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Religion and religiosity in contemporary Poland White Paper

Historical outline

Poland adopted Christianity in 966 and this date marks the foundation of Polish statehood. The baptism of the then current ruler of the tribes inhabiting part of the contemporary Polish territory was conducted through the intermediary of the Czech state and signified the entrance of the country into the influence sphere of the western Latin division of Christianity. Since the very beginning the Catholic Church, through its institutions: dioceses, parishes, religious orders, actively contributed to erecting the institutional structures of the state and its civilizational and cultural development.

Medieval times saw building close connections with the centres of Christianity in Western and Southern Europe. Towards the end of the medieval era, the Polish state, under the rule of the Jagiellons, became one of the largest European monarchies. Along with its territorial expansion it became a multi-ethnic and multi-religion organism, and within its borders the following existed: the eastern Orthodox Church, Judaism and Islam. The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, although encompassing a considerable share of the contemporary population of the Nobility Commonwealth citizens, did not cause any deep social divisions or conflicts stemming from religious attitudes.

Polish rulers adopted a concept of regulating interreligious relations, which differed from that of Western Europe where bloody religious wars broke out, by basing it on the principle of the freedom of conscience. The influence of protestant reformers was quite effectively curbed, undoubtedly due to the threats posed by neighbouring countries representing other creeds and worships than Catholicism (Islam Turkey, eastern Orthodox Russia, Protestant Sweden). The 17th century saw the rise of an unprecedented union between the Catholic Church and part of Orthodox Church, whose purpose was to erase the divide between the eastern Orthodox Church and Catholicism. The newly founded Greek Catholic Church (Uniate) developed mainly in the east of the Polish Commonwealth of that time (these are predominantly territories lying now within Ukraine and Belarus).

At the end of the 18th century Poland was partitioned between three invaders: Russia, Prussia and Austria, with the first two of those three countries representing religions different from Roman Catholicism, dominant in the Polish Commonwealth. During the period of partitioning there occurred very strong fusion of Polish national identity with the catholic religion, whose consequence was the formation of the specific stereotype of a Pole-Catholic. After regaining independence by Poland in 1918 the Roman Catholic creed was decidedly the dominant one in all social layers, and especially so amongst the most numerous workers and peasants. World War II, which commenced on 1st September 1939, with Hitler's Germany attacking Poland, brought numerous human and material losses to the Church in Poland. In a large part the clergy was exterminated in German death camps and concentration camps. One of the better-known heroes of those times was the Polish Franciscan monk, Friar Maksymilian Maria Kolbe, who sacrificed his life for a fellow prisoner in Auschwitz Camp.

After 1944, when communists took over the power in Poland, religion became one of the main enemies of the state. Persecution and organised laicisation, especially of youth, did not bring about considerable effects. The then cardinal of Poland, Stefan Wyszyński, arrested for a period of time by the communist government, adopted the strategy of resistance to communism, resorting to folk religiosity and by widespread ministry. In 1978 Cardinal Karol

Wojtyła was elected Pope and assumed the name of John Paul II. It was an enormously important event, both for the Polish Church and for the entire society suffering the hardships of communist oppression.

The Pope's pilgrimage to Poland in 1979 mobilised great numbers of participants, not only from among orthodox Catholics, and is nowadays commonly regarded as the impulse laying foundations for the Solidarity movement a year later. That exceptional, mass movement expressed many religious symbols, notions and other elements, closely combined with the national themes. The political changes of 1989 led to reinstating democracy in Poland and also to regaining by the Catholic Church its formerly lost position. Through its representatives and the broad involvement of its institutional structures and intensive ministry activities, this church actively participated in most actions building Polish national identity and defended it in difficult moments.

With the Catholic Church assuming the role of the primary resistance factor in the face of the totalitarian state, it is usually pointed out that its functioning rested on different strategies during the communist times and during the period that followed (Tomka 2006). In communist times the main focus was imply on the survival of the Church as an institution, supporting the believers in the face of repressions, as well as retaining them against the state's atheism. During the breakthrough period the actions of the Church tended to rebuild and reformulate the national identity in accordance with the ideals of democracy and civic empowerment. Presently, with the increase of the viewpoint pluralism, globalist tendencies, the power of the market and commercialism, with added liberalism and moral relativity, the goal is to retain the believers in the sphere of religious orthodoxy and prevent secularisation.

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Outcome of research in the field of religion and religiosity

In the presented study, mainly the research by CBOS (Public Opinion Research Center) was used. It possesses several advantages. Firstly, these are surveys conducted on Polish nationwide representative samples, which enables one to refer their outcome to the whole society. Usually sample groups include ca. 1000 adult inhabitants of Poland. Secondly, they are performed using the same or very similar method over many years, thus making it possible to compare and observe changes in time. The second source was furnished by the results of the World Value Survey from years 1989, 1997, 2005 and 2012, also based on representative samples and giving the possibility to draw comparison with the state observed in other countries included in the research. Amongst the European countries not all of them participated in those surveys, so complete comparisons are impossible. The third basic source was the official statistics of the Catholic Church, compiled annually by the Institute of the Catholic Church Statistics SAC in Warsaw. Moreover, a number of works by sociologists of religion were used, in which inspiring interpretations of the present situation of religion and religiosity in Poland can be found.

Mono-religious Polish society

According to the last General Census in Poland (2011) 96.0% of respondents answering the question of their religious affiliation declared that they belong to the Roman Catholic Church, 0.4% to Eastern Orthodox Church, 0.4% to Jehovah's Witnesses, 0.2% to Augsburg Evangelical Church and 0.1% to the Greek Catholic Church (Catholic Church of Byzantine-Ukrainian Rite). No affiliation to whatever religion was declared by 2.6%. The religious structure of the Polish society is therefore by and large monolithic. The representatives of religions and cults other than Christianity constitute less than a thousandth of the total population and persons without any religious affiliation constitute a small percentage. It is worth noting that the representatives of Christian denominations other than the Catholic one are very unevenly distributed within the country: the Eastern Orthodox

Church believers and Greek Catholics inhabit mainly the east of Poland, while protestants the west and north-west.

The number of Catholics within the entire Polish society is basically stable, although in recent years a small decrease has been noted. In the light of the World Value Survey data in 2012 92,3% of respondents perceived themselves as Catholics, in 2005 r. – 94,4%, and in 1997 – 93,5%. The analogous proportions of people declaring a non-religious status were as follows: 4,7%, 2,0% and 3,1% (WVS'97, WVS'05, WVS'15). So, it may be formally accepted that 90% of Polish population are Catholics. This indicator is the highest among all the countries subject to WVS research in 2012. For example, in Germany Catholics account for 26,6%, in Spain – 72,3%, while in the Netherlands 17,6%.

In Polish nationwide survey conducted by CBOS in 2012 89.3% of adult respondents declared themselves as Roman Catholics, 4.9% declared Christianity (in general), 1.6% atheism and the same number as simply non-religious ones, 0.7% stated that they did not belong to any religious denomination and 0.2% that they were agnostics. The stance of agnosticism, atheism or religious indifference is relatively rare among Poles (CBOS 158/2014).

Religious auto-declaration

In the case of religious auto-declarations, considering obedience to the Church's recommendations fairly significant changes are visible. The number of those considering themselves to be believers and complying with the recommendations of the Church fell from 66% to 39% between 2005 and 2014, while the number of those who perceive themselves as religious people in their own way grew (from 32% to 52%), as did the number of non-religious people (from 1% to 5%).

Table 1. Religious auto-declaration of the Polish during 2000-2012 (%).

Response categories	2000	2003	2005 (02)	2005 (05)	2006	2007	2009	2010	2012
I am religious and I comply with Church recommendations	56,7	53,9	57,6	65,9	62,9	55,0	53,2	45,5	45,9
I am religious in my own way	39,6	42,8	39,0	31,5	31,8	39,3	41,1	46,1	47,3
I can't say whether I'm religious or not	1,3	1,0	0,6	0,8	1,7	2,4	1,6	3,2	2,2
I'm not religious and I'm not interested in it	0,7	0,6	1,0	0,4	1,7	1,4	2,0	2,3	1,7
I'm not religious because the teachings of the Church are mistaken	0,4	0,7	0,4	0,1	0,8	0,4	1,1	1,5	1,5

Note: The categories: 'other' and 'difficult to say' were omitted.

Source: *Zmiany w zakresie wiary i religijności Polaków po śmierci Jana Pawła II*. CBOS report, BS/49/2012, ed. R. Boguszewski.

Data from CBOS research indicate that since the nineties the basic indicators of the declared faith have remained at a more or less identical level, although in this scope one could observe certain tendencies of change. The percentage of people declaring themselves as deeply religious during the period of 1997-2014 was contained within the range of 8%-12%, as religious ones – within the range of 83%-87%, and as non-religious ones – within the range of 3%-8%. The decrease of the proportion of deeply religious people (falling values between 2005 and 2014 by 4%) is noticeable, as is the increase of the non-religious people (during the period of 2005-2014 by 3%). Those shifts are not considerable, yet the tendency is clear and stable.

WVS research indicates that religion is an important value for the Polish people. Almost half the respondents in 2012 consider it to be very important, and further 33.9% as rather important in their life. It is one of the highest indicators in Europe. The percentage figures of respondents declaring a significant role of religion in their life have maintained a similar level since at least the end of the nineties, although one ought to note a slight increase

of the number of respondents, for whom religion is not important – increase from 16.2% in 1997 to 19.0% in 2012 (WVS'97, WVS'05, WVS'12).

Table 2. Importance of religion in selected European countries (%).

Importance religion in life	Belarus	Estonia	Germany	Netherlands	Romania	Spain	Sweden	Ukraine	Poland
Very important and rather important	48,0	25,3	38,0	25,2	83,8	32,1	26,2	60,8	79,6
Not very important and not at all important	50,8	73,1	61,7	72,7	15,9	67,1	72,8	39,3	19,9

Source: WVS'97, WVS'05, WVS'12.

In the cited WVS survey questions were also asked about what religion is to respondents in general. The surveyed Poles most often saw the essence of religion in good deeds unto other people (70.5%), followed by imparting the purpose of life in this world (62.6%), giving the purpose of life after death (25.8%), and finally observance of religious norms and ceremonies (23.5%). In the light of this research one can state that the Polish appreciate the ethical dimension of religion more than the eschatological one.

Religious practices

Also the indicators of participation in religious practices exhibit a high level, although there appear noticeable changes here. The percentage of people practising regularly (several times a week and once a week) falls between 50% and 58% during 1997-2014, for those practising irregularly (once or twice a month and several times a year) – between 33% and 37%, and for not practising – between 9% and 13%. Here there is a noticeable decrease of the number of people practising regularly (by 8% during 2005-2014), and the increase of the people practising irregularly (by 4% during 2005-2014) and not practising ones (by 4% during 2005-2014) (CBOS 26/2015). After combining both variables (faith auto-declaration and participation in religious practices) it appears that the number of religious people who practise regularly fell during 2005-2014 from 58% to 50%, while there was an increase in the number of religious people who practise irregularly (from 32% to 35%), the number of religious people who do not practise (from 6% to 7%) and the number of non-religious people who do not practise (from 3% to 6%).

An important indicator of religiosity is the frequency of prayer. In 2015 it was recorded that 43% of Poles, surveyed by CBOS, pray every day, 15% - more than once a week, 8% - once a week, 12% at least once a month, and 7% never. In relation to 2005 the percentage of people praying everyday decreased (by 13%), with a rise for those who do not pray at all (by 2%) and the ones who pray more often than once a week (by 4%) (CBOS 26/2015).

Taking into account the category of young people, treated as one particularly endangered by secularisation tendencies, one can notice a light intensification of the trends which are found in the whole society. During 2005-2014, among respondents aged 18-24, the proportion of people perceiving themselves as non-religious rose (from 6% to 15%), with a decrease of religious ones (from 86% to 77%), decrease of regularly practising ones (from 51% to 44%), increase of non-religious ones in general (from 10% to 18%). The proportion of people declaring themselves as religious and directed by the recommendations of the Church (from 51% to 43%) and the proportion of non-practising and non-religious ones rose (from 4% to 11%). Similarly in the case of the inhabitants of large cities, who are happen to be considered a category subjected to fast secularisation, these tendencies are more conspicuous than in the entire population. During 2005-2014 the percentage of people describing themselves as deeply religious fell (from 12% to 8%) as did the one of religious people (from 80% to 75%), with the rise of the non-religious people's percentage (from 8% to 17%). There

appeared more non-practising people (rise from 17% to 23%), with a reduction in the number of religious and regularly practising ones (fall from 43% to 36%) (CBOS 26/2015).

The cited research shows certain fairly clear-cut tendencies, but it ought to be emphasised here that they are neither very far-reaching nor evenly distributed. In some cases changes happen to be retarded, and they even may proceed in reverse direction. It is also noticeable that the dynamics of those changes is not high; they develop slowly over a longer period of time.

The World Value Survey showed that in 2012 going to church at least once a month was declared by 67.2% respondents, in 2005 by 75.0%, and in 1997 by 73.1%. On the other hand the number of respondents perceiving themselves as religious reached, in consecutive survey waves, respectively: 90.9% in 1997, 92.0% in 2005 and 86.2% in 2012. The decrease of the number of respondents regularly attending church and declaring themselves as religious people is therefore confirmed here. Nonetheless, however, in the background of other European countries, the level of auto-declaration as a religious person is high, anyway. For example the number of people declaring themselves as religious in 2012 reached 49.5% in Germany, 49.9% in Spain, 68.3% in Ukraine, and 43.8% in the Netherlands (WVS'12, WVS'05, WVS'97).

In the light of the official data of the Catholic Church, which conducts annual counts of the faithful attending the holy Sunday mass and receiving holy communion, in 2014 39.1% of the faithful (*dominicanos*) attended the mass, with 16.3% receiving holy communion (*comunicantes*). It is also possible to observe considerable territorial variation among particular regions of Poland. The highest participation of the faithful in mass services was recorded in the following dioceses: Tarnów (70.1%), Rzeszów (64.6%), Przemyśl (59.6%) and Kraków (50.7%), while the lowest participation occurred in dioceses: Sosnowiec (27.5%), Koszalin-Kołobrzeg (25.8%), Szczecin-Kamień (24.9%) and Łódź (24.8%). The highest percentage of the faithful received holy communion in the dioceses: Tarnów (24.3%), Opole (21.1%), Zamość-Lubaczów (21.1%), Pelplin (21.1%), and the lowest in the dioceses: Szczecin-Kamień (11.3%), Łódź (11.3%), Sosnowiec (11.0%) and Koszalin-Kołobrzeg (10.8%). As can be seen the differences between dioceses are two-fold at times. Moreover high participation of the faithful in the holy mass does not always involve large numbers of people receiving holy communion – the differences between *dominicanos* and *comunicantes* sometimes exceed 40%, and on average for the whole of Poland they reach just above 20%, which denotes that more or less such percentage of people go to church but do not receive holy communion (*Annuarium* 2015).

In comparison with previous years one can notice that the percentage figures for the holy mass attendees systematically decline, with simultaneously growing percentages of people receiving holy communion. These data can be interpreted as an expression of greater harmonisation of the religious identity of Catholics, who wish to realise their religious involvement more fully.

Table 3. The numbers of the faithful attending the holy Sunday mass and receiving holy communion 1980-2014 (%).

Indicator	2014	2010	2005	2000	1995	1990	1985	1980
Dominicanos	39,1	41,0	45,0	47,5	46,8	50,3	49,9	51,0
Comunicantes	16,3	16,4	16,5	19,4	15,4	10,7	9,1	7,8

Source: *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae in Polonia AD 2015*, Warszawa: Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego SAC 2015.

The Polish people themselves notice the changes in the level of religiosity. In CBOS research, conducted 20 years after democratic transformations in Poland and regaining independence, 48% of respondents claimed that religiosity declined, and twice fewer (22%) claimed that it grew throughout these years. (CBOS 28/2009).

Canons of faith

While considering the issues of religion and religiosity amongst Poles, the significant question is what the inhabitants of Poland actually believe in, what are the contents and structure of their belief and what importance is assigned to transcendence in their faith.

Over half of the respondents questioned by CBOS in 2015 (56%) stated that they definitely believe in God and have no doubts about His existence, 27% declared believing in God, although sometimes with moments of doubts, 5% - that sometimes it seems to them that they believe in God, sometimes not, and also 5% - that they do not believe in personal God, but they believe in some sort of higher force, 4% - that they do not know if God exists and do not believe in the possibility of verifying it, with 3% - who do not believe in God at all. In comparison to previous years, when similar research was conducted, it turns out that the percentage of people definitely believing in God slightly decreased (in 1997 – 61%), while there was growth in the percentage of those having sometimes doubts (in 1997 – 25%) and not believing in God at all (1997 – 1%) (CBOS 29/2015).

Interesting information is gained by juxtaposing these data with the declarations of participation in religious practices. It turns out, for example, that amongst the people participating in religious practices several times a week 83% definitely believe in God, once a week – 72%, once or twice a month – 56%. It is not, therefore, the case that all the church attendees have no doubts as to whether God exists and definitely believe in Him. The data clearly show that participation in religious practices is strongly correlated with belief in God: religious people go to church more often while non-religious ones do not take part in religious practices.

In the international research of World Value Survey in 2012, 92.2% of the surveyed Poles declared believing in God, while 56.8% - believing in hell (WVS'12). Believing in God is thus more common than believing in hell. The level of believing in God in Poland is therefore similar to that in Romania (92.3%), and higher than in Germany (62.9%), Netherlands (71.1%) or Sweden (40.9%). The results show that Poland is not affected by secularisation trends to the same extent as western European countries.

The World Value Survey data indicate that for the Polish God is something important. The average level of the importance of God in personal life, declared by Poles in 2012, was 7.95 (on a scale from 1 to 10). In 2005 it was 8.73 and in 1989 it was 8.78. Thus, we encounter a certain decrease of the importance of God in the life of Poles. For comparison let us add that, for example, in the Netherlands this indicator was 4.37, in Germany – 5.28, in Spain – 5.0, in Sweden 3.65, in Russia 6.68 (for 2012). The importance of God in life is higher among women than among men, and higher amongst older people than amongst younger ones (WVS'89, WVS'97, WVS'05, WVS'12)

In the CBOS research in 2015, respondents were also questioned about their belief in life after death. What followed was that 36% of respondents thinks that after death we go to heaven, hell or purgatory, 31% stated that there is something after death, yet no one knows what, 14% - that after death there is nothing; it is the definitive end; 4% - that we all go to heaven, and 3% - that we undergo reincarnation. And here again: the belief in heaven or purgatory after death is not common, even amongst those who regularly practise – it is declared by 57% of people practising several times a week and 55% practising once a week. Those who do not practise are most often in favour of the thesis that after death there is nothing (55%).

In spite of the fact that many people do not possess clear-cut convictions about the life after death, most Polish people taking part in the discussed research state that everyone can be delivered (61%). Opinions that only religious people may be delivered (8%) and definite declaration of disbelief in deliverance (15%) are relatively rarely encountered. The faith in

deliverance is also stronger than the convictions about life after death, ingrained amongst the regularly practising people.

In the cited research, there were also questions asked about other dogmas and religious ideas, of which most belong to the orthodox canon of Christian faith. 82% of respondents declared belief in God hearing prayers, 70% - in last judgment, 70% - in heaven, 69% - that man has an immortal soul, 62% - in the resurrection of the dead, 59% - in the original sin, 56% - in hell, 36% - that animals have an immortal soul, and 30% - in reincarnation. The presented data show that the faith of the Polish people is to a certain extent syncretic, and combines elements originating in various, not necessarily Christian, religious traditions.

Mostly, however, what prevails is the content pertaining to Christian orthodoxy. Using the global indicator of faith orthodoxy, based on all 12 categories applied in the cited study, it was concluded that it reached 7.33 on average (on a scale from 0 to 12), with highest figures for the people practising several times a week (9.74) and relatively amongst young people (7.97). It testifies to better absorption of dogmas by those who often use religious ministry and those who recently attended religion classes at school.

Parish and participation in parochial life

The most important centre of religious life is the parish. CBOS research from 2014 indicates that for 66% of its participants it is the primary place of religious practices. The others either visit other parishes or sporadically participate in religious practices. It is a characteristic fact here, that the larger the residence environment is, the more rarely people practise in their parish (CBOS 158/2014).

The research allows also for establishing that the parish is not only a centre of religious life, but also meets other needs: it organises pilgrimage, events of cultural or sports-recreational character, holiday trips, runs libraries, material aid for the poorest people. In total, it was noted that 40% of respondents were beneficiaries of various parochial actions and initiatives. The respondents, however, are not fully knowledgeable as regards the functioning of their parish. They perceive it as, primarily, an institution organising pilgrimage (86%), administering aid for the poorest (67%), running its own website (61%) and parochial newspaper (60%). In the image of a parish, its picture as a tourism-pilgrimage operator, cultural organiser and charitable aid manager prevail. Fewer than half of the people taking part in the research notice the functioning of the parochial council (45%), and more frequently perceive it as a place where prayer communities exist (58%) (CBOS 163/2014).

As regards the activities contributing to the parish, it is not very high, although it stretches outside other areas of social involvement. Such activity is declared by nearly one third of CBOS respondents. Most often it involves sporadic actions in the form of cleaning, renovating, fund raising, participation in organising and setting the scene for religious celebrations.

The subjective feeling of a bond with a parish is declared by two thirds of CBOS respondents (66%). It ought to be noted, however that in recent years the power of identification with a parish is in decline: e.g. in 2005 a bond with the parish was declared by 80% of respondents. The motivation for non-identification with the parish (such attitude was declared by 33% of respondents) took most frequently the form of statements that it stems from not belonging to the Church, lack of faith, or because of specific reservations against the parish, e.g. that nothing is going on or the parson is not liked much.

Polish Catholics generally do not feel their impact on parochial matters is too large, or that they have a say in its functioning: 81% think that they have no such influence, with 44% - definitely thinking so. It is also characteristic that when asked whether they wish they had such influence, they usually respond that they have no such need (82%). It testifies to the fact that the Polish treat parishes more like service-providing institutions, and yet they feel no need to strongly engage in its affairs and functioning (CBOS 158/2014).

General image of the Church in Poland

In general, the Poles think that the situation in the Polish Church is good: according to 68% of those polled by CBOS in 2015 (including 10% recognizing it as very good). In comparison to 2013, the number of people thinking that it's good has increased (from 62%). The situation in the Polish Church is, according to respondents, better than in the rest of Europe and worldwide. In relation to both Europe and the rest of the World, 58% of those surveyed recognized the situation as good (CBOS 32/2015).

In 2013 CBOS conducted a research which showed the image of the Polish Church in a different light. The respondents were asked what were the main problems that the Polish Catholic Church was facing. The most common answers were: pedophilia among clergy (43%), homosexuality among clergy (29%), Church's involvement in politics (28%), loss of churchgoers, drop in religiousness (26%), high living standards among clergy (23%), too high charges for sacraments (22%). The image is therefore not as positive as it might seem. The next question concerned the main problems in respondents' parishes. Here the most common answers were: too high charges for sacraments (18%), loss of churchgoers, drop in religiousness (16%), high living standards among clergy (10%), Church's involvement in politics (8%), expressing political sympathies during sermons (7%) (CBOS 145/2013). One can see that on the parish level, the Poles see less problems and the pressure is put elsewhere. Therefore, one can assume that the views on the Polish Church in the Polish society are shaped strongly by the content presented in the media.

Confidence in the Church

The level of confidence in the Church can be an indicator of identification with the institution, but it can also indicate a weakness of this identification and promote individualization of faith (Libiszowska-Żółkowska, 2009: 62).

The 2016 CBOS survey 2016 reports that 70% of the surveyed Poles have confidence in the Roman Catholic Church, including 24% who declare a great deal of confidence. This is a high index, as the Church is ranked 7th among the 24 surveyed institutions. Even more interesting is, that Poles have bigger trust towards Caritas, the largest charitable organization run by the Church (83%), than to the Church in general. Taking into account the long-term perspective, it appears that the level of trust towards the Church is relatively stable, although it has slightly decreased: in 2002 it was 76%, in 2006 - 81%, in 2010 - 78%. Poles have slightly lower trust towards their parish parson - 67% in 2016. It can also be observed that the level of trust has slightly decreased, when we take into account previous studies: in 2008 it was 72% and in 2010 - 69% (CBOS 18/2016).

Changes in the level of confidence in the Church as an institution, are illustrated by yet another study of The World Values Survey. In 1989 it had reported that 50.5% of Poles have a great deal of confidence in the Church, and a further 31.9% of them have quite a lot of confidence. In turn, in 2012 it had been stated that the Church was 'strongly trusted' by 19.9% while 38.4% 'rather trusted'. The overall decline in those who trust The Church was thus almost 25%. Meanwhile, the percentage of those who did not trust in the Church had increased: from 1.9% ('do not trust') in 1989 to 9.0% in 2012 (WVS'89, WVS'97, WVS'05, WVS '12). In 1989 the Church was the most trustworthy institution in Poland, which is not the case today.

Political involvement of the Church and its place in public life

According to the provisions of the Polish Constitution "public authorities in the Republic of Poland shall be impartial in matters of personal conviction, whether religious or philosophical, or in relation to outlooks on life, and shall ensure their freedom of expression within public life'. Every once in a while, more or less heated debates take place regarding the presence of the Church and religion in social life, the role carried out by them, and potential

restrictions in this matter. These debates relate primarily to whether the broadly understood public sphere should be completely free from religious influences, remain in isolation against the Church, religion and world views by leaving these matters to individual choices of citizens, or whether it should be open and an accessible space of expressing ideas and religious beliefs, the display of symbols and expressing values which are important to community life.

According to the respondents surveyed by CBOS in 2015, Poland is a country where religious freedom is generally respected. This is what 85% of surveyed stated, however a less common belief is the general conviction of the ideological neutrality of the state - an opinion expressed by 64%. Reservations as to both principles are put forward primarily by people not involved in religious practices and who are non-believers (CBOS 45/2015).

The CBOS 2013 survey examined attitudes towards the presence of religious symbols in public spaces. Respondents mostly tolerated quite a large presence of religious elements and the Church itself in the public sphere. For example, 88% of respondents said that they are not offended by the presence of the cross in offices or schools, 85% - were not offended by the religious nature of the military oath, 82% - by religious classes in schools, 80% - by the participation of priests and bishops in State rites and ceremonies and 76% - by priests blessing sites and public buildings. Slightly bigger doubts were towards: the incitement of priests about how to vote during elections (82% were offended by this practice), making statements of the position of the Church on laws passed by the parliament (55% were offended), and the statements of the Church on moral issues and customs (33% were offended). Taking into account the longer period of time since the research was carried out on this subject (since 1995), it can be noticed that despite small fluctuations between certain years, the overall trends are similar. Thus, it is possible to say that Poles have a relatively high acceptance for different, although not all, forms of the Church's presence in public life. Mirosława Grabowska affirms that 'crosses and priests are simply Polish a cultural landscape' (CBOS 170/2013: 5). The significant majority of Poles approve of this model, while the discussions and disputes relate to more specific issues.

Debates on the subject of presence of religious symbols in public spaces took place in 2011. Similar discussions, although carried out a bit earlier, took place in other European countries as well (e.g. Italy, 2009). CBOS survey conducted then confirmed that for the vast majority of respondents (88%) the cross is nothing offensive in a public buildings like a school or office. Slightly fewer respondents felt that the cross should hang in the Chamber of Parliament (60%). However, some stated that since the parliament includes representatives of different faiths, there should not be any religious symbols there (36%), while others claimed that others that there should also be symbols of different religions (19%). Most Poles (56%) also deem that the presence of the crucifix in public places can not be considered a violation of the rights of non-believers (CBOS 153/2011).

The high stability of the Poles' opinion on these subjects, also confirmed during surveys in 2015, is noteworthy. (CBOS 178/2013, 48/2015 CBOS).

A CBOS survey from 2014 showed that when it comes to specific parishes, where respondents belong to, there are not many cases of political engagement of priests: 61% of respondents stated that in their parish political agitation or disclosure by the priests of their views political never happens, and a further 17% that it only happens occasionally (CBOS 163/2014). Allegations in terms of the Church influencing the political life or being directly involved in this life, concerns the Church rather generally and only a few of its representatives.

These cases however, are usually heavily publicized by the media, which is why the Church is often seen as interfering in many spheres, which are totally independent from faith. Examples of when an attempt to influence public affairs is attributed to the Church, often

relate not so much directly to political issues, but rather moral. The Church speaks on these matters in accordance with the its doctrine or addresses politicians for preferred solutions. Usually, this is seen as 'unauthorized interfering in political affairs'.

Religion and morality

Many diagnoses concerning Polish religiousness, indicate a gradual disperse of the teachings of the Catholic Church, from the views of the Poles concerning morality (Mariański 2004: 321-382). According to sociologists it proves not of rejection of the religious world view, but rather of the selectivity and subjectivity of the moral sphere. Poles more frequently acknowledge that they can decide for themselves in regard to what is permitted or not, not necessarily following by the indications of the Church and pastors.

In the CBOS studies mentioned earlier, concerning the involvement of the Church in public affairs, it was noted that 33% of respondents are discouraged by the spoken positions of representatives of this institution on moral issues and moral customs (CBOS 178/2013). Grabowska interprets this fact by the particular discomfort that people feel towards an authoritative and non-empathetic style of Church statements. The distance of Poles towards accepting the moral guides of the Church is quite clear however.

The results of research carried out by CBOS in 2013 reports that 22% of Poles think that 'you should have clear moral principles and never occur from them', 42% - that 'you should have clear moral principles, but in certain situations you depart from them', 19% - that 'you must have some moral principles, but there is nothing wrong with abandoning them due to the requirements of various situations in life', and 12% - that 'your behavior should not be linked to predetermined moral principles, but you should, depending on the situation at hand, find appropriate ways of proceeding.' A large part of the respondents accept the rule of adapting behavior without having to take into account moral principles (CBOS 15/2014).

On the other hand, answering the question of the sources of the distribution of good and evil 19% answered that it should be decided by the law of God, 20% - that by the public, and 57% by each person individually within their own conscience. It is also worth noting that the percentage of those who believe that every person is the source of morality increased by 11% since 2005, while those referring to the laws of God declined by 8% (15/2014 CBOS).

Subjectivity of moral principles is also visible when respondents comment on the subject of justification for those rules. 16% said that only religion can provide justifications for their correctness, 33% - that essentially religion justifies moral principles, but you might find other reasons, and 41% - that they do not feel the need for any justification of moral principles, other than their own conscience. Furthermore, only 14% of the surveyed felt that the moral principles of Catholicism are the best and constitute sufficient morality. More often, the respondents accepted the view that 'all principles of Catholicism are right, but in regard to the complexity of life they need to be complemented by other principles' (27%) and that 'most moral principles of Catholicism are right, however, they do not agree with everything', moreover 'those that are correct, are not sufficient for people' (45%) (CBOS 15/2014). These figures quite clearly confirm the thesis of partial rejection of moral principles associated with Catholicism and avoiding searching within religious justifications of morality.

It would be proper to present more data concerning Poles' attitude towards chosen moral norms that show the concrete consequences of this individualized approach. In 2013, 77% of surveyed Poles favored the acceptable use of contraceptives, 74% - sexual intercourse before marriage, 63% - divorce, and 27% - the termination of pregnancy (CBOS 71/2016).

This last issue is a bit more complicated, because there are large discrepancies in terms of hypothetical reasons for abortion. Opinions collected in 2016 shows that 70% of respondents would allow for abortion when the life of the mother is in danger, 71% - when her health is endangered, 73% - when the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, 53% - when it is known that a child will be born handicapped, 14% - when a woman is in a difficult

financial situation, 13% - when she faces a difficult personal situation, and 13% - when she simply does not want to have a baby. The possibility of abortion is thus accepted in a situation of danger to the mother or the baby or when the pregnancy results from rape, but rather is not permitted for the so-called social reasons or when it is the result of individual choice (CBOS 71/2016).

What impact the Catholic Church has on the views of the Poles in the area of morality show the results of research carried out by CBOS, when heated discussions about the exacerbation by Parliament of abortion law took place. The Polish Episcopate delivered its statement in the form of a letter which was to be read out to the faithful during Sunday Masses. It presented a clear and consistent position of the Church. These studies were all performed twice: before the publication of the letter and after its publication. As it had turned out, this letter essentially had no impact on the views of the respondents (CBOS 71/2016).

Religious relativism

One of the factors that can significantly influence the shape of religiousness in Poland is religious relativism (Mariański 2002). It is one of the leading ideas characteristic for the New Age, which is sometimes called "religious universalism." However, it constitutes a threat to religious orthodoxy.

A CBOS survey from 2011 shows that 87% of respondents approve of the statement that 'every religion is equally good, if it helps a person live his life the best he can', 70.0% agrees with the statement that 'God is worshiped in different religions regardless of what we call Him - Yahweh, Allah, etc., and He is really the same God', and 67% of surveyed recognize that 'all religions lead to the same goal' (CBOS 135/2011). The measure of relativism thereby, remains essentially at the same level since the end of the 90s, even though in comparison to similar surveys conducted in 1997 and 2006, the percentage of those agreeing with the second and third statement slightly decreased in that mentioned edition of studies.

On the other hand, the World Value Survey of 2012 shows that 37.3% of responding Poles accepted the statement that 'the only correct religion is my religion', while 53.2% are of the opposite statement. In comparison: in Germany, 28.8% believe only their own religion to be the correct one, in the Netherlands 13.3%, in Romania 43.3%, in Russia 30.1%, in Ukraine 33.1%, in USA 21.2% and in Qatar 97.6%, in Libya 95%, in Jordan 93.7%. High rates of religious exclusivity exist in Islamic countries, while in Europe we have opinions rather not refusing the legitimacy of other faiths and religions. The index for Poland is slightly higher than in most European countries included in this study, but definitely closer to the pan-European level.

Nevertheless, the question of whether 'people belonging to other faiths are probably just as moral as those belonging to my religion' 88.1% of respondents in Poland approve with the statement, whereas 4.2% did not agree with it. In Germany, such a statements are accepted by 53.8%, in the Netherlands 60.6%, Romania 71.7%, Russia 64.5%, Spain 66.3% and USA 79.8% (WVS'12). This ratio is extremely high comparing to other countries in the world, and Poland's is comparable only to Australia (85.6%). It also shows a mentioned previously tendency that Poles usually separate morality and religion.

The New Age and superstitions

Detlef Pollack and Olaf Müller, who had analyzed the results of studies concerning the popularity of the New Age in Central and Western European countries, came to the conclusion that ideas associated with this religious current covered only a minor part of the population of Poland. In view of the strong Church, faith in the ideas and values of New Age should be considered as an alternative form, and not as complementing the dominant religion (Pollack, Müller 2006). Representative polls show, however, that in Poland there is a fairly

high level of acceptance of some elements of the New Age, which had sometimes been combined with an orthodox Catholic faith.

Previously cited data of CBOS from 2011, show that Poles do not treat their own religion exclusively, seeing it as the only path towards salvation (CBOS 135/2011). Poles also resort to divination and refer to traditional superstitions. In CBOS studies, respondents were presented a set of claims. As it had turned out, 59% of respondents believe that some people have the ability of clairvoyance, 48% - that some people have the ability to predict the future, 39% - that there is a rational civilization somewhere in the universe, 39% - that telepathy is possible, 34% - that it is possible to throw an evil spell at someone, 33% - that talismans bring luck, and 29% - that the sign under which a person is born has a large importance on the development of his character. What is characteristic is the fact that people defining themselves as deeply religious have shown higher rates of acceptance for these statements than non-believers, and that the highest acceptance rate was recorded among the believers 'in one's own way.' A high acceptance was also noted among those who practice religion several times a week (CBOS 135/2011).

Quite popular among Poles is the belief in superstitions, such as keeping our fingers crossed for someone's success, the belief in a chimney sweeper bringing good luck, the magical power of talismans, the luck of numbers 7 or 13, or bad luck brought by a black cat crossing the road. The most popular superstition is keeping our fingers crossed, meeting a chimney sweeper or smashing a mirror. This was declared by more than 25% of respondents. Although the number of those declaring their belief in superstitions is not too high, it turned out that 56% of respondents has at least sometimes kept their fingers crossed, 45% of them knocked on wood and 45% huffed on a coin they had found. The practice of superstitions is therefore more frequent than the faith in them. In this case it was also noted that the depth of the declared religious faith and regular religious practices have minor effect on the belief in superstitions and the acts according to them. They are just some features of Polish culture, which are absorbed in the process of socialization, and religious teachings do not invalidate them. (CBOS 130/2011).

Religious customs during the holidays

Polish Catholicism is very strongly associated with the customs of religious holidays. During the holidays, the importance of religion is revealed and religious practices have a mass character. Although during celebrations, the importance of religious elements is not always great, the holidays are a way of upholding and passing on elements of religion and religiosity to the next generations. Moreover, during religious holidays, the weave of religious and national traditions is perfectly visible.

The regularly conducted survey of Poles by CBOS, shows that for almost half of the respondents (46%) Easter is a religious experience. Most Poles however, treat Easter as a family celebration (70%). This type of research has been conducted since 1994, and we can observe that both the hierarchy of importance of the various ways of understanding the Easter, and the percentage of indications are similar (though slightly fluctuate). However, there is a noticeable decrease in the number who see Easter as a religious holiday. Those who see it only as a secular holiday or focus on the purely practical aspect of the holidays is less - about one-fourth (CBOS 47/2015).

Generally Poles do prepare for Easter in some spiritual way: 84% fast on Good Friday, 68% go to the Easter confession, 65% have their head sprinkled with ash on Ash Wednesday, 59% participate in the celebrations of the Easter Triduum, 57% take part in Easter retreats, 52% in the Way of the Cross or Bitter Grievances and 48% participate in the Resurrection Mass on Easter Sunday. Generally Easter holidays are celebrated mostly religiously, even by those people not notably connected with the Church. This tendency is stable, and the only larger changes can be seen in the case of the number of people going to the Easter confession

(a decrease of 11% between 2006 and 2016) and participating in the Resurrection Mass (a decrease by 12%). They are closely related to the spiritual life and are of strictly religious character of this practice and a less customary relating to tradition. Consequently, the changes are rather important. A similar alteration in figures can be observed when it comes to the time of silencing yourself during Lent. Approximately 50% of respondents declare this practice, while back in 2010 it was over 60%. This is where can see the influence of consumer culture.

When it comes to the Christmas Holidays, here we can also see a similar tendency to combine the religious and family dimensions. In 2015, 23% of the CBOS respondents acknowledged Christmas as a religious holiday, whereas 54% as a family holiday. Poles obey common customs associated with these holidays: 99% give each other Christmas greetings and wishes, 98% consume the special dishes during Christmas Eve, 98% share the Christmas wafer (a specific Polish custom), 86% retain the fasting during the Vigil (Christmas Eve, prior to the supper), 79% sing Christmas carols, 69 % participate in the Midnight Mass. 69% of respondents proceed to confession, and 67% say a pray or read the Bible passage before supper (CBOS 175/2015). Strictly religious customs are a little less common, but the religious component is present in all of the aforementioned, though not always fully realized. In the customs of Christmas, the growing influence of secular culture can also be seen by for instance manifesting the use new technology to send Christmas wishes and spending these holidays outside the family home, for example on holiday trips.

Religious customs still play an important role in the life of Poles, and the majority of them can not imagine the important moments of life without religious ceremonies. 83% of the surveyed by CBOS in 2005, answered that the ceremony of their child's baptism is important, 81% - that a religious wedding ceremony is important, and 85% - religious funeral ceremony. While throughout the recent years the percentage of those who do not attach importance to the aforementioned rites has increased, it is a clear tendency that the most important moments in life should be accompanied by religious rites (CBOS 31/2015).

The significance of Pope John Paul II

John Paul II is a person who has had a particular impact on the Polish society and the Polish Church at the end of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century. In a study conducted by CBOS in 2011, 80% of respondents stated that the life and teachings of John Paul II contributed to the transformation the lives of most Poles, and 58% believed that He had also helped to transform their own lives. During these studies, prior to the beatification of John Paul II, respondents were asked about the meaning of this celebration. 95% considered it to be an important event for all Poles, 83% important for themselves personally, 71% it being important for Europe, and 70% - the beatification being important for the whole world (CBOS 49/2011).

The impact of John Paul II has many dimensions, including a religious dimension. The death of John Paul II in 2005 was considered a quite important moment. The surveys conducted then showed an increase in the basic indicators of religiosity which had reversed the former long-term downward trends. This increase, however, was short-lived, and in later years the trends have returned towards that downward direction. The level of declared faith and frequency of religious practices in Poland had declined since the death of Pope John Paul II in 2005. In the years 2005-2014, the number of people declaring themselves as believers and deeply religious, decreased from 97% to 93%, whereas the practicing at least once a week fell from 58% to 50%. The reducing number of Catholics declaring themselves as believers and who follow to the indications of the Church fell from 66% to 39% and was accompanied by an increase in the number of those who consider themselves 'believers in their own way' (from 32% to 52%) (CBOS 158/2014).

John Paul II continues to be at the top as a personal model and authority. In 2009, he was mentioned as a personal authority by 17% of those surveyed by CBOS, and 59%

considered him to be the main authority in public life by placing him on the first spot (CBOS 134/2009).

Respondents surveyed in 2015 most frequently believed that despite the passage of 10 years since the death of the "Polish Pope" his memory still lives among the general public (94%), and that his teachings are generally known (71%). Less frequently do they recognize that Poles follow the rules in life which were indicated by John Paul II (45%). Speaking about themselves personally, they declared that they are aware of the content of His teachings. (70%), and stressed that in their lives, they follow those rules (68%). Thus, Poles slightly more often declare themselves to be familiar with the teachings of John Paul II and follow them, rather than declare such an attitude among the general public (CBOS 46/2015).

The cited studies may lead to the conclusion that for most Poles, John Paul II is a moral authority - 95% of respondents admitted that (including 65% by choosing 'strongly'). This is a higher percentage than in the case of Pope Francis as a moral authority (84%, including 43% who chose 'strongly'). Poles often mention John Paul II in their prayers and conversations (declared by 43% of respondents, including 11% as 'very often'), but the prayers asking for intercession on various issues is less common (34%) (CBOS 46/2015).

These nationwide systematic studies indicate that the importance of John Paul II is slowly falling with the increasing length of time that has passed since his death. This is not a radical decrease, however, it is taking place.

Anticipated changes in the Church

Attention is often paid to the problem of adapting the Church's teachings to the requirements of modern society and contemporary culture, as well as the needs and problems of believers. Discussions devoted to that have not omitted Poland. Some communities formulate postulates towards the Catholic Church and other churches, sometimes far-reaching demands of greater openness to new problems and issues and adjustment in some of the contents of those teachings.

The results of research conducted in 2015, when in many countries and communities discussions were made on possible changes in relation to the Church's teaching concerning the family in connection with the ongoing 24th Synod of Bishops, suggests that Poles also expressed some expectations in this regard. According to 80% of the respondents the Church should allow individuals who are divorced and living in open relationships the ability to have the Holy Communion, 79% were for allowing the possibility of the use of in vitro, 73% to allow the possibility to have an abortion in some cases, 72% to allow for the use of contraceptives, while according to 60% to replace individual confession with a collective one, and 59% to abolish celibacy. Less frequently the respondents demanded the admission of women to the priesthood (37%), to enable people living in homosexual relationships to have Holy Communion. (32%), the allowance of such people to obtain the sacrament of marriage (16%). This data show quite a serious rift between the Church teaching and the views of the believers in Poland (CBOS 32/2015).

Certain issues defining the context of Polish religiousness

1. Emigration

One of the most serious problems for the contemporary Polish society, also having its consequences in the area of religion, is the mass economic emigration. Currently it is estimated that several million Poles reside abroad permanently or temporarily, mainly in Western Europe: Great Britain, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Scandinavian countries. Official figures coming from the Catholic Church parish records talk about 2.7 million parishioners being abroad, which is approx. 8% of the total registered people in Catholic parishes (*Annuario* 2015). Emigrants leaving for work and to pursue a better standard of living, often lose their religious roots. Many of them focus primarily on

making and saving money, and often stay in regions where access to churches and Catholic communities is difficult, where there is no possibility of having or using pastoral support in Polish and in effect they quickly lose their religious formation. In some environments, migrants are also subject to serious loosening of moral standards, especially those relating to marriage and family life. An example of this may be temporary partnerships commonly established while abroad, arising either out of necessity of common renting an apartment, or from attempts to compensate for experienced social isolation and loneliness. People with their own families in their homeland, also tend to enter into such relationships, and the dramatic effects are visible upon returning from the economic emigration. For a large part of these emigrants, the only mean and opportunity to maintain a connection with religion are holidays and vacation periods, when they return to their homes. Prior to the larger religious holidays, places on airplanes or highways are usually full of Poles returning from Western Europe to celebrate with their families. Despite the fact that Poles treat holidays primarily as an opportunity to meet with the family, during the stay in their homeland, they massively participate in religious activities and practices that nurture religious traditions.

2. Anti-religious and anti-Catholic trends

Just like after obtaining sovereignty in 1989, till this very day, we have to deal with rather strong anti-religious trends, especially against Catholicism. This is no doubt a result of the fact that Catholicism is the predominant religion and in many cases expansively and publicly resists the secular trends.

Many examples of such anti-religious actions may be found. In the 90's a weekly newspaper founded by the former advocate of the communist government during the martial law period, was considered very popular. Nowadays, some artists and culture activists openly distance themselves from religion, expressing this position in their works giving rise to many controversies among believers. During the returning every once in a while discussions about the abortion law, those in favor of making an abortion easier by legal means, usually consider the Catholic Church and its believers as their main opponent regardless of what role they have during those discussions. Street demonstrations which took place in the fall of 2016, directed against the civil project of tightening the anti-abortion law and against the conservative government coalition which is currently in power, had very strongly referred to the anti-religious and anti-Church rhetoric.

They usually take a form of vulgar ridiculing ideals and moral norms with religious underpinnings, as well as sharp criticisms of actions of the Church hierarchy referring both to the traditional anti-clericalism arguments taken from some Enlightenment rationalism and from some positivistic trends. Arguments indicating the backwardness and parochialism of Poland in comparison to the more developed European countries are also common.

These cases broadly covered and widely publicized by the media, happen both in the more liberal side where they are usually more or less accepted, and in the more conservative media, where they are the subject of condemnation and indignation. Some liberal newspapers covers which show the Church and clergy in very negative light, cause large controversies throughout the entire population, especially among Christians.

The place where the most heated discussions take place, at the same time being the place where it is the most difficult for opponents to find a common ground is the Internet. Information on the Internet concerning the life of the Church or generally related to issues connected with religion are usually accompanied by many anonymous comments, all the while most of them being expressed aggressively. Commentators mostly cite many anti-religious stereotypes referring to the wealth of priests and the Church, of pedophilia among the clergy, irrationality and lack of novelty in religious beliefs, etc. Religious spokespersons rarely engage in these types of dialogues or even polemic discussions. For this reason, the most popular Internet news portals are quite largely controlled by anti-Christian rhetoric.

From time to time, some atheistic or anti-religious organizations engage in social campaigns which are aimed at promoting the secular views and fighting off religion. One of these campaigns was titled 'You have a right to not believe', another had the slogan 'Atheists are divine'. These organizations oppose the teaching of religion in schools, organizations of nativity scene plays and Christmas meetings in schools and kindergartens, the presence of religious content in school textbooks and encourage apostasy.

Anti-religious and anti-Catholic trends are present in Poland, but they operate on the margins of mainstream society in a systematic way. There are numerous cases of direct aggression directed against symbols of religion, places of worship, religious representatives, and forms of manifestation of religious identity. It would be difficult to interpret them as having a mass character, since they usually do not have the power to give rise to society-wide anti-religious attitudes. The official data of the Catholic Church states that during the years 2012-2014 many forms of discrimination (e.g. offensive comments, beatings, etc.) were conducted on priests. 12.1% of the clergy was harm suffered, and in 8.7% of parishes there was some kind of desecration of holy places (*Annuarium* 2015).

Internal variation of Polish Catholicism

Polish Catholicism is not homogenous and varies internally with regard to many different criteria. Sociological studies in Polish religiosity usually indicate the existence of significant differences between age categories, gender representatives, inhabitants of various environments (countryside – large cities) and regions of the country, followers of particular political parties, etc. Inside the all-encompassing current of Catholicism, discussions and disputes continue with regard to various components of ecclesial teaching, its position in public life, the manner of conducting ministry or the degree of the lay people's influence upon the life of the Church. Catholicism is an internally dynamic reality, with complicated relations between its elements and segments, subject to the impact of internal contexts with simultaneous exerting influence on the very same contexts. Without any doubt, it is not a monolith that it might seem to be.

For this reason, the sociologists of religion draw up certain typologies, facilitating a global insight into the state of religion and religiosity in Poland. One of such typologies, with considerations for primarily Catholic religiosity is proposed by Janusz Mariański, who distinguishes seven basic categories of Catholics (Mariański, 2012:38-40):

- 1) Catholics with commitment, ecclesiastic and prayer activity, belonging to communities and movements participating in various forms of ecclesial teaching; aware of their faith, active in prayer and developing their life in a religious way. Mariański estimates their number at 10% of adults belonging to the Catholic Church.
- 2) People bound to the Church with formal ties, agreements, and fulfilling various functions in it working for the benefit of Church institutions (ca.1%).
- 3) Traditional and orthodox Catholics, practising ones, recognising dogmas of the faith and respecting the moral teachings of the Church, involved in the functioning of the parish, with attachment to national traditions and religious ceremonials. This category shows strong internal variation in many respects and the orthodoxy of its followers is variously motivated. It constitutes about 30% of Polish Catholics.
- 4) Selective Catholics, partially identifying with the dogmas of the faith and the moral doctrine of the Church, selecting elements suitable for them, practising sporadically and irregularly, consciously adopting the attitude of keeping a distance from the institutional dimension of religion and placing religion and religiosity fairly low in their hierarchy of values. According to estimates they account for about 30%.
- 5) Open, progressive, liberal Catholics; fairly removed from orthodoxy, keeping distance from associating Catholicism with the Polish national identity; often anticlerical and

reforming in attitude, undertaking critical reflexion over the elements of Catholic culture and doctrine. They account for about 15%.

- 6) Nominal, marginal Catholics; baptised but practising only in special circumstances (holidays, religious celebrations), accepting religious education of their children at a basic level, but not identifying themselves with multiple components of the teachings of the Church and not deepening their religious awareness. They may account for about 15%.
- 7) Borderline Catholics; distanced from God and the Church; actual atheists connected with the Christian tradition, not involved in the life of the Church and maintaining distance from faith, religion and moral teachings; yet formally they do not leave the Church. They account for about 2-3%.

Perhaps the quantitative estimates referring to particular categories of Catholics are disputable, and for sure these categories are open-ended, without strictly limited boundaries, but still they show that Catholics in Poland do not constitute a homogenous and internally cohesive group. Further divisions may appear within particular categories, as Polish Catholicism is undergoing dynamic pluralisation. Among the reasons for this internal variation, one may point to reasons of more subjective nature (biographical particulars, consciously made decisions, character features), as well as to more objective ones (ministry activities of the Church, cultural tendencies, impact of the media). It is nonetheless clearly visible that ecclesial religiosity, remaining under institutional control, is only one of the forms of Polish Catholicism.

A slightly different typology is proposed by Christopher Grabowski after John Allen (Grabowski 2014, Allen 2009). Stronger emphasis is put here on the public dimension of Catholicism, participation of Catholics in public debates and political life. This typology is an attempt at answering the question of how Polish Catholics seek an answer to the challenges of modernisation. Grabowski distinguishes three categories of Catholics: liberal, evangelical and Pentecostal. The first are open to everything which modernisation brings, reject strict affiliation of religion with national identity; they talk about the necessity of adjusting the language and the contents of ecclesial teaching to (especially moral one) to the requirements of modernity, as well as about the necessity of greater democracy in the Church and greater independence of the faithful. Evangelical Catholics are in turn more orthodox; they attempt to make the awareness of Catholics deeper; they demand greater personal commitment (also in missions); they are inspired by various elements of the tradition, and yet it is difficult to consider them conservative, since they actively seek new forms of propagating the evangelical message. Both of these categories of Catholics are relatively numerous and contain many groups, centres of ministry and associations, expressing their view in public debates loud and clear, using various means of social communication. Grabowski, however, draws attention to the fact that they make use of different discourse, which makes mutual understanding and cooperation difficult. Of the lowest importance in the public space are Pentecostal Catholics, who view Christianity in the category of apocalypse and the approaching end of all time.

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The transformations of Polish religiousness in the first several years of the 21st century, may be interpreted by usage of different theoretical categories such as: 'the individualization of religion and religiousness' (Polack, Müller 2006, Mariański 2012), 'faith without affiliation' and 'affiliation without faith' (Davie 2010), shifts towards 'the invisible religion' (Luckmann 1996), 'collective identity' (Jakelić 2006), 'post-secularism' (Pękala 2012), 'secularization connected with modernization' (Kaufmann 2004, Casanova 2006), religion as remembrance and reversion towards tradition' (Hervieu-Léger 1999). As it may seem, none of the aforementioned theoretical interpretations entirely exhaust the complication of the issue, nor constitutes the whole picture. Thus, Mariański duly recognizes that any definitive statement in this domain are impossible, and further directions of changes are

uncertain (2006). Although certain tendencies are outlined, it is unpredictable what their further course will be. Various currents of secular trends which are connected to globalization and the growing cultural pluralism, as well as diffusion of secular elements from Western Europe, the secularized pop-culture commercialism and cosmopolitan market areas, collide with the lively trend of Church evangelization, innovative forms of pastoral activities, activities of orthodox-Catholic groups or communities, Church and beyond-Church institutions, or new methods of Christian influencing and upbringing. Furthermore, religion in Poland and the religiousness of Poles cannot be detached from other elements of national culture and transformations which take place in its capacity (Dyczewski 1995, Dyczewski 2002). This study is merely a fragmentary outline of certain phenomenon and processes which may be observed in this extent, and requires further thorough studies.

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