SUMMARY. It is commonly accepted by scholars of nationalism that national mythologies represent a key point for the shaping, definition, and legitimization of nations. Although the centrality of civic religions, their rituals and ceremonies for the formation and development of nations and of their sub-groups cannot be denied, the role of traditional religion in national symbolism and mythologies has often been unjustly neglected. After 1989, not only could Poland use symbolic figures from its own religious tradition, but also add to its own national pantheon a new hero linking the religious and the secular: Pope John Paul II. In Polish Catholic discourse, two main myths emerged expressing the two main directions of contemporary Polish Catholicism. On the one hand, the liberal myth of John Paul II expresses the ecumenical and Europe-oriented views of the larger strata of the Polish Catholics. On the other hand, the martyrological-romantic myth of John Paul II is supported by a minority belonging to the Polish conservative strata and sees John Paul II as the last hero of the Polish Romantic tradition.

KEYWORDS: John Paul II, the Polish Catholicism, nationalism, collective memory, national myths, national heroes.

It is commonly accepted by scholars of nationalism that national mythologies represent a key point for the shaping, definition, and legitimization of nations. The emergence of nation as original and legitimating source of political power as a process stimulated by the Enlightenment and the fading trust in traditional religion have often been major arguments to ground the idea that national mythologies represent a substitute of traditional religion. Therefore, the transcendence of traditional religion has been told to have been mainly replaced by new nation-based transcendence (foundation myths, national heroes, etc.), while religious time was replaced by the

1 The article is written according to the research project “Central and Eastern European Region: Research of the Construction of National Narratives and Politics of Memory (1989-2011)” – VP1-3.1-ŠMM-07-K-02-024 – sponsored by the Programme for Human Resources Development for 2007-2013 “Support to Research Activities of Scientists and Other Researchers (Global Grant)”.

civic calendar. Although the centrality of civic religions, their rituals and ceremonies for the formation and development of nations and of their sub-groups cannot be denied, the role of traditional religion in the national symbolism and mythologies has often been unjustly neglected. On the one hand, traditional religion historically consolidated the sense of belonging in Europe. The Peace of Augsburg (1555) clearly linked political and religious loyalties in modern Europe, creating a longstanding link between the two sides of sacrum – the religious and the political. At a symbolic level, such relation was mirrored in an increasing interweaving between political and religious imagery. On the other hand, although in the 19th and 20th centuries, nation states have more or less clearly set apart the dominion of religion from state’s affairs, traditional religion has often continued playing an important role in shaping new national communities. In some cases, religious powers gave the state their support in order to keep their independence possibly unaltered. In other cases, it was the state power that used the religious symbolic capital of its own citizens and sought the support of religious authorities aiming to strengthen the new political power by merging traditional religious symbols and secular meanings of new national mythologies.3

If laicization can be described as a complex web of relations between the state and the Church,4 that very web of relations has been characterized by a considerable variety conditioned by concrete historical, socio-political, and economic conditions. After the fall of the communist regimes, the relations between state and religious powers in East Central Europe have enjoyed a new era. Religion has been fully reintegrated in public life and religious communities have often been guaranteed a peculiar position in the public inscenization of new democratic powers. Religious ceremonies are broadcasted by the national TV broadcasters, representatives of secular power participate in public religious ceremonies, representatives of the religious hierarchy participate in secular ceremonies, and religious feasts have anew become part of official secular calendars. The new contamination between religious and secular powers has led to the re-emergence of specific religious lieux de memoire, such as national patrons, that are used both in religious and secular discourse and stress the tight temporal/historical interconnections among three elements – the religion, the state and the nation. Somerski and Zach have recently stressed that in post-communist states, national patrons have become an integral part of new national pantheons and created a symbolic link to the national tradition of the Interwar period or even of earlier times by stressing the centrality of ethics in nations’ historical development.5

After the fall of the communist regime, the importance of national patrons in the lay public sphere also increased in Poland. Religious figures such as St. Adalbert and the Holy Virgin Mary had been historically linked to the fate of the Polish state and their religious and national meaning had been kept by Church authorities during the communist rule.6

The Polish case is, however, highly peculiar. After 1989, not only could Poland use anew symbolic figures from its own religious tradition, but also could add a new hero linking the religious and the secular to its own national pantheon: Pope John Paul II. Although after 1989 he had become a sort of a living mythic figure, his death strengthened his heroic status. The beatification of John Paul II that occurred in 2011 finally gave him official prominence within the Catholic Church. In the next pages I analyse how the myth7 about John Paul II developed in the Polish public sphere after 2005 (the year in which John Paul II died and his image started being supported only by memory), what meanings and historic memory it supported, and how, as a real national patron, he merged the secular and the religious. Although the myth is widespread both in secular and religious discourse, in the article, I tackle only the religious one. Historians have not shown much interest in the myth of John Paul II in the Polish public discourse. The only works on the topic have been the result of sociologists’ efforts. Brzozowski, Hodalska, Klekot, Kulawczuk, Niedźwiedź, and Witan discussed the myth of John Paul II through the analysis of symbolical performances that occurred in Poland between the Pope’s death and his burial in April 2005.8 Wider studies on the perception of the myth and its uses and meanings are still scarce. In this article, first, I briefly sum up the political context in which John Paul II myth developed in Poland. Second, I analyze the two opposite myths that developed in Poland after the death of John Paul

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7 By “myth” I indicate here a symbolic figure used by a group as representing its own basic values and being coherently related to the foundational mythology accepted by the group’s members. See Yves Bizeul, Politische Mythen. In: Politische Mythen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert in Mittel- und Osteuropa. Hrg. v. H. Hein-Kirchner, H. H. Hahn (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2006), 3–14.

II. Finally, I try to understand to what extent these two myths are alternative to each other in today’s Poland. The analysis is mainly based on the Catholic popular and special press (Przewodnik Katolicki, Gość Niedzielny, Przegląd Powszechny, Biblioteka Kaznodziejska, etc.), official documents of the Polish Episcopal Conference, and separate publications by members of the Catholic Church.

A POPE FOR POLAND

When talking about the myth of John Paul II in Poland, one should not look at 1989 as a “zero hour.” From the very beginning of his pontificate, Karol Wojtyła, a former bishop of Cracow, seemed to the Polish public sphere as a mythic figure echoing the widely known Słowacki’s words of the 19th century about a “Slavic pope” to come with a prophetic mission to accomplish. Although the control over public communication made the spread of the image of the Pope as a fighter for the freedom of Poland limited, it was the Pope himself that quite clearly underlined the fight against totalitarianism as one of the main tasks of his pontificate during his very first visit to Poland in 1979. Then and in later years, John Paul II used apostolic visits (“pilgrimages”) to his own homeland (in 1983 and 1987) as a means to deliver clear political and symbolic messages. Such appeals to moral renewal were used by Solidarność as a symbolic arm linking the national tradition and the fight against the communist regime. On the one hand, papal visits to Poland were organized, both while the communist regime was still in power and in the 1990s, as veritable pilgrimages not only to the main centres of the Polish State, but also throughout the main Catholic places of remembrance in Poland (for example, Częstochowa and Gniezno). The peculiar link between the symbols of national Catholicism and secular symbols in Poland often made the papal pilgrimages overlap the religious meaning and gain a stronger historical-political connotation. Częstochowa was home to the picture of Mary which was considered the main actor saving the Polish Republic from the Swedes in 1655, at the battle of Częstochowa. Soon after the victory, in a counterreformation mood, King Jan Kazimierz organized a celebration in which the Virgin of Częstochowa was crowned as the Queen of Poland. The political reshaping of Mary was not limited to the Virgin of Częstochowa but to the whole Polish Marianism. In 1683, while leading the army against the Ottoman siege of Vienna, Jan Sobieski interpreted once


again the success and defence of Europe as the result of Mary’s intervention. Later on, in 1920, the victory against the Bolshevik army in the so called Miracle on the Vistula (Cud nad Wisłą) was once again attributed by the Catholic groups to the intervention of the Virgin. Gniezno was associated with the figure of St. Adalbert from Prague. Although St. Adalbert is considered the introducer of Catholicism in Poland, his figure is no less tightly connected with the rise of the Polish State in 966 and the Christianization of the whole Central European area.

On the other hand, after the fall of the communist regime, the pope was viewed by both the former communist and post-Solidarność leaders as a living place of remembrance of the Polish nation’s resistance to socialist nomenklatura. The importance of the “Polish pope” for contemporary Poland was also assessed through the creation of even a couple of remembrance days related with John Paul II. The first institutionalization of the Pope’s memory occurred after the 1999 visit to Poland. The Catholic authorities created the so called Pope’s Day (Dzień papieski), a religious remembrance day to be celebrated every year (for the first time in 2001) on the Sunday that precedes October 16th – the day John Paul II was elected in 1978. Far from remaining exclusively a day of religious devotion and prayer, the Dzień papieski is still an enormous event with hundreds of scientific and other conferences and various public events organised by various social Catholic organizations throughout Poland and coordinated by the Catholic foundation (Fundacja Dzieło Nowego Tysiąclecia). Moreover, Dzień papieski is considered by organizers as a chance to build “a living monument” to the Pope that is to honour his memory through the support of his moral teaching. Specifically, this “living monument” is represented by a prize awarded to people considered as particularly important for the diffusion of Pope’s moral teaching and by the creation of grants for the children living in the Polish countryside, who have good results at school and are the models of the Catholic morality. The political Polish authorities doubled the Dzień papieski after the death of John Paul II in 2005 by inserting a new remembrance day – the Pope John Paul II Day (Dzień Papieża Jana Pawła II) into the Polish civic calendar (October 16th) as a way to “[...] honour the biggest authority of the 20th Century, the man who, through the sources of Christianity, taught us solidarity, courage and humility, firmness and understanding, wisdom and respect [...]”.

As one can see, not only had the two remembrance days a different “timing” but also their content was (and remains) quite different. While the lay remembrance day aims to construct a civic image of John Paul II connected to a kind of civic morality and treats Christianity as a source of civic values, the goal of the religious one is bounded to the moral teachings of John Paul II and their active spread. The

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11 Ustawa Nr 1296 z dnia 27 lipca 2005 r. o ustanowieniu 16 października Dniem Papieża Jana Pawła II.
existence of two different remembrance days does not only mark the boundary between the lay state and the religious community, but also explains the ongoing crisis between two different conceptions of Poland. On the one hand, the birth of democratic Poland represented for the Church a new deal. In the 1990s, somehow lacking of a clear understanding of what sociological changes had been going on in Poland, the Catholic Church sought to reshape the country as a confessional state.\textsuperscript{12} The Church seemed to remain faithful to a romantic vision of Poland that had been accompanying the country from the 19th century. Summing up the characters of such mythology, Geneviève Zubrzycki observed that

\begin{quote}
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\ldots
\] essentially and eternally Catholic, Poland is the bulwark of Christendom defending Europe against the infidel (however defined). A nation assailed by dangerous neighbors, its identity is conserved and guarded by its defender, the Roman Catholic Church, and shield by its Queen, the miraculous Black Madonna, Our Lady of Częstochowa. Christ among the nations, it was martyred for the sins of the world and resurrected for the world's salvation. Last but not least, it is a nation that has given the world a Pope deferentially referred to as the “Pope of the Millennium” – and rid the Western world of communism.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

In post-communist Poland, the “Christ among the nations”, however, had to find a new task and a new way to action. After the fight against the Communism had been won, the Catholic Church (and the rightwing part of Solidarność) soon identified liberalism and a certain understanding of consumption as the new enemies. One of the leading figures of such fight was once more the “Pope of the Millennium” – John Paul II. Still in his Encyclical \textit{Centesimus Annus} (1991), John Paul II denounced the danger carried by the new liberal world. Although the pontiff underlined the importance of economic freedom for people development, economy was not supposed to be the main task of democracy. Consequently, according to John Paul II social doctrine, democracy turned out to be humanistic and deprived from any deterministic link to liberalism. Thus, the values of human life, family, and solidarity turned out to represent the elements of the “third way” between socialism and liberalism that Poland and the whole changing world were stimulated to choose.

As far as the Polish political scene was dominated by the protagonists of change – Solidarność and the Social-Democrats – and the structural economic transformation occupied an overwhelming position in the political agenda of Poland, the social teachings of the Pope just occasionally echoed in the political area and remained limited to the dominion of the Catholic Church. Catholicism, moreover,


was meaningfully not guaranteed any particular status in the 1997 Constitution of Poland, in which the nation was defined pluralistically and Catholicism was not given preeminent position. It was, however, in 2005, when the conditions in which the myth of John Paul II developed changed. On the one hand, the increasing space the discussions about politics of memory gained in the Polish public space, the increasing popularity the party Right and Justice gained beginning with 2005 presidential elections and brothers Kaczynski’s (the leaders of Right and Justice) moral conservative views, determined much more visibility for the Catholic Church as an actor of the Polish publicity. On the other hand, the pope’s death on April 2nd, 2005 stimulated a very strong emotional reaction throughout Poland. During the mourning week between the death of John Paul II and his burial, millions of people variously expressed their attachment to the pope by lighting candles in public spaces, meeting and praying together, waving national flags and symbols, marching, and so on. All of them just furthered the myth of John Paul II in Poland that since that moment had no “living support” any more. In a moment when the quality of structural reforms started being criticized, a new political panorama was arising and the quarrels about the so called “polityka historyczna” was reaching its peak, the death of Pope John Paul II appeared to some Catholic observers as a veritable chance to give the people of Poland a new moral guide and a historical myth: “The Pope’s view on history calls us up to heroism. [Heroism] is not only a matter for particular people and a sum of exceptional historical moment. It is the effort we make every day in many fields of our lives... Heroism should be the main instrument for national life. Elder generations were supposed to die for the Fatherland. Today we are privileged, we can heroically and wisely live for Her.”

THE POPE BETWEEN POLAND AND EUROPE

These stages of development confirm the progressive process of institutionalization of pope’s figure that became officially celebrated in two remembrance days created by two different social actors – the Church as an institutionalized

14 Porter-Szűcs Brian, Faith and Fatherland. Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland. 197–201; Zubrzycki Geneviève, “‘We, the Polish Nation’: Ethnic and civic visions of nationhood in Post-Communist constitutional debate,” Theory and Society, 2001: 30, 629-668.
hierarchy, and the State as the representative of citizenry. John Paul II offers a multiplicity of narrative combinations linking the level of individual experience in form of communicative memory with elements of pre-existing cultural memory embedded in religious symbols. First of all, the memory of John Paul II is a linked to his own life-experience. His “humble” origins and the experience of all the different phases of 20th century’s Polish history – from the Nazi occupation to the new III Republic through the Popular Republic of Poland – make him a symbolic figure mirroring the everyday experience of many Poles. Second, the memory of John Paul II is strongly linked with the most recent past – the late years of the socialist regime in Poland and his “pilgrimages” to the Fatherland prior to 1989, elements that got impressed in collective memory as anticipations of an ideal typical image of freedom. Third, especially in the religious milieu, the memory of John Paul II is linked to his devotion to the Holy Virgin. Since his election, John Paul II openly linked his pontifical activity with the Virgin Mary, inserted the M for Mary in his papal coat of arms, and constantly stressed his devotion to the Mother of God in his doctrinal teaching. In the Polish Catholic discourse, such symbolic link between the pope and the Virgin became in many cases a major element for the transformation of John Paul II in the last figure of a chain of memory that joins the I, the II and the III Polish Republic or, the defence from the Swedes, the Turks and the Bolsheviks with the defence against the Moscow-depending elite of socialist Poland.

Trying to look concretely at the myths of John Paul II and the historical meanings and values they hold and spread, one can find two main alternative models that developed over time without changing their basic ideological perspectives. Both of them are differently characterized socially, historically, and geopolitically.

The first one, which I call the liberal myth of John Paul II, could be summarized as ecumenical and Europe-oriented. Firstly, at a social level, the myth of John Paul II expresses the need for an open society and modernization (understood as a horizontal process of democratization): it is not a case that John Paul II is described as a reformer inside the Church (as a developer of the principles of the Second Vatican Council) and outside the Church. By blaming the social consequences of both socialism and liberalism, John Paul II – an “anti-utopian” and “anti-ideological” Pope – indicated a new way Catholics are invited to follow to build new Poland:

In the frameworks of totalitarianisms John Paul II was in favor of democracy as a modern form of State government harmoniously related with the truth about man. Democracy guarantees citizens the possibility to participate in the process of political decisions, it guarantees

the possibility to elect governments, to control the [activity of] elected governments and to substitute the existing [governments] with a new one. In order not to be only a totalitarian camouflage, the democratic order must be based upon universally accepted values.

The need for “universally accepted values”, however, does not represent tout court the refusal of liberal democracy, but expresses the need for a stronger activity of Catholics in politics, as the use of the lay term “citizens” (obywatele) instead of “nation” (naród) indicates. Although the moral sphere is still considered a matter to be controlled by the Church, pluralism (and the lay elements of the state and society) is recognized as a matter of fact but not as an enemy. In the Catholic discourse, the equation Pole-Catholic (Polak-Katolik) that has been deconstructed in favour of a more open “citizenship” concept in which the nation (as an ethnically and religiously homogeneous entity) is just one part or multiethnic and multiconfessional society is very central. As Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz put it “The definition “Pole-Catholic” must preserve the nation from the danger of nationalism. The nation is formed not only by the elements that make us different from others but also by [the elements] that link us to others”. The new millennium gives each Pole the task to rethink fundamental concepts such as “... nation, state, Catholic, Christian, European and our relation with each of them”.

Secondly, the issue of Europe and European identity represents the second strong argument grounding the liberal myth of John Paul II and giving Poland a precise geopolitical orientation. Already in 2004, when Poland joined the EU, the Union was looked at as a means to avoid “national egoism” and make the new state growth within a democratic context. The access to the EU, however, was not considered the access “to Europe”, but a way to strengthen the European identity of Poland. As in past centuries, also in the 20th century, Poland had been the bulwark of the Christendom and the Christian Europe against the “Empire of Evil”. By defending Poland as bishop and as a pope, Wojtyła defended the Europeanness of Poland and stimulated the integration of Poland in the EU as the unavoidable following step. As priest Boniecki, an editor of Tygodnik Powszechny, put it, the very activity and teachings of John Paul II indicate that Poland has never been outside Europe and Europe needs Poland, not as an everlasting and meta-historical Christ of nations, but as the holder of one meaningful national and historical tradition. As such, the European integration was understood as an osmotic process in which Poland is supposed to change Europe and be changed by Europe. Especially dur-

ing the discussions about the opportunity to quote the Christian origins of Europe in 2004-2005, the figure of Pope John Paul II was used as the marker of a possible Polish way to Europe. In fact, in Polish liberal Catholicism, the Pope was often depicted not as the hero of Catholic Poland, but as the first apostle of the European Christendom, the major figure for inter-confessional communication in Europe. In a pastoral letter written after the pope’s death, the Conference of Polish bishops even described Europe as a communion of Christian confessions and pinpointed that it was thanks to the efforts of John Paul II that East Central Europe has achieved pluralism, regained democratic sovereignty, and started (!) dialogue with other Christian confessions in Europe.23 Europe and European states’ democratic pluralism turned out to be the result of and guaranteed by the presence of Christianity and Christian morality.24 Christian tradition (and in particular figures such as St. Adalbert that merged religion, Polishness, and European identity)25 was supposed to be the basis for politics and action, not only guaranteeing “identity” but giving the possibility for discussion, cooperation, free common life within the EU, and enabling cooperation through the defense of some basic moral values.26

The ecumenical vision of John Paul II was not, however, limited to the Christian confessions. His particular relations with the Jews have been often used in the Polish liberal Catholic discourse as a key point to argue the Christian (Catholic) sense of guilt face to the Judaism and the Polish anti-Semitism and construct an image of tolerant Pole. As a “Good Pole” who lifelong “destroyed walls” and “built bridges,”27 Karol Woityła had been an exemplum of a friendly attitude towards the Jews still during his youth and wartime. In later years, as Pope John Paul II, he became the protagonist of a new Church that recognized its own mistakes and recognized the Jews (and the Muslims) as brothers and gave Poland a new way to understand its own history.28 The common prayer of different religious community for the Pope after his death was just interpreted as the most visible result of his activity and teaching. The Pope’s death and common prayer for the dead Pope finally confirmed the mutual confidence between the different confessions.29

Finally, it should be underlined that liberal Catholics clearly understood that after his death, Pope John Paul II was unavoidably becoming a myth, in which his

24 Ojciec Święty Jan Paweł II – bezcenny i zobowiązujący dar od Boga: List biskupów polskich na Uroczystość Zesłania Ducha Świętego 2005 r.
26 Owoce Wielkiego Pontyfikatu: Słowo Biskupów polskich w trzydziestą rocznicę wyboru Jana Pawła II.
figure was going to be used with increasing frequency by lay state authorities and the religious ones, whereas the moral side of his teaching remained just second-
ary. In 2011, priest Artur Stopka interestingly underlined that “The beatification of ‘our’ Pope put an end to a certain understanding of his figure and work . . .
the memory of John Paul II is being purified.”

As an official saint of the Roman Catholic Church, John Paul II was supposed to be reinserted to the exclusive field of religion. The clergy and the faithful, however, remained among the main actors that merged the religious and the secular-national image of John Paul II.

THE POPE AS A DEFENDER OF CATHOLIC POLAND

Such merging tendency is much more visible in the second myth, which I call the martyrological-romantic (conservative) myth of John Paul II and is supported by a minority belonging to the Polish conservative clergy. Differently from the liberal model, in the martyrological-romantic one, John Paul II represents not an individual but a collective actor, the last hero of the Polish romantic tradition. Firstly, the biographical experience of Karol Wojtyła is represented in the martyrological-romantic Catholic discourse as the reflection of the historical events experienced by the whole national community. The difficulties Karol Wojtyła faced since his early childhood and youth (his mother’s death, his father’s death, the job in Solvay factory during the war) appeared as an anticipation of the difficulties or even as the reflection of the difficulties the state and the nation faced during the war; the birth and development of the socialist Poland coincided with the rise of the heroic and prophetic figure of him as a bishop and a pope until the final “victory” against the “Empire of Evil”.

As a collective actor, John Paul II remains the representative of the nation (naród) and the fatherland (ojczyzna), two unchanging, meta-historical entities merging the ethnicity and religion:

The Fatherland is a mission for us and our children. Here we learn how to love the Republic in order [to understand] how to love the Kingdom [of God]. It is the only place in the world from which we can see the sky. The Polish Gospel [polska ewangelia] teaches us a wonderful love. It teaches us patriotism.

John Paul II was the living expression of such “Polish Gospel.” His anticommunist activity in Poland (as a bishop) and in Rome (as the chief of the Catholic

Church) has been reinterpreted as the fight for freedom of the last Polish knight. His fight for freedom against the Communist power – perceived as a foreign element in the very body of the Polish nation – reminded of the fights against the foreign powers carried out by the Polish military chiefs in the earlier centuries. By successfully defending Poland against the Evil of communism, and strongly and constantly invoking Mary as the protector of Poland and of his own, John Paul II fits in the chain of Polish memory as the last hero of Marianism-centred national epopee after Jan Kazimierz, Jan Sobieski and Józef Pilsudski.33

However, as the message of the “Polish Gospel” endures over time, so the activity and teaching of John Paul II did not remain limited to the Communist era. In the context of post-Communist Poland, the conservative myth of John Paul II is moreover related to two main elements polarizing the new (post-socialist) “Civilization of Evil” and the “Civilization of Love”34 to be built: the position regarding the process of the European integration and liberal capitalism. These two elements are often almost indistinguishable and deeply related to each other. On the one hand, the figure of John Paul II is linked to the opposition to liberal capitalism. His opposition is grounded on the echoes coming not from the Pope’s teaching, but form the political arena and remains related to the idea that after the fall of Communism, the left-wing-liberal parties betrayed Poland by “. . . opposing the teaching of the Church and the natural right . . .” From this perspective, John Paul II is depicted as a moralist who, through his own Encyclicals and pontifical activity, fought against all the “evils” not only the Church, but also the conservative right-wing Polish parties (Right and Justice in primis) have been fighting in the political arena: same-sex marriages, abortion, in vitro fecundation, and other ethic issues.35 Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, a controversial founder of Radio Maryja36, reminded that Poland can exist as far as the people of Poland endure in a certain sufferance–based idea of the Catholic ethics and the Polish history: “We [the ethnic Catholic nation, A.G.] are Poland as far as we remain faithful to what began at the Golgotha, emerges from the Gospel, and form the Polish spirit. Since the very beginning, since Gniezno, since the baptism [of Poland], since that very first cross. And forever.”37

On the other hand, John Paul II has been depicted as the defender of Catholic

Europe understood as the “fatherland of fatherlands”\(^\text{38}\) (but strongly opposed to the liberal EU). The fight against the “de-Christianisation of Europe”, which is constantly present in the conservative Catholic discourse, is associated with the claim for the preservation of the national statehood – in particular of confessiona

tag nation states – in Europe and, especially, in Poland.\(^\text{39}\) In it, Europe is the object of a new Christianization to be put into practice in order to preserve “Western spirituality” (that is Catholicism) against the new Islamic wave and lay society (but also from the “German” Protestantism and the “Russian” Orthodoxy). By freeing Poland from the Communist captivity and underlying that Poland had never left Europe (and that, therefore, one should even talk not about the European integration of Poland but about the re-Christianization of Europe through Poland and the “Polish Pope”\(^\text{40}\)), John Paul II represents the historical figure that links the recent past and the defence of the Christian Europe against its liberal treason.\(^\text{40}\) Poland, thus, emerges in the newly democratic Europe as a new “Christ of the Nations” that after suffering from the “Evil” of Communism is given the task to redeem secular Europe.\(^\text{41}\) Once again, the image of the Holy Virgin, the martial defender of Poland, became through John Paul II and his Marian devotion the defender of Europe from de-Christianizing modernity and guaranteed the security of the three ethic pillars of “tradition”: man, family and the Nation (\textit{naród}). The Pope and Mary are thus two merging figures of “ethical” national memory in which the national history becomes a moral criterion for the determination of the future.\(^\text{42}\)

A PROVISIONAL ENDING NOTE

The two models I introduced are simplified, ideal typical models. Elements of both models are often mixed according to the needs of particular groups and the particularity of group’s memories. In particular, they reflect the profound changes Catholicism is undergoing in Poland where the memory of the 19th century’s Polish martyrdom is still echoing in the Catholic discourse, although its strength is challenged every day more strongly by liberalism and consumption society. As in the case of the national patrons, the myth of John Paul II is central to both secular and


\(^{41}\) Rydzyk Tadeusz, \textit{Tak-tak, nie-nie}, passim.

religious discourses. In the religious discourse, as it has developed since 2005, the
two models or myths of John Paul II contain references to two diverging positions
of the Polish Clergy on the political, social, and geopolitical issues of today’s Poland
that reflect the positions one can find in the secular discourse. Such parallelism
turns out to be particularly interesting since it underlines the changing borders
and understanding of secularization in post-modernity or post-post-socialism. On
the one hand, the post-modern (post-ideological) era of political myths with a
religious background could more effectively represent an ethical guide and ethical
symbol for both believers and non-believers. On the other hand, as in the case of
the national patrons, the existence of secular myths with religious background and
of religious myths with historical/secular meaning should make us think about the
fact that the issue of secularization in East Central Europe after 1989 remains cen-
tral in order to understand the stratification of the new national pantheons.

Andrea Griffante

BESIKEIČIANČIOS TRADICIJOS: APIE JONO PAULIAUS II MITĄ LENKŲ
KATALIKIŠKAME DISKURSE (2005–2013)

SANTRAUKA. Nacionaliniai mitai laikomi pagrindiniu elementu sudarant, apibūdinant ir
legitimizuojant nacijas. nors pilietinių religijų, jų ritualų ir ceremonijų svarbą nacijų vystymuisi
vargu ar būtų galima paneigti, tradicinė religija nacionalinėse mitologijose dažnai tebevaidina
neantraeilį vaidmenį. Po 1989 m. Lenkija ne tik galėjo vėl naudotis savo gausia nacionaline
religine mitologija, bet ir įamžino dar vieną asmenybę, jungiančią religines ir pasaulietines verty-
bes – Joną Paulių II. Lenkų katalikiškame diskurse vyrauja du Jono Pauliaus II mitai, atspindin-
tys dvi pagrindinių dabartinės lenkų katalikybės krypčių vertybes. Viena vertus, liberalusis Jono
Pauliaus II mitas pabrėžia ekumeniškas bei proeuropietiškas nuostatas, kurios pastaruosius
20 metų dominoja tarp lenkų katalikų. kita vertus, martirologinis romantinis Jono Pauliaus II
mitas, palaikomas konservatyviosios lenkų katalikų mažumos, laiko lenkų popiežių paskutiniu
lenkų romantinės tradicijos herojumi.

RAKTAZODŽIAI: Jonas Paulius II, lenkų katalikybė, nacionalizmas, kolektyvinė atmintis,
nacionaliniai mitai, nacionaliniai didvyriai.