Overcoming "Psychic Catastrophe": Memory, Identity, and Religion in Polish *Solidarność*

by

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Abstract

By examining the role of the Roman Catholic Church during *Solidarność*, the Polish Solidarity movement of the 1980s, this paper seeks to demonstrate how religion may act as a tool of collective healing and as a means for the peaceful reclamation of identity, thus challenging the reductive view of religion as a means for justifying political violence. The first half of this essay provides a description of the Solidarity movement, focusing specifically on the contributions of the Church, as well as the role that Pope John Paul II and other religious leaders played in de-atomizing Polish society and in inspiring motivation for the movement. This examination serves to highlight the inextricable link between Solidarity, religious identity, and memory. The second half of the essay provides a psychoanalytic analysis of the Solidarity movement, with the aim of understanding how religious authority may take on the role of the supportive parent, resulting in enhanced relatedness and a more stable group identity. Finally, the essay highlights the limitations of such an analysis, and raises the question of how a more in-depth study of the transgenerational transmission of trauma might further add to our understanding of the ebb and flow of collective religious identities.

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Introduction

Solidarność, the Polish Solidarity movement of the 1980s, presents a unique example of how a community can overcome totalitarian rule without resorting to violent means. Despite the multidimensional nature of the Solidarity movement, the importance of religion in its success cannot be overstated, and especially the symbolic impact of Pope John Paul II's pontificate. By pointing to Poland's triumph and to the survival of the nation and its people despite centuries of trauma, suffering, and intermittent existence, the Polish-born Pope succeeded in convincing his compatriots of the importance of overcoming differences and of the need to bond in the name of love for their nation. The non-violent nature of *Solidarność* not only demonstrates how religion may act as a tool of collective healing and as a means of peaceful reclamation of identity, but also challenges the reductive view of religion as merely a means for justifying political violence. Furthermore, the leadership of Pope John Paul II, as well as other key figures of the Polish Roman Catholic Church, such as Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, demonstrates how religious authority does not always constitute a means of manipulating power and privilege. In a given context, such authority may also provide a nurturing role that has clear parallels to the role that psychoanalyst Donald W. Winnicott's (1971) "good-enough mother" plays in the successful development of the infant's transitional space. It is my contention that further investigation of Polish Solidarity could contribute to the psychoanalytic understanding of the role that religion plays in the transgenerational transmission of trauma, as well as in the collective healing of a community. Contemporary literature (Legutko, 2008; Rojek, 2013) suggests that, although *Solidarność* has primarily been considered as an economically or politically motivated movement, religious sentiment was at the heart of this mobilization. Ultimately, it was religion that allowed Poles to reclaim an identity that had been oppressed for many generations.

One of the major misconceptions of psychoanalysis is that it is concerned solely with individual pathologies. However, analysts are not disinterested or inept with regards to the broader ills of society—on the contrary. Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, constantly changing social and political landscapes have attuned psychoanalytic scholars to matters which transcend the individual patient on the couch. Understanding the nature of the "psychic catastrophe" (Kaës, quoted in Gatti, 2011) that is incurred by collective trauma has important implications at both the theoretical and practical levels. Although psychoanalysis cannot by itself resolve the complex, multilayered impact of collective trauma, psychoanalytic insights can no longer afford to be discarded or ignored if we are to arrive at a means of understanding and treating the "psychic catastrophe" that may result from such trauma.

The first section of this essay will provide a description of the Solidarity movement, focusing specifically on the contributions of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the role that Pope John Paul II played in de-atomizing Polish society and in inspiring motivation for the movement. This examination will serve to highlight the link between religious identity and what Tomasz Merta (2011) has described as the "explosion of memory" (*eksplozja pamięci*) that took place in Polish society during *Solidarność*, as well as the search for "life in truth" (Beyer, 2007). Second, this essay will provide a psychoanalytic analysis of Polish Solidarity, with the aim of understanding how religious authority may take on the role of a supportive parent, resulting in enhanced relatedness and a more stable group identity. Finally, the essay will examine the limits of such an analysis, and raise the question of how a more in-depth study of the transgenerational transmission of trauma might add to our understanding of the ebb and flow of religious identities.

Solidarity

Poland was not the only country that was subject to the hardships imposed by the Stalinist and later the Leninist regimes in the twentieth century, and yet it has been characterized by many contemporary Central and Eastern European scholars as a 'peculiar' case. As Maryjane Osa (1989) points out in her comparison of Poland and Hungary, although the countries of the Soviet Bloc were similar in many ways, especially in the nature of their religious beliefs and traditions, the distinct separation between the nation (led by the Roman Catholic Church) and the state (led by the communist regime) was unique to Poland. So what exactly is it about this separation of nation versus state that made Poland such an exceptional case? What is it that inspired ten million Poles (approximately a third of the total population) to band together in opposition to one of the most totalitarian regimes in all of history? This section seeks to address these questions by examining the immense influence that the Roman Catholic Church had in shaping citizens' attitudes and in providing them with both a physical and a psychological space within which they could identify their needs and desires, and within which they could enact their resistance to the government's oppressive measures.

There are many detailed accounts of the Solidarity movement in Poland, each focusing on different aspects of its revolutionary nature. Many Polish scholars have published their own interpretations of the causes, meaning, and impact of Solidarity, whose non-violent nature has been of interest not only within Poland itself, but throughout the world as well. It is not only those who were directly impacted by these protests who see the value of understanding this multi-faceted rebellion and how it set the stage for the revolutions of 1989 and the ultimate collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Foreign historians and journalists such as Timothy Garton Ash (1983) have written book-length accounts filled with anecdotes of the emotionally charged

protests that took place in the Lenin shipyards in Gdańsk and elsewhere, protests which, somewhat miraculously, brought together a nation that had been atomized by a highly authoritarian State over a period of decades. Seeing as there is an abundance of historiographical literature concerning this turn of events, the discussion of Solidarity here will not focus heavily on the chronology of events, but will rather examine the underlying psychodynamics that were a driving force in this movement, as well as the role of the Roman Catholic Church in creating and upholding the ideology that was central to the cohesion of Solidarity's participants.

Defining Solidarity

Although the focus here is specifically on the emergence of Solidarity in Poland, it is useful to understand how the concept of solidarity is more generally understood, what its characteristics are, and how it is differentiated from other forms of social rebellion. Drawing on poststructuralist thinkers such as Jacques Lacan, Mohineet Kaur Bopurai (2015) characterizes solidarity as a collective attempt to fill in the gaps of conscious experience. The term "solidarity" was introduced into sociology by Émile Durkheim (1893/1965), who distinguished between "mechanical" forms of solidarity and "organic" forms of solidarity. Solidarity has also emerged as an increasingly influential concept in contemporary philosophy, and has been central in Catholic social thought and Protestant social ethics (Stjernø, 2005). While it is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate the many ways in which solidarity has been conceptualized, a baseline definition is useful for further discussion of the Polish Solidarity movement that began in 1980.

Although the concept of solidarity has historically been quite nebulous, a useful definition is provided by Steinar Stjernø (2005), who describes it as "the preparedness to share resources with others by personal contribution to those in struggle or in need" which "implies a

readiness for collective actions and a will to institutionalize that collective action through the establishment of rights and citizenship" (p. 2). According to Stjernø, solidarity defined as such is a rarity in the present era, as it is antagonistic to the values perpetuated by increased individualism and globalization. Nevertheless, Bopurai (2015) argues that, psychologically speaking, solidarity is a human need that "can be roughly equated with what Abraham Maslow calls the needs of love and belonging," and, as such, "is not only a means to an end but also an end in itself" (p. 5).

As a phenomenon, solidarity in the modern era has been characterized by some scholars as something of a miracle (Owczarski, 2015; Weigel, 2013), demarcating not only a political revolution, but also a "revolution of conscience" and of "spirit" (Weigel, 2013, p. 4). Another reason why it is difficult to define the term "solidarity" may be attributed to the fact that solidarity can take on so many different forms; the cohesion inherent in solidarity may be based in political or economic concepts, human-rights concepts, as well as in particular concepts of spirituality. The term "solidarity" was introduced as a dominant theme into Catholic social teaching by Pope John Paul II, who expounded solidarity as a moral virtue that enhances relatedness among individuals and that promotes the collective well-being of a society. He elaborated upon the concept of solidarity in the 1981 papal encyclical *Laborem Exercens*, with specific reference to the issue of worker solidarity, addressing the need for new labour movements all over the world. There can be little doubt that the concerns regarding injustice expressed by the Pope constituted a direct reaction to the events of Polish Solidarity that had captured the world's attention only months prior. The concept of solidarity became so engrained into Catholic social teaching that it surpassed the previously dominant virtue of charity (Weigel,

2013). The Pope's preoccupation with the theme of solidarity as a central "virtue" of Catholicism is repeated in future encyclicals, such as the 1987 encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*:

> When interdependence becomes recognized in this way, the correlative response as a moral and social attitude, as a "virtue," is solidarity. This then is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual because we are really responsible for all…Solidarity helps us to see the "other"—whether a person, people or nation—not just as some kind of instrument, with a work capacity and physical strength to be exploited at low cost and then discarded when no longer useful, but as our "neighbor," a "helper" (cf. Gen 2:18-20), to be made a sharer, on a par with ourselves, in the banquet of life to which all are equally invited by God. (Pope John Paul II, 1987, #38-39)

As the above excerpt exemplifies, the concept of solidarity that is promoted in Catholic social teaching is not to be considered as something of a transient nature as Bopurai (2015) suggests; it requires a lasting commitment towards the Other and towards communal responsibility. Solidarity, in the Catholic sense, ultimately promotes relatedness. As such, it counters the inherent tendency of all individuals to project themselves, along with their unconscious fears and desires, onto the Other. While projection is "crucial in the establishment of the self," it may serve to distort knowledge of both the self and of the Other if it is "overused and not identified" (Clack, 2010, p. 77). In order to develop a form of relationality that emphasizes reciprocity, mutual recognition, and recognition of the other as 'wholly Other', it is thus necessary to identify the processes of projection that may obscure engagement with the Other, and which may perpetuate passivity and destructive behaviors. The Catholic concept of solidarity is therefore ultimately non-violent, and demands a perspective that recognizes the dignity and human rights of all.

Solidarity in Poland

In discussing the Solidarity movement in Poland, it is not possible to reduce the movement as embodying any single form of solidarity. In their quest for "Bread and Freedom," Polish workers, intellectuals, and clergy came together in order to fight against unjust political and economic conditions, to protest human rights violations perpetrated by the State, and to display a religious commitment to the 'common good', as advocated by the Roman Catholic Church (Beyer, 2007). They were also fighting for less tangible elements, such as 'life in truth', and, as it will be argued here, the reclamation of an identity that had been trampled upon and distorted by various outsiders since Poland's inception as a state in 966.

The protests that began in the shipyards of Gdańsk in 1980 were not without precedent. There had been several previous uprisings by Polish workers during the communist era, the most notable being that which took place in December 1970, which "fused [workers] for the first time into a cohesive community with a common purpose" (Garton Ash, 1983, p. 12). These earlier protests, however, had been quelled by the use of violent means, and dozens of workers were shot. The murders came as a veritable shock to the Polish population, as they clearly "transgressed that especially sacred unwritten commandment of the Polish religion of freedom, 'Pole shall not kill Pole'" (Garton Ash, 1983, p. 12). For Lech Wałęsa in particular, who was one of the participants of the 1970 strike and also the eventual leader of the Solidarity movement of the 1980s, the drive "to honor the martyrs' memory became a driving force, almost an obsession" (Garton Ash, 1983, p. 12).

By 1980, an alliance between workers, intellectuals, and the Church had formed, displaying a cohesiveness that was "unprecedented in Polish history, unique in the Soviet bloc, unseen in the West" (Garton Ash, 1983, p. 25). Poland at this time had an exceptionally large

number of youths, with approximately one-third of workers under the age of twenty-five (Pełczyński, 1980, p. 450). These youth had only heard of the Hitlerite or Stalinist experiences of terror from their parents and elders. While members of this younger demographic were well-aware of the kind of terror that previous generations had experienced and were aware of its impact on the nation's morale, they refused to settle for such meager standards of living. For the youth of Poland, the lies perpetuated by communist propaganda were transparent and laughable. The time had come, many felt, not only to raise material expectations, but also to demand freedom from these lies and to show their loyalty to what Wałęsa described as "the family which is called Poland" (Garton Ash, 1983, p.28).

There is a great deal of debate regarding the emergence of Solidarity and its links of causality, that is, which historical events in particular may be said to have played a causal role in the emergence of Solidarity. It would be overly simplistic, however, to assert any single event as being determinative for this emergence, and equally narrow-minded to discredit seemingly unrelated occurrences as irrelevant. For instance, while some have pointed to the weakening of the State as a major incentive for revolution, this does not explain why there was nothing that resembled Solidarity in other countries belonging to the Soviet Bloc.

There is little doubt that the strikes of December 1970 were one motivating factor in the uprisings that took place ten years later. The protesters of 1980 explicitly sought to honor the memory of their comrades, who had also been fighting for freedom and dignity. However, the memory of this violence was also still fresh enough to constitute an important source of anxiety for Solidarity's participants. Although the goal was not to employ violent means as a way of making their demands heard, the shootings in 1970, as well as violent uprisings in neighboring countries, served as an important reminder that there was no guarantee of opposition without

bloodshed. As many foreign journalists reported at the time (Polish journalists were limited by State censorship), protestors who had avoided church services for decades were suddenly stirred to go to confession and to attend services that took place on location in the shipyards. The images of Pope John Paul II and the Black Madonna (the "Queen" of Poland) were predominant on site, and were believed to endow Solidarity with an important protective factor (Stony Brook University, 2011).

Another precipitating factor of Solidarity that cannot be ignored is the election of Karol Wojtyła as Pope in 1978, and his first visit to Poland in 1979 (also the first visit by any Pope to Poland during the communist era). Karol Wojtyła's election came as a welcome surprise to the general population in Poland, and as a less-welcome shock for the Polish United Workers' Party (i.e. the Communist Party). Following the extremist approach of the strongly anti-religious Gomułka regime, which had perpetuated "brutal administrative and propaganda practices" (Zaremba, 2015, p. 318) in its attempt to quell Church influence in the public sphere, there had been some effort by the Gierek administration to improve Church-State relations in the 1970s. This effort however, was superficial, and the State's policy continued to promote secularism and endeavored to weaken the Church's influence. Despite these efforts, 77% of Poles surveyed in 1975 admitted to regular participation in religious activities, which continued to play a central role in the life of many Poles, even though religious instruction had been removed from schools and religious institutions continued to be repressed in various ways (Zaremba, 2015, p. 318). Religion in Poland proved too great a force for the Party to overcome, and with the 'miraculous' election of Pope John Paul II, the influence of the Roman Catholic Church increased exponentially. The election of a Polish Pope altered the climate considerably, as a result of which the Christian ethos was revitalized, and with Solidarity came "an ethic of hope, hope in the

human person, and the reality of human freedom," which was characterized by a "mass conversion" amongst Poles, not necessarily in an explicitly religious sense, but rather "in the sense that they decided to live according to their conscience, as opposed to the dictates of communism" (Beyer, 2007, p. 211).

As the first independent union to emerge within the communist bloc, Solidarity brought together a vast diversity of Poles. Although it is easy to conclude in hindsight from the 1989 revolutions that Solidarity's aim was to bring an end to the communist regime, such a goal was unimaginable for Solidarity's leaders and participants. According to Beyer (2007), one of the primary motivations of Solidarity was the recognition of the equality and dignity of all human beings. Although Solidarity was universalistic in its scope, the diversity of the individuals involved in the movement was not ignored; many participants adopted a phenomenological perspective that highlighted the value of each narrative and point of view. Intellectuals and workers were having serious conversations in the shipyards, and the Church and the laity were collaborating in an entirely new way. Their approach was not to overthrow the communist regime; the spirit of the movement was rather one which valued forgiveness, compromise, and respect for all people, even those who had committed evils.

Because the strong influence of the Church prevailed in the atheistic state, the Party permitted certain concessions with regards to religious activities, not realizing the extent to which the Church would emerge as a political force in and of itself. Furthermore, because millions of Poles could not relate to the ideals propagated by the government, they were united in their support for the Church, which in turn supported the continuity of Polish identity. Oppressive governments are largely successful in atomizing the societies over which they hold power. In an atomized society, citizens are often reluctant in sharing their anxieties and anger

with others, for fear of being found out. Pope John Paul II's 1979 visit and his powerful "be not afraid" speech (which affirmed him as a true enemy of communism) played a major role in de-atomizing Polish society (Stony Brook University, 2011). The Party attempted to re-atomize society by imposing martial law in December 1981, cutting off communication and re-instilling fear in the participants of Solidarity by making random selective arrests. However, although Solidarity was suppressed, its ethic of hope and its quest for truth did not die along with it. As had been the case with other historical events in Poland, the inherent cohesiveness of the nation was not destroyed, and the Church played an important role in maintaining this cohesiveness, both at a symbolic and at a practical level, despite the 'state of war' that the government had declared upon its own people.

Although Wojtyła's election as Pope certainly set the stage for such a large-scale movement as Solidarity, it is important not to ignore earlier events that solidified the link between Polish identity, Poland's history, and Polish Catholicism. For instance, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, a staunch anti-communist, initiated the Great Novena of the Millennium in the 1950s. The Great Novena foresaw a ten-year program of religious renewals, whose ideology was clearly oppositional to the authoritarian regime. One of the major projects for reinforcing the relationship between Polish national identity and the Church was the peregrination of the image of Matka Boska Częstochowska (Our Lady of Częstochowa), a particularly sacred relic within Polish Roman Catholicism. While a number of legends are associated with this famous Marian image, she is most well-known as a protective figure that represents the successful defense of Poland against Swedish invasion during the seventeenth century. Częstochowa, the city in which her icon is housed, was the final cloister of defense against the Swedes, and in the centuries that have followed, her image continues to be one of the most recognized in Poland, and undergoes a

much-celebrated ‘pilgrimage’ every year, a tradition that began with the Great Novena. This image, also known as the Black Madonna, was a central symbol in Wyszyński’s program of renewal, which “intended to rededicate the Nation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was venerated as the Queen of Poland” (Osa, 1996, p. 67). The personalization of this painting, and the widely attended and elaborate ceremonies that accompanied its peregrination throughout Poland, served to reinforce the special relationship between the Nation and the Virgin Mother, who, as Osa (1996) rightly points out, was considered to be “Poland’s Queen in metaphysical terms that superseded ordinary, political concepts” (p. 68). Furthermore, Osa (1996) suggests that, because of this emphasis on the special relationship between Poland and its “Heavenly Queen, the Nation was considered a primary form of attachment imbued with a transcendent spiritual significance. The relation between Nation and State, on the other hand, was seen as one of material necessity and of oppression” (p. 68).

The weakened State’s attempt to regain control and to re-atomize the state by imposing martial law in December 1981 resulted in the visible suppression of Solidarity. Despite the climate of fear imposed by the State, however, the spirit of cohesiveness that had emerged among the Polish people was not quelled. To be sure, the imposition of martial law constituted a severe setback. After the declaration of ‘state of war’ (*stan wojenny*) was issued, Poland’s military forces took to enforcing order in their own country, telephone lines were cut, and all Polish citizens were now legally permitted to do in the company of others “was to work, to stand in a queue, and to pray” (Garton Ash, 1983, p. 264).

Despite Solidarity’s numbers, the movement was not sufficiently organized or prepared for the measures taken by the State, which had been planned in secrecy, and which had come as a shock to all of Poland. There was no doubt, however, that, with the advent of Solidarity, a

veritable revolution had taken place. This was not a revolution in the traditional sense of the term, in that Solidarity "neither took over nor destroyed the existing state apparatus" (Garton Ash, 1983, p. 275). Rather, it has been variously characterized by participants and scholars alike as a revolution of conscience, or as a revolution of the Polish soul (Garton Ash, 1983; Weigel, 2013). It was also a revolution of memory, in that Polish citizens now insisted upon the importance of acknowledging the true history of their country, and not the lies and distortions propagated by communist historiography. Under the communist regime, Poles had been forced to live a double life. With the advent of Solidarity, however, citizens had expressed their desire to restore authenticity, and in doing so, to reclaim 'true' Polish identity. And while the State succeeded in imposing order through the decrees of martial law, the ideology of Solidarity had infiltrated the mindset and attitudes of Polish society, as a result of which the State's success was superficial at best.

Solidarity, Memory, and Identity

If we accept Bopurai's (2015) characterization of solidarity as a collective psychological response to overt uncertainty, which in turn leads to a search for 'truth', then it makes sense that solidarity is inextricable from memory. Memory in itself is also clouded by uncertainty, in that one can never be sure of the accuracy of what one remembers or of what has been forgotten. Memory, like solidarity, is thus a "domain of lack" (Bopurai, 2015, p. 6).

There are many unanswered questions that continue to plague contemporary scholars of Central and Eastern European societies, histories, and culture. In his seminal work, *God's Playground,* Norman Davies (1982) points to the many obstacles that have hindered the establishment of a widely accepted historiography of Poland. And while Davies' own work is

often touted as one of the most factually accurate and authoritative historiographies of the country, the date of its completion—1979—leaves us in a difficult predicament when it comes to gaining a better understanding of the events of the early 1980s. It is clear from the literature that relates the events of this decade in Poland that there is no clear consensus as to the exact causes or meaning of Solidarity and the role that Solidarity played in the revolutions of 1989, which resulted in the collapse of communism, both in Poland and elsewhere. Furthermore, the significance of Solidarity has been somewhat eclipsed by the tensions and anxieties that have arisen in the post-communist state, which has led some to mistakenly conclude that Solidarity was in some sense a 'failure'.

While the Roman Catholic Church played a significant political role in the events of the 1980s, and evidence of a religious revival in the post-communist state has led many sociologists of religion to reevaluate the secularization thesis, it may be argued that Church itself has taken a more passive symbolic role in the relatively new democratic state, in contrast to the more active role that it played when millions of Poles heard and responded to its plea for an ethic of solidarity in the 1980s, banding together in their quest for a "life in truth" (Beyer, 2007). Despite the turbulence of the post-communist state of affairs, however, it would be a mistake to overlook the significance of Solidarity in and of itself.

According to Paweł Rojek (2009) in his book *Semiotyka Solidarności* (The Semiotics of Solidarity), all of the controversies surrounding the Solidarity movement can be reduced to a single question: did the ideas underlying the movement transcend communism or were they merely a reflection of the communist regime? Those who hold the "thesis of reflection" argue that the form and content of the ideology of Solidarity was in fact identical to that of the regime against which it was opposed, and that Solidarity unconsciously took its beliefs and structures of

thinking about the world from the beliefs and structures of the Communist Party. According to this argument, Solidarity, like communism, was characterized by an *a priori*, utopian vision of ideal society, a certainty about its righteousness, and a dichotomous view of social reality based on moral categories. Moreover, Solidarity emphasized social consensus, suppressed differences of opinion, and assumed a positive concept of freedom, which is a foundation of totalitarianism. According to this argument, Solidarity—which many believe to have valued human dignity, civic society, and democracy—in fact posed a threat to these values (Rojek, 2009, pp.11-13). Like Rojek, this paper questions the merit of the "thesis of reflection" and its essentialist evaluation of Solidarity.

While Rojek compares the documents of Solidarity with those of the Communist Party, seeking to demonstrate the existence of significant structural differences between the discourses of the Party and those of Solidarity, it is equally important to highlight the unique relational and psychological dynamics that were at work in the Solidarity movement, and which served to differentiate its ideology from the ideology of the communist regime. First, rather than suppressing differences, as the "thesis of reflection" suggests, the Roman Catholic Church in fact encouraged Solidarity's participants—which included workers, intellectuals, and clergy—to embrace and transcend differences of opinion. Furthermore, contrary to the "thesis of reflection," Solidarity's quest was not for a utopian society, as can be seen with the participants' willingness to compromise with the Party and in their reluctance to resort to extremist measures and violent revolts. If Solidarity had indeed been rooted in a certainty about its righteousness and had been based on a dichotomous view of social reality, as the thesis of reflection proposes, the peaceful Round Table talks of 1989 would never have been possible.

As Beyer (2007) points out, the "ethic of solidarity" that characterized the movement of the 1980s was unique, and entirely different from the ideology of the communist regime. According to Beyer (2007), some of the fundamental characteristics of Solidarity include "unity among differences, the foundation of hope…promoting the equality and dignity of all, the centrality of participation… and the insistence on life in truth" (p. 207). While the movement was "infectiously hopeful" (Garton Ash, 1983, p. 337), it was not utopian, nor did it serve to deny the past wrongdoings of its participants or of the nation. To be sure, there are always individuals and groups who will assert their righteousness and innocence, but this was not the overall aim of Solidarity. In fact, it was quite the opposite.

Some scholars have, in hindsight, asserted that the revolutions of 1989 and the ultimate demise of communism were inevitable. While it is true that some intellectuals correctly predicted such an outcome, there were a number of factors which made it possible, and there was never any guarantee of the regime's ultimate demise. One important factor, for example, is the awareness that Solidarity brought to historical events and memories that had been long suppressed and unacknowledged. The acknowledgment of a difficult (and distorted) history was an important first step in Solidarity's 'revolution of memory'. If one looks to contemporary China, on the other hand, it has been suggested that there have been three major psychological obstacles that have prevented a public acknowledgment of the Cultural Revolution:

> [First,] most people now feel shame for their past behaviour and tend to repress memories of it. Second, there is an unconscious reluctance to meddle with the image of Mao as the great leader and hero. Finally, there is a lack of role models. Since not even leadership figures and intellectuals have revealed their complex relationships to the Cultural Revolution, why should ordinary people do so…? (Gentz, 2014, p.21)

While it must be acknowledged that the historical, cultural, and political context of the Chinese Cultural Revolution and of Polish Solidarity cannot be equated, the Chinese example

demonstrates the extent to which psychodynamics play a role in determining the motivation of a nation to come together in the face of a common enemy. In Poland, rather than the repression of memory (which had long been the tendency), Solidarity generated a conscious movement to bring collective memories back into awareness, and to challenge the lies and propaganda that had been distorted by communist historiography, which had denied, ignored, or exaggerated the events of the past according to its own convenience. So long as the Party had been successful in atomizing Polish society, this historiography was sure to be engrained into the minds of Poles by various means, such as the media, school books, and educational curricula. However, with the help of the Church, members of Polish society recognized the deceptions inherent in the Party's version of events, and sought to insist upon a history based in truth.

Poland constitutes an exceptional case in that, despite wars, raids, and periods of intermittent existence, the lack of continuity in its geographical presence as a nation did not compromise the continuity of Polish national identity. Paweł Rojek (2013) and Ryszard Legutko (2008) suggest that the continuity of identity is due to the fact that 'Poland' is, in itself, more of an 'idea' than a geographical territory. Both authors emphasize the interdependence of identity and memory, and often refer to Poland not just as an idea that has survived in the minds of many generations of Poles, but also as a person, as a 'she'. Despite the manipulation of memory by oppressive governments, the existence of many alternative historiographies, as well as the disruptions in Poland's geographical continuity, Rojek (2013) argues that the essential Polish identity has remained remarkably intact. But what is this essential Polish identity?

Some scholars (e.g. Garton Ash, 1983; Morawska, 1984; Osa, 1989) have pointed to the fact that, from an early time, there has been a clear separation between Church and State in Poland, whereby the Church is equated with the Polish 'nation', while the State is seen as

something that exists separately. The Church and the 'national identity' of Poland have thus been historically inextricable, which, as Osa (1989) points out, has not been the same case for other countries of the Soviet Bloc, such as Hungary. Ewa Morawska (1984) agrees that Poland's exceptionalism is in large degree due to the blending of religion and nationalism, which resulted in a "Polish civil religion" that delegitimized the State "by rallying Polish society around a counterview of a past and future free, independent Poland" (p. 29). This argument, Osa (1989) reasons, relies on Poland's loss of independence "as a 'traumatic event'" (p. 277).

Jan Assmann's (1995) distinction between collective memory and communicative memory has been highly influential in determining whether and to what extent historical events help to shape group identities. By communicative memory, he means "everyday memory," which is transient, formless, and has no "cultural" characteristics, that is, it "offers no fixed point which would bind it to the ever expanding past in the passing of time" (Assmann, 1995, p. 127). Such fixity can only be achieved through the cultural formation that is inherent to collective memory, which, unlike informal everyday communication, objectivizes culture and concretizes the identity of a particular group. The fixity of collective memory is "maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication," which constitute "figures of memory" (Assman, 1995, p. 129). Without the institutional communication of the Church, it is difficult to say whether or not Poles would have had the means to challenge the collective memory which had been crafted via the cultural formation of the communist regime. Because of the existence of an institution that was in place to oppose the false collective memory that had been imposed by the State, Polish workers and intellectuals were inclined not only to question communist historiography, but also took it upon themselves to reconstruct their own history,

which, due to the restrictions of State censorship, resulted in the development of a dynamic and industrious underground press.

Although the concept of collective memory has been questioned by some historians, Tomas Plaenkers (2014) believes that the important question that arises from the discussion surrounding collective memory is whether or not a particular society is "ready to make room for, and allow, public discussion of diverse views of its own history" (p. 135). He contrasts the public discourse that took place following 9/11, in which concepts such as "national trauma" and "onlooker trauma" became subject to discussion, to the silence with which the Cultural Revolution has been treated in China. How a society deals with its history is dependent on whether or not the society is able to create and promote a "three-dimensionality," which Plaenkers (2014) argues is a mark of "psychic maturity," as it allows the individual to share his or her own experience "in the context of the whole society's story" (p. 134).

The exceptional emergence of Solidarity in Poland was not only a mark of the country's political sophistication at the time, but also of the "three-dimensionality" that characterized Polish national identity. Although it is not within the scope of this essay to describe the formative events of Poland's history in great detail, the important intersection between memory, identity, and religion in Poland can be examined within a historical context that spans over 1000 years, going back to 966, which marks the genesis of the Polish state, as well as the year of King Mieszko I's baptism and the beginning of Latin Christianity in Poland. By insisting on a need to return to authentic "figures of memory," Poles demonstrated a conscious awareness of the inextricability of their national identity from their history.

The important role that the Roman Catholic Church played in helping Poles to reclaim their 'Polishness' was surprising to those who had underestimated the influence of religion, and

who had considered it to be privatized and apolitical. The role of religion in this ‘revolution of conscience’ is less surprising when one considers religion as something that “not only can help to generate and define the grievances that breed disruptive collective activism, it can also supply the symbolic and emotional resources needed to sustain that activism over time” (Smith, 1996, p. 11). In light of this observation, one question remains: What factors allowed religion to take on this particular role in Poland in the early 1980s, and what made the influence of the Roman Catholic Church unique in the particular case of Solidarity? The following section will examine this question in further detail, by looking to the psychodynamics that characterized Polish society at the time, and to the unique relationship that formed between Church and laity.

Analysis

Although there have been many interpretations of the symbolic significance of Solidarity on the part of philosophers, sociologists, and historians, there has been little elaboration with regards to the psychodynamics that allowed for the mobilization of millions of Poles in 1980. As such, my aim here will be to carry out such an analysis, using the theoretical concepts of Donald Winnicott in order to interpret the unconscious motivations that were at the heart of Solidarity, and how the Church in particular served as a kind of parental authority, allowing Solidarity's participants to define and bring into awareness their needs and desires, and to create a space in which these needs could be voiced and shared with others.

For those in doubt of the potential contribution of psychoanalytic theory at both the local and global levels of conflict resolution and cultural analysis, one only has to look to the work of Vamik Volkan (1988), a Turkish psychoanalyst who has spent several decades applying his expertise in the areas of public policy and international affairs. Though more focused on ethnic and national conflict than on religion, Volkan's work has been significant in demonstrating how psychoanalytic theory can contribute to a contemporary understanding not only of the individual psyche but also of the collective psyche. Other examples of applied cultural psychoanalysis include M. Gerard Fromm's *Lost in Transmission* (2012), which looks at the large-group effects of the Holocaust, 9/11, and the Oklahoma bombings, as well as Tomas Plaenker's *Landscapes of the Chinese Soul* (2014), which examines the psychological impact of the Cultural Revolution on Chinese citizens. In applying psychoanalytic theory 'beyond the couch', these authors have demonstrated the extent to which unconscious motivations and defense mechanisms can determine ideologies and societal attitudes. It is according to this assumption that Polish Solidarity will be examined here.

Winnicott

In recent years, the revival of psychoanalytic interest in religion has given rise to a wealth of scholarly discussion. This renewed interest has resulted in a view of religion that differs greatly from the traditional (i.e. Freudian) position, which reduces religion to the status of infantile illusion. This alternative understanding of religion was largely made possible as a result of a major shift in psychoanalytic thinking, often referred to as the 'relational turn', which placed greater emphasis on interpersonal interactions, and which inspired newer generations of analytic scholars to search for a non-reductive theoretical framework that would allow for a more positive evaluation of religion and religious phenomena. Donald W. Winnicott, with his development of such concepts as the 'transitional object' and 'transitional phenomena', played an important role in providing such a framework and, as a result, his work has been of great influence to the contemporary psychoanalytic study of religion in life and in culture.

Winnicott's writings suggest that the human capacity for cultural or religious experience is highly dependent on the capacity for creative living that is usually developed in early infancy, which in turn is contingent upon the infant's interaction with specific objects (e.g., the mother). In healthy development, this capacity for creative living is gradually generalized as the ability to interact with the broader cultural field, which allows the adult to 'create' and 'discover' art, science, and religion. Despite Winnicott's own reticence in theorizing specifically about religion, his theoretical concepts have been highly influential among analytic scholars who seek to understand and explain how the attribution of religious meaning, or 'sacredness', takes place within a relational context, and how religion confers meaning within a particular context. This paper seeks to do the same, by demonstrating how Winnicott's theoretical concepts have laid the foundation necessary for a relational understanding of religion that is at the core of Polish

Solidarity. More specifically, the goals here will be: (1) to explicate those theoretical concepts that are of greatest relevance to a psychological understanding of the causes and meanings of Solidarity; (2) to examine how these concepts have allowed for a more positive and non-reductive understanding of religion; and (3) to address some of the limitations and criticisms that may be leveled against Winnicott and to propose further avenues of studying the psychological aspects of Solidarity. Also, while the corpus of Winnicott's writing is vast, the main focus here will be on those writings that have had the greatest impact for the psychoanalytic study of religion—namely, his text *Playing and Reality* (1971) and the various articles in which he formulates his concepts of the transitional object and transitional phenomena.

At the most basic level, psychoanalytic theory assumes that individuals are motivated by unconscious material. Our behaviours, personalities, and the manner in which we relate to other people and the external world are largely guided by unconscious psychic material, which has been repressed over the course of early development. In the analytic process, the analyst's aim is to bring unconscious material into awareness, via techniques such as free association, which consists of the analysand's uncensored verbal description of his or her own reality; the interpretation of dreams; and the analysis of transference feelings, which tend to arise when the patient re-enacts scenarios from important past relationships. By working through unconscious material, it is possible to transform the structure of the personality, to eliminate neurotic symptoms, and to liberate oneself from the control of unconscious drives, thus achieving the autonomy of a mature adult psyche (Corey, 2009). Beyond this basic definition of psychoanalysis, there is a great divergence in theoretical orientations, which include Freudian theory, Jungian theory, and the object-relations school, among others.

The British object-relations school to which Winnicott belonged was at the epicenter of the aforementioned 'relational turn' in psychoanalysis. The 'relational turn' constituted a shift in focus from the *intra*personal dynamics of the psyche to that of *inter*personal dynamics, as well as a shift in emphasis from the role of the father to the role of the 'good enough mother'. For Winnicott and his contemporaries, the instincts are not a determining factor in the formation of relationships, as they are for Freudians. In fact, Winnicott's approach suggests the reverse: that it is the quality of our relationships that determines our instinctual attitudes. The framework at the foundation of Winnicottian theory does not privilege the biological drives, as Freud does, or the "universal archetypal forms," as Jung does, but rather "the internalization" (Jones, 2002, p. 5) of the interactions between the infant and their caregiver. According to J.W. Jones (2002), it is this relational perspective that makes Winnicott's theory particularly amenable to the psychoanalytic study of religion, seeing as relational themes reverberate "through our devotional practices, spiritual disciplines…and theological convictions" (p. 5).

While Freud (1927/1961) views atheism as normative, Jung champions a very spiritual kind of psychoanalysis that Freud adamantly tries to dissociate himself from. Yet, even though they present very different visions, both emphasize the psyche's *intra*personal drives. For Freud, that drive is gratification, while for Jung, integration is central. Jung posits the discovery of "the sacred buried within each self" as one of the major goals of psychoanalysis, and his approach, unlike that of the interpersonal school, is "profoundly introverted and individualistic—each person [is] his or her own church, synagogue, or ashram. One has no need of others; everyone has within the self the collective wisdom of the human race" (Jones, 1991, p. 5).

In contrast to Freud and Jung, object-relations theorists posit that it is the object (i.e., the Other) and the individual's relationship with the object that is of primary importance. According

to this approach we are "relationally oriented, from the beginning" (Jones, 1991, p. 14). While Freud viewed the phenomenon of transference within religion as a linear projection, contemporary psychoanalysts who share Winnicott's understanding of human nature tend to view transference as a more complex network of reciprocal interactions. Such an understanding allows for a different treatment of religion. The relational turn in psychoanalysis challenges the traditional tendency towards dichotomization (subjective/objective, fantasy/reality). And it is Winnicott's concept of the intermediate realm (i.e., transitional space) that has largely served to bridge the gap between the subjective and the objective, demonstrating how these two separate realms overlap and interact to form a third realm of experience, that is, a third 'way of knowing' that is not *either/or,* but rather *both/and*.

In "A Critique of Relational Psychoanalysis," Jon Mills (2005) offers an insider's view of what the relational turn has contributed to the field of psychoanalysis. By engaging in a self-reflective critique of his own area of expertise, Mills underscores the need for self-evaluation by analytic scholars. Without such self-evaluation, the concepts and ideas put forth by the newer approaches risk becoming as dogmatic and unyielding as some of the classical psychoanalytic ideas are now perceived to be.

In Mills' (2005) view, one of the major advantages of the relational model is that it has given analysts "a permissible space for comparative psychoanalysis by challenging fortified traditions ossified in dogma" (p. 156) which include not only the more orthodox ideas about transference described above, but also conceptions about the analyst's role as a neutral and non-self-disclosing agent of the therapeutic process, as well as the traditional reduction of religion to a state of 'fantasy'. The second advantage that Mills identifies has to do with the impact that the relational turn has had on the therapeutic encounter itself, in that it encourages a more holistic

process in which the analyst engages the patient in a "natural, humane, and genuine manner," and in which the importance of interpretation and analytic insights is deemphasized (p. 156). As Winnicott (1971) himself explains, it is not the analyst's job to "give this link" of interpretation to the patient; "premature interpretation" carried out by the analyst is to be avoided, as it "annihilates the creativity of the patient and is traumatic in the sense of being against the maturational process" (p. 117). Finally, the third advantage identified by Mills is that the relational turn has permitted contemporary analysts to adapt classical theory to changing times, which includes embracing a postmodern tradition of questioning the validity of truth-claims, objectivity, and positivism.

The relational model of psychoanalysis provides an alternative perspective to the traditional model by giving primacy to our interactions with others, and by rejecting the notion that the internal drives constitute "the basic stuff of mental life" (Mitchell, 1988, p. 2). As further examination of Winnicott's transitional paradigm should demonstrate, the relational school places far more importance on intersubjectivity than it does on subjectivity alone or objectivity alone. The concept of intersubjectivity has been integrated by relational psychoanalysts "as the ideal striving for mutual recognition," which corresponds to the stage of development in which the individual succeeds in acknowledging "the existence and value of the internalized other" (Mills, 2005, p. 159).

Despite the usefulness of the relational model, it is also necessary to acknowledge some of its limitations. According to Mills, one of the dangers inherent to relational psychoanalysis lies in the fact that the emphasis on intersubjectivity may lead to the absolutist misinterpretation that *everything* is determined by one's interpersonal experiences. By centering the focus entirely on the interpersonal aspects of psychic experience, overstatements regarding the importance of

interrelatedness risk obscuring “the separateness of the self” (Mills, 2005, p. 160) as well as the individual’s personal history.

Another potentially problematic notion found in relational literature is the idea that the intersubjective system constitutes a dynamic entity that exists in and of itself. Intersubjectivity thus considered introduces the problem of agency, in that it obscures the agency of the individual mind, which is subordinated to the intersubjective system. It also gives rise to the question of how the intersubjective system, as an independent entity, is able acquire an agency of its own. A third possible criticism is that the relational model “displaces the notion of the analyst’s epistemic authority as an objective certainty” (Mills, 2005, p. 165). According to this critique, the positions taken up by relational psychoanalysts eliminate any possibility for objective truth. Within this model, everything becomes fiction.

Whether or not one agrees with the criticisms of the relational approach identified by Mills, such limitations do not necessarily serve to negate the value or significance of the relational model. Rather, it is precisely because the relational school has so much to offer that “a proper philosophical grounding becomes a necessary requisite in order to lend credibility and validity to its diverse theoretical position” (Mills, 2005, p. 182).

Another trend that has emerged from the acknowledgment of the outside world’s influence upon the human psyche has been the recognition of how the internal and external worlds are intertwined. This recognition has encouraged contemporary psychoanalysts to take into account the role that history, culture, and religion play in the formation of both individual and group identity. While Winnicott (1958/1975) himself does not fully elaborate on the extent to which factors such as religion, memory, and politics determine the construction of the ‘true self’, versus the construction of the ‘false self’— that is, that part of the psyche which forces the

true self to remain hidden, and which, unlike the true self, cannot "experience life or feel real" (p. 297)—many of his followers have taken up this task, arguing in favour of the applicability of Winnicottian concepts to phenomena that plague broader society, and by pointing out the global political vision that is implicit in Winnicott's work (Gerson, 2005).

The Transitional Space and Other Fundamental Concepts

In order to better understand how the events of Polish Solidarity may be understood from a psychoanalytic perspective, or, more specifically, in light of Winnicottian thought, it is necessary to elaborate upon those concepts that are fundamental to his theory. Scholars often position Winnicott and Freud in stark opposition to one another with regards to their respective conceptions of culture, religion, and human development. Jones (1991) has even gone so far as to characterize Winnicott's theoretical contributions as a catalyst for one of the major 'paradigm shifts' of psychoanalysis. Winnicottian concepts such as the 'transitional object', 'object usage', and the 'good enough mother' have contributed significantly to the transformation of psychoanalytic attitudes towards religion. Many of these concepts have been elaborated upon with the goal of re-establishing the significant role that religion may occupy in the life of the mature and healthy adult.

Winnicott's writings suggest that the capacity for religious experience is highly dependent on the capacity for creative living that is developed in the early experiences of infants, particularly in their interaction with specific objects. Winnicott posits that, in healthy development, this capacity for creative living is gradually generalized as the ability to interact with the broader cultural field, of which religion is a subset.

In combination with his many years of experience as a pediatrician, Winnicott's psychoanalytic training led him to apprehend a major lack in psychoanalytic theory. In his writings, he remarks on the absence of any sufficient psychoanalytic explanation which might serve to consolidate the gap which exists between the individual's experience of inner reality and the external reality shared with others. Although recognized in works of philosophy and theology, Winnicott argues that the significance of the 'transitional realm'—the term he uses to describe the intermediate area of experience located between the subjective and objective spheres—has been overlooked by psychoanalysis, which has focused mainly on inner psychic reality and its relation to external reality. Winnicott argues that there must be some kind of continuity that accounts for the individual's ability to successfully transition from his or her inner subjective world to the outer world of shared reality, and vice versa. Winnicott's perspective thus places him in opposition to Freud, who maintains a strict dichotomy between the realms of fantasy and reason. Winnicott (1971) challenges this dichotomy in the following way: "If we look at our lives we shall probably find that we spend most of our time neither in behavior nor in contemplation, but somewhere else. I ask: where?" (p. 105)

In an attempt to answer this question, Winnicott develops the notion of 'transitional phenomena'. In the early stages of life, transitional phenomena constitute those experiences that allow the infant who is still incapable of distinguishing him- or herself from other objects to transition into a state where differentiation or individuation is possible. These experiences take place in a psychological space that Winnicott usually refers to as the 'transitional realm', but which is also sometimes called 'potential space', or the 'intermediate area of experience'.

The transitional realm constitutes a major part of early experience, and the quality of the infant's interactions with 'transitional objects' is crucial for healthy psychological development.

However, it must be noted that the importance of the transitional realm does not diminish as the individual matures. Rather, it is experienced in a different way. As Winnicott (1958/1975) explains, this intermediate area is "retained in the intense experiencing that belongs…to religion and to imaginative living, and to creative scientific work" (p. 242).

As Bornstein (2013) writes, Winnicott's view is one that emphasizes "development toward greater complexity and wholeness as the principle source of motivation in human life" (p. 50). In one of his earliest writings on transitional objects and transitional phenomena, Winnicott (1958/1975) justifies that his use of the term 'transitional' "gives room for the process of becoming able to accept difference and similarity" and that what he refers to as the 'transitional object' constitutes the visible aspect of the infant's "journey of progress towards experiencing" (pp. 233-4).

We are most familiar with the initial transitional object of the infant as the toy or blanket which is carried everywhere, dirtied, cuddled, adored, and mutilated. Parents generally come to realize the significant importance that the object holds for the child and abstain from washing or changing it in any way so as not to interrupt "the continuity in the infant's experience, a break that may destroy the meaning and value of the object to the infant" (Winnicott, 1958/1975, p. 231). The infant holds an exclusive possession over the object, and others must respect this as an experience that must not be interfered with in any way. The transitional object is something that can be instinctually loved and hated, and "must seem to the infant to give warmth, or to move, or to have texture, or to do something that seems to show it has vitality or reality of its own" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 233). In other words, the transitional object is not merely used for comfort or reassurance. For the infant, a true transitional object is, at times, even "more important than the mother [and constitutes] an almost inseparable part of the infant" (Winnicott,

1971, p. 235). So, while the transitional object is usually something that is seemingly of little or no value to the observing outsider, it holds tremendous power for the child, to the extent that it appears to have a life of its own.

Despite the enormous significance that the transitional object holds for the child, it is not the nature of the transitional object that should be of central concern to the psychoanalyst (or parent), but rather the manner in which the object is used. By itself, the object merely serves "to sustain a growing and evolving inner reality and helps to differentiate it from the not-self world" (Winnicott, 1971, p. xx). It is the individual's experience of relating to the object that is significant, not the object itself. These individual experiences of relating are limitless in their variety. For Winnicott (1971), any attempt to describe the experiences that take place within the transitional realm may be likened "to the description of the human face when we describe one in terms of shape and eyes and nose and mouth and ears…the fact remains that no two faces are exactly alike and very few are even similar" (p. xii).

The transitional object is neither wholly imaginary nor is it entirely real; rather it occupies an intermediate position, where the internal and external worlds are intertwined. The transitional object is a tangible object that is infused with subjective meaning. In the case of Polish Solidarity, one may posit the existence of two such (related) objects. The first is the portrait of the Black Madonna, and the second is the image of Karol Wojtyła, i.e. the "Polish Pope." What is of interest in this scenario is that the symbolic meaning that infused these objects was not unique to the individual, but that their meaning was shared by millions. And while it might be impossible to receive an identical account of each individual's experience of these objects, there is a remarkable similarity in how these individuals related to them. To interfere with these objects, to take them away, would have had disastrous results for the shared meaning

that was necessary for Solidarity to emerge, just as it would be disastrous to remove the initial toy or security blanket from the young infant.

Another important concept that arises in Winnicott's theory, and which builds upon his description of transitional phenomena, is that of 'object usage', which is distinguished from object relating. Object relating is a subjective phenomenon, in which the individual employs projective techniques and identification to imbue the object with meaning, and the individual or 'subject' "is depleted to the extent that something of the subject is found in the object, though enriched by feeling" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 88). Discussion of object relating is generally favoured by psychoanalysts because it eliminates the need for an examination of external objective factors, and the focus remains on the projective mechanisms used by the patient. Object usage, on the other hand, goes beyond object relating, which is merely the first step of object usage. In discussing object usage, "the analyst must take into account the nature of the object, not as a projection, but as a thing in itself" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 88). For Winnicott, the difficulty lies in the sequence of events that takes place between the initial stage of object relating and the final stage of object usage. Before object usage is possible, the individual must surrender the object from his or her control and projective mechanisms. In this process of ceding control, "the subject destroys the object" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 89). The object may or may not 'survive' this destruction, but if it does, then the survival of the object as an independent entity will ultimately serve to benefit the individual in that it permits him or her to live "in the world of objects", even though the individual must relinquish control and accept "ongoing destruction in unconscious fantasy relative to object-relating" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 90) in order to do so. Although the process is extremely painful, object usage represents the final stage that the child must achieve in

his or her development that will allow him or her to engage in the activities of creative living (e.g., religion) that constitute an important element of maturity and overall psychic health.

Developing a capacity for object usage does not occur in isolation. The process of disillusionment that accompanies the transition from object relating to object usage requires the presence of a figure that Winnicott refers to as the 'good-enough mother'. Although the infant is the only one who perceives the immense power and value of the transitional object, the transitional experience associated with this object cannot occur without the helpful presence of others, especially the 'good-enough mother'. For Winnicott (1958/1975), the infant is an "unknowable isolate, who [can] personalize and know himself only through the other" (p. xiv). As a result, the intermediate area of experience is necessarily interpersonal in nature. Transitional phenomena are thus first experienced in relation to the primary caregiver (usually the mother). The 'good enough mother' is a necessary buffer for the gradual process from total illusion to the disillusionment that takes place once the infant has acknowledged the existence of objects as 'things in themselves'. Once the initial transitional object has been discarded, and the child has gained the capacity for creative living, transitional phenomena can then arise in relation to "the whole cultural field" and cultural experience takes place in the transitional sphere, that is, the "potential space [located] between the individual and the environment (originally the object)" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 100).

Winnicott (1958/1975) postulates three stages of the disillusionment process. The initial stage is one of absolute dependence. Here, the mother's task is to maintain the infant's illusions by adapting completely and lovingly to the infant's needs. The second stage is an intermediate stage of relative dependence, elements of which, Winnicott claims, can be reproduced in psychoanalytic regression. Finally, in the third stage, the infant progresses towards a capacity of

being alone. If the task of gradual disillusionment has been successful, the presence of the 'good-enough mother' will be felt even when the infant is alone and "will imbue the child with an experience of quiet relatedness" (Hoffman, 2004, p. 787) and a feeling of security. Among scholars of religion, it has been argued that the continuity of the mother's felt presence that results from healthy disillusionment parallels the continuity in the individual's felt presence of God which, as Goldman (1993) writes, is experienced as "both intimate and ultimate" (p. 123).

Here Winnicott points out how crucial non-interference is to the good mother/infant relationship. This element of non-interference was equally crucial in the relationship that the Polish people had with the Church, and especially with the Pope. Upon Wojtyła's election as Pope in 1978, he was successful in creating a relationship with Polish Roman Catholics that could be said to be analogous to Winnicott's mother-infant relationship. During his first visit to Poland in 1979, millions flocked to see him in the flesh. His mere presence brought together people from all over the country, from many different walks of life. Polish Catholics, desperate to be as physically near this miraculous individual as possible, listened to his words with utter rapture. This could be said to correspond to Winnicott's first stage of "absolute dependence," whereby Poles identified totally with the Pope, internalizing and repeating his words. A period of relative dependence can be said to have followed, whereby there emerged a great interest in his activities, his speeches, his previous writings, and plans for his next visits. Individual family homes set up mini shrines, and a flag with his image became one of the largest and most striking symbols at Gdansk. Eventually, individuals became less preoccupied with the Pope himself, and, although his symbolic importance was not erased, participants of Solidarity and the 1989 revolution began to create their own space and their own language. Most significantly, this was seen with the emergence of the underground press, which, with the help of activist intellectuals,

began to produce not just pamphlets, but major volumes concerning a wide variety of subjects, from philosophy to economics. The Church, of course, played an important role in providing physical space and resources for the creation of this underground movement, but what emerged was something that had arisen from the 'transitional space' of Solidarity, which was the outcome of the intersubjective encounter between the Church, the workers, intellectuals, as well as figures from the past. Although Winnicott emphasizes the importance of the intersubjective encounter that takes place in the here and now, Solidarity was also an encounter of the present with the past.

This is the natural course of events if all goes well. If, however, there is some disruption or obstacle that impedes the process of gradual disillusionment, the child may be left without the reassurance of the continued felt presence. This may occur, for example, if the 'good-enough mother' is in absentia, if there is a prolonged separation from the mother figure, or if the task of gradual disillusionment is not upheld by parents and teachers at later stages of development. In a similar way, it can be said that Solidarity would not have been possible in the other countries of the Soviet Bloc due to the existence of such obstacles. Because the Church did not play the role of the 'good-enough mother' in other countries in the same way that it did in Poland, there was no 'holding environment' in which these citizens could enact their unconscious needs and desires.

It may be argued that, in the Polish example, the fear, anxiety, and tensions that arose in the post-communist era following Solidarity were also a result of a disruption in this process of gradual disillusionment. The collapse of communism came quickly—Poles were suddenly faced with the challenge of affirming their place as a not yet well-established democracy. The ambiguous slogans of Solidarity—for example, to live a "life in truth"—began to lose their

significance. Although the Pope arguably retained a highly symbolic importance in the homes and lives of Roman Catholic Poles, his pleas for a co-existence of freedom and solidarity were generally unsuccessful. It was clear that the ethic of solidarity that had upheld widespread social consensus in the 1980s no longer had power in the attitudes and relations among Poles. With the rapid Westernization of Poland, the influence of the Church was overwhelmed by globalizing outside forces, and could thus no longer provide the holding environment (i.e. the 'ordinary good home') that had allowed Church leaders to act as the arbiters of Poland's nationhood during the communist era.

A Non-Reductive Framework for Understanding Solidarity

While it is possible to separate subject and object heuristically, Winnicott views the two as inextricably intertwined. As Jonte-Pace (1985) states, Winnicottian theory posits that "we create what exists, we create the objects of our environment, we create the other…What is external is simultaneously created by the individual" (p. 230). Knowledge is an active process in which reality is continuously being discovered and created. This process of discovery and creation can be applied equally to any activity that arises within the cultural field, whether it is of a scientific, artistic, or religious nature. And because this process is rooted in a relational understanding of the human psyche, interpersonal interaction is central for the development of knowledge and culture, both of which arise from the interpenetration of the self and of the outside world (Jones, 1996).

The non-violent nature of Solidarity distinguishes it from other instances of social rebellion in that it was rooted in the same kind of relational understanding that Winnicottian theory is founded upon. Any concept or model that places primary importance on relationships,

as Solidarity did, requires a common meeting place for the intersubjective encounter that does not intrude upon or consume the space of the Other and that does not permit the Other to intrude or consume the space that is relegated to the self. This is precisely what the Church, and especially John Paul II, encouraged Solidarity's participants to embrace in their quest for the "common good." Solidarity was not a commitment to absolute victory over the "enemy" (i.e. the State), but rather a quest to create a nation that was best for all.

As Jessica Benjamin (2004) explains it, the only way that "we ever manage to grasp two-way directionality" is "from the place of the third, a vantage point outside the two" (p.7). Benjamin's conception of the third is not as a thing-in-itself, but rather as "a principle, function, or relationship…to which we surrender" and which "mediates 'I and Thou'" (pp.7-8). Furthermore, because the transitional realm or the "third" is conceptualized by psychoanalysts as an abstract space or 'world' in which the subjectivities of the self and the Other meet, it is transcendent; the space in which Solidarity was created cannot be 'grasped'. The transitional space, or the third, is thus what allows us to create meaning, which lies in the experience itself.

The space of the third may also be accorded to an aspect of the relationship that allows for three-dimensionality, in that it acts as the entity which both parties hold in common and allows for a mature and healthy perspective in dealing with conflict. Osa (1989) describes how the organizational structure of the postwar Church allowed it to act as a third, defending Solidarity to the Party while simultaneously encouraging moderation on the part of Solidarity's participants. The Church was wary of the kind of reaction that a violent opposition could elicit, and although Church leaders were sometimes subject to criticism for their restraint at pivotal moments, the Church nevertheless played the role of the third by establishing necessary limits and boundaries, thus creating a "holding environment" for the Solidarity movement. The

Church's messages against the Party were subtle, full of subtext, but restricted in the sense that they did not constitute a full-frontal attack. Andrzej Micewski (1987) writes that the leaders of the Polish Church recognized the potential dangers that existed for Solidarity and its participants, and the necessity of co-existence with the regime. Without this recognition of the need for compromise and peaceful resistance, the Round Table talks of 1989 would never have been able to take place. The Church's mediation and influence allowed the Solidarity counter-movement to achieve a level of political sophistication that was unique to Poland and that made it a 'peculiar' case in comparison to other countries belonging to the Soviet Bloc.

Within psychoanalysis, the reductive view is described by Jung (1976) as a "method of psychological interpretation which regards the unconscious product not as a symbol" (p. 459) but rather as a pathological symptom. The term "reductive" means "leading back" and, as such, psychoanalytic interpretation that employs a reductive method is viewed by Jung (1976) to be "oriented backwards" (p. 459).

The appeal of the non-reductive framework intrinsic to Winnicottian theory is evident in the contemporary psychoanalytic literature, which tends to favour pluralistic, exploratory approaches over the reductionist attitudes that have been perpetuated by the Freudian camp. In recent years, for instance, there has been increased emphasis on the 'constructions' that are co-created between the patient and the analyst in the therapeutic encounter, that is, the shared realities that emerge out of the interaction of two individuals. There has also been greater emphasis placed on "the importance of mutuality" (Siegelman, 1994, p. 481) and of recognizing the genuine validity of individual experiences and perceptions. In her critique of reductive analysis, Siegelman (1994) explains how Winnicottian theory has contributed to a more open and process-oriented view of symbolization that focuses less on "the polymorphous perversity of the

classical Freudian account" and more on the individual's "potential for creativity and even spirituality" (p. 483).

In contrast to the "thesis of reflection" discussed above, although Solidarity relied upon the cohesion of millions, it was not concerned with overlooking the differences amongst its participants, but rather transcending them in order to achieve a common goal. In reality, the differences of individual participants allowed for the 'co-construction' of a multifaceted movement. While workers made concrete demands and made their physical presence seen and heard, the Polish intelligentsia elaborated upon the theoretical aspects of Solidarity, while the Church adapted its theology to further advancement of the cause. Thus, the 'mutuality' that is central to Winnicott's theoretical framework, as well as the focus on each individual's potential to 'create', constituted equally important aspects for Solidarity.

According to Green (1975), Winnicott has "recreated the language of the unconscious" (p. 364), and it is this new "language" that has permitted contemporary scholars to seek alternatives to the reductive take on religion that has reigned within psychoanalysis for many decades. Unlike Freud, Winnicott does not want us to relegate illusions into the realm of wishful thinking. On the contrary, his approach considers illusions to be a necessity for religious life in adulthood – without illusory substance, our lives would become bleak and stagnant. Inspired by the Winnicottian view of illusion, Rizzuto (1979) suggests that "[t]he type of illusion we select — science, religion, or something else — reveals our personal history and the transitional space" (p. 209) that was created as a result of our earliest experiences of interaction with the external world. In a similar way, it is possible to look at the emergence of Polish Solidarity as a function of a shared illusion. While some may have viewed the cries for "Bread and Freedom," and the quest for the "common good" to represent a kind of wishful thinking, the participants of

Solidarity were convinced of their right to higher expectations, and thus refused to accept a life of poverty and misery under the communist regime. Furthermore, the Church played a crucial role in creating and upholding these 'illusions'; the Pope himself embodied the kind of 'miracle' that Solidarity's participants sought for themselves.

Limitations and Criticisms

Although the scope of Winnicott's influence has been broad, some of the ambiguities surrounding Winnicott's theory make it necessary to examine more closely the limitations and criticisms that have been leveled against the appropriation of Winnicottian concepts to the study of religion. This final section will thus briefly explore specific criticisms that have been made against Winnicott and his followers—namely, the idealization of transitional objects and of the mother.

Brody (1980) holds that, in many cases, Winnicott's notion of the transitional object has been misapplied. Although Winnicott was primarily a clinician, his writings do not specify the extent to which his clinical observations contributed to the development of his transitional paradigm. While Brody commends Winnicott for the freedom he accords to "imaginative thinking" (p. 562), she is critical of how he leaves the chore of empirical verification to other scholars and clinicians. She also argues that, in generalizing the concept of transitional phenomena as observed in infant development to the entire cultural field of adulthood, Winnicott attempts to make his theory too comprehensive. Despite these ambiguities, what concerns Brody the most is the uncritical enthusiasm with which Winnicott's work has been received and how it has been accepted in a way that overlooks or minimizes the "ambiguities, logical errors, and misunderstandings of infant mental capacities that enter into his thesis" (p. 568).

Much of Winnicott's observations and ideas about the development of transitional space emerged from his investigation of the mother-infant relationship. While some argue that this investigation constitutes one of the major strengths of his theory, others question the role that he assigns to the mother, who appears to be entirely responsible for the success of the infant's development. More specifically, the latter group is critical of Winnicott's (1953) assumption that the 'good enough mother' must indulge the infant's illusion of magical control over the transitional object "by almost 100 percent adaptation" (p. 94) in order for healthy development to take place. Brody assesses this feat of complete adaptation on the part of mother as something that is nearly, if not totally, impossible. She contends that it is unrealistic to expect a mother to adapt herself completely to her infant's needs, and yet Winnicott considers this level of adaptation to be necessary for a childhood experience that he assumes to be universal.

However, while it is true that Winnicott places primacy on the mother-infant relationship, Jacobs (1995) posits that Brody's interpretation of Winnicott's 'good-enough' mother "has become exaggerated in its significance" (p. 109). By '100 percent adaptation', Winnicott does not mean that the mother must literally cater to the infant's every whim without fail, but rather that the infant's illusion surrounding the transitional object is something that should not be interfered with. The danger, for Winnicott, lies in the premature intervention of the relationship that the child has with the transitional object—for another person to remove or alter it in some way may have disastrous consequences for the child's ability to develop a healthy transitional capacity in adulthood. And while it is true that, in the earliest stages of development, the most important figure is typically the mother, Winnicott applies the same expectation of 'adaptation' to other care-takers as the child grows older—fathers, siblings, teachers, etc.

With respect to issues relating to religion, the importance of the 'good-enough' mother raises questions as to how the failure of the mother to adapt completely to the infant's illusions might affect the nature or treatment of internalized religious beliefs. If the infant fails to cultivate the capacity to enter and re-enter the transitional space, from which religion and other creative activities arise, does it then follow that the individual's religious beliefs (or lack thereof) are necessarily pathological? Not necessarily—for Winnicott, one of the goals of the therapeutic process is the cultivation of transitional capacity, which implies that, even if the individual did not develop this capacity during the 'usual' stage of development, it is still salvageable. Once the transitional capacity is acquired, then the potential for a non-pathological experience of religion is certainly within the realm of possibility.

For Winnicott (1950), one of the tasks of psychoanalysis "is to study and present the latent ideas that exist in the use" of difficult concepts, and to avoid "confining attention to obvious or conscious meaning" (p. 175). In his essay, "Thoughts on the Meaning of the Word Democracy," Winnicott argues that any study of the psychological development of a society must be undertaken in parallel to the study of the psychological development of the individual. It is here that the limitations of Winnicott's work become more pronounced. The psychoanalytic treatment of societal and cultural phenomena cannot be taken to be analogous to that of the individual. While there might be certain similarities that may lead the analytic scholar of religion in culture to pose a "diagnosis" upon society (i.e. PTSD), such treatment of the issue constitutes a gross oversimplification.

In discussing the transitional or 'in-between' space, a number of scholars (e.g. Jones 1991; Praglin, 2006) have compared Winnicott's transitional space with Martin Buber's *das Zwischenmenschliche*. Martin Buber, a social philosopher and theologian, was a contemporary of

Winnicott, although there is no evidence that their paths ever crossed. Whereas Winnicott emphasizes the psychological element of the 'in-between' space, Buber is more attentive to social and cultural factors:

> Buber's focus on meaningful relatedness is pursued foremost in his seminal 1923 study, *I and Thou*, where he outlines two ways of being in the world: the modes of I-It and I-Thou. In the realm of I-It, persons treat each other as objects. In the realm of I-Thou, persons seek to relate meaningfully to others. We must live in both worlds, Buber insists, yet only in the world of the I-Thou do persons relate with their whole being, and here is true dialogue and relationship possible. (Praglin, 2006, p. 2)

As those who have compared the works of Winnicott and Buber have rightly emphasized, their similar treatment of the 'in-between' space that individuals occupy demonstrates the importance of both the psychological and broader cultural factors that contribute to the creation and maintenance of this intermediate realm. As such, a purely Winnicottian analysis is insufficient when attempting a broader cultural analysis. The final section of this paper will thus propose further avenues of study by which the psychosocial motivations of Polish Solidarity may be examined.

The Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma

While a Winnicottian analysis provides some useful theoretical concepts to understand the unconscious motivations at the heart of Polish Solidarity, and the strong ties that these motivations have in religious sentiment, Winnicott's work is clearly limited in its consideration of historical and cultural context. As such, I would like to propose that, in addition to the analysis carried out above, which considers the importance of the 'third', the 'good-enough mother', the 'holding environment', and the 'transitional space', an examination of the psychodynamics underlying social movements as complex as Solidarity require an examination which spans across space and through time.

As a further avenue of study, I would like to propose that the underlying psychodynamics of Solidarity might be better understood as a function of the traumatic stress that Poles endured over many generations, the effects of which were passed onto more recent generations of Poles, even though these younger generations may not have experienced such trauma directly. The 1970s witnessed an explosion in literature that gives evidence in support of the intergenerational transmission of trauma on a large-scale. While a great deal of the empirical studies surrounding this phenomenon deal with the Holocaust, other scholars have begun to apply it to events of large-scale trauma elsewhere, such as the Cultural Revolution in China (Plaenkers, 2014).

Although it is true that, in the period leading up to Solidarity, the events of World War II and the Holocaust still resonated deeply among Poles, my intention is not to propose a simplistic causal relationship between the social movement of the 1980s and the trauma incurred by World War II. Rather, the 'trauma' that was imprinted onto the participants of Solidarity was the accumulation of the many violent attempts that had been made over centuries to break the continuity of Polish identity and to distort or repress true historical events. In psychoanalytic

terms, the ‘trauma’ incurred by the attempts of the Other to distort collective memory forced Poland to identify with the outsider, that is, to reject or lose the ‘self’ (i.e. its nationhood). According to the “transmission of trauma” thesis, Solidarity did not necessarily arise in response to any single historical event, but rather in response to a psychological wound that spanned many generations and that had left a profound mark on Polish identity. In order to reclaim this identity, Solidarity intended to recover “life in truth,” and to make a clean break from the harmful ‘outsider’ ideology that was being imposed in their schools, in their newspapers, and in all public activities. What arose with Solidarity was not simply a rejection of economic and political conditions, but also constituted a loudly voiced intolerance of the internalized dissociation that had been imposed upon Poles for many generations. Solidarity arose partially in recognition that the cognitive dissonance between the contrived language that Poles used in their public lives and the language of their private lives had become too disparate and burdensome. There was thus a great desire to reclaim not only ‘true’ memory, but also language, and to be able to use it authentically in all spheres of life.

It is important to note that many of the participants of Solidarity were born after the events of World War II, and felt that, in a sense, nothing of great import had taken place during their own lifetimes. However, in the 1980s, one would have been hard-pressed to find a family that had not been in some way directly impacted by war-time tragedy. It is feasible, therefore, that the resistance and mass mobilization of Solidarity constituted an attempt to reconcile unconscious fears and feelings of guilt evoked by the pasts of the older generation, feelings which had been indirectly ‘transmitted’ to Polish youth. By demanding “Bread and Freedom,” and by exposing themselves to a different kind of external danger, Solidarity’s younger participants were unconsciously reacting to a traumatic past that they themselves had

experienced only indirectly through the stories and behaviors of their parents and elders, willing themselves to be the belated saviors of their nationhood.

From a psychoanalytic point of view, the effects of mass trauma can be particularly destructive when they remain repressed in the collective unconscious, a phenomenon that René Kaës (quoted in Gatti, 2011) has described as a "psychic catastrophe," which occurs when the usual methods of dealing with the trauma are inadequate. The effects of such a "catastrophe" may be turned inward (i.e. clashes within the group) or outward, against an Other that is perceived to represent a serious threat. In psychoanalytic literature, it is proposed that violence carried out in the name of religion is often an irrational response to the helplessness, desperation, and uncertainty that results from situations of mass trauma or traumatic stress. According to this perspective, religious violence arises when the aggressive energy induced by "psychic catastrophe" is sublimated into the goal of destroying, humiliating, and shaming a carefully selected Other in the same way that the perpetrators perceive themselves to have been destroyed, humiliated, and shamed.

The effects of mass trauma have been shown to affect communities over time-periods that sometimes span multiple generations. The transgenerational transmission of trauma has been studied by scholars from multiple disciplines, and there is a good deal of empirical evidence to support the intergenerational effects of collective traumas, which may be "remembered" either through the telling and retelling of stories or by means of the profound silences that such trauma can impose upon a given community. Within psychoanalysis, Alice Miller (1983) has considered the effects of transmission of mass trauma on the perpetuation of abusive child-rearing practices, while psychopolitical analyst Vamik Volkan (1988) has examined the debilitating consequences that such trauma may have for large-group identities. According to this view, traumatic situations

leave an indelible "imprint" on the psyche of survivors. If there is no intervention or treatment, then this "imprint" is transmitted to their children, who internalize it, repress it, and sublimate it, just as their parents have. In this way, children "remember" and suffer the impact of mass trauma even if they have not experienced it first-hand. It is thus that the "psychic catastrophe" is diffused not only across space but also through time.

This idea is important for understanding the psychological aspects of collective memory. It also demonstrates how that which constitutes the "psychic catastrophe" does not only affect its immediate victims, but is transmitted also to their children and their children's children. As M. Gerard Fromm (2012) points out, it builds "upon the idea that what human beings cannot contain of their experience—what has been traumatically overwhelming, unbearable, unthinkable—falls out of social discourse, but very often on to and into the next generation as an affective sensitivity or a chaotic urgency" (p. xvi).

The diffuse nature of "psychic catastrophe," along with the fact that mass trauma is commonly pushed back into the deepest recesses of both the individual and collective unconscious, makes it exceptionally difficult to treat. An additional obstacle is that individuals and groups react to and manage different types of trauma in varying ways (i.e. war-time trauma vs. natural disaster). Furthermore, the fact that there is no uniform definition of "trauma" across different religions and cultures complicates our ability to comprehend how the various manifestations (i.e. symptoms) of "psychic catastrophe" are acknowledged and managed at the individual and societal levels.

Religion, like nationalism or ethnic identity, constitutes a culturally acceptable form that may facilitate the intergenerational transmission of trauma, and that may even serve to mask the traumatic origins of certain rituals, institutions, and dogmas. Religions characterized by

authoritarian beliefs, rigid practices, and strict disciplinary codes often have difficult histories. It is thus important to not only examine contemporary socioeconomic factors that contribute to the development of pathological religious belief systems, but also the historical events that inform ideologies that allow for the perpetuation of potentially harmful religious attitudes and practices. On the other hand, religion may also serve as an important tool for collective healing without resorting to violence or hostility. The case of Polish Solidarity may provide one such example, in that the Roman Catholic Church played a central role in the non-violent reclamation of national identity, and in the development of a 'healing' cohesiveness among Polish citizens, who had been atomized by the State and who had previously feared the consequences of solidarity, especially in light of Poland's traumatic past.

Conclusion

As any scholar of Polish history can attest, it would be naïve to make any sweeping statements regarding the causes and motivations that precipitated the emergence of *Solidarność*. However, in calling for freedom, human dignity, and solidarity, the influence of the Roman Catholic Church on this movement is undeniable. The Church presented Polish citizens with a common bond in the uniformity of its traditions, symbols, and beliefs, via what Assmann (1995) refers to as "institutional communication." In Winnicottian terms, religion presented Solidarity's participants with useful 'transitional objects' necessary for the development of the 'transitional space', from which new forms of thought could emerge. The Church provided an important holding environment essential for nurturing interpersonal relations, and for overcoming obstacles such as material poverty, societal atomization, and the climate of fear that was imposed by the State. However, as discussed above, while a Winnicottian analysis may aid us in understanding the conditions that made Solidarity possible, a more rigorous examination of social and historical context is necessary in order to truly comprehend the complex psychological factors that were at work. Solidarity must also be understood in terms of Poland's past, the memories which are bound to Polish national identity, and which likely influenced Solidarity's participants on both a conscious and unconscious level. As such, further exploration of the 'transmission of trauma' thesis and its pertinence to Poland's rebellion may prove to be fruitful.

Polish Solidarity garnered world-wide attention for its unique nature as a non-violent revolution of 'conscience' and of 'memory', and is considered by many to be causally related to the 1989 Revolutions that took place throughout Central and Eastern Europe, and which led to the end of communism in these regions. Solidarity's symbolic significance, however, has been overlooked by many, especially now that Poland, as a new and relatively fragile democratic

country, has seen a great deal of political tensions and corruption over the past several decades. In the past twenty years, national identity in Poland, as well as the important relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the concept of 'Polishness', has also been further challenged by the fact that many families are now beginning to discover Jewish origins that were previously covered up. As Vera Muller-Paisner (2012) writes:

> After the Second World War, many Holocaust survivors who stayed in Poland replaced their Jewish identity with the safety of a national identity as a Pole and Christian. Today, after more than sixty years, in a society that was Communist and anti-Semitic, Christian families have been discovering the secret of Jewish roots. Many elder family members, on their deathbeds, alter family history by declaring that they are Jews, and often ask to be buried in Jewish cemeteries. Poles, raised to find their place in society as Catholics, are suddenly facing the dilemma of discovering parents who are Jews. Educated as Christians, they are trying to redefine religious identity. They are left with the task of trying to grasp the fear and horror of their family's Holocaust narrative, to understand their relationship to it, and to attempt to form a new identification that would integrate and include this experience. (p. 21)

We are hearing of such stories more and more frequently. These discoveries have once again challenged the concept of national identity, which has so long been linked to the Roman Catholic Church and its symbols. After living in what has been perceived to be one of the most ethnically and religiously homogenous countries in Europe, Poles are now faced with a new possibility of heterogeneity that will force them to integrate and adapt these experiences into their definition of nationhood. Such issues further complicate the 'transmission of trauma' thesis, in that they highlight the ways in which the Roman Catholic Church has not only served as a vehicle of collective memory for Poland, but also how the Church may have obscured other important aspects of that memory. Despite the movement's peaceful nature, it is important not to consider the ideology of Polish Solidarity in a utopian light. While the Church's support was essential to the mobilization and the cooperation of millions of Poles, it must be noted that the Church has historically constituted an imposing authority in itself. This raises questions as to

what role the Church has played in the psychic survival of certain groups and individuals. It may be argued that, by promoting unity and uniformity of belief among Polish citizens, the Church provided the illusion of a climate of tolerance and equality, when in fact it was promoting a certain 'sameness' in order to protect the integrity of the collective memory that had been shaped by its traditions and institutions. As such, it is worth exploring the precise mechanisms and institutional structures that play a part in the development of collective memory. In comparing Poland to other countries that belonged to the Soviet Bloc, it is evident that Solidarity's emergence and unique character owed a great deal to the distinct separation that had historically been made between nation and state, as well as the close identification of Polish nationhood with the Roman Catholic Church.

Following the collapse of the communist regime, the historical distinction between nation and state was lost as the Church merged with the state. This merger constitutes one possible reason why it was not feasible for Poland to uphold the ethic of solidarity, as Pope John Paul II and other leaders of Solidarity had hoped. With all of the events that have taken place since 1980, however, there is no reason to view Solidarity as being obsolete in its significance. While some may argue that freedom and solidarity cannot co-exist, and as such, solidarity is irrelevant to a modern democratic society, it is important to note that, without Polish Solidarity, such a society may well not have come into existence at all. Furthermore, the movement itself provides a unique and valuable example of how religious institutions and leaders play a crucial role in upholding collective memory, which is inextricable from group identity. Solidarity also constitutes a potentially valuable example for the future understanding of the intergenerational transmission of trauma on a large scale, and how religion may in fact encourage the healing of societies that have experienced mass trauma or periods of traumatic stress.

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