


## Paradigm of Political Thought of Polish Christian Democracy in the Interwar Period

### Paradygmat myśli politycznej polskiej chadecji w okresie dwudziestolecia międzywojennego

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**Abstract:** The main assumptions of the political thought of Christian democracy were in accordance with the guidelines of the encyclicals. They were also based on the achievements of the European Christian-democratic trend. Among the most important assumptions and claims of Christian-democratic political thought are: (1) basing the organisation of social life on the principles of Catholic ethics; (2) recognising the primacy of supernatural goals over temporal ones; (3) respect for the human personality and its rights; (4) ensuring a proper balance between power and civil liberty and the rights of the individual and society; (5) guaranteeing a parliamentary-democratic system; (6) respect for private property and labour; (7) social solidarity; (8) enfranchisement of workers; (9) anti-revolutionism and anti-socialism; (10) a corporate state system.

**Keywords:** political thought, Christian democracy, chadecja, social teaching of the Catholic Church

**Streszczenie:** Główne założenia myśli politycznej chrześcijańskiej demokracji były zgodne z wytycznymi encyklik. Bazowały one również na dorobku europejskiego nurtu chrześcijańskodemokratycznego. Wśród najważniejszych założeń i twierdzeń myśli politycznej chadecji należy wyróżnić: (1) oparcie organizacji życia społecznego na zasadach etyki katolickiej; (2) uznanie prymatu celów nadprzyrodzonych nad doczesnymi; (3) poszanowanie osobowości ludzkiej i jej praw; (4) zapewnienie właściwej równowagi między władzą a wolnością obywatelską oraz prawami jednostki a społeczeństwem; (5) zagwarantowanie ustroju parlamentarno-demokratycznego; (6) poszanowanie prywatnej własności i pracy; (7) solidaryzm społeczny; (8) uwłaszczenie robotników; (9) antyrewolucjonizm i antysojalizm; (10) korporacyjny ustrój państwa.

**Słowa kluczowe:** myśl polityczna, chrześcijańska demokracja, chadecja, nauka społeczna Kościoła katolickiego

Christian democracy was part of the exemplification of catholic social thought, the ideological origins of which can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Western Europe. This was a period of not only great changes in science and technology, but also significant social changes. The whole 19<sup>th</sup> century was filled with conflicts between the Catholic Church and liberalism<sup>1</sup> and socialism.<sup>2</sup> Efforts to overcome them, undertaken in the bosom of the Catholic community, created the ideological climate of the birth of christian-democratic thought. Political parties, or structures whose purpose was to implement them, were formed mainly in the twenty years between the wars.

The aim of the article is to show the paradigm of political thought of Polish christian democracy in the period of the Second Polish Republic. The article uses source materials such as: papal encyclicals, party programs, statutes, speeches, press articles, statements of politicians and others, as well as literature on the subject. Among the research methods and techniques, one should first mention those relevant to the political sciences and historical ones, especially the analysis of testimonies and traces of political thought of Polish christian democracy, as well as comparative analysis.

The Catholic Church's social teaching was based primarily on the Gospel. Christian democrats emphasized that the truth from this source is universal and transcendent, because the world is based on it and without

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<sup>1</sup> The enlightenment roots of liberalism meant that from the very beginning of its existence it found itself in opposition to christian social thought. In the history of social thought, the fate of the relationship between liberalism and the social doctrine of the Church is above all a period of dispute. The social encyclicals of the popes have repeatedly spoken strongly about the errors of liberalism. Father Jan Piwowarczyk wrote that "liberalism as a system was a paradise for the strong and the rich, a hell for the weak, for the poor, for the popular strata. May God protect us from returning to a system that has imagined liberalism. We would have to repeat from the beginning all the revolutions, all the revolts of the masses, all the social struggles that constituted the history of the nineteenth century" (Piwowarczyk 1985: 284; see also Gocko 1994: 137).

<sup>2</sup> Since the beginning of socialism and communism, the Church has recognised their impiety, immorality and irrationality. These systems were condemned by popes: Leo XIII, Pius IX, Pius XI. They did this not only because the communists fought against religion. And not because they themselves were proposing what Pius XI, in his encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* (*On Godless Communism*), called "erroneous mysticism." The pope understood that people in socialism were attracted to his promise of a happy society. At the same time, he stressed that this is a dangerous utopia. History has shown, and modern times continue to confirm, that the realisation of utopia leads to crime. Catholics understood that this happens when reality and its law are disregarded. This law is a natural law. Socialism directly denies it, recognising the absolute equality of all people, rejecting the institution of the family, the difference of the sexes, private property, and accepting the myth of a classless society. He does this by appealing to materialism. People are not equal by nature – they have different qualities and abilities (Krajski 14.07.2018).

it could not exist permanently in a spiritual and scientific sense. The social doctrine of the Catholic Church existed as a consequence of the Gospel and the vision of man transmitted by it in his relations with other people, especially in community and social life<sup>3</sup> (Winnicki 1996: 232).

The social constitution of the Christian Democrats was provided by papal encyclicals, mainly Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* of 1891 (encyclical on the workers' question) and Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno* of 1931 (encyclical on the renewal of the social system and its perfection according to the norm of the law of the Gospel). The encyclicals "at the very moment when it was desirable, and even necessary, indicated to all mankind safe principles for the solution of the difficult matter of social coexistence [...]" (Leo XIII 1891/1931; see also Pius XI 1931/1935). European christian<sup>4</sup> democracy was

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<sup>3</sup> The social teaching of the Catholic Church is a constituent part of its teaching, the so-called Magisterium of the Church. The authoritative teachers are first and foremost the popes, the bishops assembled in universal councils presided over by the popes, the bishops assembled in provincial synods together with the representatives of the churches entrusted to them, and the diocesan synods presided over by their bishops, with regard to the social problems affecting the territory under their jurisdiction (Kondziela 1984: 5-9).

<sup>4</sup> As a result of the French Revolution and its ideological currents, the Church's mission was realized in a 19<sup>th</sup>-century society ruled by an anticlerical or indifferent bourgeoisie, which prompted Catholics to become politically active in defense of their own spiritual and community interests. In the first half of the XIX century, in France and Italy, and in the other half in Germany, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, Christian associations and more or less coordinated movements with political characteristics were formed. There were three currents in social Catholicism at the time: (a) conservative, which developed into corporatism (e.g., in France – René de la Tour-du-Pin, in Austria – Karl von Vogelsang); (b) a reformist one, demanding an improvement in the lot of the working class within the existing order, so-called paternalism (in Germany – Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, in France – Charles Montalembert, Antoine-Frédéric Ozanam, Adrien Albert Marie de Mun); (c) the current advocating political change, which was a direct precursor of the European Christian Democrats (in France – Hugues-Félicité-Robert de Lamennais, Jean-Baptiste Henri Lacordaire, Philippe Buchez, in Belgium – Antoine Édouard Ducpétiaux, Pierre Daniel Huet), as well as the Christian trade unions that developed until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Western Europe. Pope Leo XIII approved the name christian democracy, giving it the meaning of a social movement devoid of political goals and working for the betterment of the workers under the direct direction of the spiritual authority. This led to the radical Catholic groups formed at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Sillon – Marc Sangnier in France, Cultura Sociale and Lega Democratica – Rev. Romolo Murrini in Italy) being condemned by the Pope. These movements gave rise to christian-democratic parties in the interwar period (Jeune République, Parti Democrat Populaire in France, Partito Popolare Italiano in Italy, Catholic Union in Belgium, conservative Centre Party in Germany, Christlich-Soziale Partei in Austria, conservative Volkspartei in Switzerland, Katholieke Staatspartij in the Netherlands and Confederacion Espanola de Derechos Autonomos in Spain; see Stefanowicz 1985: 386-387).

united by the conviction that civilisation would either be based on Christian values, and in the shape historically given to them by Catholicism, or there would be no civilisation at all, since Christian thought protected against totalitarianism and nationalism (Stefanowicz 1991: 26–27).

The social teaching of the Catholic Church has put forward a number of postulates for a specific time: the postulate of a just society, of a democratic society, of a social order based on the resolution of conflicts without resorting to violence, and of international peace (Kondziela 1984: 8). The programs of christian-democratic parties in individual countries differed from each other and evolved. However, they were united by a common ideological core – basing on Catholic Social Doctrine and personalist philosophy (Stefanowicz 1973: 26–27).

## **1. Genesis and Development of Polish Christian Democracy**

The christian-democratic movement in the Polish lands under the partitions developed mainly in industrial centres. Since the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the social structure has changed. With the development of industry, new classes emerged and strengthened – the bourgeoisie and the workers. At the same time, the problem of poverty and exploitation of the working class arose. The development of christian democracy in the Polish lands can be divided into three periods. The first was the years 1890–1900, when workers' cultural and educational associations were formed, which strengthened the catholic social ideology. The second is the period 1900–1910, when the first christian trade unions were formed, giving the opportunity for further evolution towards christian-political action. They were formed mainly as a result of the merger of organisations with a similar political program, operating in individual partitions, e.g., the Silesian and Greater Poland craft and workers' associations or the Galician agricultural cooperative movement. The third period was the time of the end of the first World War, when the proper christian-democratic movement began to take shape. At the time of the formation of the independent Polish state, the situation in the christian-democratic political movement was already crystallised. The Christian-National Workers' Party was established in Galicia (October 30, 1918), the National Workers' Party (NSR; April–May 1918) in the Prussian partition, and the christian democracy (1916; Wichmanowski 2001: 183) in the Russian partition.

The unification of the three christian-democratic groups and the creation of a unified christian-democratic party took place in two stages. In 1919 in Krakow, christian-democratic parties from the former Galicia and the Kingdom of Poland united under the name of the Polish Party of Christian Democracy (PSChD). As a result of the split in the NSR (1920), two parties were formed: the National Workers' Party and the Christian-National Workers' Party (ChNSR). At the Congress (May 24–25, 1920), which was recognized as the First Congress, unification was carried out. The ChNSR merged with the PSChD, and the newly formed party adopted the name Christian National Labour Party – Christian Democracy (ChNSP–ChD). At the second Congress in 1925, the name was changed to Polish Christian Democracy Party (Wichmanowski 2001: 183).

In the Legislative Sejm (1919–1922), christian-democratic deputies stayed for several months in the club of the People's National Sejm Union, which brought together representatives of national democracy and right-wing parties with a similar program. Twelve MPs, Christian Socialist activists, left this union in July 1919 and, with 17 NSR MPs, formed the National Christian Workers' Club. Christian democracy in the Second Polish Republic operated in the workers' territory with the intention of opposing the socialist party. Above all, however, it was a Sejm faction. The second area of its activity were the christian trade unions. It was not an independent force in parliamentary activity. During the first term of the Sejm (1922–1927), christian democracy was politically on the right wing of the centre. In the run-up to the May Coup of 1926, it played an important role in parliament, often tipping the balance in assembling a right-wing majority. In May 1923, the coalition cabinet of Wincenty Witos (Polish people's party; PSL Piast) was formed – the "Chjeno-Piast" Government (May 28 – December 14, 1923) with representatives of PSL Piast, people's National Union (ZLN), ChNSP, ChNSR, National Workers' Party (NPR). On May 5, 1926, however, W. Witos's third government was formed, also with the participation of the christian democrats. Until the May coup, it was involved in a political struggle between the right and the left. After the coup, christian democracy found themselves in opposition to the post-May government, which shifted them politically towards the left. At that time it was divided into three groups: Lwów (Stefan Bryła), Silesian (Wojciech Korfanty), central (Józef Chaciński). Two parliamentary clubs were established: the general (Józef Chaciński, Waclaw Bitner) and the autonomous Silesian (W. Korfanty). From the testimonies and traces of christian-democratic political thought, its strategy was clear:

it was anti-communist, anti-sanation, neutral towards other parties, but more friendly to national democracy, NPR and PSL Piast than to the parties of the left-wing opposition (among others socialists and PSL "Liberation"). Within the Christian Democrats there were divisions into different territorial groups with different attitudes to political reality, which made it impossible at the beginning of the 1930s to unite the following orientations: the Upper Silesian (pro-national democracy, with a particularly strongly marked separateness), pro-government-Poznań-Pomerania, Warsaw, Vilnius, West-Galician – Hallerian in Krakow, East-Galician – pro-government Lviv (Holzer 1974: 141–142).

In 1937, the Christian Democratic Union (ChD) merged with the NPR. From this union arose the Labour Party (SP),<sup>5</sup> whose president was W. Korfanty, and vice-president leading activist NPR – Karol Popiel. The unification of NPR and ChD took place on the basis of common traditions and a rather far-reaching ideological kinship. Both parties derived their social ideology from the indications of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. The merger was opposed by proposals popular in many political circles – the creation of a common centre of anti-sanation opposition. Front Morges Concept<sup>6</sup> was one of them, the closest to both parties (Stronniectwo Pracy 1937; Majchrowski 1979: 40).

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<sup>5</sup> The Labour Party initially opposed the Piłsudski camp. The strongest party structures were in Silesia and Pomerania. During World War II, SP (Romb) was part of the Polish government in exile. Three party politicians served as government delegates to the country: Cyril Ratajski (1940–1942), Jan Jankowski (1943–1945) and Jerzy Braun (1945). In February 1943, it consisted of the Federation of National Catholic organizations "Union" (its member was among others Karol Wojtyła), and in March 1944 of Union of National Revival. After the Second World War, on the basis of the Yalta Agreement, the SP resumed its official activities in the country through the merger of the conspiratorial SP and the National breakaway party associated with the Polish Workers' Party, which was formed as a result of the split in the SP at the turn of 1942 and 1943. The Labour Party was represented in the Provisional Government of national unity, the State National Council and local national councils, as well as in the state administration. Faced with infiltration by agents of the Security Office, the SP's General Board decided on July 18, 1946 to suspend the party's activities.

<sup>6</sup> This was a political agreement between activists from centrist parties, formed in 1936 on the initiative of General Władysław Sikorski and Ignacy Paderewski to fight the Sanacja dictatorship and its foreign policy. The formation did not gain much public support and, as a result, had no significant impact on the political situation in the country. The only tangible effect of the Morges Front's activities was to lead to the formation of the Labour Party in 1937, a christian-democratic party formed from the merger of the Haller Union, the PSChD and the NPR.



The undisputed leader of christian democracy was W. Korfanty. In addition to him, leading activists included Rev. Stanisław Adamski, Rev. Aleksander Wóycicki, K. Popiel, Antoni Chaciński, Józef Chaciński, W. Bitner, Ludomir Czerniewski, Ludwik Gdyk, Tadeusz Błażewicz, S. Bryła, Rev. Zygmunt Kaczyński, Juliusz Makarewicz (Wichmanowski 2001: 184).

## **2. Inspiration and Paradigm of Ideology**

Christianity shaped the psyche and customs of tens of generations of the Polish people and Polish culture – this was the position of the christian democrats. To Christianity the Polish people owed the concept of freedom and dignity of man. The return to Christian principles was considered by the christian democrats to be a condition of moral renewal, which depended on the reconstruction of the whole socio-political and economic life in Poland. The sources of the ideology of Polish christian democracy should be sought in the Catholic and social thought of the Republic of Poland and the period of the struggle for independence. This thought included the desire for reforms in various areas (social, political, economic) of public life in the country, with regard to religious and ethical motivation; it highlighted among others the need to realize the Christian principles of love of neighbour in social and state life. The connection of socio-political concepts with the principles of the Christian faith can be considered as the beginning of the christian-social, democratic movement, the sign of which was the renewal of all spheres of life based on Christian ethics (Turowski 1989: 19).

Critically analysing the social reality of the Second Polish Republic, christian democracy proposed a program for its reconstruction. The economic problems of the independent Polish state were exacerbated by social conflicts and ideological disputes. Poland was also marked by the influence of the former invaders (Germans and Russia) who embraced totalitarian ideologies (national socialism and communism). At the forefront of christian democracy programs in the Second Polish Republic was the slogan: organization of the present in the liberated motherland. It was emphasized that “the building of the social edifice is to be adapted to the spiritual and material needs of modern society” (Zasady 1917: 3). Christian Democracy was concerned with the welfare of the people, because they constituted the predominant part of society. They sought a thorough reform of

the system, to its healing. The method of restoring justice was to introduce reforms that would provide the "disadvantaged class" with decent living conditions (Piwowarczyk 1921: 19).

Christian democracy accepted economic and social policy as an inseparable whole, while recognising man and his higher vocation as the goal of economic activity, and above all as a task of service for the good of the whole. It wished to rebuild the political system on the principles derived from Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* and, in time, to shape it according to the corporate model taken from Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. The vision of the future of the Christian democrats appeared in the slogan: National, Christian and People's Poland (Korfanty 1992: 311). Wojciech Korfanty wrote in 1931 in "Polonia," the press organ of the party:

Organizations have arisen in all countries, especially of the workers, which follow the precepts of Leo XIII and his successors. [...] The terrible solstice that we are going through, the millions of unemployed, the agrarian crisis, the Bolshevik and fascist experiments, the loud cry for social reforms [...] testify to the catastrophe that threatens the world. [...] Only living and working according to the guidelines and principles indicated by [...] Leo XIII and his successors, can create a new order, based on social justice and Christian *charitas* (Korfanty 14.05.1931: 1).

The christian democrats claimed that they were striving for an ever better future for Poland. The tactics they adopted were those of progressive evolution. "When we have accomplished what we can for the time being, we immediately set forth a new program, a higher one, reaching further" (Zasady 1917: 3).

In addition to social and political concepts in the practical dimension, christian democracy proposed to society certain values with a religious, philosophical and social dimension. The basic values on which the idea of Polish christian democracy was based were love, freedom and justice. From them arose the principle of christian humanism, based on the personalist concept of man and social life. The reference to personalism in christian democracy's thought was all the more natural as the encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* were based on its foundation, proclaiming the primacy of the person-human being over the impersonal world of things. From the principle of love, altruism and the Christian system based on it were born. "In the name of [...] freedom, we will measure our legislation in such a way as [...] to ensure to the individual [...] the maximum, but within the limits of harmony with the community – personal freedom."



The third principle was justice. Each person was to receive as many goods as he gave "his work in the construction of a common civilisation for all." All christian-democratic programs emphasized the monumental importance of the Catholic religion and the Church in Poland, for the individual and the nation. Appreciating the universality of the good contained in the morality derived from religion, christian democracy sought to guarantee the presence of faith not only in private life, but also in social and state life (see Zasady 1917: 3; Outline Zarys 1920: 3–6).

Christian democrats saw the principles of Christianity as a guide for political, social and economic action. They opposed the ideology of Christianity to socialism and Bolshevism, accusing them of spreading class hatred and restricting individual freedoms. They also opposed capitalist liberalism, which, in their view, drove the workers into poverty in the pursuit of profit. They called for the creation of a social order in accordance with Christian ethical precepts. They called for social harmony. They stressed that society is a community in which the interests of different strata and professions are represented, interdependent and responsible for the fate of the nation and the state. All social problems were to be solved by corporatism. The program of christian democracy was summarised in the idea of "a just and strong Poland with a strong and lasting government based on the trust and cooperation of the broadest masses of the people" (Korfanty 1992: 364).

The purpose of the action of the party was clearly defined in the program of the PSChD of 1925: the flourishing and power of the Republic of Poland, its foundation on Catholic principles, balance and cooperation between social strata, and the care and defence of the working strata in moral, economic, and socio-political terms (Program 1925: 1–3).

### **3. The Main Principles of Political Thought of Polish Christian Democracy**

The most general rules and beliefs contained in christian democracy's political thought grew out of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church and its application to Polish reality. The main assumptions of this thought were in accordance with the guidelines of the papal encyclicals. They were also based on the achievements of the European christian-democratic trend. In the Second Republic of Poland, christian democracy included their ideology

in party programs. Subsequent programs outlined the ways of realisation of political thought, which determined the desire for a catholic, powerful, national and just Poland. "From divine and human rights, the Catholic derives his right to freedom of thought, freedom of action, according to reason and conscience" (Korfanty 1992: 246). Among the most important testimonies of christian democracy political thought were regulations, resolutions of congresses and general conventions, positions of parliamentary clubs, as well as speeches of deputies and senators, works of theorists, leaders and activists, as well as views presented in the christian-democratic press.

Christian democrats argued that people must voluntarily submit to an ethical and moral system whose authority they could not question. To submit to a higher law of which no man is the author. Such a law is God's law. No human law can discourage evil or encourage good, as the divine law can, through its mysticism (Winnicki 1996: 232).

The most important assumptions and assertions found in the political thought of christian democracy include: basing the organisation of social life on the principles of Catholic ethics; recognition of the primacy of supernatural goals over temporal ones; respect for the human person and their rights; ensuring a proper balance between power and civil freedom, and between the rights of the individual and society; ensuring a parliamentary-democratic system; respect for private property and labour; social solidarity; appropriation of workers; anti-revolutionism and antisocialism; the corporate state system (Pawłowski 1995: 66-67).

#### **4. Views on Power and Local Government**

Christian democracy in its views on state power was based both on the papal encyclicals and on the philosophy of the Church Fathers, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. From the political thought of christian democracy it followed that the source of power is human nature. Power is not an end in itself; it is an end for the common good. The nation gives form to power and appoints those who are to exercise it. The state, in order to promote the common good, must have a proper organisation of authorities with well-defined rights and obligations. At the same time, the control of the authorities must be properly organised. Therefore, the division of power into the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary is indispensable. The christian democrats emphasized

that power gains confidence, raises authority, and becomes strong if one remembers that it comes from God and that its exercise is in accordance with the commandments of God. Power in the state cannot be unlimited or omnipotent, because its limits are determined by the law of God. If a nation has "given" itself order and power, and it works for the common good, then obedience and respect belong to that power. On the other hand, a power that indulges in lawlessness ceases to serve the common good – it loses the basis and the reason for its existence. The citizen becomes absolved of owing obedience and respect to this authority. Such actions not only can but must be resisted (Korfanty 1992: 294, 306; Stefanowicz 1963: 111–113).

In numerous testimonies of christian-democratic thought, there is a phrase that testifies to the fact that the people were to be called to participate in the government, and the goal of partisanship was to gain complete equality for the Polish people. Obtaining and assuring them influence over the system of the state and the economy: "such [...] as is rightfully due to its strength in numbers and its duties" (Program 1918: 6–8).

The programme of Christian Democracy, established in 1916–1918 in the Kingdom of Poland, advocated the Polish Republic with a Sejm elected by all citizens who speak Polish (Wóycicki 1921: 155–162). In Wielkopolska, the National Workers' Party, already at the time of its founding, announced a programme in which it stressed that it would "strive for the political awareness of the broad masses of the working people [...]" (Bigoński 1921: 5). A worker in the sense of the party was any man who worked for wages or sold the products of his labour. The pronouncement of the main intentions of the christian-democratic political and social programmes is unambiguous: to let the working people speak and to recognise their social and economic rights.

In the Second Polish Republic, in formal and political terms, all citizens were equal before the law, and the source of power was the general public. However, due to the diversity of ownership and education, equality was an illusion. The leaders of christian democracy recognized the fact that although the majority of the people were working people, they did not decide on the power in the state. It was necessary to change this by organising the nation politically.

The struggle over the shape of the legislative power gained momentum during the work on the March Constitution of 1921. After the creation of the National Christian Workers' Club, three of its members sat on the Commission and took an active part in its work. They spoke in favour of bicamerality (the Sejm and the Senate), emphasizing that the legislative power should be an intermediary between the nation and the state. Before the May

coup, christian democracy argued that the centre of gravity in the direction of state life should be shifted from the Legislature to the executive. The PSChD sought to reform the Constitution and electoral code, and to extend the powers of the president and Senate (Program 1925: 30). Christian democracy changed their position on the Constitution when it became clear that the ruling camp wanted to use this project to secure the monopoly of their power.

An analysis of the testimonies of christian democracy's political thought indicates that they generally had a unified position on executive power. It advocated a strong executive power based on a two-stage executive: a head of state (a Polish president) elected by the National Assembly, and a strong government (Zarys 1920: 15). However, in its programme demands of 1931, the christian democrats opposed the omnipotence of the state exceeding the limits of natural and divine law (Statut 1931). Established in 1937, the SP presented a classic Montesquieu model of a democratic state.

On the issue of justice, christian democracy opposed the subordination of the judiciary to the executive, since the interests of the state and the care of its development required the "freedom of the courts" and their independence. As christian democrats have pointed out, the independence of the judiciary is the basis of the rule of law in the state (Przybylski 1980: 56, 85, 252).

The christian democrats attached great importance to the work of local government. They stressed that the advocate of social interests towards the state administration was the local government, which was treated as a political school of society. In the programme drafted by Rev. A. Wóycicki in 1918, it was pointed out that one of the necessary conditions for the development of Polish statehood was "broad communal and provincial local government with elected local government authorities" (Turowski 1989: 217). Christian democracy won the majority mainly in the municipal government. After the May 1926 coup, in local governments, the activities of opposition parties were limited. At that time, christian democracy took care of the defence of the local government against the sanation camp. The idea of local government in Christian Democrat political thought was inspired from 1931 by Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, which implied that a higher community should delegate the exercise of its authority to lower communities that were subordinate to it (Pius XI 1935; Wichmanowski 2001: 200–202). Even before the publication of the encyclical, there was a demand in christian democracy's thought to expand the competence of professional and economic local governments. By the mid-nineteenth century, it was already recognised that it was in the commune that civic virtue took shape, as the community there was small and the relationships between its members were direct.

## **5. Rights, Freedoms and Obligations of Citizens**

In christian democracy's political thought, special attention is paid to a wide catalogue of civil rights: personal, which are called freedoms, and social and political. According to the christian democrats, every citizen, in addition to the rights and freedoms due to him, had certain obligations towards the state. The state, as one of the highest human communities, creates a social organism that knows its rights and duties. The human individual is a constituent part of this community and must submit to the requirements of the whole (Korfanty 1992: 185). Christian democracy proposed to make the exercise of civil rights dependent on the performance of duties by the citizen.

The duty of every citizen was, first of all, to respect the legal order, that is, to observe the norms in force in the state (constitution, acts of law, legal system) and to show respect for the legitimate authority respecting the law based on Christian morality.

Among the basic social rights, the following are distinguished: the right to work, education and science, to health protection, material security in case of illness and incapacity for work, and security for old age, as well as the right to enjoy the benefits of culture. For national minorities, it was the right to cherish their cultural and national distinctions. The right to work was considered one of the main civil rights. It included the right to "fair pay" and the right to private property. Christian democracy devoted much attention to the right to study and education. Political rights included the right to association and active and passive electoral rights. Christian democracy demanded respect and defence of the rights of all social strata.

Harmonious cooperation between the state and the citizen is possible only if the state respects the rights of the human individual as a moral personality and if the individual fulfils his obligations to the state. As the christian democrats argued, every citizen has certain obligations to the state. One of the most important was the economic strengthening of the state and the creation of material foundations for the realisation of social rights. Work – the main source and foundation of a nation's economic and cultural well – being – was both a right and a civic duty. The duties of the citizen towards the state included the tax obligation. Tax reform was demanded in the direction of fair distribution of taxes to all citizens of the country, tax fraud was severely condemned. Citizen's duties also included military service. All men of the appropriate age were required to serve in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland (Korfanty 1992: 170, 185; Program 1925: 28–29).

## 6. National Question

The National factor played an important role in the political thought of christian democracy. The basic assumptions containing the formula of the national character of the state were contained in the programs and statements of the creators of this thought. It was clear from the program's postulates that the christian democrats wanted Poland as a whole to have a clearly Polish character, so that traces of foreign rule would be erased (Zarys 1920: 15; Korfanty 1992: 311; Wichmanowski 2001: 203–207). They stressed: "We want to make the Polish state an obedient instrument of the national will." They also argued that loyalty and respect belonged to their own people, and the state should defend the interests of the Polish people and Polishness. But "[...] national interest and selfishness must be subordinated to the precepts of Christian ethics and limited by the laws of other nations. [...] Defending the legitimate rights and interests of the Polish people, we will not allow the rights of other peoples living with us to be violated" (Program 1925: 29–30). One of the leading representatives of christian democracy Rev. S. Adamski wrote that if "members of other nationalities" assume full civic duties, the principle of justice will give them full civil rights. "Having suffered national oppression ourselves, we must guard against falling into a similar error" (Adamski 1922: 25). The political thought of christian democracy developed in constant dialogue with the cultural and national-political aspirations and aspirations articulated by the national minorities. Despite numerous national conflicts, christian democrats were hopeful that they would be able to implement the idea of the nation-state (Śliwa 1993: 243).

## 7. Economic Views

In terms of social structure, the Second Polish Republic was a very diverse country, an agricultural country with a developing capitalism. Christian democracy understood social strata as organs of the national body, which have certain functions corresponding to the relevant needs of society as a whole. It was believed that only harmony, and not a conflict of interests, could guarantee the permanent and correct functioning of social structures. The manifestation of social solidarity was to be a corporation. Christian democracy's thought was stimulated in this direction by the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. Pope Pius XI linked the corporate system to the principle of



subsidiarity and the common good. The task of the corporate system was to create "professional states" to which people would belong according to the social function with which they would be connected by work; this is an association of persons engaged in the same profession, workers and employers (Pius XI 1935; Korfanty 1992: 365; Stefanowicz 1963: 111–113). Corporatism as a vision of social, political and economic order was of great interest in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. In Poland, these ideas were also promoted. However, the situational context was different compared to Western European countries. In the Second Polish Republic, a strong christian-democratic trend did not function and in the confrontation between the christian democrats and the socialists, the socialists won in organisational work (Rogaczewska 2007: 139–140).

In the first years of the Second Polish Republic, the christian democrats advocated the need to preserve and consolidate the agricultural character of the country. They took into account that, among the working population, around 70% made their living from agriculture. However, due to the low degree of agricultural intensity and high overpopulation of the countryside, the superiority of agriculture over other branches of the economy was not as great as it appeared from the structure of society. Nevertheless, they pointed out that agriculture should be the leading department of production, since the economic development of the state depended on the productivity of farms. They argued that the industrialisation of Poland would not solve its complex socio-economic problems, not least because of the poor capital resources of Polish society, which could not compete effectively with its Western European counterpart. All of christian democracy's most important postulates concerning agriculture and industry were included in the bias programs, mainly in the 1925 PSChD program. They were dictated both by the current needs of the time and by the need for socio-economic change (Program 1925; see Pawłowski 1996: 81).

The functioning of the industry was also an important aspect for the economic development of the state. It was necessary to take into account those branches that were important for the development of the state and defence. The distribution of industry should be correlated with the raw material base and labour force. Much attention has been paid to the arms industry (Figat 1992: 197). It was believed that small-scale industry, as well as crafts and trade, should be given special care. Economic independence was guaranteed by the independence of industry and trade from foreign capital. The state should provide a strong economic base: loans, customs tariffs

and appropriate legislation, and vocational schools. Christian democracy also supported cooperatives, which helped to acquire individual property. It recognised three forms of ownership: private, cooperative and state. The programs emphasized the principle of private property as just and equitable, consistent with the nature and importance of work – the source of its acquisition (Program 1925: 26).

Christian democracy's main programmes included a number of economic initiatives. A detailed programme for the development of agriculture as well as industry, crafts, and trade was proposed. At the Sejm forum, christian-democratic MPs showed great initiative in matters of general economic, budgetary and financial assumptions. Christian democracy proposed a model of social-system solutions that would lead the nation out of social chaos and ensure social harmony (Adamski 1921: 4).

## 8. State Security

Christian democrats believed that the security of the state depended on a combination of internal and external factors. The internal power of the state was expressed in a strong economy, the cohesion of social strata, the degree of their identification with the state and its institutions, and a strong national army. "The state [...] must be powerful in order to be able to stand against the constant efforts of its possessive neighbours" (Zarys 1920: 15). Increasing the state's defence capabilities was seen by the christian democrats as a matter of military training for Poles. MPs at the Sejm have repeatedly called for an increase in the budget of the Ministry of Military Affairs, arguing that it was necessary to reform the army, strengthening the air force, navy and technical forces.

It was emphasised that: "Poland, having an unfavourable geographical position, an open border to the East and West, without natural protection – and neighbours showing a lively action of military adaptation, threatening to violate our borders, should take care of its army" (Figat 1992: 194–196). Proper normalisation of relations with neighbours was a necessary condition for the existence of the state and its development. Poland was threatened by two powerful neighbors: Germany and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR; since 1922 USSR). In this regard, it was necessary to strive to group the smaller states around each other and take

a leading role among them. It was realized that both the Treaty of Versailles, the Treaty of Riga, and other international treaties and agreements did not constitute iron guarantees for peace in Europe. Among external factors, relations with neighbours, international alliances, and the system of collective security were put on the first plan. The treaty signed at Rapallo in 1922, which was unfavourable to Poland, had a major impact on the concept of foreign policy, as a system of alliances had to be created with those states that could oppose Germany and the USSR (Turowski 1989: 19).

## **Conclusions**

The ways of realisation of political thought outlined programs of factions. Christian democracy determined the pursuit of a Catholic, powerful, national and just Poland. They sought to transform the social order of the time in the spirit of her own vision of the state. The analysis of testimonies and traces of political thought made it possible to reconstruct the methods that were supposed to lead to changes. They saw the guarantee for the realisation of their goals in the introduction of "Christian truth and justice" into all spheres of social, national, and state life (Program 1918: 3). The way to achieve them was through the gradual acquisition of political influence. Wojciech Korfanty argued that: "first of all, intensive propaganda is needed in the broadest circles of the population in order to get to know (the MW population) and understand christian-social ideals. It stood up for a just social and economic system, and exerted the desired pressure on legitimate institutions and factors in the state" (Korfanty 1992: 389).

The aim of christian democracy was to organise the political life of the Polish nation on the principles of social morality and Christian justice. The instrument shaping political and civic consciousness were Catholic organisations, mainly professional, as well as socio-economic, cultural and educational. At the congresses of christian democracy, they were called to undertake educational work among the people. In order for the christian-democratic movement to play its intended role, it was necessary to create an army of people, conscious of their tasks and goals, capable of continuous and persistent organisational work.

The political thought of christian democracy was derived from church doctrine, and this christian democrats recognized as their own. The main

goal of christian democracy was the democratisation of political and economic life. In its ideology, the fundamental place was occupied by the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, and all action was subordinated to it. In the years of the Second Polish Republic, christian democracy stood apart from other political parties in terms of influence and success. However, it was a socially progressive group representing democratic attitudes that were neither widespread nor strong at the time. It stressed the desire to play an important role as a workers' party. Its social composition was predominantly made up of workers, followed by the petty bourgeoisie, craftsmen, merchants and a small number of the intelligentsia.

The political thought of christian democracy, formed in the Western cultural circle, transferred to the soil of Poland, was enriched with values and projections derived from the Polish experience. Christian democracy, based on Christian principles in terms of programming, brought to Polish political thought a broadly developed ideology containing both Polish philosophical concepts as well as Thomistic and Maritain elements. The adoption of Catholic doctrine as the basic platform of activity placed it as one of the parties in the vast geography of political Catholicism (Majchrowski 1979: 11, 40, 51).

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