

The Holy Ghost:

The Battle For Control of the Polish Public Sphere (1991-2003)

David P. Burns, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Salisbury University

This study investigates how and why one gatekeeper, the Polish Catholic Church, asserted itself as a media force soon after the transition to capitalism. The period under study – 1991 to 2003 - is significant because it begins with Pope John Paul II's 1991 directive to adapt Church communication to fit the new Polish landscape and concludes with the Church's struggles to assert itself in Poland's media environment. Using textual analysis of primary documents and in-depth interviews of key political and religious players, this study examines the steps Church officials took, and the motivation behind, the development of the Catholic Church's media properties, the goals church leaders had for these channels and whether those goals were realized.

This paper is a case study that provides a historical overview of the social and political landscapes that existed under communism and how they changed after the transition, focusing on the battle for control of the Polish public sphere. This study investigates the role both the democratic government and the Catholic Church played in rewriting the legal framework for the press and influenced the new media landscape that resulted from this restructuring.

Methodology

This study incorporated qualitative methodologies in gathering its data. The qualitative methods used in this study - in-depth, semi-structured interviewing (see Fontana & Frey in Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a) and textual analysis of key documents (see Goetz and LeCompte, 1984) - helped address the research topic more fully than implementing quantitative methods. Gaskell (2000) confers legitimacy to this choice of research methodology when he rationalizes that qualitative research

inherently attempts to explore “the range of opinions [and] the different representations of issue” (p. 41), instead of simply counting opinions or people.¹

In this study, the public archives of legal and religious documents were collected and analyzed. Since this study concerns Poland, many of the documents targeted for study were written in Polish originally. However, in cases where the government created official English translations of its documents, the researcher treated these English translations as primary documents. When English translations were not available, professional native-speaking interpreters translated the documents into English for the researcher.² The analysis of governmental records dealing with State-Church relations specifically and Polish media laws in general, Church records, especially papal directives, translated media law publications, and translated diary entries, was carried out. These records were supplemented with other documentation analysis concerning mass media regulation in Poland, especially those that pertain to the Catholic media (including, but not limited to, the Polish Constitution, the 1992 National Radio and Television Law on Broadcasting, the Polish Concordat between the Polish government and the Vatican, and the 1989 Act of the State-Church Relationship – the document that gave the Church special media privileges).

Tremblay’s (1957) criterion for selection was used to choose the key informants.³ Subjects were selected using judgment sampling techniques, which allows the researcher to select participants “by virtue of their ...previous experience, qualities which endow them with special knowledge” (Johnson, 1990, p. 28). These “experiential experts” (see Morse, 1998, 1991, 1986) possessed knowledge of both the Catholic Church and the Polish public sphere.

Habermas defines the public sphere as “a domain of our social life in which public opinion can be formed (Habermas, 1989, p. 231).” In large, populous societies, this public discourse takes place not only through interpersonal communication but through the mass mediated channels as well. Thus, if one group can dominate a country’s mass media it can guide the path of public discourse and shape public opinion more easily. For many years, the communist party, with its party-run media

¹ For a thorough discussion regarding the use of interactive and non-interactive data collection methodologies refer to works by Goetz and LeCompte (1984); Wimmer & Dominick, 1987; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a; Berger, 2000; McCracken, 1988; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b; and Seidman, 1998.

² This method is supported by Berg (2001), Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996, Webb et al., 1981 and Babbie, 1998.

³ Tremblay’s five criteria for selection are: (1) the subject’s role in the community, (2) the subject’s knowledge of the topic, (3) the subject’s willingness to communicate and cooperate, (4) the subject’s communicative abilities, and (5) the subject’s impartiality (p. 689).

monopoly, was relatively successful in controlling the public sphere in countries like Poland and Hungary.

Lenin (in *Novaya Zhizn*, 1905) felt it was the media's duty to support the continuous communist revolution by publishing articles that support the "common cause of the proletariat." Poland's media system prior to 1989 followed the communist example of state-run press, radio and television. Goban-Klas (1997) described "journalists" working for media organs during this time as "a living 'transmission belt' between the party and society (p. 27).

The communists tried to keep out dissenting views by, for example, jamming foreign shortwave signals, such as the United States' Radio Free Europe and the United Kingdom's BBC. The communist regime also tried to squelch any independent internal press. For example, the Catholic Church was allowed a few 'Roman Catholic' press organs. These publications had a communist party member who controlled the newspaper content while the Church was allowed a single "church assistant" on the editorial board (Goban-Klas, 1997, p. 39). In this way, the Church was allowed to own mass media in name only; the church press was just another communist party tool that commandeered the Church's name.

However, for a Church trying to reach a *modus vivendi* with the communist government, having any press organ with their name on it was important. Nonetheless, the Catholic Church's newspapers, magazines, and newsletters, were a favorite target for the communists; ink and paper were often in short supply for the Catholic press, and little pastoral news actually made it to print.

Even during the Post-Stalinist era, a period marked by a slight relaxing of overt repression by the regime on oppositional factions, the communists introduced a censorship office, which selectively enforced laws. In 1946, the Main Office for the Control of the Press, Publications and Publishing Houses (Polish acronym: GUKPPIW) was established and tasked to censor the contents of broadcast and published materials. The communists also dusted off a 1938 Press Law that allowed strict punishments for calumny and allowed the government to react to unjustified criticism (Bar, 2000, p. 429).

The long arm of the GUKPPIW did not extend, however, into church buildings. The regime was not allowed to censor sermons and church announcements that were delivered during church services. Also, posters placed in church showcases (this included not only inside buildings but also in

announcement lists near churches and in religious cemeteries) were free from censorship (Bar, 2000, p. 430).

The confrontational relationship between the State and its censors and the Church's press properties warmed slightly in the early 1980s thanks in large part to the pressure being exerted on the regime by the Solidarity trade union. In September 1980 the union negotiated with the regime the broadcast of a Sunday Mass on state run radio, and a speech by the Pope was reported in the Polish media (Weschler, 1982, p. 176). Those Mass broadcasts remained the only religious content on State radio until the Round Table Talks in 1989 between the State, the Solidarity trade union, and the Catholic Church which helped bring about the fall of communism and triggered Poland's transition to democracy (Bar, 2000, p. 427).

Goban-Klas (1997) explained that, especially during martial law, the regime preferred granting concessions to the Church rather than to outlaw the Solidarity trade union:

The ruling generals were more willing to allow the church to operate than they were to tolerate Solidarity...[The church] equipped thousands of parish centres with video cassette recorders, organized video shows of underground political films, supported Catholic discussion clubs, and, most importantly, influenced editors and journalists of many papers to relay the church's position (p. 41).

Another example of this warming by the regime is an August 1981 act, which exempted from censorship Church-approved magazines, photographs, religious audio and videotapes, information leaflets, letters, and internal memoranda (Concerning Control of the Press, 1981). By November 1981, the Church was allowed to indicate what the censor's had changed within a text that had been cleared for publication (The Decree of the State Council, 1981).

The Underground Press

For four decades, the communist regime's attempts to dominate the public sphere in Central European countries like Hungary and Poland were largely effective in marginalizing dissident views. However, as the dissidents slowly made inroads into the social sphere through their underground activities, the regime's credibility among the citizenry dropped and the credibility of the dissidents grew. The *samizdat* – or underground - press stoked political debates by intellectuals and gave the average citizen an alternative, oppositional view to the government's activities and motivations. In

Poland, brazenly reading an underground newspaper in public places became the moniker for Poles to register dissatisfaction with the communist regime. Poland's *samizdat* press eventually became a template for other countries' underground information networks. The Church assisted *samizdat* publishers by providing space for "editorial meetings" and sometimes supplying a hiding place for contraband printing presses (Demszky, personal communications, July 1999).

Gradually, the communist system developed not just cracks but entire fissures in its foundations. Political dissidents were able to commandeer a covert share of the public sphere not only through the *samizdat* press but also through an underground mobile educational institution known as the Flying University. Flying University "professors" taught closeted anti-communists a revolutionary brand of politics. In Poland, Catholic Churches were often the meeting places since churches were considered the most secure. Nonetheless, despite dissidents' efforts at covert instruction, the secret police infiltrated the Flying University and compiled lists of attendees and speakers (Gabor Demzsky, personal communications, July 1999).

The Flying University proved an effective way for Central European intellectuals to critically examine the activities of the communist regime and devise ways to thwart its control on society. The Flying University expanded the public sphere and forced issues to the fore that communist leaders would have preferred to keep in the shadows. Not only did the *samizdat* press and the Flying University spotlight many of the societal ills and inequalities in the communist system, it helped train a new generation of critical thinkers to challenge the social status quo by exposing dissidents like Hungary's Gabor Demzsky and Miklos Haraszti to Poland's Adam Michnik and his idea of new evolutionism, which preached the ideals of behavioral change among the citizenry rather than expecting the communists to reform (Michnik, 1985, p. 144)

Round Table Talks Expand Church's Mass Media

As communist power began to wane, the Church worked with both the regime and the Solidarity trade union to maintain a religious, social and political presence in Poland. The oppositional Solidarity force, led by Lech Wałęsa, needed the Church's support to lend legitimacy to the struggle against the communists and, since the Church was the only legal oppositional institution in Poland at the time, relied on the Church to hold meetings and organizational conferences (Goban-Klas, 1994, p.237).

In return for providing social stability, the communists granted the Church special privileges (Sabbat-Swidlicka, 1993). Those privileges were exemplified at the Round Table talks with the 'Act on the relationship between the Church and State' on 17 May 1989. Among other things, the act granted the Church preferential rights to the airwaves thus empowering them to establish and operate media properties including radio and TV stations, newspapers, publishing properties, film and audiovisual enterprises for the purpose of teaching and evangelizing to the masses (Pietrzak, 2000, p. 431). This led Goban-Klas (1997) to declare the Church "the winner in the confrontation between the old regime and Solidarity" (p. 38).

After the fall of communism, Solidarity, having democratically won control of the government, relied heavily on the Catholic Church to organize the new government. With a supportive Wałęsa administration in office, the Church's unique broadcast privileges negotiated with the communists were given legitimacy by the new administration. The Catholic Church's right to launch electronic media properties was confirmed by the Communications Act on 22 November 1990 and the Broadcasting and Television Act on 29 December 1992. Pietrzak, (2000) explains the Church's privileges extended beyond radio and television and provided exemptions to the Church in regard to launching mass media interests:

These rights comprise establishing and running theatres, cinemas, film production studios, other audio-visual media, archives, museums and libraries. This act relieves the obligation to obtain the permissions and licenses for this activity from [the Polish Catholic Church] and defines it sufficient to notify appropriate administrative bodies about establishing and carrying out such activity (p. 278).

It is important to note that being able to simply inform governmental bodies of the Catholic Church's intention to launch a mass media channel was not extended to other churches and religious unions – relegating these other institutions to the same lengthy, competitive and political application and concession process as any would-be media hopeful.

In a sense, directly after the transition, there was an ongoing war for control of the Polish public sphere and the Catholic Church played a significant role. Pope John Paul II described the media as the "meeting point of the contemporary times;" a place where the Bible must be present and evangelization efforts must be focused (Bar, 2000, p. 427). The Church, thanks to advantageous media concessions initially negotiated from the communists and then legitimized by the new

democratic government, was well positioned to be one of the loudest in the cacophony of voices that were developing in Poland's new mediated public sphere.

Opportunity Lost

In the period leading up to and directly after the transition from communism, the Polish Catholic Church itself experienced significant changes. Some of those changes were caused by factors out of the Church's control, while others were purposely set in motion in an attempt to create a new role for the Church after the fall of communism. The Church's role in fighting communism resulted in widespread popular support from Poles, but when that struggle ended, the Church risked losing its central role in Polish society. Faced with the reality that Western European Catholic countries like France and Italy had experienced a decrease in church attendance and waning church power in an increasingly secularized society, the Catholic Church sought a voice in a new, more secularized, Polish public sphere.

This study concludes that from 1991-2003, the Polish Catholic Church failed to capitalize on its nationally iconoclastic position at a time when Poland's public sphere was reforming and the nation was recreating its identity. The Church's problems stemmed from three changes that occurred after the 1989 transition when: (1) Poland adopted a more secular social agenda which undermined church attendance and the institution's social influence; (2) the Polish Episcopate fragmented along political lines after the death of Poland's patriarchal primate; and (3) the secularization of the Polish Conference of Bishops following the Polish Church's adoption of Vatican II tenets compromised the Church's unified front during Poland's social reformation. These points are elaborated upon in the following pages.

Poland adopts a more secular social agenda

In the 1970s and 1980s, Poles relied heavily on one of the few outside organizations they knew to help form civil society -- the Catholic Church. However, once communism fell and the revolutionaries who led the civil society became the regulators, the Church took on a more direct role in politics than proscribed by its own encyclicals. The Church won some seats in Parliament. It also won some concessions in the constitution, national broadcast laws, and the Concordat. But these Church actions also caused a public outcry, for what the people perceived to be the Church's heavy-handed involvement in their new democratic state.

During the drafting of a new Polish broadcast law, the Church fought for a provision that would obligate radio and television stations to reflect 'Christian values' in their programming. After several failed attempts, the draft, with the Christian value provision, became law in 1992 (Hiebert, 1999, p. 100). Although similar Christian parties have attempted similar moves in other countries (Spain, Ireland, and Mexico, for instance), their level of success pales in comparison to the success of Poland's Christian right during this time. Regardless, the Christian values proviso proved difficult to enforce among Polish media channels, and possessed no real teeth with foreign media imported into the country via electronic transmission channels like satellite (Goban-Klas, 1997, p. 38).

A political cartoon in a post-transition Polish newspaper depicts a weary Pole trudging through the cartoon frame lugging a hammer and sickle. The man drops the hammer to the ground and flings the sickle into the air. The sickle flies through the air like a boomerang, transforming itself into a Christian cross. The cross finishes its return loop, hitting the unsuspecting man in the back of the head. Although this illustration may exaggerate the situation, it certainly expressed the feelings and fears of some Poles at the time who feared, at least at the sociological level, they were trading one ideological dictatorship for another.

After the fall of communism, the focus of blame for societal problems shifted to a degree toward the Church. The same Polish people who flocked to the Church during the heady days of Solidarity began to resent the church's powerful role in the restructuring of the new Polish society. Indulging their new freedoms to air dissent, Poles embraced a society that allowed freer thought and personal actions, and they readily exercised their new rights. Poles not only enjoyed voicing their opinions at the polls, they were quite vocal as to the way they wanted their new society structured. That included a Church presence in their religious lives, but not in secular matters (U.S. Library of Congress, <http://countrystudies.us/poland/87.htm>).

Disillusionment with Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa as president also tainted the Church because of their close association. Dissidents who had once openly opposed communism later felt disappointed in the way their longed-for independent Poland was evolving. By the mid 1990s, a kind of cultural reshuffling was taking place throughout the country. Privatization eliminated jobs and caused friction in the Polish family; young Poles who embraced capitalism were becoming successful entrepreneurs, while their elders, who had worked under, and were familiar with, the communist system, struggled to adapt. Pensioners - who were promised a modest monthly retirement

allowance by the communist system - didn't receive enough financial support from the government to live on. Poles turned inward to establish their place in the new social, political and economic systems, forgetting their neighbors and even their religious obligations.

In the Polish centrist newspaper *Cash*, prior to the 1995 presidential elections in which Lech Wałęsa lost to Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Gadomski (1995) described the electorate's dilemma. He prophesied that since the Catholic Church, at the time, had not declared its acceptance of free-market reforms and the spirit of democratic capitalism, voters favoring these issues would be forced to vote for the former communists in the upcoming elections. Gadomski also criticized the Church's right-wing factions for pursuing their own political agenda instead of attacking substantive issues important to the Polish people. As an example, Gadomski cited the Church's insistence on a provision in the broadcasting law to police television program content (Gadomski, 1995, p. 5)

Unhappiness with the Polish Church extended as far as Rome. One week after the Pope's 1995 visit to Poland, *The Warsaw Voice*, an English language newspaper, reported on political infighting between the Vatican and Miodowa Street. The story maintained that the Pope blamed Primate Josef Glemp for "entangling the Catholic Church in hopeless political conflicts." The Vatican also held Glemp responsible for the landslide drop in public confidence in the Church from 88 percent in November 1989 to 47 percent three years later (Church of Discord, May 28, 1998).

Political analysts at the time, however, blamed this drop in Church support less on Glemp and more on the changing political environment. They felt a more likely scenario was that much of the Church's popular support pre-1989 stemmed more from the Church's anti-communist stance than its religious doctrines (Hetnal, 1999, p. 506). A country study on Poland published in 1998 by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress and sponsored by the U.S. Department of the Army takes a somewhat different position. It postulates that Poles, prior to the transition, viewed the Church as infallible and surrounded by an almost mystical veneer – a holy ghost - that engaged in a moral battle against communism for control of the public sphere (U.S. Library of Congress, <http://countrystudies.us/poland/40.htm>). Thus, when the reality of communism vanished there was less need for a powerful, autocratic holy ghost.

Ironically, during the period under study, Poles as a whole appeared to become more secular than they ever were under atheistic communism, feeling they no longer needed the Church as a motivational and spiritual force in their now-resolved struggle against totalitarianism. As in Western

Europe, the new ideals of democracy and free-market economy helped empty church pews of Polish Catholics, depriving the Church of much of its voice in the Polish public sphere.

Possibly by design, possibly from turmoil, the Church, during the period under study, became more pluralistic in its message and as such, able to speak to a more politically diverse population via its media properties. The Church toned down its presence in the political arena and re-committed itself to its role as ideological watchdog. By 2003, experts characterized the relationship between the Catholic Church and the State as fully normalized; the Church still weighed in on matters, but those opinions were added to the multitude of opinions expressed by other societal factions. The changes that were occurring within Polish society were being mirrored within the Polish Catholic Church – as society pluralized, the Church fragmented into various political camps, and as society pursued a secular democracy, the Church also became less autocratic in its approach.

The Polish Episcopate fragments after primate's death

By papal edict, Catholic churches globally began adopting more modern Vatican II principles beginning in the 1960s (Burns, in press). These new tenets welcomed open debate of the Scriptures by both the laity and clerics. In the 1960s, Poland's Primate, Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, feared questioning the tenets of Catholicism would give the communists an opportunity to divide and conquer the Church in Poland, so he purposely delayed the Polish Church's adoption of Vatican II tenets, despite opposition from the Vatican. For over two decades, the Polish Catholic Church under communism resisted church modernization. However, Wyszyński's death in 1981 opened the door to the adoption of Vatican II reform in Poland.

The Polish Church was able to maintain a strong presence during the communist regime's tenure because the autocratic communist system, which rewarded order and hierarchy, relied on the Catholic Church's autocratic structure to establish and reinforce a strict social infrastructure in Poland. In return, the communists allowed the Polish Church to remain united organizationally and ideologically.

Although often criticized for being obstinate, close-minded, and non-progressive in the way he shepherded the Polish flock, in hindsight, Wyszyński's keen political sense may have been the Church's saving grace for much of his tenure as Poland's Primate. He was adept at knowing how best to approach the regime to advance the Church's interests.

The Polish Conference of Bishops politicizes following Vatican II adoption

After Wyszyński's death, his successor, Bishop Josef Glemp, faced increased pressure from Rome to finally implement Vatican II tenets, even as he dealt with the impact of martial law in Poland. In a sense, the Church underwent a similar metamorphosis in 1981 to the one the Polish nation would experience in 1989 – exchanging an autocracy under its Primate, for a more pluralist, post-Vatican II organizational structure. In this post-Vatican II environment, Glemp's duties as primate were revised, devolving some power away from the primacy and toward the Conference of Bishops. This led to a greater independence among the clergy.

By the time communism fell, the newly empowered Polish bishopric began voicing their views on, and forming political blocs for, influencing social policy. Whereas, under the direction of Cardinal Wyszyński, the Episcopate was once a body that spoke in unison regarding Poland, the Church and society the Conference of Bishops began to fragment into small cliques, each with its own social and political vision. As Primate, Glemp became the leader of an organization that was splintering on nearly every issue, becoming more and more difficult to control and becoming less effective as a leading influence in society. During the period under study, conservative hardliners, who promoted a unified, introspective, nationalistic and ethnocentric Polish Church, vied for power with the more liberal clergy, who saw the Church's role as an apolitical spiritual leader that provided a moral compass to Poles during Poland's myriad societal changes.

Ideological clashes with the Episcopate and parish priests plagued Glemp's administration early on. In the early and mid 1980s it was renegade priests, like Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, urging parishioners to live 'as if' the Soviets weren't occupying Poland. Later, after the transition, members of the Episcopate directly defied Cardinal Glemp on various ideological and doctrinal matters, something that did not happen under the previous Primate.

This factionalism among the Polish clerics perturbed Pope John Paul II considerably. During his summer 2002 visit to Poland, John Paul II's private message to the Conference of Bishops was to get its house in order. The fragmentation of the Polish Church was minimizing its effectiveness at a crucial time in Poland's history and marginalizing its power in Poland's political and social spheres (Tomasz Królak, personal communication, 26 July 2002).

The Habermasian idea of publicly sanctioned organizations representing the private person and influencing public opinion was alive and well in Poland, during the period under study. While the Church's efforts to exert its influence directly in the political realm were met with mixed success and its interpersonal contact with its congregation had dropped, the church retained significant ability to communicate its messages to the Polish people using its sizeable mass media resources.

The Polish Plenary Synod in 1991 strived to: (a) capitalize on the concessions the Church won from the communists to evangelize more directly using the Church's media properties and (b) more aggressively utilize the lay media to disseminate Church news (Burns, in press). The Church expanded the number of newspapers and radio networks and initiated cable and television stations. In late 1991, the Catholic Church obtained consent from the Communication Ministry to open eleven radio stations. By 1994, it was running 104 relay stations, including 60 relay stations of Radio Maryja, an ultra-conservative Catholic radio station. In 1997, it received a license to operate its first television station, TV Niepokalanów (Hiebert, 1999, p. 100).

The Church directed Catholics toward Church goals, at a time when mass media properties could influence the rebuilding of the country's social and political institutions. However, the Polish Church hierarchy, inexperienced in the management of media channels, parsed its media properties out to various religious orders within the Church to run the stations. The Redemptorist Fathers (ultra-conservatives), Jesuits (moderates), Dominicans (liberals), and Marians (liberals) operated Church media properties. With independent, and largely unchecked, control over these properties, each religious order tinged its media property with its own religious and political philosophies. Although these orders do not codify varying political ideologies, their overall tendencies can be deduced from their practices. Subsequently, during the period under study, Church media properties ran the gamut from promoting ultra-conservative isolationist ideologies to promoting liberal, nearly secularist, Pan-Europeanism. Those Poles who looked to the Church for guidance as their culture debated the redefinition of social norms and mores were often met with differing and sometimes contradictory messages, depending on which Church-owned media they consumed.

The varying ideological slants that each order disseminated resulted in political clashes between, and alliances struck among, members of the Conference of Bishops. Those bishops who supported a station's ideology protected that property from being marginalized or even closed down by competing members of the Conference of Bishops (Fr. Kazimierz Sowa, personal communication, 30

July 1999). Despite their political leanings, one thing remained constant - all Catholic media properties had an official Church representative overseeing content and coverage. This official, always a member of the clergy, implemented the directives of the Polish Episcopate, which, in turn, justified its position and actions to the Vatican (Fr. Kazimierz Sowa, personal communication, 30 July 1999). Public deviations from the norm among organizations within the Church became exceptions to the rule and usually did not represent substantial divergences from traditional Catholic positions.

Conclusion

The Catholic Church is a closed, hierarchical system that adopts reforms slowly and deliberately; it is an institution that changes over centuries not years. The Catholic Church rarely opens itself up for inspection by the laity or even introspection by its clergy. The adoption of modern Vatican II principles, which promoted open dialogue among and between the laity and clergy, was a landmark occurrence for just this reason; the Church opened itself up for evaluation and reformation for the first time in centuries. That said, even a post-Vatican II Catholic Church is by no means transparent.

The Polish Catholic Church exemplified this closed system throughout much of its history. During communism, Poland's Primate ignored the Pope's Vatican II modernization efforts of the 1960s and 1970s in order to keep the Church unified in an atheistic communist state. However, the fall of communism, as well as Poland's eventual adoption of Vatican II tenets following the Polish primate's death, ushered in a new era for the Polish Catholic Church. This post-Vatican II Church openness, however, resulted in a fracturing of the Church hierarchy along political lines at a crucial time in Poland's social reformation.

After 1989, the Polish Church tried its hand at direct involvement with politics. After experiencing some initial success, the Church's political influence lessened as public opinion about the Church's involvement in State matters became harsher.

Much can be learned from the Church's overt attempt at politics in Poland. By ignoring previous papal warnings against active participation in national politics, the Polish Church alienated its devotees, lessened its political and social power in the country, and threatened its evangelization efforts. With less political clout the Church turned to its media properties to disseminate its messages. However, instead of the Polish Episcopate formulating a coordinated media plan with a unified message, the Conference of Bishops allowed the various religious orders that operated the

channels to operate like a Post-Vatican II electronic parish; each station molded its message to reach its own unique congregation. In post-transition Poland, this may have contributed to a splintering of ideological thought. The extreme differences between the Church's mediated messages may have worked against the interests of the Church by exacerbating its internal divisions, confusing its audience and diluting its power within the Polish public sphere.

REFERENCES

- Babbie, E. (1998). *The practice of social research* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Bar, W. (2000). The right of the religious denominations to the mass media. In H. Misztala (Ed.), *Religious laws as of July 1, 2000* (pp. 427-436). Lublin: Cathedral of Religious Law.
- Berg, B.L. (2001). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Berger, A.A. (2000). *Media and communication research methods: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Broadcasting and Television Act, *The Journal of Laws 1993*, No. 7, paragraph 34 (29 December 1992).
- Burns, D. P. (in press). Politicking from the pulpit: 20th century popes as agenda setters. *Central European Journal of Communication*.
- Communications Act, *The Journal of Laws*, No. 86, paragraph 504 (22 November 1990).
- Concerning the Control of the Press, Publications, and Dramas, *The Journal of Laws*, No. 20, paragraph 99 (August, 1981).
- Constitution of Ireland*. Irish National Parliament. December 29, 1937.
- Constitution of the Republic of Poland*. Polish National Assembly. April 2, 1997.
- Constitution of Spain*. Spanish Parliament. December 29, 1978.
- Country Studies/Area Handbook Series: Poland* (1998). The Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress (<http://countrystudies.us/poland/1.htm>).

Decree on the means of social communication. Vatican II Inter Mirifica. December 4, 1963.
(<http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/v12.html>)

Denzin, N.K. (1978). *The research act.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). (1998a). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). (1998b). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Fontana, A. & Frey, J.H. (1998). Interviewing. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (pp. 47-78). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., & Nachmias, D. (1996). *Research methods in the Social Sciences* (5th ed.). New York: St. Martin's Press.

Gadomski, W. (1995, October 6). Religious war: Who wants it? *Cash*, p. 5.

Gaskell, G. (2000). Individual and group interviewing. In M.W. Bauer & G. Gaskell (Eds.), *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound* (pp.38-56). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

Goban-Klas, T. (1994). *The orchestration of the media: The politics of mass communications in communist Poland and the aftermath*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Goban-Klas, T. (1997). Politics versus the media in Poland: A game without rules. In P.H. O'Neil (Ed.). *Post-communism and the media in Eastern Europe* (pp. 24-41). Portland, OR

Goetz, J.P. & LeCompte, M.D. (1984). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research.* New York: Academic Press, Inc.

Habermas, J. (S. Seidman, ed.). *On Society and Politics* (1989) Boston: Beacon.

- Hetnal, A. (1999). The Polish Catholic Church in pre- and post-1989 Poland: An evaluation. *East European Quarterly*, 32(4), 503-529.
- Hiebert, R. (1999). Transition from the end of the old regime to 1996. In J. Aumente, P. Gross, R. Hiebert, O.V. Johnson & D. Mills (Eds.), *Eastern European journalism: Before, during and after communism* (pp. 79-122). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Johnson, J.C. (1990). *Selecting ethnographic informants*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Królak, T. & Żbilowski, K. (Eds.). (May, 1999). *Press directory of the apostolic visit of Holy Father John Paul II to Poland June 5-17, 1999*. (Available from Drukarnia Modena Printing, ul. Chwarznienska 170F, Gdynia, Poland).
- Lenin, V.I. (1905). "Party organization and Party literature," *Novaya Zhizn*, No. 12, November 13, 1905.
- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Qualitative research methods series 13. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Michnik, A. (1993). *The church and the left*. David Ost (Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Michnik, A. (1985). *Letters from prison and other essays*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Morse, J.M. (1998). Designing funded qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (pp. 56-85). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Morse, J.M. (1991). Strategies for sampling. In J.M. Morse (Ed.), *Qualitative nursing research: a contemporary dialogue* (rev. ed., pp. 127-145). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Morse, J.M. (1986). Qualitative research: issues in sampling. In P.L. Chinn (Ed.), *Nursing research methodology: Issues and implementation* (pp. 181-193). Rockville, MD: Aspen.
- Pietrzak, M. (2000). *Religious law*. Warsaw: Law Publishers PWN.

Pius XII, Pope (1957, September 8). *Miranda Prorsus – Encyclical on motion pictures, radio and television*. Vatican Cit, Italy.

Pope John Paul II in Poland, (1995, May 23). *Polish News Bulletin*.

Sabbat-Swidlicka, A. (1993). Church and state in Poland. *RFE/RL Research Report*, 2 (April 2), 45-53.

Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.

The church of discord. (1998, 28 May). *The Warsaw Voice*.

The Decree of the State Council Concerning the Seats and the Territorial scope of the District Offices for the Control of the Publications and Dramas, *The Journal of Laws*, No. 24, paragraph 125 (November, 1981).

Tremblay, M. (1957). The key informant technique: A non-ethnographical application. *American Anthropologist*, 59, pp. 688-701.

Webb, E., Campbell, D.T., Schwartz, R.D., Sechrest, L., & Grove, J.B. (1981). *Nonreactive measures in the social sciences*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Weigel, G. (1992). *The final revolution: The resistance church and the collapse of communism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Weschler, L. (1982). *Solidarity: Poland in the season of its passion*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Wimmer, R.D., & Dominick, J.R. (1987). *Mass media research: An introduction*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Contact Information: dpburns@salisbury.edu