European Defense Community reached a fever pitch. With a preliminary treaty of defense cooperation having already been signed in continental Western Europe in May 1952, the Catholic-socialist syncretists of *La Quinzaine*, *Esprit*, and *Dziś i Jutro* feared that Europe was doomed to German revanchism. It is for this reason in particular that, as Verlhac noted, a mere three months after the arrest and imprisonment of Primate Wyszyński, “friendship toward Poland is growing in France, and the question of the Oder-Neisse border is making great progress in public opinion.”

Jean Verlhac – and, with him, the entire milieu of *La Quinzaine* – thus accepted without question what Wyszyński’s arrest denoted about PAX’s place within Polish politics. Verlhac understood that his Polish friends were in bed with the Stalinist establishment, and it did not bother him at all. Indeed, even the one time that Kętrzyński really let his emotions get the better of him, unleashing a torrent of anti-ecclesiastical sentiment in a letter to Verlhac, the latter did not object. In this particular letter, meanwhile, Kętrzyński placed all of the blame for Wyszyński’s arrest in part on the cardinal’s own stubbornness, in part on his foolhardy advisors, and finally – and most significantly – on the Vatican itself:

> the evolution of this conflict depended on the personality of the primate of Poland, who is at the same time a man of a very great and beautiful spirituality and a fantasist with no sense of politics and extremely poor counsel from an often dishonest entourage. [...] All efforts had been made to incline the primate toward reasonable solutions. This was deemed impossible. What could the Polish government do in these conditions but invoke the decree authorizing it to intervene in ecclesiastical affairs? Above the primate there is only

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974 Jean Verlhac, Letter to Wojciech Kętrzyński, 16 December 1953, AKSCC V/94.
the Vatican, which had no desire of playing the role of mediator in this conflict. [...] What is hidden in the West is the fact that the bishops have not followed the primate in this conflict, that his successor has managed to establish relations with the government.975

There were exceptions, but by and large the Francophone Catholic vanguard of Western Europe had spoken in defense of PAX even at the height of its complicity in persecution of its own Church.976

**The Resilient Esprit-PAX Partnership**

In the interest of ramping up its appeal to the Catholic-socialist partners whom Kętrzyński and Łubieński had been courting since long before the show trials began, the Dziś i Jutro editors took the unprecedented step of producing an eight-page, all-French-language edition (*Aujourd’hui et demain*) for Christmas 1953 highlighting the articles of greatest interest from the entire year. Similar issues would follow in 1954 and 1955. Kętrzyński supervised the selection of mailing recipients for these issues, creating a specifically targeted list of current or potential partner groups. Among the highlighted articles was a text by Dominik Horodyński entitled “We place our trust in France,” focused on the debates over the European Defense

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Community. In fact, almost every text included in the French-language edition touched in some way on the question of peace and German neutralization.977

This focus begged for a greater engagement on the part of Jean-Marie Domenach, who, in addition to being Esprit’s managing editor, had in just two years become one of Europe’s leading activists for a “peaceful solution of the German problem.” As the founding co-chair of the French lobby group devoted to this cause within the framework of the larger progressive-Catholic struggle for peace, Domenach had inspired the creation of an analogous Polish committee in mid-1953. These Polish colleagues, led by Horodyński and the PZPR’s Ostap Dłuski, sought to bring Domenach to Poland as their committee’s honored guest as soon as possible. This voyage came to fruition on 28 January 1954, in time for the scheduled 31 January assembly of the Polish Committee for the Peaceful Solution of the German Problem. Domenach spent just over a week in Poland, visiting Kraków and Lublin in addition to Warsaw, acquiring what he described as a better understanding of the Poles’ “traditions and hopes for the future.”978 In these he found a perfect synergy with his own.

During his time in Poland, Domenach had the opportunity to make the acquaintance of Andrzej Krasiński. Although Krasiński had withdrawn from most of his movement duties for three years while struggling with tuberculosis, he felt strong enough in early 1954 to serve as Domenach’s guide around Poland. As it happened, the men bonded instantly and would thereafter remain lifelong friends. It was thus Krasiński who, in late May 1954, had the privilege of writing to Domenach that PAX had chosen him to be the recipient of that year’s Włodzimierz Pietrzak Prize for overall achievement by a Catholic activist. Krasiński showed great tact in his

978 Jean-Marie Domenach, Letter to Dominik Horodyński and Ostap Dłuski, 5 January 1954, IMEC ESP2.C2-03.02; Jean-Marie Domenach, Letter to Dominik Horodyński and Ostap Dłuski, 11 February 1954, IMEC ESP2.C2-03.02. The quotation is drawn from the latter.
announcement of the prize to Domenach, consulting him first on whether or not the *Esprit* editor would even permit the Poles to advertise the decision:

> The decision of the Jury was unanimous, but in taking it the Jury deemed it necessary to consult first your opinion regarding the publicity of the Prize. In particular, the jury wanted to spare you possible attacks on the part of conservative Catholic milieux in France and avoid inflaming the growing campaign against the so-called “Catholic progressive international.”

Worthy of attention is Krasiński’s effort to distance PAX from its four-year international campaign by placing the phrase “Catholic progressive international” in scare-quotes. Subsequent correspondence shows that this was Krasiński’s way of gauging Domenach’s general attitude toward PAX. Despite the many deeply personal conversations that he had shared with Domenach in January-February 1954, Krasiński recognized that the issue of Wyszyński’s arrest still hung heavily in the air, and thus Krasiński preferred to tread carefully.

This care, however, proved entirely unnecessary. Although Domenach did not, in the end, announce his receipt of the Pietrzak Award in the pages of *Esprit*, he invested considerable time, thought, and passion into planning the substance and logistics of his second voyage to Poland in 1954 to receive the award. The connection between Pietrzak and his own “martyred” Témoignage Chrétien friend Gilbert Dru was not lost on Domenach. Indeed, it only convinced him further of the need to commit ideologically to solidarity with the Polish progressive Catholics in their most successful of international causes: the anti-German element of the peace campaign.

After having settled with Krasiński on dates for his visit – 15 July - 3 August – Domenach turned to correspondence with Kętrzyński. This PAX elder, evidently impressed with

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Domenach’s enthusiastic response to Krasiński’s cautious entreaty, rather distastefully asked the French editor to provide a public statement to be circulated to mainstream Polish press in time for the 22 July national holiday of “People’s Poland,” which brought the 10th anniversary of its founding: “Do you not think it would be good to have in this regard a brief pronouncement of your authorship that could be reproduced by our press for 22 July?”

Although Domenach failed to submit this propaganda piece, he was nonetheless deeply sympathetic to PAX’s agenda. This sympathy followed not only from personal affinity for his contacts like Kętrzyński and Krasiński, but from his perception of a symmetry in Polish-German and Franco-German relations. This was no marginal concern in France: not only the French Communist Party, but also the Socialists of the SFIO and a wide cross-section of French society feared for Alsace, Lorraine, and whatever other territory might come into play in the event of German ressentiment. Common coal and steel market or no, French memory of the defeat of 1940, and even France’s humiliation at Prussian hands in 1870, was still fresh.

As he accepted the Pietrzak Award in Warsaw, Domenach declared, “If countless Christian activists – both Catholics and Protestants – have decided to struggle, together with peace fighters, against the re-militarization of Germany, they have done so above all for moral reasons: the example of Munich has taught us all that a nation that betrays its friends prepares its own demise.” Both the private correspondence and public statements exchanged between Domenach and his Polish counterparts thus underscore the existence of a genuine sense of solidarity — as Domenach wrote, “our Polish friends’ cause is in solidarity with our own” on both sides.

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981 Jean-Marie Domenach, Speech on the occasion of the conferral of the Włodzimierz Pietrzak Prize, Dziś i Jutro, 1 August 1954.
The core of this solidarity was a joint political project pursued *en chrétien* – at least, as they understood it – as an alternative to European integration, indeed, a project of global peace beginning with the effacement of any possibility of German re-armament. The PAX laudation for Domenach (read aloud by Kętrzyński at the award ceremony) thus began as follows:

To Mr. Jean-Marie Domenach – for his selfless activism in defense of peace, for his struggle against the ratification of the accord from Bonn and Paris dividing Europe into mutually antagonistic blocs, for his contribution to the work of peaceful reconciliation of all European nations. The jury takes this opportunity to underscore the significance of the participation of French Catholic milieux in our shared fight for a peaceful solution to the German question, participation valued particularly by the Polish nation, which is bound to the French nation by unbreakable bonds of friendship and common national interests. The jury wishes also to single out in its decision both the personal contribution of Jean-Marie Domenach and the contribution of the *Esprit* journal that he edits to the general European movement for the defense of civilization, encompassing, regardless of differences of worldview, all people of good faith.

The symmetry between the language used by the Polish progressive Catholics and that used by Domenach, not only to congratulate each other, but indeed to reinforce each other’s political convictions on grounds of religious principle, is striking. For both, geopolitics and Christian faith were indelibly intertwined as motivations for organized lay activism. They pursued this activism in their capacity as members of the Catholic Church even though that Church had not authorized these actions. Indeed, Pius XII did all that he could to undercut that type of activism, short of ordering Catholics to back the Western European Christian Democrat-led project of (Western) European integration, which Domenach publicly dismissed as a “false” Christian Europe. In his acceptance speech, Domenach also declared,

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You Poles are our friends, as you have suffered more than we at the hands of German barbarity. I declare this in the name of all of my colleagues: when we became involved in the fight against German remilitarization and against a “false” Europe, we were thinking above all of you. [...] When we are asked to mobilize Christian Europe “against Bolshevism,” we reply “no,” for we remain loyal to the cause for which we are fighting and loyal to the friends with whom we fight. We do not forget that this supposed “Christian Europe” has betrayed itself, creating conflict and awakening hatred between nations and races. This Europe has already died, buried under the ruins of the Ghetto, under the millions of corpses at Auschwitz. This Europe was not Christian.  

What Domenach proposed as the alternative to the (Western) European integration project was, rather, a “Europe reaching back to the traditions of all struggle against exploitation, and particularly the most recent struggles for liberation from fascist occupation, a Europe of the past but also of the future, which, in a mutually assured peace, will seek the path to the reconciliation of nations, cultures, and peoples.”

At every stage, the enterprise that brought Domenach to Poland in the summer of 1954 – from his official declaration of “loyalty to the friends with whom we fight” to the joint holiday that he and his family took in Poland with PAX friends like Andrzej Krasiński, who accompanied the Domenachs on vacation to beaches on the Baltic and hiking trails in the Tatra Mountains – seemed genuine. Goulven Boudic, in his excellent study of postwar Esprit, has in passing noted the intensifying relationship between Esprit and its Polish counterpart in the first half of the 1950s. Nonetheless, a detailed, contextual understanding of the Polish side of the story is necessary to make sense of these contacts. Ideological affinity, a shared policy agenda,

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984 This declaration by Domenach himself, more than any other document, gives the lie to Domenach’s 1982 claim that his trips to Poland in the 1950s “put me on my guard against the advances” of PAX. Domenach, “L’Internationale personnaliste,” p. 175. It would not even be accurate to say that the PAX activists fooled, let alone brainwashed, Domenach: he agreed with them in their foreign-policy advocacies – plain and simple – and these shared beliefs led him to maintain an enthusiastic partnership.

985 Domenach, Speech on the occasion of the conferral of the Włodzimierz Pietrzak Prize.

and personal relationships combined to make the Polish bond with Esprit, strong already since Mounier’s visit in 1946, more intimate and more committed than ever. This—less than a year after Kaczmarek’s sentencing and Wyszyński’s arrest, discussion of which appears nowhere in any of the papers or statements involving Domenach and his friends from PAX.

This was a bond with Esprit, not just with Domenach personally. Esprit executive editor Albert Béguin, long-time Esprit contributor and Mounier confidant Jean Lacroix, Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français president Henri Bédarida (1887-1957), and renowned Catholic sociologist Henri Bartoli (1918-2008) made a one-week journey to Poland in April 1955. In the course of their visit, they gave lectures in Kraków, Lublin, Warsaw, and Wrocław, with PAX shepherding them around as foreign dignitaries.\footnote{These seminars eventuated, among others, in a series of translated publications in Dziś i Jutro, including Jean Lacroix, “Sens nowoczesnego ateizmu,” Dziś i Jutro, 8 May 1955; Henri Bartoli, “O cywilizację pracy,” Dziś i Jutro, 28 August 1955.} Indeed, all were so impressed with their time in Poland and their treatment at the hands of their hosts that they pledged to return seven months later for the tenth-anniversary celebration of Dziś i Jutro.\footnote{See, for example, Henri Bartoli’s discussion of logistics for his visit in Henri Bartoli, Letter to Wanda Urstein, 22 September 1955, AKSCC V/98.} This—despite the obvious propagandistic significance accorded to their visit by the PAX leadership, evident from just a few sentences of its announcement in the pages of Dziś i Jutro: “The visit of the French Catholic intellectuals came at a time when the entire Polish nation was signing the Vienna [Peace] Appeal. The fact of the mass signings by Polish society made an enormous impression on our guests, who appreciate in full the significance of the struggle for peace. Prof. Lacroix voiced this appreciation in his farewell address, in which he underscored Poland’s great role in the work of maintaining peace.”\footnote{[Untitled front-cover note], Dziś i Jutro, 8 May 1955. The Vienna Appeal came just shy of the fifth anniversary of the Stockholm Appeal, issued by the World Council of Peace (successor organization to the Partisans of Peace), in session in Vienna on 17-19 January 1955.}
In sum, then, the pall cast over socialist Poland by the show trials and arrests of its highest-ranking ecclesiastical officers seemed rather transient. Willing as they were to turn a blind eye to their Dziś i Jutro/PAX colleagues’ complicity in Stalinist attacks on their own Church, PAX’s French progressive Catholic friends if anything accelerated PAX’s transnational partnership with their respective milieux. Most striking is the fact that this willingness to bend over backwards in the name of their politically suspect Polish partners came from activists whose paths to progressive Catholicism had been anything but certain. It was the iconic fin-de-siècle social Catholic Maurice Vaussard who offered to arrange and pay Odette Laffoucrière’s way to Poland in the late fall of 1953. Laffoucrière was to serve as a long-term unofficial Pax Christi envoy to Poland, with the intention of preparing an extensive, pro-PAX book-length study of Catholicism in socialist Poland. Laffoucrière did visit in the spring of 1954, together with La Quinzaine managing editor Jean Verlhac, though the book never came to fruition. In its cross-Iron Curtain activism, then, Pax Christi and its pro-German reconciliation vice-president Maurice Vaussard became a loyal partner of the anti-German Jean-Marie Domenach, for whom the trauma of wartime resistance turned Germany’s permanent neutralization into a downright obsession.

The Holy Office at Mid-Century

In a decade defined in the European Catholic activist world by the incessant attacks of Pius XII’s Holy See on progressive Catholics of various stripes, La Quinzaine had represented a fearless core group of Catholic-socialist syncretists assembling refugees from across the many nodes of condemned French progressive Catholicism. The year of La Quinzaine’s debut and of the Stockholm Appeal was also the year of Pius XII’s encyclical Humani Generis. This
encyclical followed nearly a decade of build-up in the Holy See that had begun with the 1942 condemnation of Marie-Dominique Chenu’s *Une École de théologie* manuscript.

Dominican – but firmly anti-Saulchoir – Father Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, who had helped Maritain to coordinate early-interwar Parisian Thomist study circles, emerged after World War II as Rome’s prized scholastic theologian. A professor at the Collegium Angelicum, the Roman papal academy of Thomist thought, Garrigou-Lagrange used that institution as a launching pad for theological vitrioles against his principal opponents, the “historical Thomists” Chenu and Congar.990 Ironically, among his students was the young priest Karol Wojtyła: thus it would be that, 50 years after Garrigou-Lagrange orchestrated the condemnation of *nouvelle théologie*, his most famous student would bestow a cardinal’s hat on Yves Congar, one of his teacher’s greatest foes.

Under prodding from Garrigou-Lagrange, Pius XII prepared an encyclical on *nouvelle théologie*. Virtually identical in style to the anti-modernist encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* of 43 years earlier, this encyclical made plain Pius XII’s desire to model his theology of the Catholic confrontation with the modern world on that of Pius X. Like the 1907 encyclical, the 1950 *Humani Generis* condemned not one specific proposition, but a whole spectrum of ill-defined “new opinions [...] not always advanced in the same degree, with equal clarity nor in the same terms, nor always with unanimous agreement of their authors.” The encyclical was thus first and foremost a *rappel à l’ordre*, a way of exercising institutional discipline rather than extirping any specific supposed heresy. And yet the identities of its chief targets were clear, offering as the encyclical did as its point of departure a lamentation of a “certain historicism”

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990 See, for example, Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle théologie*, p. 4-5, 35.
that “overthrows the foundation of all truth and absolute law.”

Chenu, Congar, and their Dominican and Jesuit nouvelle théologie acolytes were under attack from the top authority of their Church.

On the one hand, Humani Generis helped to spur the renaissance of an agglomerated progressive Catholicism coalescing around La Quinzaine, which welcomed the leading nouveaux théologiens as contributing authors in the wake of their dismissal from Le Saulchoir. On the other hand, it seemed only a matter of time before the vigilant eye of the Holy See honed in on the remaining progressive centers in Francophone Western Europe. This it did mostly through the often-reluctant mediation of the French Episcopate.

Cardinal Feltin, his Lyon colleague Cardinal Gerlier, and his Lille colleague Cardinal Achille Liénart (1884-1973) – responsible in the French Episcopate for the Mission de France – thus spent much of the early 1950s in the uncomfortable role of campus security officers shutting down centers of vigorous progressive-Catholic activity. Feltin directed the suspension of the UCP in 1951 and the Jeunesse de l’Église in 1953. Liénart, meanwhile, attempted a more measured approach to his charge, the Mission de France, suspending Rev. Augros as seminary director and twice moving the seminary to cut it away from its enracination in proletarian

991 Pius XII, Humani Generis (12 August 1950), Online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii.
992 See, for example, Apostolus [Marie-Dominique Chenu], “Devant la mort,” La Quinzaine, 15 March 1953.
993 Humani Generis frightened the Dziś i Jutro activists enough for them to reprint in translation an interpretation of the encyclical published in La Revue Nouvelle by renowned Louvain theologian Rev. Roger Aubert (1914-2009). Though Aubert was himself a product of social Catholicism, he had strongly mixed feelings about condemning wholesale the tremendously powerful pastoral tools of nouvelle théologie. As a result, his commentary on the encyclical, though positive overall, was tepidly so, at times sounding even quite forced. The conservatism of the encyclical was, moreover, entirely at odds not only with Dziś i Jutro’s declared ideology, but indeed with the rest of the very same issue containing Aubert’s commentary, devoted otherwise to the upcoming November 1950 Warsaw peace congress. It is thus difficult to view Dziś i Jutro’s reprinting of the Aubert text as anything more than an instrumentalist attempt to cover all available bases. Roger Aubert, “L’encyclique Humani Generis : Une mise en garde contre certaines déviations doctrinales,” La Revue Nouvelle, 15 October 1950, p. 302-309; Roger Aubert, “O encyklice Humani Generis,” Dziś i Jutro, 19 November 1950.
995 See especially the conclusions to Keck, Jeunesse de l’Église.
When this failed to curtail the worker-priest activity that had been irritating the Vatican’s now-Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani since 1946, the French Episcopate in the fall of 1953 issued an instruction to the worker-priests to cease their factory- and mine-based labors and to report to their respective bishops for re-assignment to conventional parochial duties. Of the 100 or so worker-priests functioning as of March 1954, only about half submitted to their bishops’ orders.997

Unlike the intellectuals of the nouvelle théologie or the marginal politicians of the UCP, the worker-priests carried enormous appeal as a human interest story. They were, after all, the one successful direct missionary initiative in Catholic Europe sending its priests into proletarian milieux to integrate with the workers and then win them over. Pastorally, this was the equivalent of Kętrzyński’s pledge for Dziś i Jutro to Christianize socialism from within; only with the worker-priests the momentum was grassroots, not top-down. Thus, their forced cessation of mission to the proletariat – that, or of the priestly vocation itself – caught the eye of mainstream media worldwide.998

In Poland, too, the plight of the worker-priests captivated the press, fueling a facile anti-Vatican sentiment entirely independent of the top-down rhetoric condemning Pius XII for his American-imperialist sympathies. In the same letter to Jean Verlhac in which he had expressed his exasperation with the intransigence of Wyszyński’s milieu, Wojciech Kętrzyński expressed – with even greater emotion – concern for the fate of the worker-priests, lamenting the return of a reactionary Church like that which had condemned not only modernism, but Marc Sangnier’s Sillon movement in 1910. As Kętrzyński put it,

996 See the detailed, thoroughly documented account of Liénart’s campaign in Perrot, Les fondations de la Mission de France, esp. p. 133-190.
998 This is documented extremely well throughout Cole-Arnal, “The Témoignage of the Worker-Priests.”
We are watching from here with great attentiveness, as well as
great disquiet, the events that have recently taken place in France.
Especially the affair of the worker-priests seems to us particularly
tragic. I believe truly that, after the condemnation of Marc Sangnier,
this is the most tragic moment of 20th-century Christendom. It must
be said that the entire experiment of the worker-priests has been
annihilated at one fell swoop, in the most unfortunate of conditions.
In reading the declarations of the French hierarchy, I have the impression
that it is defending a cause that is not its own, that the call to order that
has come from Rome has been carried out in France à contre-cœur. [...] 
In sum it must be stated clearly that the decision taken by the Vatican
and carried out by the French Hierarchy has proven an irreparable
disaster as much on the spiritual as on the social level.

As he closed the letter, Kętrzyński made an observation that, simple though it may seem
at first glance, poignantly encapsulates the contribution of the entire Catholic-socialist-syncretist
enterprise to the transformation of 20th-century Catholic activism writ large. Lamenting the
prematurely and brutally interrupted mission of the worker-priests, Kętrzyński concluded, “In
these conditions, it is only the laity who have the possibility of representing Catholics in the
working man’s world and to take part in his fight. Your role is thus all the greater, and the more
dangerous at the same time.” 999 In so describing La Quinzaine, so was Kętrzyński reflexively
applying the same characterization to the entire Dziś i Jutro/PAX enterprise. As he and his
fellow PAX elders understood it, the task of the Church in a world defined by the progress of
socialist revolution was to offer spiritual guidance at the vanguard, not the rear-guard, of the
world’s events. Meanwhile, the very circles within the institutional Church that had proven
themselves most interested and best prepared intellectually and pastorally for the Christianization
of the proletarian revolution were being recalled and punished by the “Stalin of the Church.”

The personalist theology of labor whose model had been taking shape since the mid-
1930s under the influence of first Mounier, then Congar and Chenu, and finally the Mission de

France – Mounier being, initially, the only layman on this list – thus became, by the mid-1950s, the exclusive purview of lay activists across Europe. We have focused here only on the Francophone and Polish centers, but Italy, the Netherlands, non-Francophone Belgium and Switzerland, and West Germany, too, all had their progressive-Catholic centers for whom Mounier’s writings had virtually been a second catechism.

For all of these Europeans, the whole point of Catholic activism to establish a Catholic-socialist partnership based first and foremost on dialogue in response to current events. At the time, the most pressing issues on the table were the legacy of war (and the prospect of yet another), socialist revolution in Eastern Europe, and the twilight of colonialism in the Third World. Although the shape and sociopolitical context of this dialogue were thus wildly different than in the case of Rev. Kornilowicz’s fin-de-siècle dialogues with partitioned Poland’s socialist vanguard, the pastoral and ethical premises were the same. For this reason, with the Holy See throwing overboard over the first half of the 1950s the only clerical elements suited to remake Catholic society from the ground up, key lay activists felt it to be their time to step in.

*The New Theology of Bolesław Piasecki*

Bolesław Piasecki, as we have seen again and again in reflections by those who came into contact with him, was no simple Catholic-socialist syncretist, burdened as he was with an interwar fascist past. When Mounier came to Poland in 1946, Piasecki remained in the background, enjoying several brief conversations with the eminent French philosopher, but really letting his fluent French-speaking, well-read recent recruits – Kętrzyński, Krasiński, and Łubieński – direct the movement’s emerging international contacts. Piasecki, in turn, became overnight a defining presence of the postwar Polish political scene, his specialty being shuttle

Nonetheless, Piasecki contributed regularly and substantively to the printed content of Dziś i Jutro from the moment of the weekly’s inception. Though it was Kętrzyński and Łubieński who announced Dziś i Jutro’s mission of Christianizing socialism from within, it was Piasecki’s commentaries that delineated the specific contours of the emerging sociopolitical partnership between Catholicism and Marxist socialism in Poland. Prone though he was to obtuse Marxist-structuralist language of “objective truth,” overdetermining his intellectual analysis with the presumed opposition between “idealism” (by which he meant faith) and “materialism,” Piasecki made a substantial contribution to the growth of Dziś i Jutro and PAX as a presence in both Poland and the world.

In this contribution, he was, in turn, influenced by the various international, and particularly French, thinkers whom he encountered in the course of their visits to Poland – from Mandouze, to Boulier, to Domenach – and in their writings as reprinted in the pages of Dziś i Jutro. From this latter group, the writings of Father Yves Congar in particular opened up to Piasecki the intellectual and theological universe of the Dominicans of Le Saulchoir, particularly the emphasis on the need for a Catholic theology of work that would, in Marie-Dominique Chenu’s words, nourish a “spirituality of labor” in the modern world’s “technological civilization.”

By the time that the worker-priest activities were forcibly curtailed at the cusp of 1953 and 1954, Piasecki had been scribbling away for a decade at his own theology of Catholic-socialist syncretism. This theology’s early, albeit poorly articulated and ill-informed, shape was

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1000 As discussed in Chapter 3, two of his key texts were Chenu, “Civilisation technique et spiritualité nouvelle”; Chenu, Spiritualité du travail.
apparent already in the notes that he sent to Gomułka from his NKVD prison cell in 1945. With the worker-priest condemnation coming, however, so soon on the heels of Wyszyński’s arrest, Piasecki saw an opportune moment to publish his collected writings of the past decade, prefaced by a 42-page theological manifesto offering his own Polish personalist theology of labor.\textsuperscript{1001} As Norbert Żmijewski has suggested, Piasecki saw in this work his \textit{magnum opus}.\textsuperscript{1002} Indeed, immediately after its publication in Warsaw in December 1954, he sent money to a PAX-affiliated Polish student in Rome, Alfred Gawroński, insisting that the latter immediately translate the book into Italian and take all necessary steps to insure its publication and circulation within the Vatican.\textsuperscript{1003} Piasecki earnestly seemed to believe that he had the power, despite the consistent anti-progressive lashing-out of the Holy See under Pius XII, to win both the Vatican and the Polish socialist establishment over to his theology.

His political and pastoral aspirations were thus completely fantastic, but – despite the suggestions of many commentators and historians of the document’s vacuousness – the preface to \textit{Zagadnienia Istotne} (Essential Questions) is an important milestone of lay theology and philosophy of the period. What Piasecki set out to do was to construct a theology of work. In this enterprise, Piasecki was attempting to answer calls issued by the Dominican \textit{nouveaux théologiens} since the mid-1930s. Piasecki was well-aware of these calls thanks to his international contacts and to the intellectual briefings given to him by Kętrzyński, Łubieński, and their fellow activists. Piasecki’s preface lacks any explicit citations of acknowledged theologians or philosophers, but the influence of their thought is apparent throughout. Though certainly intended as a gamepiece in national and international political strategy, \textit{Zagadnienia Istotne} thus

\textsuperscript{1001} Micewski, \textit{Współrządzie czy nie klamać?}, p. 66.  
\textsuperscript{1002} Żmijewski, \textit{The Catholic-Marxist Ideological Dialogue in Poland}, p. 61.  
\textsuperscript{1003} Bolesław Piasecki, Letter to Alfred Gawroński, 8 April 1955, AKSCC V/97.
had a significant role to play in the history of Catholic activism, both on its own merits and for
the reception that it generated.

Declaring from the outset that his was a manifesto of “socially progressive milieux in
global Catholicism,” Piasecki suggested that the tenth anniversary of People’s Poland was an
opportune moment to settle on a normative theology to secure, on the one hand, the balance
between “the common structure of the base of believing citizens and non-believing citizens and
their shared freedom in the superstructure” in Poland. On the other hand, Piasecki also concerned
himself with the global Catholic agenda of “qualitative and quantitative expansion of the camp of
peace.”1004 It was thus that Piasecki formally stated the necessary – to his mind – relationship for
Catholics between adhering to a personalist theology of labor and advocating global peace.
Piasecki picked up, among others, where Kętrzyński had left off in a 1950 article in Dziś i Jutro
negating the false assumption that voluntarist social Catholicism was an adequate response to
Leo XIII’s call for a Catholic solution to the social question. Thus, Piasecki declared, “the
direction of Catholic thought with respect to the question of social education has constituted a
capitulation,” a misguided assumption that “the world will always be as unjust as the capitalist or
feudal world.”1005

The roots of this misguided assumption, according to Piasecki, lay in a canonical
confusion by Catholic theologians of the two foundational roles of the Christian God: Creator
and Redeemer. The confusion resulted from Christian thought’s preoccupation “with the task of
Redemption to the evident exclusion of the work of Creation. This one-dimensionality has
resulted in a range of far-reaching social consequences.” Following the Dominican nouveaux
théologiens in condemning “the abstruseness and flatness of [mainstream] theological casuistry”

1005 Piasecki, Zagadnienia Istotne, p. 6.
Piasecki then implicitly invoked a much more mainstream philosophical genealogy. Taking an unacknowledged page from Maritain’s distinction between the spiritual and the temporal, and thereby agreeing that Christians must do all that they can to engage in the temporal realm in a manner consistent with Christian ethics (in other words, en chrétien), Piasecki declared,

Christianity is optimistic. The root of its optimism in the order of Redemption is mercy; the root of its optimism in the order of Creation is work. God the Redeemer brought mercy onto the earth, opening for man the path to achieving the ultimate end. God the Creator brought work onto the earth, placing man between experienced reality and desired, latent reality. Within the act of Creation was contained a plan of the future perfectability of the earth, demanding of people the transformation of its latent possibilities into reality. The means for transforming the world is human work, which thus has the dignity of continuing the activities of God the Creator. [...] The intellectual expression of humanity’s optimism is the idea of progress, expressing the idea that consciously intended changes of reality can have an ever-greater value and efficacy.¹⁰⁰⁷

Most of the attention paid thus far to Zagadnienia Istotne by historians, including Mikołaj Kunicki and Norbert Żmijewski, emphasizes the second basic thesis of Piasecki’s preface: the “ontological adoration” of God by the “leading forces of the party of the working class,” who by being true to their own ideas and ethics were “loving God ontologically,” while Christians loved God “intentionally.”¹⁰⁰⁸ At face value, Kunicki and Żmijewski are right to consider these passages a theologically absurd – worse: heretical – cover for Catholic submission to socialist government. As Żmijewski has argued, “In his [Piasecki’s] doctrine atheism does not seem to be

¹⁰⁰⁶ Piasecki, Zagadnienia Istotne, p. 7. The reference for Chenu’s phrasing is Chenu, Une École de théologie, p. 122.
¹⁰⁰⁷ Piasecki, Zagadnienia Istotne, p. 7.
¹⁰⁰⁸ Piasecki, Zagadnienia Istotne, p. 9, 10.
possible at all,” for even intentional atheists are really just ontological theists.\textsuperscript{1009} Indeed, considering Piasecki’s proposal in light of the Catholic-socialist syncretism articulated earlier by Kętrzyński and Łubieński, one might rightly ask, what is the point of Christianizing socialism if “ontologically” God-loving socialists are already better poised to achieve salvation than “intentionally” God-loving – yet invariably sinful – Christians?

Then again, progressive Catholics had consistently insisted – in anticipation of the Second Vatican Council – on the need to take merited ethical wisdom in the world from any source that might provide it, theistic or atheistic. This was not the same thing as taking Catholicism’s bar for salvation – intelligible only to Christ as mankind’s Judge – and adjusting its height arbitrarily. In this way, virtually any socialist could gain salvation with no strings attached, while Christians despite intense work in the world very well might get nothing. With this absurd proposal, Piasecki cut at the heart of the very \textit{mysterium} of the Church and all theology of salvation.

Indeed, these contentions soon became the object of international controversy involving Piasecki and \textit{Dziś i Jutro}. That controversy has, in turn, obscured the context for the first part of Piasecki’s core argument: a desire to answer the \textit{nouvelle théologie}’s call for a Catholic theology of work. Like Chenu and Congar, Piasecki believed that the Christian mission to the proletariat was the linchpin of all possible advancement in the temporal realm. For this reason, the engagement whose intellectual inspiration one might trace in his writings to Maritain and Mounier was at once necessarily Catholic and necessarily socialist. If not for his second, self-contradictory thesis regarding ontological and intentional love of God – rightly interpreted by commentators and historians as an attempt to cater to the PZPR leadership – Piasecki would have

found himself with a well-grounded theology of labor perfectly consistent with the urgent social needs of Catholic activism in his day.

The immediate context for the treatise’s publication was the worker-priest condemnation, which begged for a layman’s systematic revisiting of the question of Catholic mission to the proletariat in the world, and then also the Wyszyński arrest. The latter event could, after all, be argued – however absurdly – theologically justifiable in light of Piasecki’s toadying second thesis regarding the virtually imperceptible yet nearly indisputable piety of the socialist establishment.

Perhaps the underlying reason for Piasecki’s full-on, unapologetic theological heresy was his desire to map out systematically in Zagadnienia Istotne every single bit of ideological and theological ground that Dziś i Jutro/PAX had covered over its decade-long existence. For this reason, his theology included emphasis on the “sanctity” of theRecovered Territories and a veritable political theology of the global struggle for peace: “For the camp of peace, the matter of thought and work of the masses of the faithful is a question not of tactical significance, but of strategy in the struggle against the bellicose plans of imperialism. Catholicism has a decisive position here, for its attitude has a determining influence on all of Christianity, and Christianity in turn profoundly shapes humanity as a whole.”

The Young Turks Become the “Fronde”

Even before the treatise achieved a certain international notoriety, it stirred considerable commotion within the PAX movement itself. The decisive role in this commotion was played by the new Young Turks: Mazowiecki, Zablocki, Myślik, etc. Since Piasecki had relocated Mazowiecki to Wrocław in mid-1953 in advance of opening the Wrocławski Tygodnik Katolicki.

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1010 Piasecki, Zagadnienia Istotne, p. 33.
even though he was ostensibly at the forefront of the struggle for the Recovered Territories, Mazowiecki felt himself being locked out of the PAX movement’s leadership. As the natural leader of his generation of PAX activists, moreover, Mazowiecki convinced Zablocki and his colleagues in Kraków to start asking questions as well regarding the PAX elders’ principled commitments, plans for the movement’s future, and institutional gambits.\footnote{Myślik, Interview with Author; Wieczorek, Interview with Author.}

Whether Mazowiecki had written his condemnation of Kaczmarek out of conviction or out of tactical considerations, he became a symbol for many Catholics outside PAX of everything wrong with the movement’s establishment-style politicking. This was a role with which Mazowiecki was deeply uncomfortable, and it led him to considerable soul-searching, visible not only to the PAX leadership, but indeed to the Public Security Ministry, which inserted its first plant into the WTK milieu in October 1954 precisely because Mazowiecki had become, in their estimation, one of a key few “potentially antagonistic persons.”\footnote{Ryszard Chodubski, “Raport o zezwolenie na wszczęcie oparcowania kandydata na werbunek w charakterze informatora,” p. 1, 12 October 1954, AIPN BU 0122/1641/CD/1. Already in January 1954, Mazowiecki had written to PAX headquarters in Warsaw to Witold Bieńkowski, in charge of personnel for the entire movement, decrying personnel changes made from Warsaw with no notification of regional field offices: “This step has forced me to file this strong protest against this way of handling personnel issues, which flies in the face of elementary principles of institutional organization.” Mazowiecki’s growing frustration with the movement itself became ever more palpable over the course of 1954 and 1955. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Letter to Witold Bieńkowski, 2 January 1954, AKSCC VI/269.}

Aside from his increasing moral qualms about attacking bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, the young editor found his hands tied by an increasingly authoritarian, top-down command structure within PAX. The buck had always stopped with Piasecki, but, as PAX dissenter Jerzy Krasnowolski would argue in late 1955, it was around the time of Wyszyński’s arrest that Piasecki found himself relying more and more on his long-time confidants, the interwar-fascist Falanga holdovers for whom personalism had always constituted an over-
intellectualized exoticism. Free as Kętrzyński was to continue consolidating his Catholic-socialist international, the next generation down – the ambitious young field activists inculcated since 1948 with revolutionary-personalist ideology – found themselves stifled by the increasingly hierarchical nature of PAX. By March 1955, Mazowiecki was complaining about the “mafia-like activity of Piasecki’s inner circle” at the top of the PAX hierarchy, for whom “the pursuit of money prevents the expansion of the Catholic sociopolitical movement.”

The tightened institutional discipline within PAX coincided, paradoxically, with Piasecki’s publication of his flagship theological treatise. Unlike Mazowiecki, who, as a regional field office director and journal editor for PAX, directly felt the organizational pressure from above, Janusz Zabłocki came into conflict with his movement’s supreme leader precisely because of Zagadnienia Istotne. Having circulated a thought-piece among the PAX “expanded leadership” in response to Piasecki’s book, Zabłocki overnight became the symbol of intellectual opposition within the movement. Though his circular did not explicitly dispute Piasecki’s theses, his argument for a “Christian ideal of political action” contradicted Piasecki’s second, more overtly heretical thesis. Indeed, Zabłocki served up a two-part counterproposal to guide PAX’s subsequent political activism: “a) disavowing struggle for Marxist recognition of a ‘separate Catholic political movement’ and b) struggle for achievement within one socialist

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1015 Andrzej Micewski is correct to note that Mazowiecki and Zabłocki had supported early versions of Piasecki’s theological theses: Micewski, Współrządzić czy nie klamać?, p. 68. However, by 1955, the entire generation of new Young Turks had largely turned toward an alternative model proposed by Janusz Zabłocki. Pace Micewski, then, the inter-generational conflict was not just about institutional politics, but about core ideology and religious belief as well. Tadeusz Myślik has put it tersely: “we wanted to be more socialist and more Catholic than Piasecki.” Myślik, Interview with Author.
movement of equal rights for different worldviews on the condition that they all accept one common socialist philosophy of society: socialist ideological pluralism.”

Zabłocki, drawing on his personalist heroes Maritain and Mounier, had thus lobbed a grenade at his movement leader’s theology. Implicit in Piasecki’s argument regarding the compatibility of socialists’ “ontological love of God” with the “intentionalist” Christian worldview was the contention that the two types of forces – while distinct – worked best together in their joint appreciation of God. As Mikołaj Kunicki has argued, Piasecki had maintained a consistent position in his closed-door dealings with the socialist establishment that PAX should be accorded full rights as a political coalition partner, while nonetheless maintaining its integrity as a separate movement. His theology neatly followed this political line. Yet both were under threat from Zabłocki’s new theses: Piasecki wanted neither to disavow his mission to make PAX a full political partner of the PZPR, nor to accept belonging to “one socialist movement.”

Instead, Piasecki wanted to continue peddling his theology, which he believed himself earnestly capable of selling to the PZPR leadership of socialist Poland. Underlying this belief was his vision of turning PAX into the ultimately victorious Trojan horse within Polish Stalinist socialism. As Norbert Żmijewski has put it, Piasecki’s “doctrine was thus not the basis for subordination of the Church to the Marxist regime but rather for claiming sole political power.” Zablocki’s tinkering with this delicate balancing act threatened to topple Piasecki’s theological claim to political power for PAX. The movement leader reacted accordingly.

As it happened, Piasecki picked exactly the wrong time to enforce orthodoxy and ideological discipline within his movement. Feeling his position threatened, Zabłocki got

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1016 Janusz Zabłocki, “Nowa chrześcijańska koncepcja działania politycznego.” Internal circular, copy of Ryszard Reiff [identified by handwriting on copy], 1955, AKSCC VI/269.
1017 See Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader,” e.g. p. 219-220, 247, 274.
together with his friend Mazowiecki, compared notes on their various objections to recent developments within PAX, and found that they had a lot to protest. Drawing from among their closest colleagues within the movement – Stefan Bakinowski (1916-1983), Rudolf Buchała, Zygmunt Drozdek (1928-), Tadeusz Myślik, Ignacy Rutkiewicz, and Wojciech Wieczorek (1928-) – Mazowiecki and Zabłocki led a campaign within PAX charging Piasecki’s closest ex-Falanga leaders – Jerzy Hagmajer, Janina Kolendo, Zygmunt Przetakiewicz – with “an unsocialist style of work and leadership” and a “bourgeois and consumerist lifestyle” driven by Inco, Veritas, and PAX’s other small enterprises rather than its revolutionary-personalist ideology.1019

These young activists shared a dual motivation: ideological – following the personalism-driven Catholic-socialist syncretism on which they had been weaned within PAX; and institutional – seeking more democracy within the parameters of the movement. Nonetheless, it is an oversimplification to suggest, as Maryjane Osa has, that the group “challenged its leader, Bolesław Piasecki, to take an anti-Stalinist stand,” and it is simply incorrect to suggest that the young activists wanted “rapprochement with mainstream Catholicism.”1020 What they wanted, rather, was a distinct Catholic presence “within one socialist movement” – in other words, Catholic-socialist syncretism.

For their desire for actions to be in line with words in the movement’s leadership, Mazowiecki, Zabłocki, and their six closest friends – who, with a touch of irony, termed themselves the Fronda (Fronde), with Piasecki as their Cardinal Mazarin – became the object of

1019 Quoted in Krasnowolski, “Raport Krasnowolskiego z poprawkami Janusza Zabłockiego.” See also the document to which Krasnowolski was responding: “Ocena postawy i działalności Mazowieckiego i Zabłockiego stanowiącą uzasadnienie wniosku przedstawionego przez Wydział Kontroli na zebraniu Kierownictwa w dniu 23 maja 1955 r.,” AKSCC VI/270.
attacks within PAX. Failing to build a larger opposition to Piasecki or broader support for reform, Mazowiecki and Zablocki agreed to submit to self-criticism – a formal confession of institutional and ideological disloyalties – before being, along with the rest of the Fronda, demoted in their institutional functions, with significant cuts in pay. They then renewed their complaints, and this time they refused self-criticism.

The Young Turks thus, by June 1955, constituted an organized opposition to the PAX model of Catholic activism. As they saw it, unlike Piasecki and the rest of the movement, they had remained loyal to Dziś i Jutro’s original, French-inspired ideology. It was at this point that Zagadnienia Istotne created a whole series of international problems for PAX, whose long-term consequences not only saved the Fronda dissidents from oblivion, but indeed secured for them prominent spots in a new Catholic lay movement born of Poland’s de-Stalinization process.

**Damnation**

The Catholic writer Jan Dobraczyński (1910-1994), a close friend of Piasecki’s and an ardent promoter of PAX, gave Piasecki cause for concern in January 1955 about the dependability of PAX’s Western European partners. Namely, Dobraczyński reported in January 1955, having just returned from a trip to Paris, “Predominant here in Paris is a ‘terror of thought,’ depriving people of the possibility of expressing themselves and acting honestly. The matter of the worker-priests and its conclusion tells us that the Catholic milieux are prepared to deal

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1021 The Fronda has received frequent mention in works of contemporary Polish history, yet not a single mention amounts to more than a passing reference to the group’s genesis, with no serious attention to their motivations or the details of their path. By the time that Andrzej Micewski set to paper his analysis of the Dziś i Jutro/PAX years, he had parted ways personally and politically on quite poor terms with the Fronda generation (with Mazowiecki in particular). Between his bias stemming from later quarrels and his lack of intimate knowledge of how the Fronda worked from the inside, Micewski’s analysis of the Fronda is considerably less credible than his argumentation concerning the rest of Dziś i Jutro/PAX history. Micewski, Współrządzie czy nie kłamać?, p. 68, 73-77. Even more subjective is the polemical self-congratulation for having “unmasked the Fronda” in the memoirs of Piasecki’s right-hand man, fellow interwar-fascist Zygmunt Przetakiewicz, Od ONR-u do PAX-u, p. 121. Meanwhile, Andrzej Friszke’s terse one-page history of the Fronda, while convincingly written and well-argued, is based above all on Micewski’s account: Friszke, Oaza na Kopernika, p. 32. A serious scholarly study is sorely needed that will do justice to the Fronda as an object of historical analysis in its own right.
ruthlessly with rebels from within. Both Domenach and Vaussard will only back us to a point. When this backing begins to threaten them – they will pull out immediately!"\textsuperscript{1022}

Dobraczyński’s prediction would soon be put to the test. Though Domenach and Vaussard both proved him wrong with their loyalty to PAX, Dobraczyński was certainly right about the atmosphere among progressive Catholic activists across Europe. Fresh off the expulsion of Congar and Chenu from Paris, with the worker-priest affair still close in the rear-view mirror, lay progressive Catholics feared that it was their turn to fall prey to ecclesiastical sanction. And they were right. On 4 February 1955, the French ambassador to the Vatican telegraphed the Foreign Ministry with the information that “L’\textit{Osservatore Romano} published a decree this evening of the Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office dated the 3\textsuperscript{rd} of this month condemning and prohibiting the journal \textit{La Quinzaine}.”\textsuperscript{1023}

Jean Verlhac, Max Stern, and his fellow French lay activists grouped around this last – and politically most radical – bastion of French progressive Catholicism heard of the decree from the pages of \textit{Osservatore Romano}, not from the Holy Office itself. At once defiant and obedient, the \textit{Quinzaine} staff submitted to the decree, while still arguing in their final editorial of 1 March 1955, “After the worker-priests, the Dominican theologians, and many others, Rome has condemned \textit{La Quinzaine} and banned it from being read. […] The Roman declaration obliges our conscience to cease publication of the journal. The disappearance of \textit{La Quinzaine} does not, however, in any way signify a renunciation on our part of the struggles shared with all of our comrades to save the world from the law of war and of profit.”\textsuperscript{1024}

\textsuperscript{1022} Jan Dobraczyński, Note for Bolesław Piasecki, 15 January 1955, AKSCC V/97.
\textsuperscript{1023} Wladimir D’Ormesson, Telegram to French Foreign Ministry, 4 February 1955, quoted at Tranvouez, \textit{Catholiques et communistes}, p. 236.
\textsuperscript{1024} “À nos lecteurs,” \textit{La Quinzaine}, 1 March 1955.
Wojciech Kętrzyński learned about La Quinzaine’s fate from the pages of Le Monde. Immediately, he wrote to Verlhac to express outrage and solidarity on behalf of PAX. Referring to the sequence of anti-progressive moves on the part of the Vatican, Kętrzyński wrote, “And so the drama continues – after the worker-priests, after the Dominicans – it is now you. [...] Please accept, dear friends, our most profound sense of solidarity and our complete confidence in you.”¹⁰²⁵ Little did he know that Piasecki’s theological treatise would soon bring the same fate to Dziś i Jutro. On 29 June 1955, Osservatore Romano published an editorial entitled “The necessity of two condemnations” alongside a decree dated 28 June 1955. The decree “condemns and prohibits 1) the book written by Bolesław Piasecki, Zagadnienia Istotne, Warszawa, ‘Pax’, 1954; 2) the weekly journal named Dziś i Jutro, Warsaw.”¹⁰²⁶

The editorial accompanying the Vatican condemnation explained at length why not only Piasecki’s treatise, but also his flagship journal fell prey to the Holy Office’s red pen. Describing Piasecki and his “progressive Catholics” along with their journal as “among the most zealous propagandists of several false affirmations,” Osservatore Romano upbraided PAX for spreading those affirmations “among Catholics behind the iron curtain.” Decrying Piasecki’s “fanaticism” and “quasi-messianic” belief in “Communism as the sole savior of humanity,” the editorial went beyond simply condemning the PAX leader for writing that “Christianity until today has erred.” Indeed, the Vatican journal aired an explicit, principled indignation with the political context in which Piasecki was spreading his heresy: “While Cardinal Wyszyński and other Polish bishops are in prison or impeded in the exercise of their episcopal office, we are witnessing an indescribable attempt to pass off the Communist regimes as respecting the liberty of the Catholic Church.”

¹⁰²⁵ Wojciech Kętrzyński, Letter to Jean Verlhac, 7 February 1955, AKSCC V/97.
Understanding the implications of the decree and the editorial requires some in-depth reading between the lines. After all, if Piasecki and Dziś i Jutro were so bad, why had their condemnation come at the end of a long line of Catholic activists who considered the vanguard of Catholic activism in the modern world to involve either dialogue or partnership with socialism? And why condemn both the book and the journal, if the journal had operated for a decade without attracting the least bit of attention from the Vatican?

The necessary documentation is not available to understand the view from the Holy See, yet Mikołaj Kunicki has traced the immediate chain of events resulting in the decree. At Piasecki’s request, his sister-in-law Janina Kolendo sent a copy of the book to Father Józef Bocheński (1902-1995), a Polish émigré and philosophy professor at Fribourg, in the early spring of 1955. Piasecki had hoped for an endorsement from Bocheński, who was both an internationally respected Catholic scholar and the brother of Aleksander Bocheński, a Dziś i Jutro co-founder and former MP. Piasecki’s goal was thus to accelerate the process of translating and publishing the book in the countries and languages of Western Europe. On reading the book, however, Bocheński became so furious that he personally translated the book’s preface and prepared a memorandum systematically refuting its theses that he immediately delivered to Archbishop Józef Gawlina, chaplain of the Polish exile community, for submission to the Holy Office.

Odette Laffoucrière had been correct to declare in the pages of Le Monde in 1953, while defending PAX after Wyszyński’s arrest, that the 1949 Holy Office decree against Communism had left considerable leeway for Catholics in the Soviet Bloc. In virtue of their political

1027 Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader,” p. 275-279; the most complete documentation available on the decree’s causes and consequences is in Peter Raina, Piasecki na indeksie watykańskim. Geneza sprawy (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo von Borowiecky, 2002).
citizenship, these Catholics could, under canon law, arguably be considered to be neither “consciously” nor “freely” choosing collaboration with socialism. Paradoxically, then, the Vatican’s censors had been far more focused on Western than on Eastern Europe. Hence, pressure was applied to everyone from Le Saulchoir through La Quinzaine, while it was in fact Dziś i Jutro that had, since 1948, been consistently both ideologizing and practicing Catholic-socialist syncretism. With his claims about “ontological love of God,” however, Piasecki went far enough to step clearly outside the bounds of what the Vatican was willing to accept in Soviet-Bloc Catholic activism. With Bocheński doing the Holy Office the extra favor of providing them with the book and a list of its theological errors, the movement’s fate was sealed.

Once the book came the way of the non-syncretist activists, the cardinals of the Holy Office put two and two together, suspecting linkages between Dziś i Jutro and some of the Western European centers of Catholic thought and action that it had condemned over the previous five years. Kętrzyński’s Catholic-socialist international, never publicly announced yet consummated through regular exchanges of ideas, people, and materials over half a decade, henceforth had an enormous target painted on its back. And so, having condemned Dziś i Jutro and “its most fanatical leader,” the Holy Office hoped to have “cut off definitively the ideological confusion brought about by ‘progressives’ in the Catholic camp, from that side and this of the iron curtain.”

The Vatican condemnation did not destroy the PAX movement, but it put Piasecki in an impossible position. Thanking Father Bosc for his confidence and “words of friendship,” Kętrzyński wrote in July 1955, “Do not worry, Reverend Father. We are sons of the Church, and

1029 “La necessità di due condanne,” L’Osservatore Romano, 29 June 1955.
And indeed, Piaseck’s personal Catholicism predominated over political considerations. Yet when he went to consult PZPR Central Committee member Franciszek Mazur – by 1955, the new religious affairs czar in Poland’s socialist establishment – asking for permission to submit to the Holy Office decree by shuttering Dziś i Jutro, Mazur said no. Fortunately for PAX, canon law provided for several months of leeway prior to ultimate submission to any Holy Office decree. This gave Piasecki time to negotiate a solution involving both the establishment and its approved new head of the Episcopate, Łódź bishop Michał Klepacz.

“Nothing recalled the fact that we were supposedly among Christians”

With Klepacz giving him temporary ecclesiastical cover, Piasecki nonetheless had to deal at the same time with his greatest institutional headache, which shared the same roots as his international troubles: the conflict between Zagadnienia Istotne and the early commitments to Catholic personalism made over a decade of activism by Dziś i Jutro. Granted, Mazowiecki, Zablocki, and their fellow Fronda activists wanted PAX to be more socialist, while the Vatican obviously wished it to be less so. Nonetheless, both critical parties drew, paradoxically, on different variants of the same social-Catholic ideology elaborated as a result of Leo XIII’s call to answer the social question.

The more that Piasecki pushed the Fronda activists out of the PAX mainstream, the more radicalized they became in their critique, opening their eyes to instances of PAX’s ideological hypocrisy dating back several years. A key example was PAX’s failure to respond to an 1953 anti-personalist rant in the mainstream establishment journal Nowe Drogi by an as-yet little-known young socialist philosopher named Leszek Kolakowski. At the apogee of Stalinist

1031 Micewski, Współrządzić czy nie klamać?, p. 62, 70.
socialism, this future icon of revisionist socialism wrote, “So-called Christian personalism constitutes a collection of mendacious slogans, which, under the appearance of care for human dignity and the rights of man, have the task of offering a theoretical justification for all of the dirtiest political practices of imperialism and its servant, the Vatican, as well as foundations for the most reactionary political doctrines.”

By mid-August 1955, most of the Fronda had submitted letters of resignation. On 14 August, the PAX leadership met and voted to suspend their voting privileges as members. That same day, the Fronda submitted a joint letter of protest to the Central Committee of the PZPR enumerating their various ideological and institutional criticisms of PAX. Seeing PAX’s problems, Franciszek Mazur relegated the letter to the back of a filing cabinet, from which it would nonetheless return one year later as the Fronda rode the de-Stalinization wave back into public activism.

Throughout this stormy time, PAX’s French Catholic-socialist partners remained doggedly loyal, living as they were under the overwhelming impression of Vatican persecution of progressive Catholicism. Meanwhile, it was a small group of Francophone voices from Belgium who offered critical equanimity from the other side of the Iron Curtain. Kętrzyński –

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1032 Leszek Kołakowski, “Neotomizm w walce z postępem nauk i z prawami człowieka,” *Nowe Drogi*, 1/1953, p. 68-81, at p. 72. Kołakowski’s rhetoric softened somewhat with the passage of time, but he remained fundamentally disdainful of Christian personalism even as he evolved his own revisionist Marxism. Particularly consistent in Kołakowski’s writings on personalism is the contention that personalism was fundamentally irreconcilable with a doctrine of human rights. See, for example, Leszek Kołakowski, “Prawa osoby przeciw prawom człowieka. Istotny sens personalizmu chrześcijańskiego,” *Myśl Filozoficzna*, 1/1955, p. 122-167. This was a position entirely at odds with the essential rationale for Jacques Maritain’s post-World War II personalist engagement in debates about human rights. On this engagement, see, for example, Moyn, “Personalism, Community, and the Origins of Human Rights.”

1033 See, for example, Tadeusz Myślik, Letter to Bolesław Piasecki, 13 August 1955, AKSCC 1/71; “Postanowienie Kierownictwa,” 13 August 1955, AKSCC 1/71; Krasnowolski, “Raport Krasnowolskiego z poprawkami Janusza Zabłockiego.”

rather audaciously, given that PAX had not yet submitted to the Holy Office’s condemnation – sent out far and wide in September 1955 invitations to PAX’s international contacts to come to Warsaw for the movement’s tenth anniversary. Among the responses that he received was a thoughtful note from Jean Delfosse (1915-2002), the revolutionary-personalist La Revue Nouvelle managing editor who had spent hours sitting with Emmanuel Mounier in Brussels-based personalist discussion circles in the 1930s. Politely refusing the invitation, the Walloon Catholic editor explained, “I am at once too well and insufficiently well-versed in the current Polish situation to permit myself to engage La Revue Nouvelle as such in the taking of positions that are terribly complex. Believe me, it is not without distress that I decline such an amicable invitation and that I refuse such an easy contact.”

Meanwhile, Guy de Bosschère (1924-), of the Belgian-based Mouvement International d’Action pour la Paix, which produced the journal Routes de Paix, accepted Kętrzyński’s invitation. Having attended the massive International Youth Festival held in Warsaw in the summer of 1955, he returned to Poland for three days in late October of the same year. Stimulating as the anniversary gathering itself was, de Bosschère could not, however, reconcile its tenor with the supposed Catholicism of its organizers. Even though he came to Poland with strongly pro-Marxist sympathies, de Bosschère, as a Catholic peace activist looking in Catholic (and socialist) Poland to join other Catholic-socialist peace activists, could not get over the absence of a cross, or of prayers to open and close the meeting sessions, or of any proletarian presence.

Publishing his reflections on the trip in the November 1955 issue of Routes de Paix, de Bosschère wrote, “apart from a small number of priests’ cassocks in the audience, nothing

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1035 Jean Delfosse, Letter to Wojciech Kętrzyński, 26 September 1955, AKSCC V/98.
recalled sufficiently the fact that we were supposedly among Christians.” Indeed, even de
Bosschère’s initiative to “commune with our brothers from the East in the liturgical simplicity of
a community mass” was rejected because, not having himself anticipated such a need,
Kętrzyński could not obtain last-minute permission to take the delegates to a mass anywhere near
the meeting space.1036

The Belgian activist’s sense of Christianity’s essential absence from the PAX
proceedings belays the wide variety of contradictions of the Polish movement’s approach.
Eventually submitting to the June 1955 Holy Office decree, Piasecki convinced Mazur to allow
Dziś i Jutro to cease publication only by promising to open a substitute weekly, which PAX
indeed did, under the title of Kierunki (Directions), in May 1956.1037 Zasadnienia Istotne,
meanwhile, had exhausted its print run even before the decree’s publication, so conforming to
the decree’s requirement that publication cease required only the cancellation of plans for future
editions or translations. On the one hand, thus, the movement appeared, in the end, to be in
compliance with the Vatican’s wishes, yet its fundamental approach never changed.1038

This tension created problems for PAX at both domestic and international levels. Never
having explicitly renounced the theses advanced in the preface to Zasadnienia Istotne, Piasecki,
who had already alienated the Fronda for ideological reasons, remained, moreover, a heretic in

1036 Guy de Bosschère, “Réalité catholique et structures marxistes,” Routes de Paix, November 1955, p. 20-23, at p. 21. See also de Bosschère’s reflections on the visit 50 years on: “It was on this new occasion that our doubts concerning the viability of the PAX movement would be confirmed. [...] What I sought to convey was that the utilitarian speech, adorned with pseudo-Marxist references, that our hosts were selling, was hardly our own, that it was not made of the same material as our progressive-Christian convictions, anchored in a different, authentic Catholic faith of the Left. A number of my friends found me to be too harsh and unjust [in my statements]. However, subsequent events proved me right.” It should, nonetheless, be noted that de Bosschère’s supposed indignation at PAX being insufficiently “Christian” did not prevent him from returning to Poland (where he met and married his first wife), nor did it keep him from entering into friendship with the non-Catholic Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, whom de Bosschère encountered regularly at international peace-movement gatherings. de Bosschère and Van Lierde, La guerre sans armes, p. 88-89.
1037 Micewski, Współrządzić czy nie kłamać?, p. 71.
their eyes. They accepted the Vatican’s condemnation of Dziś i Jutro, but they read it as a specific indictment of Zagadnienia Istotne, not of Catholic-socialist syncretism, to which Mazowiecki, Zabłocki, and friends continued to hold as a defining element of their social, political, and religious identities.

In the international realm, meanwhile, La Quinzaine was no more, but Esprit and Pax Christi held firm in their continued support of PAX. Indeed, commenting the death of Pius XII in his diaries three years after Dziś i Jutro’s condemnation, Domenach wrote on 19 October 1958, “I learned this evening that this illustrious pope died just in time for Esprit. A text condemning us had already been prepared.” Seeing in the pride and joy of his activism, his journal Esprit, the logical extension of the Vatican’s condemnation of Dziś i Jutro, Domenach thought not about the substance of the condemned propositions of Piasecki’s, but about the politics, and he came down decisively on the side of his long-time friends within PAX. Vaussard at Pax Christi followed suit.

Conclusions

Despite ideological affinities and promising personal contacts, the turn in Poland’s Stalinist civilization from mobilization to repression was threatening to doom the Catholic-socialist international definitively. This – despite declarations of loyalty and friendship from Domenach, Vaussard, Bosc, and the progressives of La Quinzaine. The events of mid-1953 to mid-1955 would prove decisive in the throttling and dismantling of the Catholic-socialist international. Nonetheless, even in the worst of times, the affinities created by the common ground of personalist ideology, the international sociopolitical activist agenda for global peace,

1039 Domenach, Beaucoup de gueule et peu d’or, p. 190.
and developing personal friendships translated into consequences that would outlast *Dziś i Jutro* itself.

In the end, the Poles would prove the undoing of their own model by the attacks demanded of them by their Polish socialist partners “from above” on the structures of the Catholic Church. Not all of the Poles’ European partners were scared off by an openly anti-ecclesiastical – yet still putatively Catholic – stance. Nonetheless, enough scurried to attract the Vatican’s attention, which, in turn, would help to bring an end to this vibrant period of unprecedented, radical activism by Catholics claiming to be engaged *en chrétien* in politics and society even as they flagrantly flouted the dictates of their Church. By 1956, the party would be over, but the music would survive and continue to inspire these same generations of activists to lay engagement in the world.

The final word on PAX as a model for Catholic lay activism came, however, from a rather unexpected Western European source: the British Catholic popular novelist Graham Greene. The icon of Polish lay activists from Zawieyski through Dobraczyński, Greene came to Poland in late 1955 both to promote a PAX publishing house edition of his novel *The Heart of the Matter* and to investigate the state of Catholic activism in Poland. Publishing a two-part series in the *Sunday Times* on his return to London, Greene declared simply, “The old independent Catholic press is dead. *Tygodnik Powszechny*, a Catholic weekly, whose circulation ran into six figures, was closed down because the editor refused to prejudge one of those clerical

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trials in which the Government unwisely indulged before it realised the strength of Catholic feeling.\textsuperscript{1041}

Though deeply critical of PAX itself, Greene bore witness to the fact that the issues driving the heart of PAX’s agenda – anti-German sentiment combined with fear of both European integration and Vatican conservatism – reflected genuinely predominant concerns among the inhabitants of the People’s Republic of Poland. Thus, the very issues that had rendered \textit{Dziś i Jutro}/PAX most successful as a pioneering movement of the European Catholic lay vanguard passed on to its post-Stalinist successor movements. Outsider though he was, Greene captured succinctly the persistence of European phobias among the post-Stalinist vanguard of Polish Catholic activism. And it would be these phobias that set the stage for the Poles’ preparation and subsequent participation in movements that conditioned lay input into the Second Vatican Council – along with a Polish lay presence in sessions of the Council itself.

Graham Greene bridged the two sides of the Iron Curtain with remarkable dexterity as he revealed to his English audience the heart of the concerns of Polish Catholic activists as they emerged from nearly a decade of collective life under Stalinism:

\begin{quote}
Peace, Democracy, Patriotism – these words when spelt with a capital letter have been taken over in a special sense in Eastern Europe. [...] It is too easy for us to condemn them. We have no Auschwitz to remember. The girl we entertain to dinner has no prison number tattooed upon her arm. [...] German rearmament to these people – Catholics as well as Communists – is a betrayal. No crimes have been committed by Communists equal to what Poland has suffered from Germany. [...] At the moment Vatican policy seems directed as much against the Catholic people of Poland as against the Communist Government. No one in Poland today – except perhaps some old lady dreaming of the past in her denuded apartment – wants the return of an émigré Government, and yet the Vatican recognises an émigré ambassador. It is as if the Pope still received as the ambassador of Russia some White Russian Grand Duke from the days of
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1041} Greene was high by at least 50,000 regarding the journal’s print run, but given the practice of passing a single copy through many hands his numbers are likely spot-on with respect to readership.
Nicholas II. Nor are any Poles prepared to consider the return of the Western Territories to a Germany responsible for such immeasurable suffering, yet when the Bishopric of Breslau fell vacant a German cleric was appointed who now lives in the comfort and security of Western Germany. Every Catholic in Poland feels a pin-prick to his pride when letters to administrators in the Western Territories are addressed by the Roman Curia to “Germania,” and prays for the day when the realities of the situation shall be recognised by the Vatican, and perhaps – in that case who knows? – the Cardinal he loves may come back to his diocese in the capital of Poland.1042

Were the activists of Dziś i Jutro/PAX simply pawns, or – worse – willing, cynical collaborators of a repressive political regime? Or were their lofty slogans about Christian mission to the workers and peace to the world the product of earnest religious and ideological motivations, in other words, a genuine commitment to “Christianizing” Poland’s emerging Stalinist civilization? Marci Shore has written of interwar Polish Marxist writers-turned-postwar establishment activists, “For those who offered body and soul, poetry and prose to support the new regime, it was a time of unprecedented power over life and death.”1043

Like their atheist colleagues who wielded “unprecedented power,” the Polish progressive Catholic activists did indeed share in these years’ dramatic, seemingly unlimited potential for revolutionary transformation of the world. Continuing to advertise their activism as “social-Catholic” in the spirit of Leo XIII, the men and women of PAX instead focused on specific tasks of Catholic-socialist syncretism. Losing sight of catechesis and of missionary face-to-face dialogue, PAX in its attempt to justify Wyszyński’s arrest went further than ever before in sacrificing principled syncretism to indulge exclusionary-nationalist impulses spreading like wildfire across postwar Poland. Anti-Germanism – this was the form taken by national-

1042 Graham Greene, “A Visit to Poland, I: The Half-defeated,” The Sunday Times, 8 January 1956; Graham Greene, “A Visit to Poland, II: Between ‘PAX’ and Patriotism,” The Sunday Times, 15 January 1956. All quotations are from the second part of the two-part series. See also Greene’s interview with Bogdan Czyjakowski on his voyage to Poland in the Paris-based Polish émigré journal Kultura: Graham Greene, Interview with Bogdan Czyjakowski, Kultura, April 1956, p. 93-99.
1043 Shore, Caviar and Ashes, p. 257.
chauvinism and national personalism not only within PAX but postwar Poland writ large, threatening to replace anti-semitism as the basis for attracting attention to the national question. Referring to PAX, Brian Porter-Szűcs has suggested, “The line between hypocritical intellectual cover and genuine conviction is always indistinct, and nearly always inaccessible to the historian.”

Unsatisfactory as this sort of indeterminacy is, the best course of action is always to zoom in closer. The consensus opinion of Piasecki among historians is very low – though, as we have seen, even his *Zagadnienia Istotne* showed clear intertextual signs of the influence of *nouvelle théologie* – but, when it comes to the rest of the movement, by and large there is no consensus opinion. It may never be possible to determine definitively whether, in *Dziś i Jutro*’s 1945-1948 period, Kętrzyński, Łubieński, and Krasiński were simply presenting, uncensored, the fruits of their own intellectual and social experimentation, or if their movement elders intervened, interfered, and tweaked their respective arguments. The same uncertainty applies to the Young Turks between 1950 and 1955.

What we can conclude is that *Dziś i Jutro*, for the duration of its existence, invoked the tradition of social Catholicism as a point of reference and self-identification. The rich analysis published over the course of the postwar decade in the journal’s pages amounts to a differentiated, nuanced proposal for transforming social Catholicism into Catholic-socialist syncretism. The guiding principle – in an age in which the state nominally belonged to the workers, activist initiatives necessarily had to work hand in hand with that state. Given this logical sequence, it is easy to imagine some or all of the *Dziś i Jutro* authors as having been by turns naïve, cynical, mendacious, or perhaps simply earnest in their intellectual work. The

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bottom line is that this initially marginal movement became a focal point of cross-Iron Curtain lay activist networking, sitting as it did in a literal geographical sense on the cusp of Catholic ministry and socialist revolution.

Between the de-sensitization forced on Catholic activists in Western Europe by the long, harsh pontificate of Pius XII and the ultimate identification of the PAX movement with Stalinism, PAX played a significant role in demonstrating definitively that vanguard experimentation with social Catholicism on a mass scale had failed. What remained, then, was the social-Catholic catechumenate pioneered by Władysław Korniłowicz. It is to the process of personalized, catechetical dialogue that we return to close out our story.
CHAPTER 10

The Catechumens Strike Back:
Catholic Writers and Social Catholics on the March in the Modern World

No human being engaged in politics or pegging religion to an ideology can serve as its apostle, for his particularism will interfere with his objective judgment. One must free oneself of the stereotypes and prejudices with which one is weighed down; one must become close to each human being, independently of who he is. A mind narrowed by opinions will never be able to gather itself for an objective approach.

--Rev. Władysław Korniłowicz, 1927

Jerzy Turowicz and Bolesław Piasecki represented two different faces of love for the Church. The difference lay in the fact that Turowicz shielded the Church, inspiring an openness in Christian thought in the spirit of post-conciliar development, more appropriate for the threats faced by the Church in the Western world, where freedom and democracy demanded spiritual depths. Turowicz’s triumph was the Second Vatican Council, for whom – in the world of lay Catholic thought – Turowicz served as a precursor.

--Ryszard Reiff, 2006

Did the discreditation of PAX as a model of Catholic thought and activism spell the collapse of Europe’s vanguard activist enterprises? *Rerum Novarum* may have been the point of departure for the social Catholicism that defined this vanguard, but, by the end of World War II, it was radical support for state socialism – in which civic repressions and even body counts became par for the course in an era of revolution – that attracted transnational activist partnerships dedicated to eliminating the social question once and for all. Yet progressive Catholics could never claim more than limited success at positioning themselves as legitimate inheritors of social-Catholic tradition. After all, for several decades after Leo XIII’s promulgation of *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, social-Catholic initiatives ranging in scale and efficacy of ministry from charitable employer paternalism to personalized, faith-based dialogues

with catechumens, had made significant, tangible gains. Catechesis brought Jacques Maritain and his wife to Catholicism, and it motivated him to develop Thomist personalism. This revolutionary intellectual premise for Catholic activism on the social question provided a principled justification – over and against socialist collectivism and atomization – of individualized ministry respectful of the dignity of each human being as a “person” made in God’s image. This was Władysław Korniłowicz’s method, highly successful in the fin-de-siècle and interwar years, which gave rise to the vibrant center of ecumenical dialogue and learning at Laski.

It was the advent of Soviet-style state socialism that produced a dual threat to this model: on the one hand, from popes – Pius XI and Pius XII – denying their own faith’s ethics of mission and salvation out of an institutionally motivated fear that this would open the door to infiltration by the socialist “enemy”; and from the Catholic vanguard itself, led by Maritain’s erstwhile disciple Emmanuel Mounier. For Mounier in Poland in 1946, it suddenly became all too clear that the best long-term solution for protecting the human person as a moral ideal was to sacrifice the dignity of part of an entire generation of living, breathing postwar people. For Mounier, too, personalized catechism was too little, too late in the face of a workers’ revolution demanding that Catholicism aggressively marshal all of its forces just to catch up.

What began as a range of good-faith efforts on both sides turned into self-perpetuating enterprises that, while retaining the trappings and often the substantive faith that they were making progress toward the best solution for Catholicism in the modern world, ultimately lent themselves first and foremost to political instrumentalization. Yet Korniłowicz’s approach did not die with him in 1946. Neither did the principled, raison d’État-bound personalism – neither exclusionary nor national-chauvinist – of Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak, though their refusal to
print obituaries for Stalin in March 1953 resulted in these journals’ confiscation by the PZPR (with Tygodnik Powszechny then transferred into PAX’s hands).\textsuperscript{1047}

Even in Poland’s Stalinist years, Laski and the Cracovian milieu remained models of social-Catholic activism. In 1955-1956, they would return with a vengeance in the face of PAX’s discreditation, laying the groundwork for a new kind of lay-activist encounter with the modern world. A significant role can be attributed to contingency here: Nikita Khrushchev’s decision to unmask Josef Stalin’s crimes – and the resultant de-Stalinization throughout the Soviet Bloc that brought, among others, Władysław Gomułka out of imprisonment and back into power – came simultaneously with the declining health of Pius XII and his pontificate. With Europe’s respective Catholic and socialist “Stalinisms” receding, the door would open for an entirely new form of Catholic engagement with the modern world, reunited at last under Pius XII’s successor, John XXIII, with approbation from the Holy See that Europe’s Catholic vanguard had not received since Leo XIII.

Three major figures within the Polish Catholic laity of the Stalinist years who would prove central to this transition began articulating and promoting their approaches already in the mid-1940s following the end of the Second World War: Jerzy Zawieyski, the last of Korniłowicz’s socialist catechumens; Jerzy Turowicz, the leader of the Cracovian principled approach to personalist activism; and Maria Winowska, a well-connected and forward-looking holdover from interwar social Catholicism who waited Stalinism out in France. Dwarved by the luster that Piasecki’s movement held both for Western European counterparts and for the Polish socialist establishment, these activist models remained in the shadows until 1955-1956, when

they would converge with de-Stalinization, Gomułka’s release, Wyszyński’s release, and the opening of a new space for non-Stalinist personalism in the world of Polish Catholic activism.

The agendas proposed by these figures would find a welcome ear in the post-1958 Holy See of John XXIII. The pope himself received Zawieyski several times for private audiences in the first half of the 1960s. This was the beginning of an entirely new kind of encounter between Catholicism and the modern world, one conditioned by socialism and the social question more generally, but no longer obsessed with worldly competition over the fate of the proletariat. For our purposes, the final chapter of the encounter between Catholicism and socialism in Europe centers on the late-Stalinist-era redemption of catechism and the person from instrumentalization by a Stalinist mass politics more geared toward the national question and geopolitical “camps” than toward a mission of mass evangelization in the modern world.

*The Last Catechumen: The Path of Jerzy Zawieyski*

The shared struggle of war and the urgent postwar debates over the nature of reconstruction – and, on the continent’s eastern half, revolutionary transformation – pushed Catholic activists out of their ghetto and into mainstream significance. It was Jacques Maritain who offered Catholic activists in the late 1930s an exit strategy from the dilemma of having to choose between only the Catholic ghetto and integral nationalism: the notion that there was a difference between exclusionary, integralist activism *en tant que chrétien* and a pluralist, dynamic path of activism *en chrétien* untied Catholic activists’ hands to pursue the latter option.

After World War II, even elderly European Catholic intellectuals and writers became commentators of the sociopolitical mainstream, breeding a deeply political class of *en chrétien* engagés. François Mauriac, who would win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1953, first became

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the clarion voice of protest against the wholesale purging (épuration) from public life of activists, intellectuals, and officials who had been involved in any way in the Vichy collaboration.\textsuperscript{1049} Mauriac was not alone in his new-found mainstream advocacies: Georges Bernanos (1888-1948), Paul Claudel (1868-1955), and a variety of gray-haired eminences of Catholic prose stepped out from behind the curtain into the national press. Together, they helped to constitute an influential, albeit little-remembered, postwar think-tank assembling France’s most publicly prominent Catholics: the Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français.\textsuperscript{1050}

At the same time, a motley crew of Catholic politicians whose various interwar, confessional, Catholic ghetto-rooted groupings had barely garnered enough votes to maintain a presence in the French National Assembly, emerged from the war credentialed as national Resistance leaders. Cashing in their moral and political capital, these politicians – Georges Bidault, François de Menthon, Robert Schuman, \textit{etc.} – brought Christian Democracy into the French political mainstream with the MRP. Theirs would be the first mainstream political voices behind France’s social and ethical reconciliation with Germany as well as France’s initiation of the project of Europe’s economic and political integration, whose first proposal even carried Schuman’s name.\textsuperscript{1051} French Christian Democrats also played a leading role in the creation of a transnational network of political cooperation, the NEI, that included representatives of all of the countries of Europe, whether from mainstream political groups or, in the case of authoritarian

\textsuperscript{1049} See, for example, François Mauriac’s commentary in \textit{Le Figaro}, 19 October 1944. On the broader question of Mauriac’s postwar public commentaries, see Judt, \textit{Past Imperfect}, p. 66-74.

\textsuperscript{1050} On the Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français, see Claire Toupin-Guyot, \textit{Les intellectuels catholiques dans la société française : le Centre catholique des intellectuels français, 1941-1976} (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2002). Postwar Polish Catholic activist milieux maintained a vivid interest in these French Catholic \textit{engagé} writers well into the years of Stalinist socialism. See, for example, Stanisław Stomma, “\textit{Pamiętnik wiejskiego proboszcza},” \textit{Dziś i Jutro}, 25 June 1950.

In less than a decade, Catholic activists had gone from low-circulation, ghettoized discussions about the modern world to the forefront of setting its agenda.

As in France, wartime clandestine activity had, of necessity, transformed the engagement of Catholic activists in Polish public life, but equally important was Polish attention to the French example, both during the war and in its immediate aftermath. In Poland, moreover, the transformation of the place of the Catholic writer and Catholic activist in society and public life remained tightly linked to the evolution of the catechumenate as produced by Catholic-socialist dialogue since the fin-de-siècle. As then, so during World War II and its immediate aftermath, Rev. Władysław Korniłowicz and his haven of Thomist meditation at the Center for the Blind at Laski remained a central point of reference.

The social networks of Polish intellectual life in the late 1930s had, by the start of the war, made Laski a crossroads of cultural and intellectual life for more than just the Catholic ghetto of Odrodzenie and Stronnictwo Pracy. Laski was, all at once, the home consistory of nuns of the order of Franciscan Sisters, Servants of the Cross; a center of long-term residence and rehabilitation for the blind; a center of Thomist learning and meditation; and a center of Franco-Polish cultural and intellectual exchange. Important figures of the Polish cultural avant-garde, who, irrespective of their relationship to Catholicism, considered France (and especially Maritain) to be their key point of reference and identity-formation found in Laski a landmark of their respective intellectual landscapes.

We have seen how Czesław Miłosz brought Maritain’s thought alive in occupied Poland through his translation of À travers le désastre. It was Laski and the influence of Korniłowicz

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and Maria Czapska that were responsible for drawing Miłosz into the magnetic field of Poland’s Catholic-socialist catechumenate. Miłosz made no lasting re-conversion to Catholicism as a result of these contacts. Nonetheless, Laski permanently marked Miłosz’s approach to cultural and intellectual life.

Korniłowicz’s last catechumen was the author and playwright Jerzy Zawieyski (né Henryk Nowicki). Born just outside of Łódź, Zawieyski passed World War II in Warsaw, dividing his time between Laski, Rev. Jan Zieja’s parish on Gęsta Street, and clandestine reading-rooms where he crossed paths with Jan Strzelecki, Aniela Urbanowicz, and the other promoters of Emmanuel Mounier’s thought in wartime Poland. His closest friends at Laski had been Rev. Stefan Wyszyński and *Verbum* editor Maria Winowska.

In 1958, Zawieyski would publish an autobiographical essay entitled “A catechumen’s path” (*Droga katechumena*). This particular essay is the key to understanding the impact of the model of Catholic catechumenate introduced by Rev. Korniłowicz on the postwar transformation of Catholic activism. Zawieyski introduced himself and his life’s path as follows:

> In the 1920s, I did not consider myself to be a Catholic in the full sense of the term, indeed, particularly in the first half of the 1920s, I was completely apathetic, and at times even hostile, to Catholicism. [...] The moral imperative to bear witness to the truth of those times, seen through the eyes of a “catechumen,” has led me to undertake the writing of this essay. And though I will speak here about myself, about my personal path as a catechumen, I nonetheless reserve the right to speak also in the name of those with whom I shared my fate.

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1053 See especially Miłosz, *Zaraz po wojnie*, p. 18. This reaction to spiritual meditations, however, in no way diminished the depth of Miłosz’s emotional and intellectual response to reading Maritain. In a published response to a 1938 survey of Polish writers asking for the titles of the three books read that year that had made the greatest impression on the respondent, two of the three titles that Miłosz gave were by Maritain: *Frontières de la poésie et autres essais* and *Art et scholastique* (the latter translated the next year into Polish by Miłosz’s friends from Laski, Karol and Konrad Górski). See Czesław Miłosz, Survey response in “Jaką najciekawszą książkę przeczytałem w roku 1937? Ankieta,” *Prosto z Mostu*, 20 February 1938.

Although born into a Catholic family, as Zawieyski describes it, he felt uncomfortable buying uncritically into the Catholic faith. Particularly significant for him in his temporary turn away from Catholicism were the legion social and political injustices that he perceived around him, especially the socio-economic plight of the proletariat and the anti-semitic *numerus clausus*, in which he saw the Catholic Church as, if not complicit, then at least unacceptably passive: “I must confess with sadness that the Church in the person of its institutional representatives, the clergy, constituted for us the greatest roadblock to Catholicism and faith.”

As a teenager and then a university student in Łódź, Zawieyski thus chose a path that struck him as an “institutionally purer” alternative, the path of socialism. The Odrodzenie network had no branch in Łódź, and the lack of an intellectually and socially activist Catholic option weighed heavily on Zawieyski’s life choices. As he described it 30 years later in retrospect, “objectively,” he was a catechumen. Spiritually longing for Catholic faith, he had nonetheless remained instinctually and emotionally repelled by Catholicism’s failure to provide definitive solutions to the social ills that *Rerum Novarum* already in 1891 had promised to combat. Zawieyski’s own personal desire to “stop up the bleeding wounds of the social question in the spirit of social justice” led him first to become a regular participant in worker solidarity protests and 1st of May demonstrations in Łódź, then to assume the position of secretary of the university’s Towarzystwo Uniwersytetu Robotniczego (TUR, Workers’ University Association).

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1056 “My first conversation about Catholicism immediately awakened the socialist within me. This happened often, indeed, almost always [with my generation].” Zawieyski, “Droga katechumena,” p. 35.
Rather than Polish activism, it was time spent in France after his university studies that raised again for Zawieyski the prospect of Catholicism in a form that would satisfy his desire for both spiritual guidance and sociopolitical activism. As a budding young playwright and novelist, Zawieyski read Mauriac, Bernanos, and Maritain, all of whom made a tremendous impression on him. The émigré Polish priest and philosopher Augustyn Jakubisiak, who ran the largest Polish-language parish in Paris, offered Zawieyski guidance in his encounters with these authors and introduced him personally to others, including Mounier and Nikolai Berdiaev. On Zawieyski’s return to Poland, Jakubisiak also directed the playwright to his good friend Korniłowicz. Zawieyski thus became a regular at Laski, and he gained several spiritual mentors. Among these was the young Rev. Stefan Wyszyński, who shared a friendship with Zawieyski founded in part on their common passion for French thought and culture, including Maritain’s writings. In February 1942, Zawieyski had a conversion experience, and henceforth, until his death in 1969, he considered himself a practicing Catholic.

Zawieyski’s story of the catechumenate is both quintessential and atypical, and both of these sides to the story made him a seminal figure in postwar Polish Catholic activism. Zawieyski was a homosexual. Although he maintained a relatively stable partnership with fellow Catholic writer Stanisław Trębaczkiewicz for close to 30 years, his inability to reconcile his homosexuality with canon law tore him apart morally for the 27 years separating his conversion experience and his death. This was a constitutive element of who he was with respect to

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1059 This was one of postwar Warsaw’s worst-kept secrets, copiously documented and circulated by the Public Security Ministry – in 1956 incorporated into the Ministry of the Interior and renamed the Security Service (SB, Shëzba Bezpiecëñstwa). Zawieyski’s diaries detail some of the spiritual dilemmas that he faced as he tried to reconcile his faith with his sexual orientation. Trębaczkiewicz wrote the preface to Zawieyski’s posthumous *Droga katechumen* collection, and, on his death in 1980 – 11 years after Zawieyski – Trębaczkiewicz was buried alongside Zawieyski in the same grave at Laski. Zawieyski’s security file is at AIPN BU 0785/4, AIPN BU 0785/5.
which socialism had never caused the slightest ethical qualms, while his Catholicism simply
could not tolerate it.

At the same time, Zawieyski was one of the very few among Korniłowicz’s catechumens
to be so well-connected on both sides of the Catholic-socialist divide. From his student days, he
retained extensive contacts in Poland’s socialist movements, including Władysław Gomułka.
Moreover, his status as a successful playwright and author considerably expanded his contacts on
the Left by establishing him as a member of socialist cultural and literary networks. Other
postwar Catholic activists from the Dziś i Jutro milieu who in 1948 announced a plan to
“Christianize the socialist revolution” knew about revolution only what they had read in
Mounier. Zawieyski, meanwhile, had actually lived on both sides of the barricades and struggled
with the relationship between the two for most of his life.

Zawieyski was also keenly aware of the plight faced by other writers struggling with their
own social and spiritual identity, placing the quest for social justice for the working poor above
their own spiritual needs and unable to achieve the kind of conversion experience that ultimately
allowed Zawieyski to reconcile the two. As he would write in 1958, “Many of my then-fellow
pilgrims turned around from that path and today find themselves occupying positions distant
from Catholicism. Often even hostile. […] they themselves do not know, today’s warriors for
atheism and spokesmen for Marxism, how much they gave me and how generously they
endowed me.” 1060 One of the principal “then-fellow pilgrims” whom Zawieyski had in mind here
was Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, the signature peace activist of the postwar socialist establishment.
As Poland’s postwar socialist point-man for the global peace campaign, Iwaszkiewicz held a

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1060 Zawieyski, “Droga katechumena,” p. 35.
place in postwar Poland that was, allowing for differences in ideology and political regime, perhaps not so different from that of Mauriac in postwar France.  

Zawieyski, who trained a watchful eye on postwar sociopolitical developments in both France and Poland, was keenly aware of these analogies. In 1947, Zawieyski published a long essay in *Tygodnik Powszechny* entitled “Zagadnienie literatury katolickiej” (The problem of Catholic literature). In this text, he re-defined the entire conceptual toolkit used by writers and editors of the Catholic faith to think about the significance of their own work, not only in spiritual or intellectual terms, but also its worldly social and political consequences. Reviewing criteria set forth by Maritain for classifying “Catholic literature” and “Catholic writers,” Zawieyski ultimately dismissed the latter category for its excessive emphasis on aesthetics and conventions of genre. Instead, Zawieyski argued that Catholics taking up their pens *en chrétien* in the modern world – particularly a world conditioned on the one side by socialist revolution and on the other by the geopolitics of atomic diplomacy and Cold War – must face the concrete issues of their time:

Catholicism values in the terrestrial plane questions of historical time, questions of social movements, economic and political questions. That which is objectively good, which grows out of an intention to ennoble man and society, carries in itself Christian traits. [...] In the face of the atomic bomb, there opens before all of humanity the perspective of a final horizon.

Zawieyski’s message was not so much a blueprint for the future as a call to self-reflection. This sort of call was precisely characteristic of the catechetical experience that Zawieyski took away from his encounters at Laski and other centers of Catholic-socialist

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1061 Indeed, Iwaszkiewicz’s published reflections on a 1946 meeting with Mauriac in Paris suggest that he himself might not have been averse to the comparison. See Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, “Spotkanie z Mauriakiem,” *Dziś i Jutro*, 14 April 1946.  
dialogue. Turning the tables on earlier conventions of so-called Catholic literature, Zawieyski dismissed “devotional motifs,” “hagiography,” “ideology,” and even “Church doctrine” as insufficient to make a piece of writing “Catholic.” The key, according to Zawieyski, was how a piece of writing expressed and complemented the concrete practice of its author’s engagement in the modern world. For this reason, Zawieyski held out François Mauriac – neither particularly devotional, nor propagandistic, nor hagiographic toward Catholicism in his writings – as a consummate “Catholic activist.”

It was thus in all seriousness, consistently with the re-imagination of “Catholic literature” that he advanced in his Tygodnik Powszechny article, that Zawieyski wrote to his old friend Iwaszkiewicz in 1955 that the latter’s interwar short stories had been “very ‘Christian.’” Coming from Zawieyski, this was no back-handed compliment for Iwaszkiewicz, though the latter was still at this point a prominent “red barricade” poet. Rather, Zawieyski meant that the catechetical experience that the two had shared in the interwar years was visible in Iwaszkiewicz’s writing from those years, while the ethos of engagement expressed in Iwaszkiewicz’s postwar writing suggested, to the Catholic’s mind, a rather “cynical contempt for the world.”

The day that he received Zawieyski’s letter, Iwaszkiewicz launched in his diary into a tirade about “Catholic culture,” describing his postwar stories as being as Christian as anything written in the interwar. Indeed, he gave in to a flight of fancy, positing ironically, “I am the greatest Catholic writer at the present moment. But not only does no one know it now, but no one ever will. Maybe someday they will say that I am a Catholic writer – but never the greatest. Catholicism right now is Rev. Meysztowicz, Graham Greene [...] and in our world, Bolcio [Bolesław Piasecki] and

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1063 This latter quoted phrase is also from Zawieyski, “Zagadnienie literatury katolickiej.”
Dominiczek [Dominik Horodyński]. And the ever-faithful Jurek Zawieyski. A Catholic he is indeed – but a writer?¹⁰⁶⁴

Paradoxically, Iwaszkiewicz’s mean-spirited comments only reinforced Zawieyski’s own post-conversion approach to Catholic activism. For Zawieyski no longer wanted to be a “Catholic writer,” but simply a Catholic engaged in the world. Zawieyski therein distinguished between a genuine engagement and desire to re-make the world – which he and Iwaszkiewicz had shared in the 1930s – and the replacement of transformative hope for humanity with the cynicism that he had seen overcome his friend Iwaszkiewicz. At the same time, Zawieyski would have agreed with his erstwhile socialist friend that Bolesław Piasecki and Dominik Horodyński, respectively the founder of Dziś i Jutro and one of its editors-in-chief, shared a “cynical contempt for the world.”

Most disheartening for both Zawieyski and Iwaszkiewicz in Dziś i Jutro was the personnel, whom – unlike Mounier, who had been willing to forgive Piasecki his fascist past – they both remembered well from the interwar years. Indeed, neither writer could accept the innumerable fascist converts to socialism populating the movement, including, from among the more renowned interwar Polish Catholic writers, Jan Dobraczyński, who had been part of the late-1930s chorus of Polish National Democrats accusing Zawieyski’s hero Jacques Maritain of heresy and philo-semitism.¹⁰⁶⁵ Even though Dobraczyński seemed to welcome Zawieyski’s plea for a new understanding of the “Catholic writer,” this acceptance appeared tied to


¹⁰⁶⁵ See, for example, Jan Dobraczyński, “Maritain na pograniczu herezji,” Prosto z Mostu, 5 December 1937.
Dobraczyński’s own institutional investment in the *Dziś i Jutro* movement. The fundamental problem, then, was that neither the Catholic Zawieyski, nor the socialist Iwaszkiewicz – though both occasionally published in *Dziś i Jutro* prior to its decisive ideological shift in 1948 – accepted the *Dziś i Jutro* movement as a genuine article.

In 1948, following the shuttering of *Tygodnik Warszawski*, the removal from power of his old acquaintance Władysław Gomułka, and the declarations by Wojciech Kętrzyński and Konstanty Łubieński in the pages of *Dziś i Jutro* of their movement’s intention to “Christianize” the socialist revolution from within, Zawieyski tread very carefully in his public activities. The ever-more pro-establishment activists of *Dziś i Jutro* were soon the only Catholics in Poland able to find any kind of audience on issues of pressing social and political significance, which were almost completely censored out of the pages of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak* beginning in 1948.

Zawieyski sympathized with his friend and new primate Stefan Wyszyński’s uncomfortable situation as the head of a national episcopate that could only get something done in Catholic affairs in Poland by asking Piasecki and *Dziś i Jutro* for help. Zawieyski’s last real act of public engagement in the postwar decade came with his attendance at the August 1948 Wroclaw peace congress. Making Laski a second home, not publishing a word between 1949 and 1955, Zawieyski felt a moral obligation to withdraw from activism as the socialist establishment accorded *Dziś i Jutro* a virtual monopoly over that activism. And this – so soon after his

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1066 To understand Zawieyski’s reasons for distancing himself from Dobraczyński, among others, one example will suffice of how the latter twisted the former’s argumentation regarding “Catholic” writers and literature: “A Catholic writer who ‘overcomes his worldview’ – as it has been said – will no longer be a Catholic writer. I am far from condemning attempts by Marxists to win over Catholic writers. If they succeed in convincing us – what is there to be done!? Let it, however, be a war of idea against idea, worldview against worldview. Let it not be about appeals to writers as Catholic writers. Catholicism suffers from weaknesses in every era. Nonetheless, it has always overcome them on its own and always will. Today, our weakness lies in our conservative and political tendencies. We will overcome these as well.” Jan Dobraczyński, “Literatura katolicka w szufladce,” *Dziś i Jutro*, 6 February 1949.

catechumen’s conversion had led him to a breakthrough in understanding the nature of Catholic activism in the postwar world. In 1956, Zawieyski would return to public prominence arm in arm with Gomułka and Wyszyński, their redemption marking the end of the Stalinist era in the People’s Republic of Poland, despite the various other problems that it would occasion. In 1948, however, the initiative in the Catholic activism spelled out by Zawieyski, whom the Dziś i Jutro authors read and respected, would pass to them, whom Zawieyski had ceased to trust.\textsuperscript{1068} Though they would make numerous lasting contacts with budding centers of Catholic lay activism on the other side of the Iron Curtain, the actual social and political face of their Catholic-socialist syncretism would largely bear out Zawieyski’s worst fears about them.

\textit{Personalism and Principle: The Legacy of Kraków’s “Aristocratic Citadel”}

With Dziś i Jutro/PAX on the rise in the vanguard of Catholic engagement with the modern world – not only for People’s Poland, but for certain Western European audiences as well – what happened to interwar models of Catholic thought and activism? What happened to Odrodzenie’s postwar successors, Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak, who had tried to carve out a space for themselves between social Catholicism and Catholic-socialist syncretism?

To answer these questions, it is important to consider both Stanisław Stomma’s 1946 principled advocacy of social peace over blind “maximalism” and Jerzy Zawieyski’s 1947 re-imagination of the role of the “Catholic writer” in modern society. Looking across Europe to French Catholic counterparts like Mauriac, and across the ideological divide to non-Catholic socialists like Iwaszkiewicz, Zawieyski called upon self-styled Catholic writers to move beyond abstract intellectual debate and use their pens for social and political advocacy. Stomma,

\textsuperscript{1068} See, for example, Mikołaj Kolatek, “List Katechumena do Jerzego Zawieyskiego,” Dziś i Jutro, 22 February 1948; “Katechumeni” [Catechumens], “Od ‘Katechumenów’ (Odpowiedź na Kantatę Anielską Jerzego Zawieyskiego),” Dziś i Jutro (Etap), 10 April 1949.
meanwhile, defined the horizon of this engagement for Catholics living in the socialist state of Poland: *raison d’État*.

What this meant, in practice, for the Cracovians of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak* – and their allies elsewhere in Poland, like Zawieyski in Warsaw and Stefan Świężawski in Lublin – was an intense devotion to enriching Polish cultural, intellectual, and religious life. At the same time, unlike their jailed or exiled *Tygodnik Warszawski* counterparts, the activists of *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Znak* fell in line with the new socialist establishment in the realms of international affairs and support for a Church-State *modus vivendi*. Unlike their *Dziś i Jutro* counterparts, however, Turowicz, Stomma, and their colleagues steadfastly refused to cross the line separating Catholic engagement in socialist society from Catholic-socialist syncretism. This was the price of their support for People’s Poland.

Until mid-1948, *Tygodnik Powszechny* managed to maintain at least a façade of social Catholicism.\(^{1069}\) With the beginning of Rev. Piwowarczyk’s systematic persecution, however, and a geometric increase in instances of interference by state censors, Jerzy Turowicz found that the only cutting-edge texts that his journal could get into print concerned high culture, philosophy, and leisure. Former *Tygodnik Powszechny* editor Jacek Woźniakowski joked in his memoirs – referring to a March 1952 special issue of the journal – that state censors tied the editors’ hands so tightly that even articles devoted to hiking in the Tatra Mountains were a risky proposition.\(^{1070}\)

\(^{1069}\) See, for example, Józef Marian Święcicki, “O postawę duchową polskiej wsi,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 28 March - 4 April 1948; Konstanty Turowski, “Obowiązki społeczne katolików,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 28 March - 4 April 1948. As a leading member of the *Tygodnik Warszawski* staff, Turowski was arrested and imprisoned within months of this article’s publication.

\(^{1070}\) Woźniakowski, *Ze wspomnień szczęściarza*, p. 52. The issue’s front-cover article was Jacek Woźniakowski, “Tatry,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 30 March 1952. Virtually every text printed in that issue concerned either the Tatra Mountains or hiking etiquette.
Meanwhile, Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak, amidst the political intrigue, arrests, and violence swirling around them in Poland, remained not aloof but resolute in their neo-positivism, in other words, the continued pursuit of a path simultaneously satisfactory to Christian faith, national interest, and personalist ethics. Unlike their colleagues at Dziś i Jutro, the Cracovian activists rejected the socialist establishment’s justification of ideologically inspired censorship of cultural and intellectual production. Maintaining this position would become increasingly difficult, and the Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak editors would ultimately pay in March 1953 with their journals’ shuttering. Namely, the editors refused to publish a laudatory obituary in Tygodnik Powszechny after Stalin’s death because they saw this as being truly at odds with the Polish national interest. As a result, the Polish Office of Confessional Affairs shuttered Znak and transferred control over Tygodnik Powszechny to PAX, which by then had considerably outgrown Dziś i Jutro and even its daily newspaper Słowo Powszechne.

In the interim, however, Tygodnik Powszechny continued to put religious and cultural issues in conversation on both national and international levels. One of its rising-star authors was a young priest named Karol Wojtyła, who, on his return from studies in Rome in 1949 began a series of articles warmly approving of the Mission de France.

Thus, Dziś i Jutro, despite its political clout, its increasingly coherent ideology, and the unique privilege – which Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak lacked – of being able to send its staff abroad, still did not manage to carve out a monopoly over Polish Catholic access to information about Catholic activism elsewhere in the world. It was Dziś i Jutro, not the Cracovian milieu, that, through progressive Catholicism, had acquired the ideology to begin to devise its own

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1071 In Łubieński’s words, “we understand the need to consider certain ideological criteria in assessing the value of art.” Łubieński, “Referat,” p. 5, AIPN BU 0648/118/1.
version of the World War II-inspired French personalist theology of labor for Polish conditions. Yet Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak, to the extent that censors would permit, offered a constant and insistent corrective to the syncretic excesses of Piasecki’s milieu vis-à-vis the Catholic Church.

By the repressive Stalinist years of 1952-1953, this was all that remained, but in the early years of Stalinist socialism – 1948, 1949, 1950 – the Cracovian milieu actually tried to articulate its own principled contribution to Poland’s emerging Stalinist civilization. Intent on marking cultural policy as a territory to which Polish Catholic activists were entitled to contribute, Jerzy Turowicz wrote in January 1949 that “a man of culture, an intellectual, is bound to objectivity and to jealous defense of his independence.”

In the interest of maintaining this independence in the realm of cultural policy, Turowicz was willing to help People’s Poland by communicating to his journal’s considerable readership – upwards of 50,000 – the urgency of supporting state policy justified by raison d’État.

As it happened, it was Rev. Jan Piwowarczyk’s social Catholicism that, perhaps paradoxically, yielded the most persuasive cases against German claims to the Recovered Territories and in favor of the Stockholm Appeal. Partly out of principle, partly in anticipation of the censors’ next move, Turowicz solicited texts from Piwowarczyk ever more selectively, in areas where Piwowarczyk was willing to go against the stated policy of the Vatican only because the Polish priest’s expertise in Catholic social ethics told him that the Holy See was wrong. Thus, Piwowarczyk opposed the Vatican’s continued recognition of German authority over the dioceses of the Recovered Territories. In the case of the global peace campaign, without making any commitments on his journal’s behalf to the Communist-led Partisans of Peace,

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1074 Piwowarczyk, “Zbiorowa odpowiedzialność narodu niemieckiego.”
Piwowarczyk applauded the principles behind the Stockholm Appeal. Falling far short of the abbé Jean Boulier’s engagement on behalf of the appeal, Piwowarczyk thus nonetheless made it clear that the Catholic activists of Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak stood for peace. The Polish Episcopate’s declaration of support for the appeal played no small role in this advocacy.

In addition to international affairs, however, it was the domain of Church-State relations in which Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak came closest to echoing Dziś i Jutro’s advocacies. Though, unlike Piasecki’s movement, they were far from the rooms and corridors where decisions were made – either by the establishment or by the hierarchy – Turowicz and Stomma elected to put the full weight of their journals behind a measured course of support for Church-State cooperation.

Fully aware of the concern of the “nations of the world” with the “attempt to work out the conditions for a modus vivendi [...] between Catholicism and Communism,” Stomma and Turowicz argued in a series of joint editorials that Catholics should, while maintaining their distance from politics, give socialist Poland a chance. By their reasoning, it was precisely Poland’s uniqueness as a committedly Catholic country planted squarely within the Soviet camp that meant that “the Polish experiment in its significance eclipses the affairs of one nation and that its results will be judged by the entire Catholic Church.” Unlike their colleagues in Dziś i Jutro, however, Stomma and Turowicz saw any potential Catholic-socialist convergence playing out over “several decades at a minimum,” rather than in the form of an instantaneously achieved Catholic-socialist syncretism.

1076 Stanisław Stomma and Jerzy Turowicz, “Katolicy w Polsce Ludowej,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 4 June 1950; Stanisław Stomma and Jerzy Turowicz, “Eksperyment Polski,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 3 February 1952. All of the quotations are from the latter text.
At the moment when they wrote the text, Stomma and Turowicz could rightly declare as rhetorical the question of “when will we be able to consider the Polish experiment a success in a universalistic sense?” By the end of summer 1953, however, with Kaczmarek’s sentencing and Wyszyński’s arrest, the honeymoon period of the intended Catholic-activist contribution to the construction of Polish Stalinism was over.

By the time of Wyszyński’s arrest, in fact, both Stomma and Turowicz were out of work. The breaking point was the massive press campaign throughout the Soviet Bloc eulogizing Josef Stalin following his death on 5 March 1953. Though Turowicz had agreed to publish several pieces cautiously supporting the proposed Stalinist constitution of 1952, and even a toady ing 60th-birthday note for Polish president Bolesław Bierut in April 1952, the Tygodnik editor drew the line at an homage to Stalin. As a result, the last issue edited by Turowicz appeared dated 8 March 1953. This final Stalinist-era issue produced by the original Tygodnik Powszechny staff – as opposed to the PAX movement members who took it over after the weekly’s seizure by the PZPR – emphasized, above all, Thomist philosophy and the ethics of the human person.1077 The featured author in this issue was the young priest and Catholic University of Lublin lecturer Karol Wojtyła, recently returned from his studies in Rome under the scholastic Thomist Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange.1078

The one moment when Tygodnik Powszechny followed in the footsteps of Dziś i Jutro’s principled political alliance with Stalinist socialism came with the February 1953 show trials of

1078 Karol Wojtyła, “Instynkt, miłość, małżeństwo,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 19 October 1952; Karol Wojtyła, “Religijne przeżywanie czystości,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 22 February 1953. The first section of the latter text focused on Christianity as “the religion of the person,” invoking at once both Maritain and Mounier, the latter of whose writings Wojtyła knew particularly well.
the late Cardinal Sapieha’s most trusted confidants in the Kraków archdiocese. In this case, a Tygodnik Powszechny front-page editorial declared that the priests’ “criminal activities, harmful for our raison d’État, have also done irreparable harm to the Church.” Otherwise, however, the final word in many of the Stalinist-era Tygodnik Powszechny publications belonged, perhaps paradoxically, to the future anti-Communist pope Karol Wojtyła.

The Interwar Activist’s Revenge

With the state-sanctioned suppression of Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak in March 1953, the latter ceased to exist entirely, while control over the former passed to the PAX movement, which continued to publish the weekly journal without changing the layout or noting the replacement of the editorial staff.

It was this appropriation of the journal that led a former foreign correspondent of Tygodnik Powszechny to begin preparing to exact revenge on PAX. Maria Winowska, whom we know from Chapter 2 as a founding editor of the 1930s Laski-based journal Verbum, had moved to France in 1937 to continue her studies at the Institut Catholique de Paris. With Polish cardinal-primate August Hlond’s arrival in France in 1940, she became the primate’s clandestine wartime courrier to the internal French Resistance, including several near-brushes with death. Having been a regular participant of Rev. Kornilowicz’s seminar at Laski since the 1920s, Winowska was friendly with the leading cultural and intellectual figures among Poland’s interwar youth, from Miłosz, through Zawieyski, through the future primate Stefan Wyszyński himself.

Although she remained in France in the wake of the Second World War, Winowska easily made the transition from interwar Polish Catholic activism to regular contributions to Tygodnik Powszechny. Initially making contact with the new journal through her friend and

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1079 “Po procesie krakowskim,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 15 February 1953.
1080 Gawroń, “Maria Winowska, grand apôtre laïque du XXe siècle.”
mentor Rev. Jan Piwowarczyk, Winowska soon became Jerzy Turowicz’s trusted source for news and commentary on the latest developments in French Catholic activism. The early years of socialist Poland were, perhaps paradoxically, the heyday of Winowska’s reporting for Tygodnik Powszechny, providing as she did direct access to the newest writings of Cardinal Suhard as well as French Catholic writers like Paul Claudel and Daniel-Rops.\footnote{On Suhard, Claudel, and Daniel-Rops, respectively, see Maria Winowska, “Boży zmysł,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 28 March-4 April 1948; Maria Winowska, “Teolog we fraku,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 13 February 1949; Maria Winowska, “Obrady intelektualistów katolickich,” Tygodnik Powszechny, 27 June 1948.} Winowska also brought the activities of the newly established postwar Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français (CCIF) into the homes of Polish Catholic readers, securing for Tygodnik Powszechny an exclusive translation of, among others, Daniel-Rops’s speech at the June 1948 CCIF congress. Winowska thus constituted the quintessential link between French and Polish Catholic lay activism in the immediate postwar.

With the advance of Stalinist civilization in postwar Poland, however, Winowska soon found herself cut off from Tygodnik Powszechny. Beginning in 1950, her texts no longer reached the journal’s Cracovian editorial offices. As a result, Winowska took to producing lives of the Polish Catholic saints and blessed figures, producing these studies at an average rate of one per year beginning in 1950, published either with French Catholic or Polish émigré presses.

Nonetheless, cut off from the social-Catholic allies who had nourished her intellectual and spiritual development in Poland throughout the interwar period, Winowska built up a significant animus against Bolesław Piasecki’s movement. As a Polish Catholic activist based in France, she frequently heard accounts of the visits to Paris by Wojciech Kętrzyński and Konstanty Łubieński from 1947 onward. As the point-person of Rome’s Polish Catholic foreign mission in France, Winowska managed also to maintain contact with her long-standing friend Primate Wyszyński.
through the moment of his final pre-arrest trip abroad in 1952. She thus succeeded in keeping herself well-versed in the latest news of Catholic activists in Stalinist-socialist Poland.

For Maria Winowska, the Catholic-socialist syncretism of *Dziś i Jutro/PAX* was entirely unacceptable, representing a second-generation modernist heresy. A strong advocate of Pius XII’s anti-Communist line, Winowska took her advocacy to the next step in the mid-1950s as she began to study closely the issues of *Dziś i Jutro* archived in the Polish Library in Paris. Spending several years preparing an “anti-progressive Catholic” manifesto, Winowska published her book in the end at an unpropitious moment: more than one year after Piasecki’s condemnation by the Holy Office, two months after Wyszyński’s release following Władysław Gomułka’s October 1956 return to the post of PZPR general-secretary. Nonetheless, Winowska’s anti-PAX treatise did significant damage to the movement’s public image among French Catholics, constituting the revenge of social Catholicism on its Catholic-socialist-syncretist bastard child.

Published under the penname of Claude Naurois, Winowska’s 1956 treatise *Dieu contre Dieu* (God against God) was a systematic, exhaustive exposé of the theological, philosophical, and institutional inconsistencies and hypocrisies of the PAX movement. Winowska’s main target was Piasecki himself, for, as “the conductor, when he raises his baton, his entire movement prepares to play.” Arguing that Piasecki had manipulated an entire generation – specifically, Mazowiecki’s generation – of young Catholic activists into “calling everything into

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1083 Naurois [Winowska], *Dieu contre Dieu?*, p. 29.
Winowska both denounced and sympathized with their elders – Łubieński, Kętrzyński, Dobraczyński, Horodyński – whom she described as the most important among Piasecki’s “indoctrinated and the brainwashed.” Setting these self-styled Catholic writers – particularly the renowned fiction writer Dobraczyński – against the high standard of the iconic, late Georges Bernanos, Winowska argued, “Imagine Bernanos behind the iron curtain. What angry cries would he not direct at his enemies before dying in the thick of battle? This indomitable one would certainly not play the game of Satan, flying in the face of his entire œuvre.”

Winowska devoted considerable attention to recapitulating not only the key arguments of Catholic-socialist syncretism advanced in the pages of *Dziś i Jutro* over the course of the journal’s decade-long existence, but also the Holy See’s condemnation of Bolesław Piasecki’s theology. Beyond the theology itself, however, Winowska astutely diagnosed the movement’s mainstay in its transnational partnerships with Western European – and, particularly, Francophone – counterparts. It was at these organizations that Winowska aimed her French-language critique most directly, hoping thereby to deprive Piasecki’s movement of its international network of support and legitimation. As Winowska put it,

> An attentive reading of the progressive press, analyzed in the context of ongoing events, proves to us incontestably that Western Catholics represent for the progressives of the satellite countries, especially for those in Poland, *a last chance*. Having failed in their own country with the Catholic masses, they can only save their reputation in the eyes of the Soviet ‘center’ with considerable successes in the Catholic milieux of the West.

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1084 As Winowska put it, “Who, at the age of 20, has not believed himself capable of reforming the world? The danger comes when the 20-year-old’s dream is institutionalized in a system and a seductive ‘ideology’ gives the right to call everything into question, for everything to be ‘begun anew.’” Naurois [Winowska], *Dieu contre Dieu?*, p. 41.
1085 Naurois [Winowska], *Dieu contre Dieu?*, p. 106.
1086 Naurois [Winowska], *Dieu contre Dieu?*, p. 93.
1087 Naurois [Winowska], *Dieu contre Dieu?*, p. 30.
Winowska thus – in the name of the late Hlond, of Wyszyński, and of her new close contacts in the French Episcopate – launched an incisive attack from the heartland of PAX’s international support system. She had a keen understanding of the entrenched Catholic organizations against which she was matched in this process. Maurice Vaussard of Pax Christi had, for example, arranged for PAX MP Konstanty Łubieński to give a lengthy interview in *Le Monde* in September 1955, in which Łubieński attempted to make light of the Holy See’s condemnation of his movement’s principal journal, *Dziś i Jutro*. A key passage cited by Winowska from this very interview, however, gives the lie to Łubieński’s claim that “People sometimes attribute to us the intention of establishing a sort of synthesis between Catholicism and Marxism: this is an absurdity or a calumny.” Łubieński’s advocacy was disingenuous: the Catholic-socialist syncretism had been at the heart of the *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX movement’s declared ideology since 1948, growing in no small part out of his own writings. Thus, Winowska, by following closely the output of the French organizations closest to her Polish enemies, succeeded in revealing their greatest ideological and institutional weaknesses and inconsistencies to the Francophone Catholic mainstream.

1956: De-Stalinization and the New Activism

Winowska’s campaign, well-informed and well-designed, was nonetheless only one small part of a mosaic of energies that converged on Polish lay thought and activism in 1955-1956, with a resultant complete transformation of the space accorded by the socialist establishment to Catholics militating *en chrétien*. Nikita Khrushchev’s 20th CPSU Party Congress “Secret Speech” and its revelations about Stalin’s purges and terror – combined with news that Polish president Bierut had died while in attendance at the February 1956 congress –

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1088 Konstanty Łubieński, “Après l’interdiction de *Dziś i Jutro* : M. Lubienski, député catholique à la Diète de Varsovie précise pour *Le Monde* la position de ses amis,” Interview in *Le Monde*, 9 September 1955. See also Winowska’s commentary on the interview at Naurois [Winowska], *Dieu contre Dieu?*, p. 32.
took the legs out from under Poland’s socialist establishment. With a summer marked by protests in Poznań over food prices and wages, Polish state socialism looked to its former leader and current prisoner Władysław Gomułka for salvation.

Gomułka, having just spent the better part of five years under house arrest, understood the plight of Primate Wyszyński, and he respected Catholic activists willing to get involved in the public life of the socialist state without the kind of Stalinist hand that PAX had revealed in the mid-1950s. For this reason, Gomułka’s return to power – in combination with some intrepid and well-timed lobbying by his old friend from the 1930s, Jerzy Zawieyski – quickly resulted in the October 1956 creation of a new Catholic lay movement of “Catholic Intelligentsia Clubs” (KIK, Kluby Inteligencji Katolickiej) headed by Zawieyski in combination with a motley assembly of Catholic activists marginalized by PAX, from Jerzy Turowicz and Stanisław Stomma through Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Janusz Zablocki.  

PAX did not disappear after October 1956, and it eventually even gained Gomułka’s favor as the latter turned in the 1960s to more repressive means of rule and a nationalist ideology relying heavily on anti-semitism and exclusionary nationalism. The KIK’s creation as an alternative pole of Catholic personalism re-oriented many of PAX’s most important Francophone partners toward the new movement. In 1956, moreover, following the creation of KIK, all of PAX’s most energetic and urbane activists – Kętrzyński, Krasiński, Łubieński, Micewski –

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1089 There is no synthesis study of the KIK movement; each existing scholarly work discusses the movement from the exclusive perspective of only one of its constitutive elements. For the perspective from the Warsaw Club, there is the thorough but increasingly dated Friszke, Oaza na Kopernika; for the KIK movement’s parliamentary circle, there is Andrzej Friszke, Koło posłów “Znak” w Sejmie PRL, 1957-1976 (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2002); for the post-1956 Tygodnik Powszechny perspective, see Manetti, “Sign of the Times,” p. 140-472. There is also limited discussion of the movement as a whole in two largely Kraków-centered works, both of which suffer from severe limitations resulting from an exclusive focus on materials gathered by the secret police: Kuta, “Działacze” i “pismaki”; Graczyk, Cena przetrwania?. Brian Porter-Szűcs’s illuminating discussion of what he calls “the Znak circle” is also distinctly Kraków-centered, framing the entire movement in reference to the efforts of the Tygodnik Powszechny and Znak staffs: Porter-Szűcs, Faith and Fatherland, e.g. p. 307-319.

1090 See especially Friszke, Oaza na Kopernika, p. 34-45.
began to jump ship, taking with them the loyalties of the transnational partners whom they had secured for PAX and cultivated throughout the Stalinist years.

For many of the Francophone former partners of PAX, this reorientation was above all a matter of personal loyalty, a leap of faith taken on the basis of confidence in someone known to them even though the French knew nothing about this new KIK movement. Jean-Marie Domenach, for example, thus shifted *Esprit*’s support from PAX to the new “KIK” movement first and foremost because his close friend Andrzej Krasiński migrated from one to the next in the fall of 1956.1091

Other key French contacts from Kętrzyński’s old Catholic-socialist international, however – the former staff of *La Quinzaine* in particular, but Vaussard as well – remained firmly committed to PAX long after the Holy Office’s condemnation of Piasecki’s *Zagadnienia Istotne* and *Dziś i Jutro* had come and gone. Indeed, former PAX members who had defected to the new KIK movement noted in 1957 and 1958 in the course of their travels to France after 1956 – and even into the 1960s – that, paradoxically, these Catholic activists simply did not trust anyone who had not been at least at one time affiliated with the *Dziś i Jutro*/PAX movement.1092

In summary, some of PAX’s former partners in Francophone Western Europe, like Vaussard, stuck with it through the de-Stalinization process of 1956, while others – like Domenach – jumped ship on the advice of Polish contacts who had themselves recently defected from the movement. Although the Holy Office’s condemnation and Winowska’s anti-PAX

1091 See the detailed correspondence for 1955-1956 between the two men at IMEC ESP2.C2-03.02.

1092 Jerzy Zawiejski made an observation along these lines at a CCIF presentation in Paris by Stanisław Stomma in May 1957; the session was led by, as Zawiejski noted to himself, the “pro-PAX” Vaussard. Zawiejski, Diary entry for 12 May 1957, Jerzy Zawiejski Diaries, BN akc. 9292/4. The one-time Fronda leader Janusz Zabłocki, newly incorporated by Zawiejski into the emerging KIK movement, recorded a similar observation in his diary on 9 October 1960: “Maurice Vaussard, I know from [Seweryn] Eustachiewicz [of Popiel’s émigré SP organization], even before our arrival inquired regarding the possibility of our cooperation with PAX and joked regarding typical Polish disagreements.” Janusz Zabłocki, Diary entry for 9 October 1960, in *Dzienniki 1956-1965* (Warszawa: IPN-KŚZpNP, 2008), p. 280.
campaign played a significant role in these choices, personal and institutional affinities proved decisive. The Catholic-socialist international agenda built up over years by Kętrzyński with Piasecki’s support thus continued to bear fruit even after PAX’s alliance with Stalinist socialism had outlasted Stalinism itself. PAX would survive as an institution even beyond Piasecki’s death in 1979, losing ever more political and moral ground until the very end of the Soviet Bloc, reconstituted after 1989 under its present name of the Civitas Christiana Association.

The balance of Dziś i Jutro’s activism is thus an extraordinary mixed bag. On the one hand, in its decade-long existence, the journal took trust reposed in it personally by Emmanuel Mounier and translated that into a Catholic-socialist syncretism explicitly pegged, on the one hand, to the socialist revolution in progress in Poland as of 1948, and on the other, to sympathetic organizations in Western Europe. These organizations became committed partners of the Dziś i Jutro/PAX movement, helping Kętrzyński by their intensive cooperation in his Cominform-inspired, peace-centered initiative of constructing a Catholic-socialist international. Never achieving any political structures like the Nouvelles Équipes Internationales or the Cominform to which it constituted a response, Dziś i Jutro’s Catholic-socialist international nonetheless succeeded in producing a real transnational network of Catholic activists who went beyond intellectualization of the Gospels to tangible sociopolitical activism, focused above all on the pursuit of global peace.

Anti-war – and thus quintessentially anti-American and anti-German – the various nodes of the network assembled by Kętrzyński and Łubieński coalesced into a support network. Its actors helped PAX through the international media firestorm that followed Primate Wyszyński’s arrest, just as PAX offered a rock-solid source of support in the wake of condemnations of the

1093 See Kunicki, “The Polish Crusader,” for an overview of the movement’s later history.
nouveaux théologiens, the UCP, the Jeunesse de l’Église, and – ultimately – La Quinzaine.

Nonetheless, as PAX’s leader Bolesław Piasecki got caught up in the momentum of his own theological knowledge gained from Dziś i Jutro/PAX’s progressive-Catholic partnerships, he lost sight of the essence of the ideology that had formed his movement’s inter-generational glue, as well as its place under socialism.

By attempting to provide theological foundations for a Catholic opposition party under a revolutionary-socialist regime, Piasecki managed to cross both the Vatican and the most ardent young Catholic-socialist syncretists within his movement. At the same time, the Holy Office decree exposed a fundamental truth about PAX. Dziś i Jutro texts – and Piasecki’s book – had a great deal to say about the integral place of human labor in Catholicism’s confrontation with the modern world. Following Congar and Chenu, Piasecki was correct in arguing that a theology of work was essential to defining any possible partnership of Catholicism and the proletariat – the putative base of any socialist establishment. Yet, when push came to shove, it was clear that PAX never really put workers in conversation with Catholicism. Kętrzyński, Łubieński, Piasecki, even Mazowiecki, Zabłocki, and Myślik – these were no worker-priests, performing mission in factories and mines alongside the members of the proletariat to show them how Catholic faith could be brought alive in the world. Indeed, not only did PAX fail completely in its putative mission of Catholic ministry to the working class – the whole point of connecting Catholicism and socialism in the first place – but it in fact created its own petit-bourgeois empire at the very moment when many Poles (including Catholic bishops) languished in Stalinist holding cells.

Try as the Dziś i Jutro/PAX activists might to preserve a connection between the movement and the social Catholicism ushered in by Leo XIII – continuing to call their journal a “social-Catholic weekly,” creating a “social-Catholic” circle of parliamentary MPs, arguing in
print that they were blazing a new path for a “socialist” social Catholicism – the very idea was incompatible with Stalinism. Social Catholicism, while intended to involve the laity in the Church, had been both Church-centered and Thomist in its personalism. When revolution replaced natural law at the core of PAX’s personalism, the movement lost even the semblance of a social-Catholic ideology. When PAX not only failed to defend, but indeed reinforced the establishment’s attacks on the ecclesiastical hierarchy, it abandoned entirely the institutional grounding of social Catholicism.

Kętrzyński may have been right when he argued in 1948 that social Catholicism was not the exclusive purview of the capitalist camp, but the Catholic-socialist syncretism of Dziś i Jutro led its movement into all-out conflict with the very faith that they were trying to introduce into socialism. This did not prevent Dziś i Jutro from playing a role of tremendous consequence in the postwar transformation of European lay activism, but it did preclude them from making themselves out to be obedient social-Catholic disciples of the Vatican. Brian Porter-Szűcs is correct that “The line between hypocritical cover and genuine conviction is always indistinct, and nearly always inaccessible to the historian,” but drastic divergence between theory and practice in and of itself constitutes evidence that something has gone wrong. It was Wyszyński’s friend Maria Winowska, the quintessential interwar social Catholic, who made this painfully clear.

If we take at face value the documentation of the Fronda’s removal from PAX, any number of leading activists in the Polish lay movement were truly serious about ministry to socialist Poland, only discovering in time that the narrow ex-fascist circle at the top of their movement’s hierarchy was taking advantage of their ideological commitment to get rich off of

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1094 Refer back to, for example, Wojciech Kętrzyński, “Któredy droga,” Dziś i Jutro, 12 December 1948.
1095 Porter-Szűcs, Faith and Fatherland, p. 142.
the *petit-bourgeois* enterprises that it had been granted by the socialist establishment. For former aristocrats like Kętrzyński, Łubieński, and Krasinski, as for their Young Turk successors Mazowiecki, Zabłocki, Buchała, and Myślik, the fervor of their Catholic-socialist syncretism was genuine, and it was this fervor that won the devotion of a variety of progressive Catholic circles in Western Europe, France in particular.

**1956-1958: Closing the Book on Social Catholicism**

On 22 October 1956, a group of Catholic activists met in the Warsaw apartment of ex-PAX activist Władysław Seńko, while others chimed in over the telephone, huddling together around the receiver in Jerzy Turowicz’s Kraków apartment. The new movement’s initiator and leader was Jerzy Zawieyski, who had foresworn public activism altogether rather than work for *Dziś i Jutro*, and yet among those in the apartment were Mazowiecki and Zabłocki, the young dissident leaders from PAX. Turowicz, Stomma, and Woźniakowski, from whom Piasecki had stolen Tygodnik Powszechny, remained connected by phone to their Warsaw colleagues all night. When Zawieyski opened the call to them with the line, “I speak to you in the name of revolutionary Warsaw,” he meant not only Gomułka’s revolution against Stalinism and against Soviet hegemony, but also against PAX’s monopolization of the Catholic activist model in the socialist world.¹⁰⁹⁶

Despite the ideological diversity of these activists, revolutionary personalism became constitutive of their new movement as well, leading to a significant inheritance from PAX. In addition to taking over many nodes of PAX’s network of Catholic activist contacts in Western Europe,¹⁰⁹⁷ it would also develop its own wider array of lasting partnerships with not only

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¹⁰⁹⁷ The Belgian node of the PAX network, unexplored for the most part in the current work due to a lack of sufficient surviving archival documentation covering the years through 1958, would grow overnight into a warm
Francophone Catholic activists, but also Italians, West Germans, and representatives of the de-colonizing tiers-monde encountered through the Pax Romana network. Many of these new contacts became possible thanks to an unexpected source: the émigré SP group centered on Karol Popiel, which, with a virtual blank check in the late 1950s from the US-run Free Europe Committee to foster “democracy” behind the Iron Curtain, was looking to train a new generation of Polish Catholic sociopolitical activists.

All of these new trends, however, represented a completely different enterprise from that pursued by Catholic activists in Europe since 1878. The Thomist renewal and Rerum Novarum remained in the backs of the minds of this new activist formation, but world events and theological breakthroughs within the Holy See combined to transform the context within which the new KIK activists began to define their ideology and goals as a vanguard movement. They still saw themselves as “revolutionary,” and they were still reacting to the social and political premises of state socialism nominally governing the People’s Republic of Poland in which they

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1099 Stanisław Gebhardt, “Działalność na forum międzynarodowym,” in Ewa Prządka, ed, Świadectwa/Testimonianze, IV: Pro publico bono: polityczna, społeczna i kulturalna działalność Polaków w Rzymie w XX wieku (Roma: Fundacja Rzymska im J.S. Umiastowskiej, 2006), p. 259-322, at p. 301-315. Stanisław Gebhardt, Interview with Author, 23 February 2006; Jerzy Kulczycki, Interview with Author, 26 March 2006; Maciej Morawski, Interview with Author, 18 March 2006. These three young émigré activists of Popiel’s SP group – along with the Polish émigré Belgian labor leader Jan Kulakowski (1930-2011) – were responsible for arranging logistics and shepherding their post-1956 Catholic activist visitors from Poland in the course of their visits to Western Europe. All three went on to significant social or political activism inspired by their SP ties, though independent of SP itself: Gebhardt, as secretary-general of the youth organization of the NEI’s worldwide successor, the Union Mondiale des Démocrates-Chrétiens; Kulczycki (1931-) – who had a full-time career as an engineer in parallel with his activism – as the director of the initially SP-funded Odnowa Publishing House, one of the most successful émigré publishers in Europe; and Morawski (1929-) as the Paris-based Polish-language correspondent for Radio Free Europe.
lived and functioned. However, the death of one Stalinism – mortally wounded by Khrushchev and dealt a death blow by Bierut’s demise and Gomulka’s political resurrection – converged with a sea change within the Vatican that brought the end of Pius XII’s “Stalinist” papacy. Domenach and Congar were only two among many Catholic activists in Europe to breathe a sigh of relief on hearing in 1958 of their late pontiff’s demise.

Everything that Pius XII had rejected, condemned, and written off from the last gasps of social Catholicism and the deeply political experiments of Catholic-socialist syncretism, his successor embraced. Seventy-seven years of age at the time of his election to the papacy, Angelo Roncalli, who took the name John XXIII (1881-1963), in a reign that lasted just over four years transformed Catholicism’s encounter with the modern world with an opening from the center to the troubled margins of that encounter. Chenu and Congar went from being pariahs banned entirely from teaching to serving as two of the most prominent invited theological experts at the Second Vatican Council that began in 1962. The reinvention of the catechism and the institutional Church’s mission to the world became central priorities of the Holy See. The new pope met with significant resistance from the Vatican establishment that had fueled Pius XII’s “Stalinist” approach – Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, Alfredo Ottaviani, Pietro Parente – but he had more than enough resources on which to draw from the ranks of the European Catholic activist vanguard to maneuver the institutional Church into a new era.

Central as the sea change in the Vatican was to the story of Catholic activism’s total re-invention in the years 1956-1958, it was as much a symptom as a cause. De-Stalinization in 1956 was a show-stopper for a Church worried for over a century about attrition of the ranks in competition with socialism. Although it certainly did not eliminate state socialism as a powerful
force in the modern world, revelation of Stalinist crimes destroyed the myth of socialist purity and orthodoxy that had lent such urgency to Catholic campaigns to address the social question.

Between 1878 and 1958, the defining tension in Catholicism’s confrontation with modernity in Europe was that of the social question vs. the national question: whether among the national-liberation advocates of fin-de-siècle partitioned Poland or in the ranks of Vichy-sympathizing Catholic activists, the universalistic imperative to minister to the populations of Europe’s working poor swelled by industrialization and modernization clashed constantly with the particularist imperative of consolidating individual nations over and against the rest of humanity. Neither question had disappeared by 1958, but both took a backseat to broader questions as to why it even mattered to continue practicing the faith or to engage in national public life in a modern world defined by sociopolitical orders revealing themselves to have been based on ideologies involving significant measures of deception. Zawieyski, Mazowiecki, and Zabłocki, for example, felt that they had been had by Stalinist socialism, while André Mandouze and the priests Boulier and Bosc buried themselves heart and soul in the plight of colonial subjects revealed by French Fourth Republic debates on de-colonization.

The year 1958 brought not only the death of Pius XII, but indeed a certain re-configuration of Europe’s involvement in the so-called Third World, with the collapse of the French Fourth Republic and the ascent of Charles de Gaulle assuring that the erstwhile European colonial power would cut away the Gordian knot of imperial entanglement. What in Mandouze’s 1948 speech at Wrocław had reflected a visceral sense of outrage at French Catholics’ support of systemic colonial oppression seemed to have been revealed both accurate and justified by de Gaulle’s ultimate rationale for disengaging France from its major “Third World” entanglements.
Furthermore, France was but one case of the larger problem of European colonial disengagement and the impact that it would have on intellectual, social, and political orders the world over.

Even de-Stalinization and de-colonization do not tell the whole story of the contingent circumstances conditioning the ultimate revolution undergone by Catholic activism in 1956-1958. Central also was the debate about the shape of an internationalized “European integration” project that had played out so clearly in the competing models of, on the one hand, Western Europe’s Christian Democratic Nouvelles Équipes Internationales and, on the other, the Catholic-socialist international assembled by Wojciech Kętrzyński on behalf of Dziś i Jutro/PAX. Although the architects of both models were, in many cases, Catholic activists – from Robert Schuman to Janusz Zabłocki – who had deeply internalized Jacques Maritain’s *en chrétien* model of engagement in the modern world, these international projects soon developed a secularizing, materialistic momentum of their own that, despite their putatively religious inspiration, made them almost structurally impervious to religious or identitarian commitments of any sort. The paradox is that the most durable legacy of sociopolitical activism of European Catholics in the immediate postwar ended up assuming a shape so fundamentally inimical to their own personal beliefs.

This, indeed, was the new defining dilemma of the Catholic vanguard taking shape in the years 1956-1958 in Europe on both sides of the Iron Curtain. KIK took PAX’s transnational contacts and grew them many times over, breaking free of exclusionary national personalism in order to work together with West German Catholics on Polish-German reconciliation, renouncing interwar anti-semitic personalism to push for Catholic-Jewish dialogue, and accepting a social and political reality of Catholic social mission in the world that Leo XIII never would have abided: de-confessionalization.
Some of these conclusions may seem obvious to us, while others feel deeply counterintuitive. How could the post-1956 Polish Catholic vanguard be said to have moved past the social question when the pope whom it produced in the person of Rev. Karol Wojtyła, a former *Tygodnik Powszechny* staffer and the KIKs’ long-time ecclesiastical patron in Poland, is remembered above all as the anti-Communist pope of social justice?

Even setting aside the question of John Paul II’s suppression of Latin American liberation theology, the fact of the matter is that, well-read in Mounier and committed to personalism and pastoral mission as he was, John Paul II’s commitments were not exactly as many have described them to be. Not George Weigel or Richard John Neuhaus, but rather Tony Judt best explained that it was Western capitalist materialism – both in the United States and in the integrating European Community – that John Paul II perceived to be the greatest threat to the dignity of the human person in the modern world.\(^\text{1100}\) There is something to be said for the fact that his great paean to the human person – a revival of social Catholicism taken to a large extent directly from the words of *Rerum Novarum*, whose 100th anniversary it celebrated – came only in 1991 with *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II’s first major encyclical following the definitive collapse of state socialism in Europe.\(^\text{1101}\)

As European Catholicism moved away from the centrality of the social question, paradoxically, a new form of dialogue emerged between the new Catholic vanguard and disillusioned socialists. Although sharing the spirit of Rev. Korniłowicz’s *fin-de-siècle* and interwar personalized dialogues with socialist catechumens, these emerging conversations and friendships between Adam Michnik and Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Jan Lityński (1946-) and Krzysztof Śliwiński (1940-), Jacek Kuroń (1934-2004) and Bohdan Cywiński (1939-)

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represented something different: a shared recognition of the new ethical tasks facing both Catholics and socialists in the wake of the burst bubble of the social question. This is why Adam Michnik’s *The Church and the Left* pays such attention to the difference between secularism and secularization, reflecting profoundly on the proper role of religion in modern life, rather than concentrating on the implications of the figure of the “human person” for social and political activism.\(^\text{1102}\) Although Korniłowicz’s Laski center was the site of many of these dialogues – also where Michnik wrote much of the book – Korniłowicz’s name does not appear even once in *The Church and the Left*. The model of dialogue had, quite simply, changed.

The secularization and de-confessionalization of Catholic life in Europe accelerated to a fever pitch in the wake of the shifts of 1956-1958. With personalism and social Catholicism as seminal reference points – but no longer the principal driving forces – KIK’s great young hope Tadeusz Mazowiecki imported from Western Europe a wide range of observations and lessons learned about the challenge and the significance of taking openly Catholic labor unions and peace movements in Belgium and France and turning them into Catholic-inspired organizations that, having dropped the term “Catholic” or “Christian” from their names, began to welcome people of all (or no) faiths and ideologies.\(^\text{1103}\) It was this model, in turn, that would inspire Mazowiecki’s work on the “21 points” that became the basis for an establishment-agreed charter of the Solidarity trade union movement born at the Gdańsk Shipyard amidst the strikes of August 1980.\(^\text{1104}\)

Behind all of these transformations was an emerging transnational network of political and social cooperation. This, more than any one particular idea or declared core value of

\(^{1102}\) See, for example, Michnik, *The Church and the Left*, p. 141.


\(^{1104}\) Bronislaw Geremek, Interview with Author, 2 July 2007.
Catholic vanguard activism, was the lasting consequence of the interaction of Catholicism and socialism in Europe between 1878 and 1958. The face of the activism changed dramatically, but the crossing and re-crossing of national boundaries only deepened and accelerated in anticipation of what we now consider to be one of the inevitabilities of a globalized world. The European Catholic vanguard accelerated the globalization of Catholicism as a whole and particularly Catholic involvement in key events and trends revealing the dilemmas of the modern world, for religious and non-religious people alike. Whatever the future holds for Catholicism, the breakthrough of laity-led activist engagement of the modern world by dynamic forces operating across national boundaries seems secure in its continuing influence over our world today, whether in Poland or France, the United States or the Philippines, Brazil or Italy.
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Louis Augros (1898-1982)
Stefan Bakinowski (1916-1983)
Zygmunt Balicki (1858-1916)
Ignacy Baranowski (1879-1917)
Henri Bartoli (1918-2008)
Władysław Bartoszewski (1922-)
Josef Beran (1888-1969)
Nikolai Berdiaev (1874-1948)
Henri Bergson (1859-1941)
Jakub Berman (1901-1984)
Georges Bernanos (1888-1948)
Lech Beynar, “Paweł Jasienica” (1909-1970)
Henri Bédarida (1887-1957)
Georges Bidault (1899-1983)
Bolesław Bierut (1892-1956)
Maurice Blondel (1861-1949)
Léon Bloy (1846-1917)
Tadeusz Błażejewicz (1880-1966)
Józef Bocheński (1902-1995)
Jerzy Borejsza (1905-1952)
Robert Bosc (1909-1979)
Jean Boulier (1894-1980)
Jerzy Braun (1901-1975)
Julia Brystygier (1902-1975)
Stanisław Brzozowski (1878-1911)
Rudolf Buchała (1927-2010)
Józef Chaciński (1889-1954)
Pierre Chaillet (1900-1972)
Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895-1990)
G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936)
Bronisław Chlebowski (1846-1918)
Wiesław Chrzanowski (1923-)
Jan Cierniewski (1866-1947)
Paul Claudel (1868-1955)
Yves Congar (1904-1995)
Bohdan Cywiński (1939-)
Róża Czacka, Mother Elizabeth of the Franciscan Sisterhood (1876-1961)
Maria Czapska (1894-1981)
Józef Czapski (1896-1993)
Wladimir d’Ormesson (1888-1973)
Yvan Daniel (1909-1986)
Jean Daniélou (1905-1974)
Maria Dąbrowska (1889-1965)
Eugeniusz Dąbrowski (1901-1970)
Guy de Bosschère (1924-)
Charles de Gaulle (1890-1970)
Alcide De Gasperi (1881-1954)
Jean Delfosse (1915-2002)
François de Menthon (1900-1984)
Angèle de Radkowski, née Fumet (1922-)
Roman Dmowski (1864-1939)
Adam Doboszyński (1904-1949)
Jan Dobraczyński (1910-1994)
Jean-Marie Domenach (1922-1997)
Zygmunt Drozdek (1928-)
Gilbert Dru (1920-1944)
Zygmunt Fedorowicz (1889-1973)
Zygmunt Felczak (1903-1946)
Maurice Feltin (1883-1975)
Gaston Fessard (1897-1978)
Stanislas Fumet (1896-1983)
Franciszek Gałązka (1920-)
Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1877-1964)
Stanisław Gebhardt (1928-)
Pierre-Marie Gerlier (1880-1965)
Martin Gillet (1875-1951)
Étienne Gilson (1884-1978)
Henri Godin (1906-1944)
Antoni Gołubiew (1907-1979)
Władysław Gomułka (1905-1982)
Karol Górski (1903-1988)
Konrad Górski (1895-1990)
Graham Greene (1904-1991)
Jerzy Hagnajer (1913-1988)
Józef Haller (1873-1960)
Léon Harmel (1829-1915)
Józefa Hennel (1925-)
Auberon Herbert (1922-1974)
Zbigniew Herbert (1924-1998)
August Hlond (1881-1948)
Jan Hoppe (1902-1969)
Dominik Horodyński (1923-2008)
Pierre Houart (1921-2010)
Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz (1894-1980)
Augustyn Jakubisiak (1884-1945)
Frédéric Joliot-Curie (1900-1958)
Czesław Kaczmarek (1895-1963)
Zygmunt Kaczyński (1894-1953)
Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz (1872-1905)
Wojciech Kętrzyński (1916-1983)
Stefan Kisielewski (1911-1991)
Wojciech Korfanty (1873-1939)
Władysław Korniłowicz (1884-1946)
Zofia Kossak-Szczucka (1889-1968)
Krzysztof Kozłowski (1931-)
Andrzej Krasiński (1916-1997)
Jerzy Kulczycki (1931-)
Jan Kułakowski (1930-2011)
Jacek Kuroń (1934-2004)
Jean Lacroix (1900-1986)
Kazimierz Lagosz (1888-1961)
Zofia Landy, Sister Teresa of the Franciscan Sisterhood (1894-1972)
Félix Le Dantec (1869-1917)
Włodzimierz Ledóchowski (1866-1942)
Władysław Lewandowicz (1894-1949)
Achille Liénart (1884-1973)
Jan Józef Lipski (1926-1991)
Jan Lityński (1946-)
Alfred Loisy (1857-1940)
Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919)
Konstanty Łubieński (1910-1977)
Hanna Malewska (1911-1983)
André Mandouze (1916-2006)
Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973)
Jacques Maritain (1882-1973)
Raïssa Maritain, née Oumançoff (1883-1960)
Henri Massis (1886-1970)
François Mauriac (1885-1970)
Charles Maurras (1868-1952)
Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927-)
Desiré-Joseph Mercier (1851-1926)
Andrzej Micewski (1926-2004)
Adam Michnik (1946-)
Stanisław Mikołajczyk (1901-1966)
Czesław Miłosz (1911-2004)
József Mindszenty (1892-1975)
Jean Monnet (1888-1979)
Maciej (Mathias) Morawski (1929-)
Emmanuel Mounier (1905-1950)
Tadeusz Myślik (1928-2011)
Francesco Nitti (1868-1953)
Stanisław Ossowski (1897-1963)
Alfredo Ottaviani (1890-1979)
Eugenio Pacelli, Pius XII (1876-1958)
Pietro Parente (1891-1986)
Vincenzo Pecci, Leo XIII (1810-1903)
Henri Petiot, “Daniel-Rops” (1901-1965)
Bolesław Piasecki (1915-1979)
Włodzimierz Pietrzak (1913-1944)
Józef Piłsudski (1867-1935)
Jan Piwowarczyk (1889-1959)
Cecyli a Plater-Zyberk (1853-1920)
Karol Popiel (1887-1977)
Tadeusz Przeciszewski (1922-2000)
Zygmunt Przetakiewicz (1917-2005)
Jerzy Radkowski, Georges-Hubert de Radkowski (1924-1987)
Achille Ratti, Pius XI (1857-1939)
Ryszard Reiff (1923-2007)
Ernest Renan (1823-1892)
Angelo Roncalli, John XXIII (1881-1963)
Ignacy Rutkiewicz (1929-2010)
Marc Sangnier (1873-1950)
Adam Sapieha (1867-1951)
Giuseppe Sarto, Pius X (1835-1914)
Ella Sauvageot (1900-1962)
Robert Schuman (1886-1963)
Maurice Schumann (1911-1998)
Ivan Serov (1905-1990)
Antonin-Dalmace Sertillanges (1863-1948)
Konrad Sieniewicz (1912-1996)
Kazimierz Zenon Skierski (1908-1961)
Zygmunt Skórzyński (1923-)
Stanisław Sopicki (1903-1976)
Zofia Starowieyska-Morstin (1891-1966)
Stanisław Stojalowski (1845-1911)
Stanisław Stomma (1908-2005)
Jan Strzelecki (1919-1988)
Czesław Strzeszewski (1903-1999)
Kazimierz Studentowicz (1903-1992)
Bogdan Suchodolski (1903-1992)
Emmanuel Suhard (1874-1949)
Stefan Świeżawski (1907-2004)
Antoni Szymański (1881-1942)
Krzysztof Śliwiński (1940-)
Władysław Tatarkiewicz (1886-1980)
Maurice Thorez (1900-1964)
Palmiro Togliatti (1893-1964)
Giuseppe Toniolo (1845-1918)
Stanisław Trębaczewicz (1910-1980)
Jerzy Turowicz (1912-1999)
Konstanty Turowski (1907-1983)
Aniela Urbanowicz (1899-1988)
Maurice Vaussard (1888-1978)
Jean Verlhac (1923-1995)
Dietrich von Hildebrand (1889-1977)
Wilhelm von Ketteler (1811-1877)
Feliks Widy-Wirska (1907-1982)
Wojciech Wieczorek (1928-)
Maria Winowska (1909-1993)
Karol Wojtyła, John Paul II (1920-2005)
Władysław Wolski (1901-1976)
Jacek Woroniecki (1878-1949)
Jacek Woźniakowski (1920-)
Stefan Wyszyński (1901-1981)
Janusz Zabłocki (1926-)
Jerzy Zawieyski (1902-1969)
A.A. Zhdanov (1896-1948)
Jan Zieja (1897-1991)