

Poland and Lithuania: The Diverging Nations

A comparative study of the Polish Solidarity and the Lithuanian Sajudis nationalist movements during the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

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Abstract

Both Gellner and Hobsbawm seem to downplay the importance of religion on nationalism. This ideographic study applies their theories to the Polish Solidarity and Lithuanian Sajudis nationalist movements during the Soviet period (1945-1989) and compares Catholic influences on both nationalist movements. Poland emerged with a dominant national identity that was devoutly Catholic and conservative, whereas Lithuania saw a surge of liberal nationalism with a sharply declined Catholic presence. This study argues that the Polish case leans more towards Hobsbawm's Marxist theory regarding the invention of tradition, whereas the lack of Catholic support steered the Sajudis movement towards a more liberal approach to nationalism in line with Gellner's theory on constructivism through industrialization.

1. Introduction

How the identity of a nation should be defined has been the topic of extended debate. Fukuyama ascribed a grim description to national identity: “National identity is frequently formed in deliberate opposition to other groups and therefore serves to perpetuate conflict.”¹ Others agree that national identity often arises in the face of perceived adversity. Hobsbawm described the national identity as the collection of nationalist symbols that “reflect the entire background, thought and culture of a nation.”² From such symbols does a state derive its identity and its legitimacy as a sovereign nation. Primordialists view the national identity as something stagnant and inherent to a population, but such notions are dismissed by both constructivists like Hobsbawm and . Nationalist movements relation to the national identity is twofold. First, such nationalist movements seek to celebrate and propagate the elements of a national identity which suit their view of the nation, as well as those who are or are not part of that nation. The second is to maintain those nationalist concepts and cultural values when such values are perceived to be under threat, for example when a nation is subjugated or otherwise repressed. During such times, the desired self-determined autonomous nation is itself a symbol for nationalist movements and therefore hugely influential on the construction of a national identity.³ As a result, the perception on the national identity can shift drastically during times in which the nation is perceived to be in duress. Making such periods an interesting topic of study, and an effective method to discuss theories regarding nationalism.

Hobsbawm’s Marxist Nationalism

Hobsbawm saw nationalism as an invention of tradition,⁴ where cultural and social elites within a nation propagate their view on nationalism as part of the national identity. This national identity lays claim to a past that has some form of continuity into the present. This impulse to preserve a perceived national identity, Hobsbawm claims, is a powerful social force that can grant legitimacy to a status quo. Images, depictions and phrases seek to reinforce the idea that the current national identity is one of a longstanding tradition. Such icons of the propagated nationalism tend to imply stability and continuity by emulating older styles, languages. Thereby

¹ Fukuyama, F. (2014). *Political order and political decay: From the industrial revolution to the globalization of democracy*. Macmillan.

² Hobsbawm, E. (1983). Introduction: inventing traditions. *The invention of tradition*. P.11

³ Klumbyte, N. (2003). Ethnographic note on nation: narratives and symbols of the early post-socialist nationalism in Lithuania. *Dialectical Anthropology*, 27(3-4), 279-295; Wuthnow, (1987). *Meaning and moral order*.

⁴ Hobsbawm, E. (1983). *Op. cit.* p.1-15.

reinforcing the idea that such icons have stood the test of time when in reality the icons, traditions, and the identity or ideologies they represent are “often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented”.⁵ A key component of this invented tradition is the repetition of its tenets, where certain customs are slowly integrated in society through repeated formalization and ritualization.⁶ Hobsbawm saw religion as a potential source of such invented traditions, but otherwise treated religion as merely another general unchanging attribute of little significance other than its use to identify different groups in society.

Hobsbawm claims that such propagated forms of nationalism are carefully crafted by a nation’s ruling elites, as they have the means and the power to make decisions regarding which tenets should and will be promoted as tenets of the national identity. Hobsbawm, who is a self-proclaimed Marxist,⁷ saw a link between nationalism and class. He argued that nationalism is constructed by a ruling elite as to validate the pride of citizenry in their national identity, as well as foster a sense of awe, loyalty and respect to the nation, and by extent those in its public service as well as its ruling elites.⁸ Hobsbawm’s view is that the working class propagates its own nationalist views entirely and claims that in order to understand the nature of nationalism and the nation, a bottom-up perspective is essential. He sees a clear separation in the contributions of nationalist movements of the working class and that of the ruling elite, who seek to invoke nationalism as a tool to strengthen the status quo.⁹ Because of this, Hobsbawm strongly believes that the national identity is malleable by nature, and he rejects the idea of a pre-existing nation entirely. To reinforce his argument, Hobsbawm brought up the role of the British rule in India, where British colonial rule sought to reinforce the feudal values in Indian society as to have a firmer control over that society. By supporting the local noble elites and using them as proxies of British rule, the Indian peninsula could to some degree be controlled with the promise of support to the local nobility. Any and all interaction with Indian subjects was strictly based on their standing within Indian society, thereby imbedding British influence in the Indian societal hierarchy and establishing the perception that British influence was strictly adherent to a perceived pre-existing Indian society.¹⁰ The disparity between the propagated Indian identity by the British and the working class Indian nationalism was abruptly made clear

⁵ Ibid. p.1.

⁶ Ibid. p.4.

⁷ Samuel, R., & Jones, G. S. (2016). *Culture, Ideology and Politics (Routledge Revivals): Essays for Eric Hobsbawm*, p. x (preface); BBC Interview by Jeremy Paxman (2002). *Jeremy Paxman interviews historian Eric Hobsbawm in 2002*. BBC Newsnight. Accessed through: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HQkwFSf7Wg>.

⁸ Hobsbawm, E. (1983). *Op. cit.* p.10.

⁹ Ibid. p.104

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 165-180

by the uprising of 1857-1858, mainly caused by the mandatory British social reforms which were perceived as invasive on the Indian culture.¹¹ With this example, Hobsbawm tried to argue that the national identity can only be constructed in a bottom-up perspective, as top-down nationalist constructs are ultimately ineffective.

Gellner's nation as a construct of industrialism

Like Hobsbawm, Gellner distances himself to the conservative idea of the primordial nation as a natural phenomenon.¹² Unlike Hobsbawm, who sees nations as the product of a national identity constructed by a bottom-up nationalist movement, Gellner sees nations as the result of a national identity perpetuated by a nation's elites.¹³ Gellner disputes that a national identity is formed by an existing commonality, instead claiming that such identities are born from the recognition of a commonality. Additionally, he argues that the idea of a nation and its national identity as a fabricated concept are the result of a social entity that is given longevity by the propagation of a nation's elites.¹⁴ To Gellner, nationhood is the recognition of certain universal rights, duties and virtues to all who share and recognize these beliefs and share a common attribute. Such a social bond is not based on the highest number of common attributes, but rather by a single attribute (such as language or a territorial region) combined with those values and expectations.¹⁵

Gellner's approach directly links nation building to the transition of an agrarian society to a industrial one. In this process, hallmarked by urbanization, rise in education and anonymization, the need of a congruent social and political system becomes apparent.¹⁶ With this increase in support for a common national identity perpetuated by the elites of a nation, come the homogenization of culture. Gellner does not see this as an attempt to consolidate power, as Marxists like Hobsbawm do. Instead, Gellner argues that such a transition is a necessity to establish a new civil society reinforced by cultural standardization and common values. Gellner saw this rise of nationalism as a herald for the decline of the role of religion.¹⁷

¹¹ Metcalf, B. D., & Metcalf, T. R. (2006). *A concise history of modern India*. Cambridge University Press.

¹² Finkel, M. (2016). "Theories of Nationalism: A Brief Comparison of Realist and Constructivist Ideas of the Nation." *Inquiries Journal*, 8(10).

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Gellner, E., & Breuilly, J. (1983). *Nations and nationalism* (Vol. 1). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

¹⁶ Finkel, M. (2016). *Op. cit.*

¹⁷ O'Leary, B. (1997). On the Nature of Nationalism: An Appraisal of Ernest Gellner's Writings on Nationalism. *British Journal of Political Science*. 27 (2): 191–222.

Debate

Hobsbawm argues that there is an elite propagated nationalism and a (or multiple) bottom-up 'working class' nationalist movements that are more in line with perceptions on the national identity of the working class. This is later expanded on by the notion of everyday nationalism, which "seeks to offer an empirical lens for Hobsbawm's affirmation to consider the dual aspects of nationalism which are 'constructed essentially from above' and 'which cannot be understood unless also analyzed from below', conceived by Hobsbawm as the 'assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people'."¹⁸ Central in this line of reasoning is the notion that this everyday nationalism is what will eventually persevere as the national identity of a nation. In 2002, Hobsbawm was sure of the fact that any nation or empire that did not have a national identity constructed in such a manner would have a limited life expectancy.¹⁹ By saying this, Hobsbawm claims elite constructed nationalist movements struggle to find the support of the working class, and will be swept aside by such bottom-up movements, given enough time passes. In Marxist fashion, he overlooks the fact that such movements have the support of some (albeit different) elites and intellectuals. Movement without such support, are inclined to collapse in on themselves because of a lack of structure or leadership. Hobsbawm's Marxist views seem to struggle to hold up in modern history, because of the largescale abandonment of communist and Marxist ideals, while nationalism is still very prevalent.²⁰ Hobsbawm's disregard of religion as a mobilizing and social force, perhaps as a result of his Marxist point of view, is a potential liability because of the unifying and divisive tendencies it has displayed throughout history.

Gellner's views are not without issue either. Gellner linked nation-building explicitly to the industrialization of a society. Nationalist sentiments are far from limited to industrial societies, as both early 19th century agrarian societies as well as 21st century post-industrial societies had prevalent nationalism. Additionally, industrial societies do not always inherently create successful nationalist tendencies. In some cases, religious tendencies of a society did diminish as industrialization took root in society. This is however, again, far from universal.

Hobsbawm treats religion as a defining attribute, and Gellner downplays its significance altogether, claiming it to be of secondary or even inconsequential importance.²¹ Both claim the

¹⁸ Knott, E. (2016). Everyday nationalism. *State of Nationalism*. Accessed through

¹⁹ BBC Interview by Jeremy Paxman (2002). *Jeremy Paxman interviews historian Eric Hobsbawm in 2002*.

²⁰ O'Leary, B. (1997). Op. cit. p.2.

²¹ Ibid.

economic conditions to be the defining factor in developing nationalist movements.²² Religion can however greatly impact the strength and nature of a nationalist movement and can exist in a symbiotic interdependent relationship with nationalism.²³ Such a relationship is especially powerful if the nation and a religion share a common perceived threat to their continued hegemony. Even when a singular religion does not have a powerful presence within a nation, its presence is everywhere. The existence of multiple religions within a nation can have a profound effect on nationalist movements within such a nation. When a nation does not have an intimate relationship with a religion whatsoever, that could be considered part of its national identity, for example as part of a larger secular tradition. The absence of religious tenets in nationalist theories from Gellner and Hobsbawm causes these theories to overlook a potential alternative powerbase for a bottom-up or elite-propagated nationalist movement.

Objective

The theories of Hobsbawm and Gellner surrounding the building of a nation seem to differ on the role of elites in the establishment of nationalist movements. Their disregard of religion as a driving force in society could be utilized to expand on the role of religious elites guiding a movement to a nationalist sentiment that provides an alternative to the national identity as it is propagated by public officials and the ‘official’ elites. By analyzing nationalist movements which include religion as a defining characteristic of the national identity, it can be established if and how such movements break with the norm of bottom-up or elite-propagated nationalism as they are described by Hobsbawm and Gellner respectively.

A nomothetic study of such groups is difficult as it is hard to prove that a case study can be translated to a nomothetic explanation, no matter how robust the findings. Such studies could perhaps follow an idiographic study, which seeks to point out the limitations of Hobsbawm and Gellner’s theories by studying the influence of religion on nationalist movements. Such a within case analysis would be best served with a historical method to ascertain the characteristics of religious nationalism regarding the theories of Gellner and Hobsbawm.²⁴ The goal would be to ascertain if religious nationalist movements would follow Hobsbawm’s, Gellner’s, or neither’s theory regarding the role of elites. The limitations and strengths of both Hobsbawm’s Marxist invention of tradition and Gellner’s nation as a construct of industrialism are perhaps best

²² Rieffer, B. A. J. (2003). Religion and nationalism: Understanding the consequences of a complex relationship. *Ethnicities*, 3(2), p.216.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Lange, M. (2012). *Comparative-historical methods*. Sage. P.12.

exemplified with a comparison between 20th century communist Poland's Solidarity movement and Soviet Lithuania's Sajudis movement.

Case selection

These movements lend themselves very well to a case study because of their relatively rapid ascension in the political scene of their respective nations. Both Poland and Lithuania were in varying degree subjugated in the second half of the 20th century. Poland as a satellite state, and Lithuania as an incorporated province in the Soviet Union. With the decline of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, nationalist movements in these nations sought (and still seek) to establish themselves on the international stage as well as searching for a national identity that defines and unifies those who see a nation as theirs. Previously, nationalist movements like Solidarity and Sajudis could promote cultural unity through a common foe; an "us", patriotic nationalists and "them", a perceived foreign oppressor in the form of the Soviet Union.²⁵ In the post-Soviet period, nationalists had to seek other unifying elements to unite the nation, or risk a cultural catastrophe. Such unifying elements were often reinforced with historical context, although the source of such elements was usually rooted in the defiance of the "them" in recent history. Social movements and organized resistance to the existing Soviet structures lay the groundwork for the independent nation that would follow in the process,²⁶ moulding what would become the important tenets of nationalism of that nation through religious icons of patriotism.²⁷ These trends were fast-paced, volatile and very influential on the identity of the nations that would rise with the crumbling of the Soviet bloc.²⁸ This makes them especially viable for a within-case study in an attempt to establish a historical narrative.

At first glance, Lithuania and Poland share many commonalities. Poland and Lithuania seem to have went through similar historical developments, sharing a nation and ruling dynasty for most of the 17th and 18th centuries and both being subjected to both Russian and German rule on multiple occasions. Attachment to the glory days of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth lived on until the 20th century in an attempt to hold on to the national identity. Such sentiments were preserved by the nonexistence of the Polish and Lithuanian states,²⁹ the

²⁵ Szporluk, R. (1998). Nationalism after communism: reflections on Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Poland. *Nations and Nationalism*, 4(3), 301-320.

²⁶ Hroch, M. (1993). From national movement to fully-fledged nation. *New left review*, (198), p.4.

²⁷ Zubrzycki, G. (2009). *The crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and religion in post-communist Poland*. University of Chicago Press. p. xi (preface).

²⁸ Hobsbawm, E. J. (1994). *The age of extremes: a history of the world, 1914-1991*. Pantheon.

²⁹ Zarycki, T. (2004). Uses of Russia: the role of Russia in the modern Polish national identity. *East European politics and societies*, 18(4), p.601.

desire to rekindle that has not waned and is referenced by Polish nationalists even during the fall of the Soviet Union in 1990.³⁰ A sense of comradery between the Polish and Lithuanian people remained well into the 19th century, where nationalists in both regions worked together to attempt to gain independence from the Russian empire.³¹ In the 20th century both nations gained their independence from the Russian empire as a result of the First World War and subsequently lost it to the German Reich and the Soviet Union. Both can boast an impressive historical foundation upon which their national identity can be built. But perhaps more interesting is the fact that despite their long similar histories, nationalisms in these two nations seem to have drastically diverged with the fall of the Soviet Union. Although Solidarity and Sajudis had a similar outlook towards Soviet influences and quickly evolved once Soviet grasp began to weaken in the 70's and 80's, the result of their ultimate perception on Polish and Lithuanian national identity was very different, regardless of their similarities.³² Regardless of their similarities, Poland and Lithuania did have some significant differences. Whereas traditional Polish elites were of little consequence in the conception of the Solidarity movement, which sprang forth as a labor union, the Lithuanian Sajudis movement actively engaged with the nation's elites, which were left relatively unmolested during the Soviet Union's Glasnost era. When considering religious freedoms however, the situation seems reversed. Poland enjoyed a great degree of religious freedom, so long as they did not openly defy the communist regime. Lithuania in contrast had very little organized religion as it was incorporated into the Soviet Union, resulting in a society where religion was kept away from public life. This provides the perfect opportunity for a case study where the relationship between elite-propagated and bottom-up nationalism with religious nationalism can be established. To that purpose, this thesis shall attempt to uncover the following research question: How did the Polish Solidarity movement successfully propagate Catholicism as part of their view of the Polish national identity, whereas the Lithuanian Sajudis movement ultimately produced a much more liberal view of the Lithuanian national identity?

³⁰ Burant, S. R., & Zubek, V. (1993). Eastern Europe's Old Memories and New Realities: Resurrecting the Polish-Lithuanian Union. *East European Politics and Societies*, 7(2),370.

³¹ Burant, S. R. (1991). Polish-Lithuanian Relations: Past, Present, and Future. *Problems of Communism*, 40(3), p.67.

³² Williams, J. H. (Ed.). (2014). (Re) Constructing memory: School textbooks and the imagination of the nation. Springer.

2. Historiography

“Do not be afraid” spoke John Paul II,³³ the first Polish Pope in history, at his inaugural speech in 1978.³⁴ He continued: “Open wide the doors for Christ. To his saving power open the boundaries of States, economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, civilization and development. Do not be afraid.”³⁵ To many Poles it was clear what he meant by this. The days of the foreign-backed communist regime were numbered. Through his inaugural speech and his other active involvements in Polish politics, Pope John Paul played an active role in the Polish struggle for independence. Likely related to this, for many of the Polish nationalists, Catholicism is a driving force behind their independent movements in the 80’s, spearheaded by the labour union Solidarity (Solidarność). This movement proceeded to spawn many Polish leaders in the post-communist era of the 90’s and 00’s. The current majority party, the Law and Justice Party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS)) likes to emphasize its roots in the original Solidarity movement, which is viewed by many as an important symbol of the people and the nation in post-communist Poland.³⁶ It should be no surprise that the Law and Justice Party is wary of supranational influences in addition to being fiercely nationalist.³⁷

PiS supporters are not the only nationalist force in Poland, as support for the Law and Justice Party is far from universal. Although most if not all political groups in Poland identify themselves as nationalists and value Polish sovereignty very highly, supporters of the Civic Platform (PO) hold more liberal views in addition to upholding the traditional Polish and Christian values³⁸. PO partisans also seek to avoid relegating more power to the EU and other supranational institutions, but in contradiction to PiS seek to preserve the current balance of power between such institutions and the national government³⁹. Logically, nationalism in Poland takes on many guises through many different nationalist movements. Such movements have been gaining traction in Poland throughout the last decade it is clear that in the post-Soviet period expressions of nationalism have been diverging, although Catholic nationalism is prominent in most such movements, this is not exclusively the case.⁴⁰

³³ Pope John Paul II (1978). Homily of His Holiness John Paul II for the inauguration of his Pontificate. Accessed through: http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1978/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19781022_inizio-pontificato.html

³⁴ Kelly, J. N. D., & Walsh, M. (2015). Dictionary of Popes. Oxford University Press.

³⁵ Pope John Paul II, op. cit.

³⁶ Wysocka, O. (2009). Populism in Poland: Invisible exclusion. Perspectives on Inclusion and Exclusion.

³⁷ Kessel, van S. (2015). Populist parties in Europe: Agents of discontent?. Springer. p.145

³⁸ Liebert, U., Trenz, H., (2011). The New Politics of European Civil Society. Routledge Studies on Democratizing Europe. P.177

³⁹ Stokes, B. op. Cit. P.9

⁴⁰ Freedman, M. Is nationalism a distinct ideology? Political studies, 46(4), p.748-765.

The Polish neighbour Lithuania saw a similar, yet different road to self-determination away from Soviet influence. Whereas Poland was considered a satellite state by many contemporary Cold War media⁴¹ and intellectuals,⁴² Catholic Lithuania was universally seen as a province of the secular Soviet Union during the Cold War.⁴³ Gorbachev's large-scale reforms in the Glasnost era of the 80's promoted openness and political restructuring.⁴⁴ This new leaf in Soviet policies allowed Lithuanian nationalists to bring their movements to the open public. The initially Lithuanian Reform Movement (Sajudis) led the Lithuanian efforts to achieve an ultimately autonomous Lithuanian state in 1990. Because of Soviet inaction, the group was emboldened and together with the other Baltic states, Lithuania claimed independence from the Soviet Union by a hugely popular protest where Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians formed an almost continuous human chain all the way from Tallinn to Vilnius (See figure 1).

⁴¹ Manchester Guardian (October 30th, 1950). *Russia and her Satellites*. ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Guardian and the Observer, p.4-8.

⁴² Although this definition is disputed, it is broadly supported by Polish (often exiled) and international intellectuals that The Polish Party-State was highly interconnected with the Russian Soviet Party-State causing the Polish nation to be often referred to as a satellite state of the Soviet Union: Sharlet, R. (1984). Dissent and the Contra-System in the Soviet Union. *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, 35(3), 135-146; Ribuffo, L. P. (1990). Is Poland a Soviet Satellite? Gerald Ford, the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine, and the Election of 1976. *Diplomatic History*, 14(3), 385-404.

⁴³ Although annexed by Soviet forces after the Second World War, Lithuania's subjugation was disputed by the Council of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement between 1949 and 1951. Vardys, V. S. (2018). *Lithuania: The rebel nation*. Routledge.

⁴⁴ Hewett & Winston, 2010. Op. cit.



Figure 1: The Baltic Way: Two million people form a human chain across the three Baltic nations on the 50th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. (23 August 1989).⁴⁵

This cross-regional cooperation drew a massive amount of attention on the world stage and ultimately resulted in the independence of all the Baltic states. The solidarity between the three states became a source of pride and were used to fuel nationalist sentiments by Sajudis and the other independence movements in the three Baltic states. When Sajudis-supported political parties overwhelmingly were voted into the Lithuanian parliament in the first democratic elections of Lithuania, it became clear that international cooperation would be a core tenet of national Lithuanian policy as well as Lithuanian national identity, as the Sajudis movement had proven to be very influential on the formation of the Sajudis propagated national identity. Perhaps because of this, Pro-European sentiment is commonplace in early 21st century Lithuanian politics.⁴⁶ However, even in the early 21st century ethnic Lithuanians (and their Baltic cousins) are distrustful of the Russian minority groups that live within their nation's borders and generally treat this minority group as second rate citizens.⁴⁷ Such sentiments are

⁴⁵ Found on *Andere Tijden*. Accessed through <https://www.anderetijden.nl/a/flevering/685/Drie-dwaaze-dagen-in-Moskou>.

⁴⁶ Mažylis, L., & Unikaite, I. (2003). The Lithuanian EU accession referendum, 10-11 May 2003. EPERN: European parties elections and referendums network: EPERN Referendum Briefings [Elektroninis išteklis]. No. 8: Sussex European Institute, 2003.

⁴⁷ Verdery, K. (1998). Transnationalism, nationalism, citizenship, and property: Eastern Europe since 1989. *American ethnologist*, 25(2), p. 299.

likely related to residual nationalist sentiments in Lithuania as a result of Soviet hegemony over Lithuania throughout the 20th century. The exclusion of the Russian minority group in Lithuania⁴⁸ (although less severe than in the other Baltic states) has been cause of unrest and are potential festering grounds of ethnic conflict in the region, although EU legislation on minority rights have significantly improved the position of the Russian minority groups.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Due to the relatively hegemonous Lithuanian population compared to the other Baltic states, the rights of Russian minority groups are more extensive than in the other Baltic states, where the Russian minority makes up a large portion of the total population, making such groups a perceived threat to democratic stability; See Adrey, J. B. (2005). Minority language rights before and after the 2004 EU enlargement: The Copenhagen criteria in the Baltic states. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 26(5), 453-468.

⁴⁹ Johns, M. (2003). "Do as I say, not as I do": The European Union, Eastern Europe and minority rights. *East European Politics and Societies*, 17(4), 682-699.

3. 21st Century Nationalism

In this chapter, the main debates in contemporary nationalism for Poland and Lithuania are identified and a dichotomy of nationalist narratives will be established with examples of the argumentation of either side. A key element of nationalist movements is how they define who belongs to the in-group of a national identity and who does not. In that aspect, nationalism seems to be a tool that is both unifying and divisive. It unifies a targeted group who is treated as the in-group, while rejecting the perceived out-group,⁵⁰ even if this out-group is inhabiting the same nation that spawned that same nationalist sentiment. Due to the changing borders and suppressed nationalist movements, the concept of the nation become less clearly defined. This makes the national identity and corresponding nationalism subject to change. To identify the changes through which Poland and Lithuania went in the Soviet period, it is paramount to know what expressions of nationalism are popular in contemporary 21st century Poland and Lithuania. Such analyses are inevitably incomplete but can give an indication of the nationalist movements and debates that were and are prominent in the last decade of the 20th and first two decades of the 21st century. The highlighted differences in expressions of nationalisms will be used later to ascertain how the nations diverged by comparing the nationalist sentiments in both nations. Nationalism is not an ideology that can stand alone, but needs a host ideology to keep it from collapsing in on itself.⁵¹ This means that contemporary state of early 21st century nationalism relies heavily on social constructs and cultural tendencies that have developed within the nation over the past decades.

Freeden⁵² introduced three different host ideologies which each can have nationalist tendencies. These different forms and expression of nationalism are (often religious) conservative nationalism, liberal nationalism, and fascist nationalism.⁵³ Depending on its host ideology, nationalism can take on very different forms. Freeden advocates that these different ideologies bring out different tenets of nationalism, whilst not inherently changing the nature of nationalism, the host ideology encourages certain aspects of nationalism while discouraging others. Nationalism can be tied to a different ideological concept when its previous host ideology dissipates. Yet when it is separated from all these ideologies, it quickly crumbles in

⁵⁰ Originally a psychological concept used to describe smaller institutions and organizations, yet well applicable on the discourse surrounding nationalism; See: Mummendey, A., Klink, A., & Brown, R. (2001). Nationalism and patriotism: National identification and out-group rejection. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 40(2), 159-172.

⁵¹ Freeden, M. (1998). Is nationalism a distinct ideology?. *Political studies*, 46(4), 748-765.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

its isolation. In such cases nationalist movements will have to adapt and transform into a new guise and host ideology. The difficulty in that transformation lies in the desire to make nationalism appear to be unchanging, as it relies heavily on its reputation of a continuous historical narrative, even though this is only rarely the case.⁵⁴

Poland

Polish nationalist movements such as Solidarity constructed historical narratives much in line with the views of both Hobsbawm and Gellner. In fact, one of the chief points of contention on its national identity was part of the millennium celebrations from 1956 to 1966. Both the Catholic Church and the communist Party-state sought to use the national heritage as part of their ideological identity, trying to shape the national identity to best fit their desired ideology. This conflict on the Polish national identity was closely related to the discourse discerning the legitimacy of the party-state and ultimately resulted in the fall of the communist regime. The role of both the Catholic church and the Soviet Union in this internal conflict will be further elaborated in their respective chapters. The overcoming of the Soviet-backed Party-state is often utilized in contemporary 21st century school settings as a nationalising tool, rather than a scientific one.⁵⁵ The espousal of these nationalist values in an educational context will undoubtedly lead to an increase of nationalist sentiment in the future, which in the Polish case would likely entail reinforcement of traditional and conservative Catholic values.⁵⁶

Contemporary Polish society is strongly debating the role of the Catholic church in the Polish nation. Chief amongst the proponents of Catholic influences in Polish society is the leader of the PiS Jarosław Kaczyński: “He who raises his hand against the Church and wants to destroy it, he raises his hand against Poland.”⁵⁷ In their perspective there is little room for contention on the Role of the Church in society. Those who deny the clerical hierarchy its position in Polish society are against Poland, seeking to establish that part of the Polish identity is to protect its Catholic foundations. To supporters of PiS the Church is the Nation and therefore closely intertwined with the Polish identity: “There are no moments in Poland’s history, both in times when Poland was strong and powerful and in those when she was non-existent, without the Church.”⁵⁸ These Catholic values seem widely entrenched in Polish

⁵⁴ Rindzeviciute, E. (2003). “Nation” and “Europe”: Re-approaching the debates about Lithuanian national identity. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 34(1), p.75.

⁵⁵ Hann, C. (1998). *Op. cit.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Speech of the leader of the leading Law and Justice Party (PiS) Jarosław Kaczyński at a convention in Pułtusk, May 2019.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

society. Catholicism gets its own mention in the Polish constitution, above mention of other religious institutions: “The relations between the Republic of Poland and the Roman Catholic Church shall be determined by international treaty concluded with the Holy See, and by statute.”⁵⁹ This officially reinforces the strong Catholic tradition as part of the Polish identity according to the public institutions of Poland.

Until recently, the position of the Catholic Church in the Polish identity was practically universally accepted and almost uncontested as an institution in Poland.⁶⁰ The role of the Catholic church in dismantling the Soviet regime was seen as instrumental and its position was supported by intellectuals and the working masses alike. At the start of the 21st century however, there exists a strong criticism on the pervasiveness of abuse in the Catholic Church, sparking the secular movement which insists that the Catholic Church is no longer able to be the moral conscience of the Polish Nation as evidenced by the statement of the intellectual Leszek Jazdzewski, lead editor of the scientific journal *Liberté!* “whoever looks for absolution and transcendence in the Church, will be disappointed. Whoever looks for morality in the church, will not find it. Whoever looks for spiritual food in the Church, will leave hungry.”⁶¹ This makes it clear that the position of Catholicism and religion as core tenet of Polish national identity has become a point of contention. This discourse seems centred around the PiS party, widely supported by the working masses, and the intellectual elite of contemporary Polish society, such as those at the University of Warsaw.⁶² This rift between working masses and intellectual elites is a good example of the discourse surrounding the effectiveness of nationalist movements according to Hobsbawm and Gellner. This situation seems to reinforce the point of view of Hobsbawm, as working masses and elites seem to be standing across from each other, each seeking to propagate a different, almost opposite, version of Polish national identity. However, these intellectual elites are in fact not the elites who are in power, or at least not in a traditional position of power. Gellner would argue that different elites are rising through political parties like PiS and seek to utilize the dominance of the Catholic Church to achieve a more homogeneous, and therefore more united population. Those who seek to diversify the Polish society, or challenge the role of the Catholic Church therein, undermine that goal and therefore must be opposed.

⁵⁹ The constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2nd April, 1997. As published in *Dziennik Ustaw* No. 78, item 483. Art. 25(4).

⁶⁰ Borowik, I. (2002). The Roman Catholic Church in the process of democratic transformation: The case of Poland. *Social Compass*, 49(2), 239-252.

⁶¹ Lecture by the lead editor of *Liberte!*, Leszek Jazdzewski to the University of Warsaw in May 2019.

⁶² *Ibid.*

Due to this ethnically homogeneous population, with over 96% claiming to have a Polish nationality, with the largest minority groups consisting of Germans (49.000), Ukrainians(36.000), Belarusians(37.000) and Roma(12.000),⁶³ Poland has seen very low ethnic violence after the (partly) Soviet mandated mass displacements of the 40's and 50's.⁶⁴ Even peoples who are often targeted by such ethnic violence, such as the Roma and Jewish minorities, are largely tolerated. However, as a response to the perceived failure of the EU to handle the refugee crisis⁶⁵, the discourse of the PiS party is actively using 'us' and 'them' rhetoric to alienate non-Christian immigrants: "As Christians, we are raised to be tolerant and respectful of other cultures. But we ask the same kind of respect from others. It is our right to decide whom we welcome to our own house. Because there are cultures, there are values, which simply cannot coexist."⁶⁶ This rhetoric by PiS Party Prime minister Beata Szydlo, a major conservative figure in Polish politics, is specifically aimed at non-Christian immigration from outside the EU, which is treated as near to the Polish 'us' as long as Polish autonomy suffered no transgression.⁶⁷ In this rhetoric, the Polish Catholic heritage and identity is actively deployed to justify the governmental stance on immigration and a multicultural state.

Lithuania

Like Poland, Lithuania is a nation of great homogeneity of population. Close to 82% of the population is ethnically Lithuanian, yet there are starkly diverging identities present in Lithuania. Both Catholicism and Eastern Orthodox, Latin and Cyrillic, pro-Soviets and liberals are all prevalent in the nation. Differences between urban and agrarian regions are large.⁶⁸ These differences in an otherwise very ethnically homogeneous population are celebrated by liberal nationalists, as the freedom to make one's own choices is a central point of national pride in Lithuania. This combination on conservative and liberal elements⁶⁹ make for an unlikely

⁶³ Jaskułowski, K., Majewski, P., & Surmiak, A. (2018). Teaching the nation: history and nationalism in Polish school history education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 39(1), 77-91; Główny Urząd Statystyczny (2011) 2011 Polish Census. P.94.

⁶⁴ Hann, C. (1998). Postsocialist nationalism: rediscovering the past in southeast Poland. *Slavic review*, 57(4), p. 841.

⁶⁵ Stokes, B. (2016). Euroskepticism beyond Brexit. Pew Research Center, p.6.

⁶⁶ Prime Minister Beata Szydlo at the inauguration of the academic year in Krakow in September 2016. Passage derived from: Cap, P. (2018). 'We don't want any immigrants or terrorists here': The linguistic manufacturing of xenophobia in the post-2015 Poland. *Discourse & Society*, 29(4), 380-398.

⁶⁷ Cap, P. (2018). 'We don't want any immigrants or terrorists here': The linguistic manufacturing of xenophobia in the post-2015 Poland. *Discourse & Society*, 29(4), 380-398.

⁶⁸ Vardys, V. S. (2018). *Lithuania: The rebel nation*. Routledge. P.4

⁶⁹ Rindzeviciute, E. (2003). "Nation" and "Europe": Re-approaching the debates about Lithuanian national identity. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 34(1), 74-91.

nationalism and national identity that encompasses elements of both the west and the east.⁷⁰ This melting pot or clash of cultures, depending on who you ask, forms a significant part of the Lithuanian national identity, and is seen as a convergence of east and west by some and as an unique isolated cultural phenomenon by others.⁷¹

Because of Lithuania's close ties with the fellow Baltic states and Poland, minority groups from these nations are generally accepted and integrated in Lithuanian society. Although the Polish minority groups have caused trouble in the past during Polish-Lithuanian border disputes in the interbellum, such issues are less prevalent in contemporary Lithuania, symbolized by Poland being one of the first nations to recognize Lithuanian independence in 1990.⁷²

The liberal tenets of nationalist movements in Lithuania is strongly tied to its young yet sturdy democratic tradition.⁷³ This is seen by some as a manifestation of western Europeanism⁷⁴, by others as a continuation of the historical aversion to the autocratic nations which threatened and subjugated the Lithuanian autonomy⁷⁵. The prominence of the democratic traditions is further emphasized by its inclusion in the Lithuanian armed forces oath of Loyalty:

*"I, [...], without any reservations, do solemnly swear to faithfully serve and defend the Republic of Lithuania, its freedom and independence, with all my might and without regard for my life, to conscientiously obey the Republic of Lithuania's Constitution, laws, and orders of my superiors, safeguard classified information, and promise to be a moral and honourable Lithuanian soldier."*⁷⁶

The tenets of freedom and constitutionally protected democratic values underlined by Lithuanian independence are the core tenets of what it means to be a member of the Lithuanian armed forces, which are usually bulwarks of nationalist sentiment. The explicit mention of

⁷⁰ Klumbyte, N. (2003). Ethnographic note on nation: narratives and symbols of the early post-socialist nationalism in Lithuania. *Dialectical Anthropology*, 27(3-4), 279-295.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Lane, A. T. (2001). *Lithuania: Stepping Westward*. Routledge. p. 209

⁷³ Republic of Lithuania Law on Citizenship, No. VIII-391 [], I-2027, 5 December 1991, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b5960.html>

⁷⁴ Rindzeviciute, E. (2003). *Op. Cit.* P.88.

⁷⁵ Verdery, K. (1998). Transnationalism, nationalism, citizenship, and property: Eastern Europe since 1989. *American ethnologist*, 25(2), 291-306.

⁷⁶ Republic of Lithuania law on the organisation of the national defence system and military service. May 5, 1998 No. VIII-723.P.4.

freedom is omitted in both the modern Polish military oath of loyalty,⁷⁷ as well as the deeply Catholic one during the Second World War.⁷⁸

Another core tenet of the liberal vision on Lithuanian national identity that in addition of the self-determination of the nation, the individual should have full self-determination as well. This is best evidenced by the liberal approach of residence and citizenship of the Lithuanian nation. The rights of both EU citizens and non-EU minority groups, such as the Russian, Belarusian, Jewish and Ukrainian minority groups in Lithuania are well protected and actively safeguarded.⁷⁹ However, all these minority groups find their populations are decreasing, causing the Lithuanian nation to become increasingly homogeneous. Shortly after Lithuanian renewal of independence in 1989, Lithuanian citizenship was granted to all non-ethnic Lithuanians who “choose if they wish to become a citizen”⁸⁰. After a 2-year grace period, naturalization procedures were introduced with extended requirements. This ability to choose for Lithuanian citizenship is very indicative of post-Sajudis Lithuanian national identity, where a strong desire for autonomous self-determination and freedom is leading in the Lithuanian political discourse of the early 21st century.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Polish Military Oath, October 3, 1992. Art. 1. Accessed through: <https://www.prawo.pl/akty/dz-u-1992-77-386,16794908.html>

⁷⁸ Swearing in recruits for the Polish Army, 1940. *British Pathe*. Accessed through: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSxbdbIKeGs>

⁷⁹ Resler, T. J. (1997). Dilemmas of democratisation: Safeguarding minorities in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 49(1), 89-106.

⁸⁰ From Minority Rights. Citizenship law revised after 1991, introducing a more extensive naturalization procedure. See revised law at “Republic of Lithuania Law on Citizenship, No. VIII-391, I-2027, 5 December 1991, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b5960.htm>”

⁸¹ Donskis, L. (2003). *Identity and Freedom: Mapping Nationalism and Social Criticism in Twentieth Century Lithuania*. Routledge.

4. Role of Soviet Union (1945-1990)

During the height of Soviet in Eastern Europe Poland and Lithuania were exposed to comparable yet different circumstances. Both were subjected to significant Soviet influence, but Poland had significantly more autonomy as a satellite state and the leading signatory nation of the Warsaw Pact. Whereas Lithuania was seen as little more than a Soviet province, with a higher than average autonomy. However, Lithuania and Poland saw comparable levels of Soviet influence in the post-Stalin period. Secular Communism was the leading political and ideological doctrine in both nations but was not so dominant that no option for dissent was available. Ironically, these communist regimes would be considered the nation's elite in the Marxian approach of Hobsbawm. This is not to say that these regimes had no support amongst the working class, especially rural regions were relatively content with their respective communist regimes. After Stalin's death, neither nation sought the route of aggression to topple the Soviet regime, and although often threatened, little violence was committed in the struggle for full independence and self-determination in either nation. Yet the measures, methods and ideological background of the dissenting groups were very different and have had their lasting effects on the national identity of these nations. The social movements that rose to unite the nations resistance to soviet rule sought to mould nationalism to fit their narrative. Their influence on the national identity of their respective nations is a testament to their success.

Poland

In Fukuyaman fashion, the German threat was actively used and emphasized by the Polish People's Republic to establish a base of national pride in the late 40's and 50's. A clear example of this practice is seen in the Polish People's Army, used by the Party-State as a "cherished bulwark of national pride"⁸², between 1947 and 1989, which is starting with the sentence: "I pledge to the people of Poland to fight for the last breath in defense of the Fatherland liberated from German violence and steadfastly help in the defense of the freedom, independence and strength of the Republic of Poland."⁸³. Neither before 1947, nor after the Soviet period in 1989, have Germans been mentioned in the oath of loyalty. The clear attempt to make use of the hostile attitude of many Poles towards the German nation (pre-World War Two) and its people. As reprisal for the horrors inflicted upon the Polish people by Nazi Germany, Germans faced

⁸² Kunicki, M. (2012). Heroism, Raison d'état, and National Communism: Red Nationalism in the Cinema of People's Poland. *Contemporary European History*, 21(2), p.242.

⁸³ Przysięga Wojska Polskiego "Oath of the Polish Army", (1947). Polona Database. Accessed through <https://polona.pl/item/przysiega-wojska-polskiego-inc-przysiegam-urowczyście-ziemi-polskiej-i-narodowi.NzY1Mjg3MjI/1/#info:metadata>.

mass expulsion from the newly acquired Polish territories. Over 3 million Germans were expelled from former Prussian lands and another million was naturalized as Polish citizens⁸⁴. With the expulsion of the German minority out of Polish lands and the temporary abdication of the German nation(s) from the world stage, neither of which could be seen as a threat to Polish hegemony. Because of this, the effectivity of the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ tactic diminished over time as relations with East Germany became somewhat steady⁸⁵ and the memory of the Second World War became less vivid. As a result, Polish intellectuals across the political spectrum sought to shift the focus of their vision of Polish national identity to a more sustainable and independent identity grounded in a historical narrative, rather than a narrative that had its foundation in Fukuyaman discord and conflict.



Figure 2: US Bureau of Engraving and Printing publishing stamps celebrating 1000 years of Polish Christianity is support of the Catholic Church of Poland (30 July 1966)⁸⁶. Noteworthy are the crown as part of the eagle in defiance of the Polish eagle being depicted without a crown

⁸⁴ Following the Second World War, Poland saw a massive populations and demographic shift on both eastern and western sides of its territory, yielding territory to the Soviet Union and acquiring Prussian lands. This caused massive forced immigrations and expulsions for both Poles and Germans: Eberhardt, P. (2006). Political Migrations in Poland. *Bibliotheca Europae Orientalis XXV*, Studium Europy Wschodniej UW, Warszawa. P.44

⁸⁵ Spohn, W. (2003). European East–West integration, nation-building and national identities: the reconstruction of German–Polish relations. In *Europeanisation, National Identities and Migration*. Routledge, p.130.

⁸⁶ Found on Mystic Stamp. Accessed through: <https://www.mysticstamp.com/Products/United-States/1313/USA/>

by the Polish Party-state, as well as the focus on Christianity instead of Catholicism, which is associated with western democratic values in the east-European bloc.⁸⁷

Both the Party-state and the Catholic Church had their own version of the historical narratives they sought to link to the Polish national identity. The Party-state emphasized the self-determination of the Polish nation as a secular and independent nation with a strong focus on equality, whereas the Catholic Church sought to link that nation to its Catholic roots using strong symbolism of Polish hegemony and faith.⁸⁸ The stage of the battle for the Polish national identity between these two narratives was the millennial celebration between 1957 and 1966, meant to celebrate the 1000 year existence of Poland and the Catholic Church of Poland.⁸⁹ Their conflicting interpretations of the millennium anniversary became the centrepiece of the conflict between the two institutions. The opposing views differed on the nature of the Polish state as a secular or as a Catholic entity, causing both institutions to try and claim the celebration as their own. This conflict culminated in the refusal of the state to let Pope Paul VI visit Poland to attend the celebrations, causing the conflict for the national Polish identity to attract international attention. An example of this international attention is the stamps made in the US to celebrate 1000 years of Christianity (see Figure 2) in Poland, thereby seeking to indirectly undermine the moral legitimacy of the Party-state and fuelling the fires of religious nationalism in Poland. This nationalist sentiment could not be swayed towards a more Soviet-backed ideology, partly because of its dependency on the Soviet Union and partly because of this perceived loss of the historical foundation of Polish identity as secularism was seen as something profoundly communist.⁹⁰

The refusal of the Party-state to let Pope Paul VI was actively brought up by Pope John Paul to further emphasize the deeply religious connotation of the Polish identity by reiterating the Catholic nature of the Millennium celebration: “I immediately understood that it was for me to fulfil that desire, the desire that Paul VI had been unable to carry out at the Millennium of the Baptism of Poland.”⁹¹ Additionally, he emphasized the importance of Poland to Catholicism, seeking to swell national pride: “We know that the recently deceased Paul VI, the first pilgrim Pope after so many centuries, ardently desired to set foot on the soil of Poland,

⁸⁷ Klumbyte, N. op. cit. p. 286

⁸⁸ Borowik, I. (2002). The Roman Catholic Church in the process of democratic transformation: The case of Poland. *Social Compass*, 49(2), 239-252.

⁸⁹ Davies, N. (2005). *God's playground a history of Poland: Volume II: 1795 to the present (Vol. 2)*. Oxford University Press.

⁹⁰ Borowik, I. (2002). Op. cit. p.239

⁹¹ Pope John Paul II (1979). *Apostolic Journey to Poland. Holy Mass and Act of Consecration to the Mother of God: Homily of his holiness John Paul II*. Vatican Archives.

especially at Jasna Gora.[The location of the Black Madonna, a major symbol of Catholic Poland]”⁹². Cleverly using the Party-state’s refusal of the previous papal visit to reinforce Catholicism as a core tenet of Polish national identity, thereby indirectly defying the Party-state.

With his pilgrimage and words, Pope John Paul II inspired the Solidarity movement, which started out as a labour union, but evolved into a nationwide social movement against communism. ⁹³ The Solidarity movement is the largest social movement to have spawned from Soviet antagonism in Poland (and perhaps anywhere).⁹⁴ This group, which mainly portrayed itself as opposing the status quo of the communist regime, sought largescale societal changes to the economic and political system of the nation. Although initially sparked by the Papal influences in Poland, the movement was primarily caused by the national unrest that followed the economic decline of the late 70’s, where the perception was that the Polish economy was stagnating and the government deeply in debt as a result of reckless government policy.⁹⁵ This antipathy to the Soviet leadership further diminished the already damaged legitimacy of the Party-state as it was seen of trying to change the core tenets of Polish society and identity. With that, the Party-state’s ideological battle for the Polish national identity against the Catholic church was lost.

Solidarity mobilized the different classes of Poland and their frustration with the Party-state and eventually managed to peacefully topple the Soviet-backed regime. The movement linked the striking and malcontent working masses to the (international) Press, thereby not only giving the striking worker classes a voice, but also allowing them to coordinate throughout the nation. Intellectual elites showed solidarity with the movement and acted as a mediating voice with the Party-state as well as counselling the movement on how to proceed.⁹⁶ The movement found that it had significant different views on what the Solidarity, and had trouble consolidating their members into committing to one specific goal or purpose. Because of this Solidarity’s popularity waned somewhat in 1981 after the movement was outlawed by the Party-state⁹⁷, as the movement found that it largely relied on its popularity, spirit of resistance and momentum to maintain a driven movement. The Solidarity movement had adopted some of the traits of the Party-states in having centralized rapidly and had constructed a clear

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Mason, D. S. (1989). Solidarity as a new social movement. *Political Science Quarterly*, 104(1).

⁹⁴ Mason, D. S. (1989). *Op. cit.* p. 41

⁹⁵ Adamski, W. W. (1982). Structural and generational aspects of a social conflict. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.; Mason, D. S. (1989) *op. Cit.* p.43

⁹⁶ Mason D. S. (1989). *Op. cit.* p.44

⁹⁷ Mason, D. S. (1989). *Op. cit.* p.47.

hierarchical structure too rapidly, making their suppression easier for the regime. Only after the adoption of the Glasnost doctrine, and the following more conciliatory leadership of the Party-state, could the Solidarity movement rise again with the help of the established hierarchy of the Catholic church, ultimately forcing the Soviet leadership to negotiate with the movement in 1988 leading up to new elections that were dominated by the Solidarity movement, ultimately resulting in the first non-communist government in Poland since the Second World War.

Through the Solidarity movement, which claimed Catholicism as the reason for their focus on non-violence as voiced by Zbigniew Bujak "draw from the values of Christian ethics, from our national traditions and from the workers' and democratic traditions of the labor world"⁹⁸, Catholicism became linked to western democratic values.⁹⁹ As a result, many contemporary political parties like to trace their lineage back to this movement. Additionally, the rapidly changing society that the policies of urbanization and industrialization of the Party-state had wrought, ultimately resulted in an increasingly educated and literate population. This in turn resulted in a somewhat unstable situation as educated citizens tend to be more politically active. This rapid development became the end of not only the Soviet regime, but that of the Solidarity movement as well. As a result, caution and an aversion to a rapidly changing world and society caused the successor parties of the Solidarity movement and large portions of the Polish population to be more inclined to a more conservative view on government policy and the Polish culture in general. Seeking for moral guidance in the church, rather than international cultural developments.

The rise of the Solidarity movement as an contradictory voice to communism seems a testament to the merit of the theories brought forward by both Hobsbawm and Gellner. Hobsbawm specifically pointed out the success of working class nationalist movements like Solidarity and posed these as antagonistic towards an elite-constructed nationalist movement (the Party-State). The Solidarity seemed especially effective in utilizing the invented national symbols of the Catholic church to establish Catholic society as the historical culture of the Polish people. Gellner's position that such sentiments rise through industrialization seems spot on, as the Solidarity movement was initially a labour union from the factories in the dockyards of Gdansk. Additionally, the movement was only successful in standing up to the Soviet-backed regime once the extensive hierarchy of the Catholic church was utilized, providing a solid

⁹⁸ The First Solidarity Congress (1982). World Affairs, Vol. 145, No. 1, Solidarity: A Documentary History. p.26

⁹⁹ Borowik, I. (2002). Op. cit

argument for the usage of some sort of societal elites, in this case religious ones, to be able to solidify the movement.

Lithuania

Lithuanians did not enjoy the same degree of self-determination that Poles did. Lithuanian desire for self-determination took on various forms during the Soviet period. After enjoying a brief period of independence in the interbellum, Lithuania was invaded by Stalin after the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1939. During his rule the ethnic Lithuanian people were repressed and displaced on a massive scale. Not one year after, Lithuania was conquered by the German Reich in 1941 during whose occupation the Jewish population faced mass deportation and the Holocaust.¹⁰⁰ When the Second World War ended in 1945, the Lithuanian battle for independence was just beginning. As a province in the Soviet Union, they fell under direct control of Soviet leadership, and suffered heavily as a result. The Soviet regime brutally engaged the anti-Soviet insurrectionists through large scale deportations to Siberian Gulags and the seizing of individual and corporate property throughout Lithuania. As a result, between 10% and 12% of Lithuania's population, mostly dissidents and intellectual elites, were deported to Siberia from 1940 to 1951.¹⁰¹ The self-proclaimed Council of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement¹⁰² represented a unified Lithuanian resistance to Soviet rule. In 1949, they declared to be "the supreme political body of the Nation, in charge of the political and military fight for the liberation of the Nation."¹⁰³ They declared that "The State system of Lithuania shall be a democratic republic."¹⁰⁴ And that "The sovereign authority of Lithuania shall belong to the Nation."¹⁰⁵ This unilateral declaration of independence had a strong liberal and western democratic tone, seeking support from the Western hemisphere: "The governance of Lithuania shall be exercised by the Seimas elected through free, democratic, universal, and equal elections by secret ballot and by the formed Government."¹⁰⁶ This appeal for western aid fell on deaf ears because the western powers wanted to avoid escalating the tension between east and west.

¹⁰⁰ Davoliūtė, V. (2014). *The making and breaking of Soviet Lithuania: memory and modernity in the wake of war*. Routledge.

¹⁰¹ Petersen, R. D. (2002). *Understanding ethnic violence: Fear, hatred, and resentment in twentieth-century Eastern Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰² The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania (1949). Declaration of the council of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement. Accessed through <https://www.lrkt.lt/en/legal-information/lithuanias-independence-acts/declaration-of-the-council-of-the-lithuanian-freedom-fight-movement/364>. This declaration was supported by all of the military public formations present in Lithuania. This movement had united leadership of all areas of contemporary Lithuania.

¹⁰³ Ibid. art. 1.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. art. 3.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. art. 4.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. art. 5.

Ultimately, through heavy reprisal and the systematic deportation of ethnic Lithuanians to Siberian Gulags, the Lithuanian dream of a liberal democratic state was crushed by the Soviet Regime.¹⁰⁷

In stark contrast to Poland, where nationalist movements were heavily influenced by the Catholic Church, late 20th century Lithuanian nationalist movements were largely the product of a desire for Lithuanian self-determination propagated through Lithuanian intellectual elites. Although such sentiments were initially repressed, eventually displays of the Lithuanian identity became more and more accepted in public life.¹⁰⁸ The narrative surrounding Lithuanian nationalist movements were subject to change due to the unique situation of the elites in Lithuania. In the decades following the mass deportations to Siberia, urbanisation soared as a result of forced mobilization to support the increasingly industrializing Lithuanian society.¹⁰⁹ During this period, Lithuania saw great upheaval with a newfound social mobility. New intellectual elites established themselves as Lithuanian society steered away from an agrarian society to an industrial one. These new elites had a certain degree of freedom to express themselves after the death of Stalin in 1953. This liberty gave Lithuanian elites room to redefine the Lithuanian identity as part of the Soviet Union and give new meaning to what it means to be Lithuanian, as a result, the Lithuanian culture revitalized itself, although initially as part of the Soviet Union. During this period, Lithuanian intellectuals constructed the idea of the Lithuanian nation that fitted in the secular Soviet world view, abandoning the Catholic roots of the previous generation of intellectuals. An understanding with the Soviet regime was established, where Lithuanian elites did not actively seek independence and enjoyed increased autonomy and relative freedom. These elites had initially been displaced from the rural areas of Lithuania but had the chance to blossom under the Soviet rule due to a period of higher social mobility as a result the previous deportations. This set them on a collision course with the middle class intellectual deportees who returned from the Siberian Gulags after Stalin's death.¹¹⁰ The former had established themselves as the nation's new elites and could openly discuss their displacement from the Lithuanian heartland, while the latter were understandably highly critical of the Soviet regime, yet found that discourse on their suffering was still very much a taboo in Soviet Lithuania. The first publicized reference to the deportations to Siberia

¹⁰⁷ Davoliūtė, V. (2014). Op. cit.

¹⁰⁸ Whitmeyer, J. M. (2002). Elites and popular nationalism. *The British journal of sociology*, 53(3), p.335.

¹⁰⁹ Davoliūtė, V. (2014). Op. cit.

¹¹⁰ Rindzeviciute, E. (2014). *The Making and Breaking of Soviet Lithuania: Memory and Modernity in the Wake of War* by Violeta Davoliūtė. *Ab Imperio*. 2014.480-488.

by Justinas Marcinkevičius were only publicized in 1970.¹¹¹ This lack of processing of the Jewish deportations of the holocaust, the deportations of separatist dissidents to Siberia and finally the economic displacement and forced urbanization left their mark on the Lithuanian people, with the leading intellectual elites seemingly having ‘forgotten’ the tragic deportations of dissidents, Jews and other undesirables in favour of their own woes on the matter of displacement while still making the best of their situation.¹¹² Even now, 30 years after the Lithuanian independence, naturalization procedures include clauses for both those who were exiled from Lithuanian soil because of foreign occupation and their descendants: “[...] deportees, political prisoners or their children born in exile shall be granted citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania”.¹¹³ As much as a third of the ethnic Lithuanian population still lived outside of Lithuania in 2015.¹¹⁴

These two diverging intellectual narratives became the leading discourse of interpretation of Lithuanian identity. With the former seeking to emphasize the resurgence of the Lithuanian identity under Soviet secularism and the latter still loyal to the ‘old’ ideals of pre-soviet liberalism and Catholicism. This dichotomy was beneficial to the Lithuanian ambitions of a self-determined nation-state through three different ways.

The first is that even though these two groups of intellectuals had different ideas of how the Lithuanian national identity would prosper, both identified as distinctly Lithuanian, causing the Lithuanian drive for a national identity to survive the Soviet cultural indoctrination. While the dissidents were deported under Stalinist doctrine in the 40’s and early 50’s, the newly intellectual elite has nationalist ideas that were more in line with the Soviet world view, but were still distinctly Lithuanian. This caused the discourse to shift back to identity discourse when these deportees returned after the Siberian exile.¹¹⁵

Secondly, because of the perceived control of the new Lithuanian elites by the Soviet Regime, this new Lithuanian discourse was left largely unmolested, resulting in peaceful dialogue between these two intellectual groups. This left the lasting perception of the Soviet regime that an uprising in Lithuania was unlikely, and that they were best left in relative autonomy.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Gatrell, P. (2007). Introduction: world wars and population displacement in Europe in the twentieth century. *Contemporary European History*, 16(4), 415-426.

¹¹² *Ibid.* p. 183.

¹¹³ Law on Citizenship, 17 September 2002 No IX-1078 (as amended by 18 July 2006 No. X – 768). Republic of Lithuania. Article 14.2

¹¹⁴ Lietuvos statistikos departamentas (2015). *Lietuviai Pasaulyje*. p.6.

¹¹⁵ Bulota, R. (2008). The impact of Language and culture on Sąjūdis. *Regioninės studijos*. p. 190.

¹¹⁶ Davoliūtė, V. (2014). *Op. cit.*

Finally, this political coexistence proved to be the main driving force of the Lithuanian independence movement in the Glasnost era.¹¹⁷ Eventually this led to very broad support for Lithuanian independence throughout all political affiliations, even those who considered themselves socialists or otherwise pro-Soviet. This political diversity is still visible in the 2010's with almost 30% of agrarian communities identifying having a positive disposition towards communism.¹¹⁸ The Sajudis movement, claiming Lithuania's independence in the interbellum and its pre-modern nationhood as grounds for renewed independence¹¹⁹, managed to use this historical narrative to mobilize the entire political spectrum behind their movement, making an almost universal declaration of independence.¹²⁰

Unsurprisingly, the Lithuanian declaration independence from the Sajudis movement came as a shock to the Soviet Regime and the new Lithuanian government was expected to back down after negotiations. The American journal *Foreign Affairs* predicted at the time: "The Lithuanian Government has already agreed to suspend some of its independence legislation in an attempt to negotiate a compromise with Moscow"¹²¹ which was expected to merely yield "the promise of political and economic autonomy"¹²², even though "Virtually all Lithuanians continue to support sovereignty for the republic – including a majority of the republic's non-Lithuanian residents".¹²³ This non-Lithuanian loyalty to the cause contributed to the republic's generous naturalisation procedure in the two years after the declaration of independence where 90% of the non-ethnic Lithuanian minority groups were granted citizenship by 1991¹²⁴. Minority groups who made use of this opportunity could void their current citizenship and acquire Lithuanian citizenship without the need to speak the language or be a resident for an extended period of time.

The case of Lithuanian independence movements seem to have been primarily fuelled by both secular and Catholic intellectual elites who together seemed to represent a vast majority of occupants of Lithuanian territory. These nationalist sentiments propagated by elites seem in

¹¹⁷ Klumbytė, N. (2011). Political intimacy: Power, laughter, and coexistence in late Soviet Lithuania. *East European Politics and Societies*, 25(4), 658-677.

¹¹⁸ Vardys, V. S. (2018). *Lithuania: The rebel nation*. Routledge. P.4

¹¹⁹ Lithuanian independence movements followed the same steps in their declaration of independence following the First World War. The different phases that the Lithuanian independence movement followed show similarities not only to the Sajudis movement, but to other independence movements in both the Baltic states and other Soviet territories, giving the Sajudis movement allies not only within Lithuania, but the other Baltic states as well, as they went through a similar development at roughly the same time: Hroch, M. (1993). From national movement to fully-fledged nation. *New left review*, (198), p.9.

¹²⁰ Bulota, R. (2008). P.191

¹²¹ Olcott, M. B. (1990). The Lithuanian Crisis. *Foreign affairs*, 69(3), p.30-46.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Fearon, J. D., Laitin, D. D., (2006). *Lithuania*. *Stanford University*. P.16

line with Gellner's view of a constructed national identity. Although Lithuanian nationalist movements had previous flare-ups when society in the region was largely agrarian, they were only successful in mobilizing large parts of the Lithuanian society after extensive industrialization had brought new elites into the discourse. Cooperation between the secular new and Catholic old elites ultimately created the public support needed for a successful nationalist independence movement in the form of Sąjūdis. Soviet antagonism followed by a relatively high amount of tolerance for dissent caused the broad Lithuanian political spectrum to unify in their nationalist desire for self-determination. This cooperation across the political spectrum, in addition to the cooperation with the other Baltic nations became the birthplace of a liberal outlook on the Lithuanian national identity.

5. Role of the Catholic Church

Perhaps one of the most influential institutions in European history has been the Catholic Church. Catholic traditions tended to be relatively uniform before the Protestant reformation. Even in the 20th century, many European nations shared similar Christian traditions.¹²⁵ Although its influence is generally believed to be waning, its self-proclaimed doctrine of compassion, morality, solidarity, and unity through faith¹²⁶ were present in Europe throughout the 20th and 21st century, with many Europeans deriving their social and moral compass from Christian morality.¹²⁷ Although the exact content and effect of the Catholic Church is hotly debated, its influence on European values, national identity and symbolism is widely supported¹²⁸, as is evidenced by the large scale at which Christian educative institutions are operating even in the early 21st century.¹²⁹ In times of uncertainty and lack of moral leadership through governmental and political leadership, religion is seen as an important cornerstone to fall back on.¹³⁰ The 20th century saw many such crises of leadership, most prominently in the late 80's, where Soviet influence was waning in both Poland and Lithuania, and Catholic symbols were used by social movements in both nations who sought to fill that void to achieve autonomy from the Soviet Union. Because of this Lithuania and Poland saw a rise of faith and expressions Catholicism that were increasingly tied to the national identity, as these social movements increasingly portrayed themselves as the primary propagator of their nation's identity.¹³¹

Poland

Polonia semper fidelis: "Poland ever faithful" vouched King Jan Kazimierz as he tied the Polish nation to Catholicism and the Holy Mary after driving back the Swedish invaders at the Monastery of Jasna Gora in 1656.¹³² The impossible victory over the heretical Swedes was proclaimed to be a blessing of the Queen of Poland: the Black Madonna that is housed in Jasna Gora. Her image became an important symbol in the counter-Reformation following the Peace

¹²⁵ Winter, W. L. (1947). The cultural integration of Europe. Social Forces. P.27

¹²⁶ The Life of Man: To know and love God. *Vatican Archives*. Accessed through http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P2.HTM

¹²⁷ Hornsby-Smith, M. P., & Procter, M. (1995). Catholic identity, religious context and environmental values in western Europe: evidence from the European values surveys. *Social Compass*, 42(1), 27-34.

¹²⁸ Ibid.;

¹²⁹ Cuyppers, S. E. (2013). The ideal of a Catholic education in a secularized society. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 7(4), 426-445.

¹³⁰ Zubrzycki, G. (2001). "We, the Polish Nation": Ethnic and civic visions of nationhood in Post-Communist constitutional debates. *Theory and Society*, 30(5), 629-668.

¹³¹ Ramet, S. P. (1989). Religion and nationalism in Soviet and East European politics. Duke University Press.

¹³² Zubrzycki, G. (2011). History and the national sensorium: Making sense of Polish mythology. *Qualitative Sociology*, 34(1), 21-57.

of Westphalia in 1648.¹³³ After the simultaneous founding and conversion of Poland in 966, this moment is considered to be as pivotal as it is legendary to the idea of a Catholic Poland.¹³⁴ Until the communist era after the Second World War, the Catholic identity of Poland had been mostly uncontested, except for a Protestant minority which was identified as distinctly Prussian.¹³⁵ Catholicism had been highlighted as a core tenet of Polish identity throughout the 18th and 19th century of Eastern Orthodox Russian hegemony and the newly united protestant German states to the west. With the introduction of Soviet Secularism, such friction diminished somewhat, only to flare up during the 10 year long Great Novena, leading up to the celebrations of the Millennium anniversary of 1966.¹³⁶ During this period, the Catholic Church amplified the symbolic Catholic heritage of Poland through a renewal of the Polish Vows to the Holy Mary. A replica of the Black Madonna was sent on a pilgrimage throughout the country and wherever she went, religious zeal flared up. Intellectuals and working class masses rallied behind the leadership of the Catholic clergy in defiance of the party-state.¹³⁷ These celebrations hijacked the party-state's own secular celebrations, causing a friction between the clergy and the Soviet-backed party-state.¹³⁸ This event was a battle of icons for the Polish identity and the very foundation on which the future Polish nation would be built. The Catholic church, carefully highlighting the symbols of Catholicism in Poland which had seen much less attention in the previous decades, crafted the perception that Catholic tradition lies at the heart of Polish identity, above any communist notions of secularity. Because of this, the regime started excluding the clergy from many official affairs, claiming that the Church was:

“

1. Failing to observe administrative regulations;
2. Dividing believers from non-believers;
3. Portraying religion in Poland for foreign audiences in a manner which is not even used in Western nations; and
4. Exciting Religious fanaticism which has hampered the stabilization of Church-State relations

¹³³ Tazbir, J. (1990). The Polonization of Christianity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In D. Loades & K. Walsh (Eds.), *Faith and identity: Christian political experience* (pp. 117–135). Oxford: Blackwell.

¹³⁴ Ramet, S. P. (1989). *Op. Cit.*

¹³⁵ Parushev, P., & Pilli, T. (2004). *Protestantism in Eastern Europe to the present day*. The Blackwell Companion to Protestantism, p. 157.

¹³⁶ Zubrzycki, G. (2009). *The crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and religion in post-communist Poland*. University of Chicago Press. P.63.

¹³⁷ Monticone, R. C. (1966). *The Catholic Church in Poland, 1945-1966*. *The Polish Review*, 75-100.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p.64.

By doing this, the state implied that the Clergy was infringing the new Polish constitution of 1952, which stated that “The abuse of freedom of conscience and religion for purposes of endangering the interests of the Polish People’s Republic shall be punished.”¹⁴⁰ Further deteriorating relations between Church and State. Although the Polish Church headed by Cardinal Wyszynski was on the receiving end of criticism of Catholics throughout Europe, they did not fail to expand their influence over the Polish political landscape.¹⁴¹ This culminated in the mass celebrations of the Sacrum Poloniae Millennium, where both state and church celebrated the 1000th anniversary of Poland and the Polish identity. The state sought to emphasize the Polish state as an isolated identity, rather than a Catholic religious one, through slogans like “A thousand years of the Polish State”, “Socialism and Fatherland”, and “The Party with the People”. The Catholic Church emphasized the religious identity of Polish nationhood through slogans like “Deo et Patrie”, “The Nation with the Church”, and most prominently “Polonia Semper Fidelis”.¹⁴² Through this constructivist approach, the Church solidified the role of Catholicism in Polish society, solidifying the pre-modern origin of the Polish Nation¹⁴³, rather than the contemporary Soviet satellite state. With this powerful message, and through shrewd political prowess by Cardinal Wyszynski, the Polish Catholic Church sought to solidify the Polish Catholic identity under the Black Madonna.

The election of Polish Pope John Paul II only further propagated the Catholic identity in Poland, an event that since his death in 2005 is officially commemorated as the national holiday Pope John Paul II Day.¹⁴⁴ Although never openly opposing the rule of law of the Polish regime, the Pope actively sought to reinforce the idea of a free and Catholic Poland. During his first international visit in Mexico he spoke: “I referred to the sentence which already possesses the right of citizenship in the history of the Church and of Poland: “Polonia Semper Fidelis””,¹⁴⁵ thereby tying his pontificate to the Polish struggle for the acknowledgement of its Catholic identity. Those three words stung the Polish Regime because of the implied pre-modern history

¹³⁹ Bromke, A. (1964). The Znak Group in Poland. *East Europe*. Vol. 13, No. 7. p. 45

¹⁴⁰ Rosada, S. & Gwózdź, J. (1952). Church and State in Poland. p.178.

¹⁴¹ Monticone, R. C. (1966). Op. cit. p. 93.

¹⁴² Zubrzycki, G. (2001). Op. Cit. p. 64.

¹⁴³ Wicke, C. (2015). Helmut Kohl quest for normality. *His representation of the German Nation and himself*. Berghahn, New York. P.29.

¹⁴⁴ Konferencja Episkopatu Polski. (2015). John Paul II—A Patron of the Family. The letter of the Polish Episcopate announcing the celebration of the fifteenth Papal Day.

¹⁴⁵ Pope John Paul II (1979) Apostolic Journey to the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and the Bahamas: Address of His Holiness John Paul II to the Polish Community in Mexico. *Vatican Archives*

of the Polish Nation, shaping that historical context to give form to the contemporary Polish national identity where there is no place for the secular socialism of the party-state. This was in fact an invention of tradition, where such devout Polish Catholicism was linked to a pre-modern historical origin even though the phrase was only first utilized in this context during the 9 year Millennium celebrations in 1963. This perceived historical narrative gave the Polish Church exactly the kind of legitimacy it sought to wrench from the hands of the Party-State.¹⁴⁶ When Pope John Paul II was invited to visit his homeland in June that same year, it was encouraged by the party-state because they only saw two options: The Pope could either defy the state, thereby inciting violence and giving the regime an excuse to crackdown on dissidents, or he could be seen to meekly abide to the regulations imposed on him by the government, solidifying the party-state's legitimacy. Instead of doing either, Pope John Paul visited Jasna Gora and addressed the 500.000 amassed Polish Catholics:¹⁴⁷

“The history of Poland can be written in different ways; especially in the case of the history of the last centuries, it can be interpreted along different lines. But if we want to know how this history is interpreted by the heart of the Poles, we must come here, we must listen to this shrine, we must hear the echo of the life of the whole nation in the heart of its Mother and Queen. And if her heart beats with a tone of disquiet, if it echoes with solicitude and the cry for the conversion and strengthening of consciences, this invitation must be accepted. It is an invitation springing from maternal love, which in its own way is shaping the historical processes in the land of Poland.”¹⁴⁸

Through this, he gave the Polish Catholics the icons and identity they sought after. He gave credit to their desires to be free from the party-state but perhaps most importantly he gave the vocabulary the Polish people required to voice their dissatisfaction with the regime that had franchised terms like justice, equality and exploitation.¹⁴⁹ The Pope spoke of “truth, simplicity and fortitude with which the Holy Spirit has made them known through our humble service. Grant that the whole Church may be reborn by drawing from this new fount of the knowledge of her nature and mission, and not from other foreign or poisoned cisterns”¹⁵⁰. This truth was an important aspect of what the Pope seemed to offer; an absolute universal truth during times where anti-Party sentiments were on the rise because of the perception that the government was

¹⁴⁶ Hobsbawm, E., & Ranger, T. (Eds.). (2012). *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge University Press.

¹⁴⁷ Graham, B. (1983). Black Madonna: Token of Resistance, idealism. *Washington Post*.

¹⁴⁸ Pope John Paul II (1979). Apostolic Journey to Poland. Holy Mass and Act of Consecration to the Mother of God: Homily of his holiness John Paul II. *Vatican Archives*.

¹⁴⁹ Zubrzycki, G. (2001). Op. cit. p.66.

¹⁵⁰ Pope John Paul II (1979). Op. cit.

illegitimate, corrupt, and deceitful.¹⁵¹ Additionally, by linking the Black Madonna and Queen of Poland to the Polish identity an image of an independence and self-determination through historical precedence was created which could never be matched by the Soviet backed strictly secular Party-State, whose attempts to point out that the Papal institution did not have Polish best interests at heart because of the Vatican failing to recognize the Polish Western border were squashed by the election of the new Polish Pope.¹⁵² Lastly and perhaps most prominently, he provided an untouchable figurehead for a movement of resistance.¹⁵³ This last point gave the opportunity for the Solidarity movement to flourish. The Solidarity movement was closely tied to the Catholic Church and arose as a means to mobilize the Polish Catholic identity through a somewhat secular medium, which the Church itself could not provide, and therefore relied on the movement to provide that.¹⁵⁴ The impact that the Pope has had on transformation of the public perception of Polish identity in the late 70's and 80's is therefore hard to overestimate: "It is hard to conceive of Solidarity without the Polish Pope"¹⁵⁵. As Solidarity grew out to be a nation-wide movement, so was Pope John Paul II's adopted as the country's de facto moral leadership. The Black Madonna, invoked by Cardinal Wyszyński¹⁵⁶ and the Gdansk shipyard gate bearing the likeness of Pope John Paul II became important symbols for the movement¹⁵⁷. Pope John Paul II built the cultural and ideological foundation of the Polish identity as well as the organizational structure to channel that sentiment productively.¹⁵⁸

When the Polish people regained control of their nation through the fall of the Soviet Union, the Catholic tenets of Polish culture remained dominant, giving rise to a new national pride of the Polish culture,¹⁵⁹ with which it has been so intricately linked during the Soviet period. A culture that is neither Western nor Eastern, like the Black Madonna who has Byzantine origins, yet was adapted to a more Western style.¹⁶⁰ Catholicism steered the faithful in Poland to a path of renewal of faith in truth, the Polish identity, and the integration of a Catholic Poland in the European community a distant third.¹⁶¹ The Catholic church was not

¹⁵¹ Mason, D. S. (1989). Solidarity as a new social movement. *Political Science Quarterly*, 104(1), p. 43.

¹⁵² Monticone, R. C. (1966). *Op. cit.* p. 92.

¹⁵³ Zubrzycki, G. (2001). *Op. cit.*

¹⁵⁴ Mason, D. S. (1989). *Op. cit.* p. 51.

¹⁵⁵ Thomas, S. (2005). *The global resurgence of religion and the transformation of international relations: The struggle for the soul of the twenty-first century.* Springer.

¹⁵⁶ Mason, D. S. (1989). Solidarity as a new social movement. *Political Science Quarterly*, 104(1), p.54.

¹⁵⁷ Paweł Skibiński, (2014). The Pope who changed Poland. *An interview by Karolina Kowalska.*

¹⁵⁸ Kennedy, M. D. (1991). *Professionals, power and solidarity in Poland: A critical sociology of Soviet-type society* (No. 79). Cambridge University Press.

¹⁵⁹ Hann, C. (1998). Postsocialist nationalism: rediscovering the past in southeast Poland. *Slavic review*, 57(4), p. 844.

¹⁶⁰ Graham, B. (1983). Black Madonna: Token of Resistance, idealism. *Washington Post.*

¹⁶¹ Casanova, J. (2006). Religion, European secular identities, and European integration. p.2.

without its critics however. Even before the election of Pope John Paul II, the Catholic church in Poland was seen as a very traditional and sometimes referred to as a dated institution by contemporary Polish nationals and international scholars alike.¹⁶² The views of the Church on social and economic issues were considered conservative even in the 60's and 70's,¹⁶³ yet these views were further solidified further during the Papal reign of Pope John Paul II, who adopted many of the Polish hierarchy's conservative tenets and rolled back many of the Papal innovations of the last decades, stifling dissent and those who questioned the orthodox teachings,¹⁶⁴ boosting conservative policies and ideologies worldwide.¹⁶⁵ Polish Catholics, staunch supporters of Pope John Paul, saw their conservative values emphasized in an international institution by a figure that was already idolized. Because of this, a strong conservative identity with an emphasis on traditional Catholic values emerged in Poland, where an unique openness to international institutions, as long as they have some kind of Polish representation,¹⁶⁶ is coupled with a strong nationalist desire for self-determination.

Catholic nationalist movements in Poland have displayed clear constructivist elements, most specifically through the invention of tradition and its clear claims of a pre-modern past despite its rise in an increasingly industrial society. The Polish case highlights the need for the inclusion of religious nationalism in the theories posed by Hobsbawm and Gellner. It is hard to conceive of a way to discuss Polish nationalism without mentioning the role Catholicism played in the conception of the modern Polish nation state and the perception of the Polish people on the Polish national identity. Hobsbawm's appraisal that religion merely has its uses as an attribute to identify different nationalist movement would be insufficient in this case, as the rise of Catholic traditions accounts for a significant part for the shifting perception of the Polish people on Polish identity. Seeing that the rise of Catholicism in communist Poland can be construed as a testament to the ingenuity and the political prowess of Catholic leadership. The combination of the competence of Catholic leadership and the tenacity of the working class Poles in propagating the Catholic Polish identity, seem to at least partially reinforce Gellner's theory. However, Gellner's claim that the rise of nationalism would push aside or even replace religion as a social construct seems to be completely inaccurate in the Polish case, as

¹⁶² Monticone, R. C. (1966). Op. cit. p.93.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ BBC Magazine (2013). The Pope: Journey from Liberal to Conservative. Accessed through: <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-21425105>

¹⁶⁵ Mulligan, K. (2006). Pope John Paul II and Catholic opinion toward the death penalty and abortion. *Social Science Quarterly*, 87(3), 739-753.

¹⁶⁶ Verdery, K. (1998). Transnationalism, nationalism, citizenship, and property: Eastern Europe since 1989. *American ethnologist*, 25(2), 291-306.

nationalism and religion seemed to have reinforced each other, rather than one feeding off the other.

Lithuania

When Lithuania finally officially converted to Latin Christianity in 1387, it did not form its own independent Church province, instead the Lithuanians fell under the jurisdiction of the Polish Church as part of the personal union with Poland.¹⁶⁷ A fact which later became grounds for anti-Catholic rhetoric, which viewed the Catholic church as a Polish influence and distanced from the Lithuanian identity. A sentiment which was voiced by Juozas Jurginis, a Lithuanian communist historian during the Glasnost era:

“The Catholic church ruined the [Lithuanian] state [...] by pushing the expansion to the East which was sponsored by feudal lords of Western Europe and of Poland and also by confronting the Eastern rite church. Lithuania's Catholic feudal lords who supported this expansion became Polonized. From then on the Lithuanian nation was represented by peasants who formed the foundation for bourgeois ideology by resisting social oppression.”¹⁶⁸

Although initial university laurates in 1918-1940 were often from an agricultural background and had the associated catholic views, this changed after a few decades of Soviet rule. After 1945, intelligentsia primarily originated from the secular Soviet views.¹⁶⁹ This new secular view on the Lithuanian nation sought to distance itself from Christianity, specifically Catholicism, which for so long was a core tenet of Lithuanian identity. As resistance to the Soviet regime grew in the late 80's, so did the association of the Lithuanian nation with Catholicism as opposed to Russian Orthodoxy and secularism.¹⁷⁰ This was reinforced by the earlier mentioned dichotomy of Western versus Eastern identity. Catholicism was seen as part of the Western identity, and therefore embraced by the Sajudis movement which was largely responsible for the mobilization of Lithuanian desire for increased self-determination during the Glasnost-era of the late 1980's and 1990's.¹⁷¹ Of course, such notions of a Catholic Lithuanian identity were not new. In 1949 the Council of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement declared that:

“The positive influence of religion in developing the Nation's morality and sustaining its strength during the most difficult period of the freedom fights is underlined.”¹⁷² By including this in the declaration it was clear that religion was a tenet of Lithuanian identity as perceived

¹⁶⁷ Vardys, V. S., op. Cit. p.13.

¹⁶⁸ Jurginis, J. (1987) *Lietuvos krikštas*. Mokslas, Vilnius. p. 320.

¹⁶⁹ Vardys, V. S., op. Cit. p.5.

¹⁷⁰ Klumbyte, N., op. cit. p. 287

¹⁷¹ Klumbyte, N., op. cit. p.287.

¹⁷² The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania (1949). *Declaration of the council of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement*. Op. cit. art. 18.

by this movement. It should however be noted that this was declaration 18 of 22 such declarations made by the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement. Insinuating that this was to be treated as an afterthought, rather than a core tenet of Lithuanian desire to sovereignty. Furthermore, religion was not defined as Catholicism or even Christianity. This is an important aspect of these declarations that should not be taken lightly. Lithuania has a long history of religious plurality, with Catholicism and Orthodoxy both present amongst the Lithuanian population long before the ‘Russification’ of the 19th and 20th centuries.¹⁷³ This duality of Lithuanian identity complicated the inclusion of one specific religious view as the primary identity of Lithuanians, which caused the absence of the mention of a specific religious view as the symbol of the Lithuanian national identity.

This lack of Catholic identity is even more emphasized by its absence in the earlier Resolution of Lithuanian Independence in 1918.¹⁷⁴ This document saw no reference to religion being part of Lithuanian identity whatsoever, in sharp contrast with the repeated mention of the liberal democratic values which were to be quintessential to the identity of the new Lithuanian state and its people. This development of consolidation of Catholicism as part of the Lithuanian identity over the 20th century could be seen as conflicting with the secular and liberal identity of contemporary Lithuania. However, it is important to note that this resurgence of Catholicism is due to its perceived link to the European West. Catholicism is not seen as an isolated ideology, but seen as a part of the positive association of Lithuanian perception of the West. Most specifically the solidarity, morality and spirituality that Catholicism propagates.¹⁷⁵ By embracing the Catholic views, the Sajudis’ idea of the Lithuanian nation sought to differentiate between the moral Catholic Lithuanian “us” and the immoral Soviet “them”. It should come as no surprise that such rhetoric increased the distrust towards Soviet influences. This sentiment persisted into the late 90’s, where relations to Soviet influences would be a blemish on a political career. After the elections of 1992, the Sajudis lost the bulk of their influence in the political scene to the reformed social democrats. With their descent, so did the narrow relationship of Lithuanian identity with Catholicism and the polarizing societal identity of the Lithuanian Catholic versus the Soviet. Catholicism is still prominent throughout Lithuania, but

¹⁷³ Weeks, T. R. (2001). Religion and russification: Russian language in the Catholic Churches of the " Northwest Provinces" after 1863. *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 2(1), 87-110.

¹⁷⁴ Council of Lithuania (1918). Resolution of Lithuania n Independence. Accessed through <http://viduramziu.istorija.net/etno/vasario16-en.htm>.

¹⁷⁵ Klumbyte, N., op. Cit. P. 286.

by the late 90's Catholicism was mostly a conduit to announce to the world that it was part of Western civilization.¹⁷⁶

Although Catholicism did leave its mark on Lithuanian society, it became less and less influential during the secular rule. Although this seems in line with Gellner's views, his theory does not explain why this is the case. Catholicism did have a significant presence in both the intellectual elites of Lithuania, as well as large parts of the (agrarian) working class and both these groups were involved in the Lithuanian quest for self-determination. Catholicism was even adopted as a core tenet of the Sajudis nationalist movement, yet was largely unable to see these values adopted as part of the Lithuanian national identity. Two reasons for this development can be discerned. The first is the less influential position of the Catholic church following the Second World War. The secular rule prevented the Catholic church from being organised and therefore left it unable to contribute to the plights of the Lithuanians. The second is the multi-religious nature of the parties that did aid the Lithuanian goal of independence. Estonia and Latvia were both pronounced Lutheran protestants and had also been subjected to the secular influences of the Soviet Union. Secularists and Greek Orthodox minority groups within Lithuania also supported Lithuanian independence, consolidating a liberal and tolerant Lithuanian religious policy. So in the Lithuanian case, Hobsbawm's theory is largely correct, as uniformity of religion was too small an attribute to help define the Lithuanian identity, therefore to be Lithuanian was no longer tied to being Catholic.

¹⁷⁶ Vardys, V. S., op cit.

6. Conclusion

Limitations

To be able to assess and evaluate the findings of this study, some limitations must be discussed. The first is the limited use of Polish and Lithuanian primary sources. Translations of such sources are bound to lose a degree of nuance, sometimes losing a secondary meaning within the text due to translation. In addition, not all primary sources had translations readily available, causing the author to have a bias to the internationally acknowledged sources, in addition to the official primary sources, such as the Oath of Allegiance and other official proclamations made by governing institutions.

It should also be noted that the institutions discussed in this research give a limited view on the subject. Although the Catholic church and the Soviet Union were decidedly dominant actors in the study of religious nationalism in Poland and Lithuania, even they do not cover the entire spectrum of information that can be found on the subject of religious nationalism in these two nations. Poland and Lithuania both had strong Protestant and Greek Orthodox influences in the pre-modern period which have been mostly disregarded in this study due to their limited presence in 20th century Poland and Lithuania. As mentioned, both nations have been subjected to large scale mass deportations, causing a scattered population over an area that is wider than the contemporary border of these nations. This potentially impacts the development of nationalism in these two nations as well.

It should be repeated, that this study is not to be treated as a nomothetic study. The theories of Hobsbawm and Gellner have merely been ideographically applied to the Polish and Lithuanian cases. Conclusions based on these findings apply to developments in nationalist sentiments in these two nations, yet could be utilized to fuel further research into this topic.

Findings

This study attempted to lay bare the origins of the Lithuanian Sajudis and Polish Solidarity movements to ascertain the role of Catholicism in these nationalist movements. Through this process, the goal is to ascertain the merit of both Gellner's theory on constructivism through industrialization and Hobsbawm's Marxist invention of tradition theory regarding the role of elites and religion in the dominant nationalist movements of Poland and Lithuania.

In this study, the Solidarity movement has proven to be profoundly impacted by the Catholic church. The dominant Polish nationalist movement and Catholicism were deeply intertwined and seemed to both prosper from the success of the other in their symbiotic

relationship. Even though the Solidarity movement was a bottom-up movement, its success was in no small part thanks to the existing Catholic Hierarchy, with the Pope providing an unassailable figurehead and its hierarchical structure offering systematic support to the movement when its own leadership was dismantled. The religious elites provided the means through which the movement could prosper, and were largely responsible for re-establishing Catholicism in Poland during the Millennium celebrations. When applied to the Polish case, Gellner's assumption that religion is largely replaced by nationalist movements seems inaccurate. Yet his presumption that industrialism and (religious) elites were instrumental in propagating Polish nationalist movements like Solidarity have proven to be correct. Hobsbawm's theory was largely reaffirmed in the Polish case. The strong constructivist nature and invention of tradition by the Catholic church '*Polonia Semper Fidelis*' provided extremely powerful tools for the Solidarity movement to overcome the secular elites of the Party-state. The Catholic church has proven to be a powerful hybrid driven by both its strict hierarchical nature and its strong roots in the working class, providing a powerful alternative for a nation's elites in the process. It seems that both Gellner and Hobsbawm underestimated the impact of the institution of the Catholic church in a nation where it is as powerful as in Poland.

Although the Lithuanian Sajudis movement attempted a similar approach to the Polish Solidarity movement, it has proven to be ineffective. Because of secular traditions and lack of structure in the Catholic church in Lithuania, the Catholic church could not provide much assistance in the nationalist movement of Sajudis. Even though Sajudis attempted to push Catholic values as part of the Lithuanian identity, Catholicism was overshadowed by the multi-religious cooperation both within the nation and internationally. This lack of uniformity in religion caused Catholicism to take a back seat in the Sajudis movement and, despite Sajudis efforts to the contrary, ultimately resulted in a lack of Catholic zeal in the resulting post-independence Lithuanian identity. Catholicism did have the popular support of the working class valued so highly by Marxist Hobsbawm, yet lacked structure through religious elites, which is a significant issue according to Gellner's constructivism.

Ultimately the difference conditions for Catholic nationalism between Poland and Lithuania seemed to have significant impact on the nature of those nationalist movements. A strong uniform presence of broadly supported Catholicism seems to have pushed Poland more in the direction of Hobsbawm's Marxist invention of tradition, with the added note that a pre-existing structure of elites can be a huge asset to a bottom-up movement. Whereas Lithuania's Sajudis movement could not benefit from the disorganized Catholic church in Lithuania, which ultimately resulted in its diminishment as the Sajudis nationalist sentiment liberalized.

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