Forms of Secularism and the Nature of European Integration

Michał Matlak

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

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Department of Political and Social Sciences

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Researcher declaration to accompany the submission of written work
Department of Political and Social Sciences - Doctoral Programme

I Michał Matlak certify that I am the author of the work "Forms of Secularism and the Nature of European Integration". I have presented for examination for the Ph.D. at the European University Institute. I also certify that this is solely my own original work, other than where I have clearly indicated, in this declaration and in the thesis, that it is the work of others.

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Statement of language correction:

This thesis has been corrected for linguistic and stylistic errors. I certify that I have checked and approved all language corrections, and that these have not affected the content of this work.

Signature and date: 10.05.2017

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Acknowledgements

Some people say that Ph.D. studies are a solitary experience. In my case this seems to have been true only on the most basic level – the writing process has indeed been a solitary experience. However, everything that preceded writing was in my case everything but a solitary venture. In making it through to the end of this challenging project, I owe a great debt of thanks to to the people I met long before I started writing.

I first became interested in the crisis of religious imagination when I was introduced to the writings of Czesław Miłosz during my inspiring literature classes at the Second High School in Szczecin. The teachers (Magdalena Guz, Anna Domżalska, Paweł Kołodziński, Anna Sołtykiewicz, Wanda Zarzycka) and friends (Michał Zywar) I met there instilled me a hopeful inclination to humanities that then brought me to the Department of Cultural Studies at the University of Wroclaw. In Wrocław I had the good fortune to observe and participate in fascinating debates in the contemporary humanities thanks to professors Stefan Bednarek, Dorota Wolska, Leszek Koczanowicz and my great colleague and scholar, Jacek Małczyński.

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Ph.D. studies were not a solitary experience above all because of the support and encouragement from my family – starting from my grandparents (Jadwiga Gratkowska and Wacław Gratkowski), through my parents (Lidia and Krzysztof Matlak) and brother (Kacper Matlak). This thesis is, however, dedicated to my wife Ola who accompanied me during this journey with a huge amount of love, understanding and support.

Preface: The Meditation Room

March 2010. I am a trainee at the Commission of Bishops' Conferences in Brussels (COMECE). COMECE's Secretary General, Father Piotr Mazurkiewicz, has invited me to a mass at the European Parliament. We walk from Square de Meus, COMECE's seat (only a small sign tells you this) to the Parliament, which is located three hundred meters away. Father Mazurkiewicz shows his lobbyist badge at the entrance. We enter the building and go to the "Meditation Room", a special space created for religious and philosophical ceremonies. Father Mazurkiewicz takes out wine, water and hosts from his bag. It is already 11AM. The Members of the European Parliament come in slowly. Some of them go directly to the first row, some stay at the back. After the end of the mass, the priest puts the religious equipment back in his bag. We leave the room. Someone takes pictures of the people who attended the mass.

It would be way too simple to say that the "Meditation Room" in the European Parliament symbolises the "real nature" of the European project. But it definitely shows the uneasiness of the project vis-à-vis religion. The story of the "Meditation Room" starts in the early 1990s when Otto von Habsburg, one of the most outspoken proponents of Christian Europe and a Member of the European Parliament for the Bavarian Christlich–Soziale Union (a part of the European People's Party), sought to establish a space for religious observance. As there was no agreement for a Catholic (or Christian) Chapel in the Parliament, it took a lot of time to establish such a room and then, once it was established in 1995, both in Strasbourg and Brussels, it took three years to organise the first Catholic mass.

The delay was caused by the opposition of the parliamentarians who identify themselves as strict secularists and who thought that there should be no place for prayers in the Parliament for any concrete religion, as the EU is a neutral body. The conflict between some Christian democrats and some secularists had to be mediated by the presidium of the European Parliament and its quaestors (who are responsible for the premises of the Parliament). It was they who came up with the idea of a

meditation room, inspired (apparently) by the Meditation Room in the United Nations headquarters in New York. The room is located on the ground floor of the European Parliament, takes up around thirty square meters and has no symbol of any religion (this is an official rule, laid out in the instruction issued by the quaestors).

The Meditation Room in the European Parliament in Brussels

The sign of the Meditation Room in the European Parliament in Brussels

The room may be reserved by any Member of the European Parliament, but can only be used for "spiritual purposes". A vast majority of reservations are made for Catholic masses, but there are also some ecumenical, Protestant and Muslim celebrations. Other sorts of religious events are very rare. The room is at times a renewed object of controversy as well. In 2010, a Dutch MEP and perhaps the most influential laicist politician Sophie van in't' Veld issued a letter protesting against the (presumably) permanent presence of a crucifix in the Meditation Room in Strasbourg and the accreditation of a priest celebrating the mass.

It came as a surprise to me that such a telling place like the Meditation Room has not been described in the literature, neither scientific or otherwise. However, there is one exception. British writer Tim Parks located the action of a large part of his novel "Europa" in the Meditation Room in Strasbourg. The main protagonist sits in the room and reflects upon his life. He has some interesting comments on the nature of the space itself:

> With nothing to do, I then stumbled across this Meditation Room, this pseudo-chapel, this distant echo of a dead if not quite buried religion whose corpse, like some petrified Atlas, still upholds the ideals on which Europe is built. Though it would be bad taste to mention the word Christianity, as it would be bad taste to have a platform that looked like an altar. One still finds chapels, or pseudo-chapels, in the most unlikely places, I thought, on realizing what the stylized sign must refer to – in conference centres, ships, airports – as one still finds oneself afraid in the dark. The Meditation Room is a small space with a blue carpet and soft cushioned benches along two walls. The neon-lit mural along one side resembles (Parks 1998).

Interestingly, Parks suspects that the main controversy of the room will be a crucifix:

> No, the only thing one can meditate on here (…) is the disappearance of the cross, the crucifix, the disappearance of any image of the sacred that might genuinely focus the attention. The very amorphousness of this Meditation Room, I thought, this blue carpet, this atrocious neon-lit wall mural, somehow brings to mind the crucifix, more than its presence. We only savour something properly when it's gone, I thought. Rather vaguely. In the Meditation Room. Our love. Our religion. And I remembered reading a book once that said how the Australian aborigines didn't even appreciate that the land was sacred to them until it was taken away (Parks 1998).

Meditation Room in the European Parliament

As Tim Parks (or the protagonist of his novel) might not have been aware, the crucifix has not entirely disappeared. It is located in a safe behind the wall and exhibited only during masses. Moreover, on the shelf below it in the safe one will find the prayer rug for Muslims.

This strange experience marks the beginning of my interest in the relationship between religion and the European Union. A mass in the building of the Parliament in a strange room without no visible symbols, a priest treated as a lobbyist, an atmosphere

of conspiracy – it was very tempting to conduct research in this field. This PhD thesis is a result of this interest.

Introduction
Significant Other: Religion and European Integration

The European problem is, at base, a religious problem.

Julien Benda[1]

The European project is a secular endeavour – perhaps one of the first great political enterprises of humanity without a clear reference to transcendence. And yet it is a project that can hardly be understood without religion; indeed, a concrete religion: Christianity. Firstly, the creation of a continent out of a relatively small part of Asia is undoubtedly an effect of the work done by Christianity (Pomian 1990) on the basis of Roman and Greek cultures.[2] But it was also Christianity that fundamentally mattered in the founding phase of European integration. The vast majority of the founding fathers were Christian democrats and pious Catholics. The story of European integration and Christianity is, however, very far from clear. On the one hand, Christianity is present in the background of the project; on the other, it is indeed a secular endeavour from the very beginning. The European project is thus rooted in three large intellectual traditions – Christianity, Enlightenment and liberalism – and has inherited all the contradictions inherent in such a multifaceted heritage.

There are two main institutional protagonists within this dissertation: the European Union and Catholicism. The rest serve as a background (a very important one though). First, there is Islam (as the religion on the rise in Europe), followed by

[1] Cited in (Mueller 2006, p.135)
[2] Although in the Middle Ages, according to historians, there was no feeling of belonging to Europe, but to Christendom. The sense of belonging to Europe has started only in the sixteenth century and got popularized in the period of Enlightenment (Anderson 2009).

Protestantism (as the biggest historical challenger to Catholicism and a majority religion in some Member States), and –finally – Orthodoxy (the dominant religion of three Member States of the EU).

Although the EU has some traits of a state, it is also an international organization created by sovereign states. Their cultures, histories and intellectual traditions are of course crucial for the conceptualization of the relationship between religion and politics on the European level. Therefore, states and nations are also part of the background in this study. As a detailed description of the religio–political landscape in all the Members States cannot be presented here, I concentrate on the most powerful states when it comes to national influence on European secularism: France (the fatherland of the most influential version of Enlightenment and laicité); Germany (with its cooperationist model of the relationship between Church and state and the roots of Christian democracy); Great Britain (because of the Anglo-Saxon roots of liberalism); and Poland (as its arrival in 2004 challenged the religio–political landscape in the EU).

Apart from the political sphere, there is also an intellectual sphere. Here we are speaking of European political thought and philosophy, which to a tremendous extent has been occupied with the issues of secularism and the relationship between religion and politics. This intellectual lineage is rich and long-standing: from Niccolo Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes to Charles Taylor and Jürgen Habermas. Modern political philosophy has provided the language, the terminology and the imaginary which has structured the ways in which European states have defined their relationship with religion.

The European Communities were created just before the wave of secularization hit European societies in the 1950s, when religiosity throughout Europe was still very high (McLeod 2007). In the subsequent decade, however, the long period of rapid secularization commenced: the 1960s was a moment, as Olivier Roy has put it, when European culture and its dominant religion began to part ways (Roy 2015).

For many observers, this rapid secularization has seen the core social, political and cultural roles of religion largely excluded from the process of European

integration. Thus, one could say, a secular process from the outset has become only more secular with time. While this is of course to a certain degree true, a slightly deeper analysis shows that religion has not disappeared from the European project, even if it's role has not been ostensive. The European project's highly pious founders, disputes over the religious roots of Europe in the preamble to the Constitutional Treaty, the question of Turkey, Islam and the cultural boundaries of Europe, and – finally – the attitude towards Syrian refugees are all religiously charged and are a good reason to pose questions on the relationship between religion and the European project.

State of the Art

In the state of art, I will limit myself to the presentation of the literature on the relationship of religion and politics on the EU level, as the literature on secularism more generally will be presented in the following chapter.

Until fifteen years ago, the literature on the politics of religion at the European level was very limited. Most of the big theories of European integration had little or nothing to say in this regard (Foret 2015, pp.13-37). However, after heated debates over the place of religion in the European polity during the drafting of the European Constitution, numerous scholars turned their attention to the politics of religion in the EU. Today, we can already speak of a relatively rich body of literature.

The most basic classification of this literature can be drawn along ideational lines, as the authors writing on religion in the EU context often employ normative arguments and present a specific idea of Europe. This point is crucial, because in most cases the normative position presupposes the description of the situation. In other words, while the supporters of the idea of Christian Europe tend to see Europe as a laicist organization, liberals, in turn, tend to see the EU as a liberal political entity and their criticisms are normally limited (although there are significant differences between them regarding the appropriate degree of exclusion of religion from politics).

Therefore, two main groups can be singled out: 1) the supporters of the idea of a Christian Europe (Casanova, Siedentop, Weiler, Weninger); 2) liberal secularists

who look for the ways to accommodate religion, but without a significant political role (Foret, Massignon, McCrea, Seeger, Zucca). The liberals differ among themselves regarding the extent in which religion should be accommodated/excluded from the public sphere – but the general idea of the depoliticization of religion that is crucial for liberalism (Holmes 1996) is advanced by all the representatives of this strand. It is also worth mentioning that the supporters of the idea of a Christian Europe also do not dismiss liberalism as such – but all of them would probably agree that the current shape of liberalism excludes religion and unjustly promotes a non-religious worldview.

The picture of the groups drawn here is, of course, somewhat closer to ideal types than a perfectly accurate description of the positions of the single authors. Nevertheless, I believe that the outline I have presented does justice to the most important insights of them.[3]

Supporters of the idea of Christian Europe

The most influential defence of the idea of a Christian Europe is a book by Joseph H.H. Weiler entitled "Un'Europa Cristiana: Un saggio esplorativo" (Weiler 2003c). He holds that Christianity is a part of European constitutional identity and therefore should be present in the ethos of European integration, and thus Christian values should be incorporated into the European political system. To argue this, Weiler analyses the constitutions of the Member States with respect to Christianity. His other argument is that European civilization, based to a large extent on Christianity, is the most important asset of Europe and therefore the reference to Christianity should be clear. What is remarkable is that Weiler is optimistic when it comes to the possibility of finding a way to reconcile Christianity with Enlightenment as the second pillar of European civilization. He contends that, for instance, the values of equality or human rights have their source in Christianity and were translated into non-religious ideas during the Enlightenment. In his other article, Weiler (Weiler 2012) describes the

[3] Interestingly, many of them are lawyers, not political or social scientists. As Norman Doe puts it, "law is a place where religion and politics meet" (Doe 2011, p.141)

Schuman Declaration as a document of political messianism rooted in both Christianity and humanism.

Philip Jenkins (Jenkins 2007), Larry Siedentop (Siedentop 2000), and Michael Weninger (Weninger 2007) represent a kindred way of thinking – at least with respect to the role of Christianity in the European project. That being said, Siedentop puts forward a very different proposal to constitutionalize a European "compound republic", a federation that would be based on common religion (Christianity), common language (English) and an Anglo–Saxon common law tradition. For his part, Weiler suggests that Europe has already had a constitution (which consists of the European Treaties) and he took a position against its federalization and constitutionalization in the mode of the classic sovereign state.

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A unique position in this debate is held by Carlo Invernizzi Accetti (Invernizzi-Accetti 2017), who is not at all a supporter of the idea of Christian Europe, but nevertheless claims that Europe's relationship with religion is at heart Christian democratic and not laicist or secular–liberal. He gives four reasons for this bold statement. First, the EU is based on the doctrine of subsidiarity on the political level and the margin of appreciation on the legal level (which according to Invernizzi-Accetti is a key element of Christian democratic ideas). Second, religion is called a "source of inspiration" in the official documents of the EU. Third, European institutions understand freedom of belief in a positive way – they promote religious traditions and education. Finally, he thinks that European jurisprudence and treaties grant a privileged status to Christianity to give the European order a sense of unity.

Liberals

Liberal secularism is perhaps the most popular option among scholars of the relationship between religion and politics in the social sciences. One of the most

comprehensive defences of the liberal religio–political order of the EU was published by Francois Foret and is entitled "Religion and Politics in the European Union. The Secular Canopy" (Foret 2015). The book represents a defence of the liberal attitude towards religion in the EU. It starts from the analysis of existing theories on European integration (and convincingly indicates its religious blind spot), goes through the attitudes of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) towards religion and secularism, scrutinizes the influence of religious organizations on the policymaking process, and indicates the role of religion in the external relations of the EU.

Foret concludes the book with a statement that the EU might be the first polity in history that builds its political identity without religious, messianic rhetoric. The author seems to sympathize with the liberal understanding of secularism which depoliticizes religion whenever possible, but secures a certain place for it in the European public sphere: "An open and permissive secularism, leaving room for religion in the public space while acknowledging its confinement to culture, may be the best way for the EU to reflect the domestic development of European societies and to project an attractive model worldwide." (Foret 2015, p.285)

Ronan McCrea, the author of "Religion and the Political Order of the European Union" (2010), thinks that both Christian and the post-secular ideas of the EU are wrong. For McCrea, the EU rightly adopted an identity-based approach to religion. The EU treats religion as a part of culture and this approach allows it to depoliticize religion.

> The EU lacks the authority to reconstruct the relationship between the state, the law, and religion in a fundamental fashion. It therefore has to devise an approach that synthesises the national traditions of its Member States (…). The EU's public order seeks to uphold its commitment to balancing religious and humanist traditions and to give scope to Member States to continue to pursue their own particular relationships to religion, by treating as a form of identity (McCrea 2010, pp.254-255).

McCrea indicates the dialectics of the European attitude towards religion. On the one hand it privileges Christianity, because of its cultural and historical influence on Europe. On the other hand, it is a limiting factor for those states that would like to undermine other core values of the EU, such as human rights:

> This gives the Union a public order which both facilitates the predominantly Christian cultural role of religion in influencing law but which is also avowedly non-theocratic (…). Although this approach comes at the cost of a degree of inequality between religions, such a situation is the inevitable outcome of Christianity's immense cultural and historical influence in Europe and the EU's limited authority and need to defer to the cultural autonomy of its Member States (…). Although the EU's public order is not strictly secular, the Union may well prove to be a limiting factor should such a broad return of religious influence come to pass. In particular, the EU's recognition of the legitimacy and worth of Europe's humanist tradition and its commitment to individual autonomy are inconsistent with wholesale enforcement of religious morality by legal means on the basis of either explicitly religious or cultural claims (McCrea 2010, p.268).

Lorenzo Zucca (Zucca 2012) also defends "A Secular Europe" and takes issue with Joseph Weiler. Zucca strongly criticizes Weiler's rejection of separation between the European polity and Christian values. He recalls the preamble of the Lisbon Treaty that draws from "cultural, religious, and humanist influences" and thus strikes a balance between the religious and non-religious sources of European values. He also strongly criticizes the idea that constitutions should be carriers of identity (the idea of constitutional identity is to him "nonsense upon stilts") and praises the secular character of the EU, which he considers indispensable if we want to protect European diversity.

Veit Bader, a sociologist and philosopher, rejects the idea that there is a chance for European governance of religion saying that it should remain the competence of

Member States. Bader proposes to stay with liberal-democratic constitutionalism, which he understands as "a meta-constitutional and meta-legal ideal containing the constitutional essentials, or the core, of various and differing articulations of rights and principles in liberal-democratic international or regional conventions and state constitutions" (Bader 2012, p.24). He also rejects the concept of secularism, but his definition of this term is different from the one adopted in this thesis – it is not only a mere separation of the two spheres (which can take various shapes), but it is an ideology alternative to religion instead. Bader's philosophical position summarizes rather well the liberal mainstream of the social sciences. Most authors believe in the fundamental role of "essentials", such as liberal-democratic principles and human rights, and they reject secularism understood as an anti-religious ideology.

Liberalism is present not only with respect to the single authors, but also research projects on the relationship between European integration and religion. The largest of them (in terms of number of scholars involved) so far – "Religare. Religious Diversity and Secular Models in Europe" (financed by the EU) – had a clearly liberal stance on how the EU does (and ought to) deal with religion. It acknowledges general engagement of the EU in the promotion of freedom of religion and belief, as well as fostering the neutrality of public institutions, but urges it to go further in this direction. The key word promoted by the research team was the "even handedness", a Rawlsian-flavoured term:

> The RELIGARE research shows that what guarantees appropriate protection is not so much justice in the sense of a 'hands-off' stance but as seeking 'even-handedness' between competing interpretations of the freedom of religion. To have the law on one's side is not enough, people also seek justice. Based on the main findings, the RELIGARE project advances a number of recommendations that are addressed both to the domestic authorities (Member States) and, in particular, to the EU Institutions. The recommendations call for a more direct and active role for the EU Institutions in developing a coherent policy framework that would strengthen the combat in Europe against

> discrimination on the basis of religion or belief in a way that is compatible with a democratic understanding of the functioning of pluralist democracies and can therefore help overcome divisions and segregations. This is especially crucial now that the EU has stepped up its efforts to protect the fundamental right to freedom of religion and belief in its external policies (Foblets & Alidadi 2013, p.4).

Post-secularists

Veit Bader calls post-secularism a "buzzword" and not without reason. It is a very fashionable term among scholars working on religion and politics, but at the same time it is not very well defined. Moreover, it is also not clear whether the term describes the actual religious reality of the modern world. The best-known author linked to the term is Jürgen Habermas, who believes that there is a chance to translate religious insights into a secular language and thus enable religious people to participate in democracy through a complementary learning process.

Post-secularists reject the neutrality of liberal secularism and its blindness towards religions and call for more understanding for religious groups. When it comes to the EU, we can see that this stance could be a kind of a middle ground between supporters of Christian Europe and secularists. Therefore, some authors (Casanova, Katzenstein) see the latest developments in the way the EU deals with religions (above all, the dialogue with religious and philosophical organizations) as proof of the post-secular character of the European Union.

Jose Casanova might be seen as a scholar close to the post-secular strand of authors, and at the same time not overly distance from the supporters of the idea of Christian Europe:

> [T]he inability to openly recognize Christianity as one of the constitutive components of European cultural and political identity means that a great historical opportunity may be missed to add yet a third important historical reconciliation to the already achieved reconciliation between Protestant and Catholics and between warring European nation-states, by putting an end to the old battles over Enlightenment, religion, and secularism (Casanova 2009).

Casanova points to the inability of Europeans to deal with religions and to recognise the role of Christianity in the making of the continent. His conclusion is however a bit different to those proposed by Weiler or Siedentop. He thinks that if the EU wants to remain committed to equality, it must be not only post-Christian, but also post-secular.

> The perceived threat to secular identities and the biased overreaction to exclude any public reference to Christianity belies the self-serving secularist claims that only secular neutrality can guarantee individual freedoms and cultural pluralism. What the imposed silence signifies is not only the attempt to erase Christianity or any other religion from the public collective memory, but also the exclusion from the public sphere of a central component of the personal identity of many Europeans. To guarantee equal access to the European public sphere and undistorted communication, the European Union would need to become not only post-Christian but also post-secular (Casanova 2009).

When it comes to the post-secular writings on the EU itself, an important volume edited by Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein (Byrnes & Katzenstein 2009) was published. Katzenstein, in his introduction to the book, states that secular liberalism is not anymore suitable for the enlarged EU and suggests that religions (above all, Christianity and Islam) should be incorporated in the way we think of Europe and European identity. In practical terms, however, it is difficult to see fundamental differences between those who refer to post-secularism and those who

support the liberal politics of religion. Although the concept was also welcomed by those who hope for a more influential role of Christianity in the European project, it seems that the idea of "post-secularism" is less and less lively in the political and social sciences.[4]

Puzzle and research question

The intellectual puzzle that inspired me to write this thesis was the following paradox: the pious Catholic who founded the EU started rather a secular project; no religious references were made in the first decades of European integration. Paradoxically, religion entered the European project much later, in the 1980s and 1990s when European societies and its elites were already to a large degree secularized. Why was this the case? Why did the European Union move from a lack of any religious reference to codified dialogue with churches?

The objective of this dissertation is therefore to shed further light on the nature of European integration by examining the relationship between religion and politics throughout the whole process. The thesis aims to answer the following research question: *which forms of secularism have underpinned the process of European integration*. Following Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, I understand secularism as a public settlement between politics and religion (i.e. we can speak of secularism, if the religious and political spheres are conceptually distinct).

This study is not polemical with a concrete theory or body of thought, although I will indicate some elements of theories and works I do not agree with. For example, I do not agree with Joseph H.H. Weiler's notion of *Christophobia* regarding the EU. I am also more sceptical of merits of the liberal approach than François Foret. I also do not believe that "neutrality" regarding religions answers all the questions. These disagreements do not change the fact that I owe a lot of insights to the critique of European secular ethos by Weiler and I share the views of Foret and McCrea arguing

[4] Post-secularism is perhaps more productive in philosophy – especially when one thinks about those works that tend to show the religious origins of theories that were considered so far as rather secular.

that the EU is a deeply liberal project (rather than a Christian or a laicist one). The biggest challenge, however, is to define the kind of liberalism that dominates the European project.

Apart from the inquiry into the nature of the European liberal ethos, my aim is also to demonstrate the other options that have been present (and also politically represented) in the European social imaginary that did not manage to dominate the European ethos of religion and politics. It is very important, as one can understand the current liberal ethos only in the context of the other two versions of secularism: the Christian democratic and the laicist. The positions taken by important actors (European institutions, Member States, political parties, religious and non-religious organizations) have been in this respect very different, and it is my objective to shed a light on these differences.

A historical perspective allows me to identify and examine the following critical junctures with respect to the relationship between religion and politics in the process: the Christian democratic foundation of the European Communities, the question of Turkish accession, the project called "A Soul of Europe" during Jacques Delors' term as a president of the European Commission, the debate on the Treaty establishing Constitution for Europe, and last but not least: the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty with its art. 17 obliging European institutions to maintain dialogue with religious organizations.

My preliminary findings indicate that three forms of secularism, rooted in the European intellectual and political history, might be identified in the discourse and practice of European integration: 1) Christian democratic secularism (Christianity transformed by personalist thought regarded as a cultural and symbolic basis of European integration); 2) Laicist republican secularism (religion seen as a challenge to the democratic political order); 3) Agnostic liberal secularism (understood as an attempt to depoliticize religion, to delegate it to other bodies, e.g. Member States or international organizations). I argue that the last concept, liberal in its nature, has been most successful throughout the whole process. The last part of the dissertation will be

devoted to three critique of the liberal ethos of European integration: conservative, republican and the leftist one.

As I will also indicate in the conceptual chapter, each of these forms has its counterpoint – "a shadow form of secularism" – within the same ideological camp. Christian democratic secularism has often been challenged by the Christian-conservative view, which is much more critical of the liberal reality than the former version. For its part, laicist republican secularism is challenged by much more radical laicist anti-religious secularism, which seeks to actively promote a non-religious worldview. Also, agnostic liberal secularism is often challenged on its own grounds by republicanism (in a different understanding than the laicist one), which is traditionally more open towards religious insights. Although I will give precedence to the first three options as they were more influential in the process of European integration, the three "shadow" versions of secularism will also be present in the thesis.

In thesis, I argue that of these six forms, agnostic liberal secularism has been the most powerful throughout the whole process of European integration.

The method: A single case study with comparative elements

The thesis is a single case study, although it contains the elements of a comparative analysis: the forms of secularism on the European level are here sometimes compared to the forms of secularism at the nation-state level. The comparative element might also be found in the chronological analysis in that I differentiate between different moments of European integration, remembering that there is a huge difference between the European Community of Coal and Steel (an international organization with very limited competences) and today's European Union, a quasi-federal polity or a (con-)federation of nation states. For the sake of this project I will assume that the European Union is a political body that is something between an international organization and a quasi-federal, non-unitary polity. I do so because this is mostly how the EU is depicted in the literature. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this study

compares the influence of the three forms of secularism on the European project. And this is the most important feature of the methodology of this thesis.

Ideal types

To give the reader a sense of how the forms of secularism are understood here, I will refer to Max Weber's concept of ideal types – a heuristic instrument allowing us to grasp the nature of the relations between religion and politics. Although the three forms of secularism are not a full realization of this concept, they are certainly close to it. Weber's ideal types were tools to organize shapeless empirical reality. In eyes of the author of "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism", an ideal type was a fictional restructuration (*Umbildung*) of reality, a form of construction that stresses certain elements common to most cases of the given phenomenon. For Weber, ideal types are unworldly (*Weltfremd*) which is not entirely the case I make – I build them, rather, drawing strongly on reality.[5] What I also take from Weber is a certain value-freedom of ideal types. My ambition is to present them as impartially as possible, although I am also aware that an absolute impartiality in social sciences is an illusion.

The ideal type is a part of the broader Weberian enterprise of the social sciences and humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*). To Weber, the vocation of the humanities was "understanding" (*Verstehen*) of a social phenomenon in its singularity (idiographic sciences), as opposed to natural sciences which aim at establishing theories with an ambition to universal validity. Weber was convinced that the methods of natural science cannot apply to social sciences (although they are perfectly legitimate in the natural realm) and therefore there is a need for "interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects." (Weber 1947, p.88) Such a position makes Weber rather distant from today's social sciences, which have mostly adopted a positivist approach that assumes the need to discover causality and demonstrate universal validity (King et al. 1994).

[5] There is a disagreement among scholars whether Weberian ideal types were so unworldly, as he claimed.

The forms of secularism, which are understood here as ideal types, have to a certain degree, a similar structure. First, they consist of a **founding myth**, be it a historical period or event (e.g. the French Revolution) or a concept (e.g. the reason) which are fundamental for the form. Second, they always have a **structuring event** or a historical process that led to creation (e.g. The 1905 law in France) and distinguished from other possible forms or conceptualisations of secularism. The third common component is **intellectual content** – they are usually rooted in different sorts of tradition, ways of thinking, or thought habits. It is also important to note that they all have an emotional component: none of these forms is purely rational. I have devoted the following chapter to the description of the three forms of secularism.

Before we go on, I would like to clarify my understanding of the nature of myth. A myth can be understood as a narrative giving a certain community a sense of purpose and does not have clear relationship with the truth, being true or false. Political myths – as Chiara Bottici (2007) has demonstrated – are a constant part of the political imagination throughout centuries (even if the rationalist social sciences tend to overlook them). Rational discounting of them seems to be a part of the heritage of the Enlightenment, which sought to demythologize reality (and ended up mythologizing itself, as Adorno and Horkheimer have demonstrated in the "Dialectics of Enlightenment").

Central themes of the chapters

Chapter I. The Forms of Secularism and its Genealogies

In the conceptual chapter I will first describe the Western idea of separation of religion and politics–secularism. Second, I will look at different ways to conceptualise such a separation; namely, the different forms of secularism. 1) **Christian secularism**, which has two variations, a Christian democratic one – where Christianity transformed by personalist thought is regarded as a cultural and symbolic basis for European integration and a Christian-conservative one, which rejects some institutions of political modernity and views Christianity as the main basis

for European identity. 2) **Laicist secularism** (laïcité), in which religion is viewed as a challenge to the democratic political order. It can also be seen as encompassing two versions: anti-religious laicist secularism (more part of French political culture than legal reality) and republican laicist secularism (which is centred on the idea of the neutrality of the state). 3) **Liberal secularism** also has two variations: liberal agnostic secularism which grew from the tradition developed by John Rawls, understood as an attempt to depoliticize religion. In turn, republican liberal secularism is based on the European and American republican liberal tradition, embodied by authors like Alexis de Tocqueville. This form of secularism views religion as necessary for the political order.

Chapter II. The Foundations of the European Communities: Christian democratic Input and Agnostic Output

In this chapter I deal with the Christian democratic foundations of European communities and the role played by the founding fathers in that context. My findings indicate that although Christianity mattered a great deal for the founding fathers, the religio–political outcome was closer to the agnostic form of secularism rather than the Christian democratic one.

Chapter III. Jacques Delors, the Single Market and the Failed Attempt to Give a *Soul to Europe*

This chapter rests upon the Weberian assumption of a linkage between the form of economy (in this case advanced capitalism) and religion. I pose the question of whether there is a link between the form of capitalism adopted by the European polity and the emerging form of secularism of the European Union. It was with Jacques Delors that the relationship between religion and the European project gained in importance. As president of the European Commission he recognised the social role of European religions by inviting them to the project "A Soul for Europe", which aimed to find a more robust source of legitimacy for the European project. An emerging supranational polity with numerous new competences needed

legitimation, as the political support for the democratically-elected governments of the Member States was deemed insufficient.

Chapter IV. Religion and the Constitution of Europe

This chapter examines the debate on the preamble to the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe and its article I-52, as well as the subsequent transfer of this article to the Lisbon Treaty (as art. 17). In this chapter, I analyse the reasons behind the refusal to accept *Invocatio Dei* and the acceptance of article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty. This debate enables us to identify key actors in the struggle for cultural hegemony within the European Union.

Chapter V. Turkey, Islam and the Cultural Boundaries of Europe

The secular character of the European project has been challenged by growing Muslim immigration and discussions over Turkish accession to the European Union. Islam is often perceived as a threat to the European secular order. Through an analysis of the process of Turkish accession and the debates surrounding it, this chapter seeks to explain how Europe deals with religious otherness and what it says about European self-perception. This is analysed in the context of substantial Muslim immigration to major Western European countries.

Chapter VI. The Secularism of Fear and the Nature of European Integration.

The last chapter looks into the cultural, political and spiritual consequences of European attitudes towards religion. There are three types of critique of European agnostic secularism addressed here. The first is the conservative one, which above all criticizes the break with the European Christian tradition and the break with the political form of a nation-state. The republican critique is in many respects linked to the conservative one, as it also sees negative consequences of "the broken thread of tradition" that results in the decline of public virtues and the domination of the liberal idea of negative freedom, which seems to override the positive one. The republican critique is,

however, one that accepts the most important creeds of liberalism and would also see more positive than negative sides of the process of European integration. The third, leftist, critique is concentrated on another aspect of agnostic liberal secularism, namely the fact that it allegedly leaves too much space for capitalism and consumerism as leading forces of the European polity.

Setting the Scene: The Forms of Secularism and Its Genealogies

Only something which has no history is capable of being defined.
Friedrich Nietzsche

All concepts presented in this chapter are contestable. It remains a recurring problem of the field of "religion and politics" that certain terms might be understood in very different – sometimes even contradictory – ways. The concept of "secularism" is certainly one of these terms. Some scholars understand it as a narrow philosophical and political doctrine promoting a non-theistic worldview (Connolly 1999), for others it is a rather broad term signifying an arrangement between religion and politics (Casanova 1994; Hurd 2008). The former meaning can be traced to the time of the Enlightenment and its critique of religion; the latter derives from medieval times. While already at that time spiritual and temporal power were conceptually separated, one would not use the term "secularism" to describe the reality of the Middle Ages (as not only a distinction, but also a certain level of practical separation, is required).

Although the concept of secularism adopted here does not prescribe the position of a state towards religion (religion-friendly, neutral, distanced or hostile), it is still a part of the bigger picture of a story told for example by Charles Taylor in "A Secular Age" (2007) We can see that the West moved from a situation where a belief in God was as obvious as the fact that we breathe to a world where belief in God is entirely optional. Some, such as Charles Taylor himself, see positive elements in this process. Others – like, for example, Alasdair MacIntyre in "After virtue" (Macintyre 1984) – see the process as a truly negative phenomenon. Nevertheless, virtually no one claims that the role of religion (faith, belief, transcendence) in the Western world has not deeply changed in the last centuries (although the devil lies in the nature of this change). This transformation is often viewed as a part of the process of "secularization", another contested and multifaceted term.

It is generally agreed among scholars that "the secularization thesis" was wrong in the sense that religion does not seem to disappear from the world although its role changes. Moreover, what is new is that many people, especially in Western Europe, describe themselves as non-believers. Secularization – changing the conditions of belief (Taylor 2007, p.3) – is connected to secularism in both its narrower and broader understanding, but the latter might take very different forms – from hostility towards religion to an openness towards religious insights in the political sphere.

An important distinction should be made here. The concept of secularism operates on three levels: private, public and political.[6] The private sphere is the level of personal convictions held and practiced in private spaces which are not accessible to the rest of the society (family, friends, and small groups); the political sphere is one that belongs to the political power. The public sphere is the place between the private and the political – where different opinions might be exchanged and promoted – for example in a form of deliberation (Habermas 1996). It is, however, important that in many cases the boundaries of the public sphere are contested by different actors.

There is, of course, a need to adjust these generic terms to the process of European integration, since it constitutes the object of my investigation. The private sphere does not change whether we speak of the level of states or transnational regimes, but the public and political spheres take very specific forms in the context of the European Union. The political sphere in this context is twofold: communitarian and intergovernmental. On the one hand, we have the European institutions where nationality should play a minor role (in reality it is of course much more complicated), like the European Commission and the European Parliament. On the other hand, the intergovernmental sphere is shaped by the governments of the Member States who regularly meet in different forms (the Council of the European Union, COREPER, and unofficial negotiations between the governments). The focus here is on the communitarian side of European institutions, because they deal with religion more often than the intergovernmental bodies of the EU. Religion plays a different role depending on one whether

[6] The distinction between political and public sphere is important for example for Rawls, as we will see later – as his "Theory of Justice" concerns the political sphere, not the public one.

one sees the EU as a polity, as an international organization or as a process see: (Foret 2015, pp.15-38)

While the description of the political sphere of European integration is manageable, the question of the European public sphere is a very complex one. For my purposes, I assume that such a sphere exists, but that it is substantially different from the national public spheres: it is much more heterogeneous, complex and fluid. Although Jacques Derrida and Jürgen Habermas (Habermas & Derrida 2003) claimed that such a European public sphere did emerge after the conflict between some Member States and the US over the war in Iraq, it seems that they went too far. My approach is closer to the notion of the processual Europeanization of public spheres, which emerges whenever European issues are debated as questions of common concern using similar frames of reference (Risse 2010, pp.5-8). For Thomas Risse, this is linked to the Europeanization of national identities which become indeed Europeanized through the politicization[7] of Europe – increasing controversies over European issues. It is important to see that we can speak of the European public sphere (or at least about partially Europeanized national public spheres), because this is where the debates over religion and politics take place. This is also the place where the harshest conflicts over religion are located.

The European Union ("European Communities" before 1992) is a project in the making, a result of the process of European integration (Weiler 1999). Therefore, when one writes about the first European Communities designed by the "founding fathers" one has to bear in mind that it was a very different object in comparison with the European Union under the Lisbon Treaty.

Varieties of Secularism

The word "secular" has Christian roots. Priests who were present in the day-to-day life of local communities were worldly and secular (i.e. not members of orders). In the beginning of the Middle Ages we cannot really speak of the distinction of worldly and spiritual powers – both

[7] This is how Risse defines it: "By politicization, I mean that issues become subject to political debates and controversies among interest groups and political parties as well as in the various public spheres" (Risse 2010).

Emperor and Pope were parts of the *Ecclesia*. However, this started to be much more complex after the eleventh century investiture controversy – when Emperors and Popes fought for supremacy. This conflict was a milestone on the way to a modern state, with its distinction between temporal (secular) and spiritual (religious) powers (Böckenförde 1967).

The differentiation for many centuries did not mean separation whatsoever – the two spheres for many centuries tried to influence each other which was often the cause of serious conflicts (Pizzorno 2009). The conflict between the Church and state in Europe reached a climax in the nineteenth century – the period of so called culture wars, and it is still very much present in the way contemporary Europeans conceptualize the relationship between religion and politics.

Although the distinction between spiritual and temporal powers is of medieval origin, its modern understanding came to being for the first time in the Treaty of Westphalia. According to Benjamin Straumann the Treaty constituted the "secular constitution" of the Holy Roman Empire, as it "established a secular order by taking sovereignty over religious affairs away from the discretion of territorial princes and by establishing a proto-liberal legal distinction between private and public affairs (Straumann 2007, p.184)" It was, to certain extent, a transnational secular order (with transnational jurisdiction) – the current European arrangements on religion and politics thus have a predecessor. Since then it has been connected to the emerging concepts of state and sovereignty. It was at the level of the state where the two spheres started to be distinguished. Nevertheless, we need to remember that the Treaty of Westphalia did not result in a separation between religion and politics, but rather in the distinction between public and private and it led to the confessionalization of states and to the subordination of religion to the state.

In today's Western world there is always a certain distinction between these spheres and in the countries with an established church (like Great Britain, Denmark or Norway), the distinction is also visible. The most crucial issue is therefore not a question as to whether a given entity is secular or not, but what form of secularism it represents. And this is a question I would like to raise in this thesis with respect to the European Union. To answer the question on the forms of secularism that have underpinned the process of European integration, I will make use of the concept of secularism developed by Elizabeth Shakman Hurd:

> Secularism refers to a public settlement between politics and religion. The secular refers to the epistemic space carved out by the ideas and practices associated with such settlements. Secularization is a process through which these settlements become authoritative, legitimated and embedded in and through individuals, the law, state institutions, and other social relationships (Hurd 2008, p.18).

Shakman Hurd, following Talal Asad, Saba Mahmood, and Jose Casanova sees secularism as a tool that has been used to identify "religion" as a concept (the term was not often used in pre-modern times, e.g. only four times in the Latin translation of the Bible) and to separate it from politics, economy and science. Such an understanding of secularism locates it in what Charles Taylor calls the "modern social imaginary", defined as:

> [T]he way ordinary people "imagine" their social surroundings, and this is often not expressed in theoretical terms, but is carried in images, stories, and legends. It is also the case that (…) theory is often the possession of a small minority, whereas what is interesting in the social imaginary is that it is shared by large groups of people, if not the whole society (…). [T]he social imaginary is that common understanding that makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy (Taylor 2004, p.23).

Taylor also interestingly describes how social imaginaries are being formed and changed:

> It often happens that what start off as theories held by a few people come to infiltrate the social imaginary, first of elites, perhaps, and then of the whole society. This is what has happened, *grosso modo*, to the theories of Grotius and Locke, although the transformations have been many along the way and the ultimate forms are rather varied (…). It begins to define the contours of their world and can eventually come to count as the taken-for-granted shape of things, too obvious to mention (Taylor 2004, pp.23-30).

There is no doubt that secularism both in both a broader and narrower understanding is part of the modern social imaginary of the Western world.

Shakman Hurd distinguishes between the two types of secularisms that are present in the theory and practice of international relations: Judeo–Christian secularism and laicism. The most important assumption of the tradition is that Western political order is grounded in "a set of core values with their origins in (Judeo–) Christian tradition." As Samuel Huntington put it: "Western Catholicism and then Protestantism, is historically the single most important characteristic of Western civilization." Another fundamental assumption of this sort of secularism is that the distinction between religion and politics is a work of Christianity and this is why the non-Western part of the world has a difficult time in separating both these spheres.

The political representative of this tradition is, according to Shakman Hurd, George W. Bush who often invoked the transcendental authority of the US, a "It is a secular republic that is realizing (a Christian) God's will (Hurd 2008, p.38)". Intellectual representatives of this option are for example: Richard John Neuhaus who famously opposed emptying the public square of religious symbols. Other scholars which are identified as working in the tradition of Judeo-Christian secularism are Robert Bellah (the author of the "Civil Religion in America"), William Connolly ("Why I Am Not a Secularist?") and Charles Taylor ("A Secular Age", "A Catholic Modernity?").

The laicist tradition, on the other hand, is based on the assumption that "metaphysical traditions of all kinds have been exhausted and transcended" – an example of such a thinking is Negri and Hardt's concept of empire. Laicism aims at excluding religion from the sphere of political power, it endorses the privatization of religion, and develops an independent political ethic. Laicism has been influential in France, the former Soviet Union, Turkey, and China. Hurd links it with the Jacobin tradition of laicism associated with what Chatterjee describes as "a coercive process in which the legal powers of the state, the disciplinary powers of family and school, and the persuasive powers of government and media have been used to produce the secular citizen who agrees to keep religion in the private domain" (cited in (Hurd 2008, p.29). Interestingly, there is no liberal option in the Shakman Hurd's typology.

Before the presentation of how the forms of secularism and its description are understood here, it is important to recall an important insight by Talal Asad who states that "[w]hat is distinctive about *secularism* is that it presupposes new concepts of 'religion,' 'ethics,' and 'policies,' and new imperatives associated with them (Asad 2003, pp.1-2)." It is because of secularism that we can speak of religion at all. Before our modern imaginary turned secular, religion was not differentiated from other domains of life such as politics or science. It is also worth noting that every form of secularism has a different concept of religion.

Table 1. The forms of secularism

	Christian secularism	**Laicist secularism**	**Agnostic secularism**	
	Christian democratic secularism	***Christian conservative secularism***	***Anti-religious secularism***	***Republican secularism***
Founding historical moment (a myth)	Medieval Christian Europe; the Catholic foundations of the European Communities	The French Revolution; French Enlightenment	Religious wars and the Peace of Westphalia	
Structuring event	Second Vatican Council	French Revolution	1905 law	Culture Wars of the late nineteenth century
Political thought (the intellectual content)	Christian Personalism	Conservatism	Enlightenment critique of religion	Liberalism

Table 2. The attitudes of the forms of secularism

Separation of religion and politics	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Presence of religion in the public sphere	Yes	No	Rather yes.
The priority of Christianity over other denominations	Rather yes	No!	No
Freedom of religion	Yes	?	Yes
The form of secularism as a part of the political identity/political culture	Yes	Yes	No
The neutrality of the state	No	Rather not	Yes
The equality of religions	Rather not	Yes	Yes
Human rights	Yes	Yes	Yes
The attitude towards the idea of state sovereignty	Rather sceptical (Maritain)	Positive	?
Centralization of power	No	Yes	Rather no

1. Christian democratic secularism

Christianity has never proposed a revealed law to the State and to society, that is to say a juridical order derived from revelation. Instead, it has pointed to nature and reason as the true sources of law.

Benedict XVI at the Bundestag

The *culture* of death manifests itself in a sexuality that becomes pure gratification without responsibility, that makes of man a thing, so to speak, as it no longer considers him as person, with a personal love, with fidelity, but turns him into merchandise. To this apparent promise of fidelity, to this pomp of an apparent life which in reality is no more than an instrument of death, to this *anti-culture*.

Benedict XVI at a mass in Vatican

Christian secularism – the Christian vision of the relationship between religion and politics – can be understood as having two variations: a Christian democratic one, and a Christian conservative one (a shadow form of secularism, as I call it). Both are reactions to European political modernity. The former tries to reconcile Christianity with modernity, the other one rejects many constitutive elements of it. European integration is genetically linked with Christian democracy – this is why I will concentrate on this form of secularism much more than the conservative one. It is, however, also important to note that sometimes both elements of Christian secularism are treated as complimentary: Benedict XVI with his fidelity to the Second Vatican Council and his critique of modernity is probably one of the best examples of such a connection between the two versions of Christian secularism.

From negation to ambivalence: Catholicism and political modernity

One can understand the emergence of the Christian forms of secularism through the analysis of the evolution of Catholic political thought in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: from the negation of political modernity (and all forms of secularism) to more ambivalent (sometimes even affirmative) approaches. The analysis of the encyclicals of the popes involved in the European *Kulturkämpfe* will allow us to trace this shift.

The Catholic Church in nineteenth century Europe went through a difficult time. After the French Revolution, the religio–political landscape of Europe started to change. In some countries, like France itself, political elites started to see the Catholic Church as a defender of the *ancien régime*. In others – like Italy – it was seen as an obstacle to the creation of a new nation-state, or a potential danger to the state (as in Bismarckian Germany at the time of *Kulturkampf*). The period of the culture wars can be defined as "a conflict between Catholic and anti-clerical forces over the place of religion in a modern polity." It was to large extent caused by the emergence of constitutional and democratic nation states (Clark & Kaiser 2006, p.1). There were also of course other examples – like Poland or Ireland – where the Catholic Church served as a basis for national and political identity and a partner in the struggle for freedom. This took place, however, on the margins of nineteenth and twentieth century politics – the centre of European politics was captured by the deep conflict between Catholicism and state (Król 2012).

The Church had to take a stance on the new political reality. In the majority of cases[8] it chose to stick with the *ancien régime* and it was a fateful choice. Let us now take a look at some examples of this position. Pope Gregory XVI in 1832 issued an encyclical "Mirari vos. On Liberalism and Religious Indifferentism" where he expresses his deep anxiety about the new epoch and a critical view on some pillars of political modernization, such as freedom to publish or the liberty of conscience:

> This shameful font of indifferentism gives rise to that absurd and erroneous proposition which claims that liberty of conscience must be maintained for everyone. It spreads ruin in sacred and civil affairs, though some repeat over and over again with the greatest

[8] Although many priests supported the French Revolution, especially before the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, which subordinated the Catholic Church to the French state, was adopted by the National Constituent Assembly.

> impudence that some advantage accrues to religion from it. "But the death of the soul is worse than freedom of error," as Augustine was wont to say (Gregory XVI 1832).

Gregory XVI expresses also his negative view on the separation of Church and State:

> Nor can We predict happier times for religion and government from the plans of those who desire vehemently to separate the Church from the state, and to break the mutual concord between temporal authority and the priesthood. It is certain that that concord which always was favourable and beneficial for the sacred and the civil order is feared by the shameless lovers of liberty (Gregory XVI 1832).

This anti-modern line was taken up by his successor in an encyclical with a telling title "Quanta Cura. Condemning Current Errors" (Pius IX 1864), which was supplemented by "Syllabus Errorum" – a list of errors condemned by the pope. While the first part concerns philosophical issues –such as the rise of naturalism, absolute rationalism and religious indifferentism – the second part is political and condemns different novel features of political modernity and one of the long list of errors is the idea that "the Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church" (Pius IX 1864).

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to think that this line was present throughout whole nineteenth century. The change came already in 1878 with the beginning of Pope Leo XIII's pontificate.[9] The new pope engaged in a critical dialogue with political and social modernity. He still defended "princes" against political revolutions and preferred the stability of political order which was in line with the Catholic Church. However, in the encyclical "Diuturnum. On the Origin of Civil Power" (Leo XIII 1881) we can observe a new notion – the idea that the Church cannot be prescribed to a concrete vision of state or political doctrine. He preferred the alliance between church and state, where possible, but did not denounce political orders where this was not the case – provided that it was "a just order":

[9] Leo XIII as Bishop Vincenzo Pecci (1810–1903) was a nuncio in Belgium and witnessed the role of Catholics who, together with liberals, helped to obtain Belgian independence.

> There is no question here respecting forms of government, for there is no reason why the Church should not approve of the chief power being held by one man or by more, provided only it be just, and that it tend to the common advantage. Wherefore, so long as justice be respected, the people are not hindered from choosing for themselves that form of government which suits best either their own disposition, or the institutions and customs of their ancestors (Leo XIII 1881).

He continued this line also in other encyclicals – like "Au Millieu. On Church and State in France" (Leo XIII 1892) – where he condemned, as a matter of fact, the idea of the separation of Church and state, but at the same time encouraged Catholics to participate in the political life of France and wrote that each of the forms of government that France has experienced in the nineteenth century (republic, monarchy, empire) was a positive good, "provided it leads straight to its end – that is to say, to the common good for which social authority is constituted" (Leo XIII 1892)

He also clarified the Church's attitude towards liberty, electing not to condemn modern attempts to strengthen the liberty of the people. He also attempted to show the limitations of this liberty:

> Man, indeed, is free to obey his reason, to seek moral good, and to strive unswervingly after his last end. Yet he is free also to turn aside to all other things; and, in pursuing the empty semblance of good, to disturb rightful order and to fall headlong into the destruction which he has voluntarily chosen (…). [T]here are many who imagine that the Church is hostile to human liberty. Having a false and absurd notion as to what liberty is, either they pervert the very idea of freedom, or they extend it at their pleasure to many things in respect of which man cannot rightly be regarded as free (Leo XIII 1888).

The encyclical "Rerum Novarum" (Leo XIII 1891) is certainly the best known among all 95 encyclicals written by Leo XIII and most relevant for the Christian democratic political project. It was published in 1891 and it was the first attempt to formulate the Catholic answer to the rise

of communism and socialism. Before becoming pope, Leo XIII had visited many European countries (O'Malley 2008, p.63) – this is why he was familiar with low standards of living of workers, as well as the growing popularity of communist ideas among them. That is one of the reasons why he decided to take a stance in the debate on the relationship between capital and labour which had been boosted more than twenty years earlier by Karl Marx. As Wolfram Kaiser (Kaiser 2007) has pointed out, contrary to Karl Marx, Leo XIII prioritized social action over political participation.

The main points of the papal message can be summed up as follows. Leo XIII defends private property, seeing it at as a legitimate fruit of labour. He also links it with the dignity of a person and views it as a natural right: "Man precedes the state, and possesses, prior to the formation of any state, the right of providing for the substance of his body" (Leo XIII 1891). The right to property was, however, not unlimited: both a just wage and proper working conditions for workers must be considered. He also encouraged the right of workers to organize themselves to fight for their rights. This encyclical set a precedent for other popes to address social and economic questions (Pius XI 1931; John XXIII 1961; John Paul 1991; Benedict XVI 2009).

Ten years later Leo XIII wrote an encyclical on Christian Democracy – "Graves De Communi Re" (1901), in which he took a stance in the debate on a question whether it is legitimate to use the term "Christian Democracy". His answer was positive, not with respect to any political party, but rather to – one could say – the political culture. Christian Democracy was for Leo XIII a positive project of European culture and not a political ideology, as he stated that it would "be a crime to distort this name of Christian Democracy through politics." This is why George Weigel called him a post-Constantinian[10] pope (along with John Paul II).

Despite papal ambivalence towards the organized political activity of Catholics, the culture wars of the late nineteenth century and the mobilization of the Church against socialists and liberals (started by Pius IX and later continued by Leo XIII) led to growing political activity among European Catholics. In the beginning, they were interested mostly in the defence of the Church against emerging or existing nation states (Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium) but

[10] Post-Constantinian in the sense of trying to influence the public sphere and society and not politics.

with time the growing presence of Catholics in the public and political spheres led to the emergence of Christian democracy as a political ideology.

One can say that the final moment of the shift is the political message of the Second Vatican Council: it encouraged Catholics to engage in politics, but at the same it forbade priests to run for parliament, it fully accepted the separation of church and state while calling for cooperation between both forms of social organization. In the last decades Pope Leo's stance was recalled by John Paul II in Centessumus Annus (John Paul 1991) and his follower Benedict XVI who consecrated the large part of his pontificate to the issues of the relationship between religion and politics – which can be seen both in his encyclicals and speeches. Particularly in his speech at the German Bundestag, Benedict addresses the issue of democracy saying that "for most of the matters that need to be regulated by law, the support of the majority can serve as a sufficient criterion." His interventions are seen as a polemic in the terms of John Rawls who excludes some forms of religious presence in the political sphere. Benedict argues for the reasonable component of the Christian message and stresses the need to complement public reason with a "listening heart" – which is for him of course the Christian message.

Although both John Paul II and Benedict XVI supported democracy, they often expressed their disappointment about the shape of current Western culture, especially when it comes to abortion, euthanasia, sexual ethics, and consumerism. The split between Catholic teaching and the secular modern ethic is often associated with the 1968 movement. John Paul II even coined a term – "the culture of death" – which was taken up his successor. This is one of the reasons why the Church distanced itself from Christian democratic political parties – as they often embraced some of the dominant attitudes which were condemned by the popes. This position has been mediated by Pope Francis who does not dismiss the teachings of his predecessors, but accentuates those parts of the social teaching of the Church which are largely accepted by Western societies: the fight against poverty and social inequalities and the need to address climate change.

The philosophy of personalism

Christian democracy is something more than just a set of positions taken by Christians in favour of democracy. It is a distinct political phenomenon – a complex one, but nevertheless distinguishable from other political doctrines. Although the links between Christian democracy (understood as political ideology) and papacy were complex, it remains one of the most important phenomena of both twentieth century European Christianity and European political history. As mentioned above, its history goes back well beyond the postwar period, but there is no doubt that "the heyday of Christian democracy" (to use Martin Conway's expression) was the period immediately after the Second World War.

Christian democratic political parties consisted of both the supporters of *ancien regime*, but also social Catholics close to the left. Gabriel Almond classified Christian democracy as a "third force" – between Marxism and capitalism, which confirms the view that Emmanuel Mounier and personalism were the intellectual parents of Christian democracy. A phrase by the French MRP leader Georges Bidault is often quoted to explain the policy of his party, which was to "govern in the center with the aid of the right to reach the goals of the left" cited in (Pombeni 2013b, p.324). Alcide de Gasperi also underlined its multidimensional character when he described Christian Democracy as 'a party of the centre which looks to the left'. This is, among others, a result of disgrace that was associated with "the right" after the Second World War especially in Italy and Germany.

The most powerful movement came from France with Jacques Maritain – his personalism was a reinterpretation of neothomism. Maritain joined this debate not out of nostalgia for pre-revolutionary times; he was rather a critic of the shortcomings of modernity and Marxism which he famously called 'a Christian heresy' (Pombeni 2013a). He embraced some elements of progressive movements – he supported, for example, the republicans in Spain. Therefore, personalism (and also Christian democracy) is not a clearly right-wing or conservative doctrine, although in general Maritain's work (as opposed to Mounier) was closer to the right side of the political spectrum.

The influence of Maritain on the ideology of Christian democracy was indirect. He was even an opponent of Christian democratic party politics. Nevertheless, his intellectual work bore very important political fruit: both as an inspiration for political doctrines of Christian democrats and as a basis for the Post-Second World War legal and political order in Europe. One of them

is the Universal (and European) Convention of Human Rights in which Maritain played a central role (Moyn 2015) The success of the philosophy of personalism seemed to be enormous As Jean-Paul Sartre wrote in 1948 to a Swiss writer, "you personalists have won (…) everybody in France now calls themselves a personalist". (Mueller 2011, p.140)

A shadow: Christian conservative secularism

The conservative response to European integration was overshadowed by the rise of more moderate Christian democracy. If it does exist today on the European level, it concentrates on two issues: the problems related to state sovereignty, and the issue of European identity – which is seen as being endangered, because of the twin ills of European secularization and Muslim immigration.

The most eminent thinker of Christian conservative secularism is perhaps the French Catholic philosopher, Rémi Brague (who used to hold the Romano Guardini Chair in Munich). His books on Europe, modernity, Christianity and Islam are widely discussed and published in many European countries (apart from France also Great Britain, Italy, Germany and Poland). Brague is very critical of modernity – he criticizes its lack of interest and knowledge about Christianity and transcendence He is also much more sceptical when it comes to human rights than Jacques Maritian: Brague claims that our interest in human rights is accompanied by the lack of interest of what does it mean to be a human. It is meaningful that it was Brague who was awarded the Ratzinger Prize in 2012, which is not surprising: his critique of modernity goes along similar lines to Benedict XVI (Brague 2014).

Indeed, Pope Benedict XVI is a central figure for many European conservatives. He has been very much interested in Europe and the European idea and has strongly criticized the developments of modern Western societies – especially when it comes to sexual norms, and the alleged lack of respect for life (abortion and euthanasia – the pillars of "the culture of death"). A very important moment for Christian conservatism was without doubts the "revolution" of 1968. Christian democrats were divided on it (i.e. on its positive and negative elements), conservatives view it as a moment where the problems of European culture started. Without doubts, the 1960s were a decade when a deep cultural transformation emerged (or accelerated)

and its effects can be still felt today. Prime among these has been the rapid secularization of Western European societies since then (McLeod 2007).

Another important component of conservative secularism is the view that Islam as a danger for Europe. While Christian democrats often see in Islam the possibility to renew continent's interest in religion and believe in the potential for Muslim moderation (following Christian democrats in their way of reconciling religion with political modernity), the conservatives view Islam as a religion which is incompatible with Western values – especially that of the separation between religious norms and politics. They often indicate a Muslim inclination to violence that – as many conservatives claim – does not have equivalent in Christianity or Judaism. The public identified such a stance in Pope Benedict in his speech in Regensburg in 2006, where the Pope recalled the opinion of the Byzantine emperor Manuel II Palaiologos on the correlation between Islam and violence. It is also often recalled that Islam does not have a clear distinction between religion and politics as it is the case in Christianity.[11] Again, Christian democrats would believe that even if the distinction does not exist in Islam (or is significantly weaker), it is possible to create one.

Although it is rather sceptical when it comes to transnational projects, Christian conservative secularism is a transnational phenomenon. In Poland, it is represented by authors like Ryszard Legutko (a leading conservative MEP and a professor) who often compares liberal democracies (and the EU) with totalitarianism (albeit without putting an equal sign between them). Pawel Lisicki, on the other hand (Liscki 2015) writes about dangers linked to (expected future) Muslim immigration and the need to revitalize Christianity in Europe.

Many American authors are also vitally interested in the fate of Europe (Weigel 2006). The influence of American intellectuals on European conservatives is strong. American right-wing Catholic think-tanks (Ethics and Public Policy Center), journals (*First Things*), as well as many American thinkers – George Weigel and his master Fr. Richard John Neuhaus being most prominent among them – are formative here. This group of intellectuals, although in general supportive of European integration, is convinced that the lack of clear reference to Christianity dooms the European project to failure:

[11] This is clearly true for post-Vatican II Catholicism, but much less in nineteenth century Catholicism, even if the distinction between the spiritual and the religious was stronger than in Islam also long before the twentieth century.

> Forty years ago, German constitutional scholar Ernst-Friedrich Boeckenfoerde argued that the modern liberal-democratic state faced a dilemma: It rested on the foundation of moral-cultural premises—social capital—that it could not itself generate. Put another way, it takes a certain kind of people, formed by a certain kind of culture to live certain virtues, to keep liberal democracy from decaying into new forms of authoritarianism—more pungently described in 2005 by a distinguished European intellectual, Joseph Ratzinger, as a "dictatorship of relativism." The Boeckenfoerde Dilemma is on full display in the European Union, which is in deep trouble because of a democracy deficit that is, at bottom, a subsidiarity-deficit caused by a God-deficit (Weigel 2016).

The myth of Christian Europe and the Christian foundations of European integration

All forms of secularism have their own myths which support their legitimacy - as stated before, political myths are narratives structuring the imaginary of political communities - they are not true or untrue. When it comes to Christian secularism (in its both forms), we may talk about two myths: that of the Christian foundation of Europe and that of the Christian foundations of European communities. Both are of course very different, but both are also strongly interconnected.

The myth of a Christian Europe started to play a role in the European imaginary in the nineteenth century, with Novalis as one of its most eminent proponents. He evoked an ideal centred on emotion and spirituality to replace the Enlightenment focus on rational knowledge and material goods. He uses the image of the European medieval period to evoke the idea of a golden era and to elicit a longing for a cosmopolitan, global, spiritual community (Kleingeld 2008). There is a strong disagreement on the achievements of medieval Europe. But virtually all historians agree that Europe as a cultural and political entity came into being in the medieval epoch. This is a point made by authors who do not subscribe to any form of Christian belief (Pomian 1990; Zięba 2011).

A special value for this form of secularism has for sure been in Carolingian Europe, as it was for the first time that Europe and Christianity were politically compatible. But another element of this story is the medieval system of education: schools and universities which were created by the church. To this factual basis one should add also a symbolic dimension. For many authors, Europe is hardly imaginable without church and crucifix as a part of the landscape or a cathedral standing in the very centre of a city or town.

The myth of medieval unity played without any doubts an important role in the founding phase of European communities. The fact that the most important founding figures were devoted Catholics – Robert Schuman, Alcide de Gasperi and Konrad Adenuaer (Schuman and de Gasperi being now candidates for beatification – is important for those who think that Christianity should have a special position in the European settlement between religion and politics. It was invoked countlessly by many politicians and spiritual leaders.

Without any doubt, both founding myths play an extremely important role in the legitimization of the European Union and Christian democratic secularism. It is not a coincidence that so many institutions, foundations and institutes are named after Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer and Alcide de Gasperi. The medieval or early-renaissance Christian figures are also present in the symbolic landscape of modern Europe – with Erasmus being the most prominent among them. Of course, not all these symbolic decisions are linked to their Christian faith – sometimes we can probably say that they are invoked despite their Christian faith, but in the Christian form of secularism their beliefs play a decisive role

Christian democratic secularism and European integration

Christian democratic secularism will play an important role in every single chapter of this dissertation. It is obviously present throughout the whole chapter devoted to the Christian democratic foundations, though paradoxically it did not dominate even this first period. This might be one of the reasons of the popularity of the "founding fathers", as they evoked by the European personalities of all sorts: from the leader of the liberals Guy Verhofstadt to Pope Francis. A more culturally dense form of secularism was chosen by Jacques Delors – who started

the first and last Christian democratic project in the history of European integration – "A Soul for Europe". Chapter 3 will be devoted to this dimension of European integration history.

Christian democratic secularism played a relatively minor role in the debates surrounding Turkey and Islam - as its position on Islam was not entirely clear - in the debate it was perhaps the Christian conservative secularism entangled with the laicist one come to forth. The Christian democratic form of secularism did not manage to dominate in the European constitutional moment, as the reference to Christian heritage did not make it neither to the preamble of the European constitutional treaty, nor the Lisbon Treaty. One can, however, argue that a sign of its limited success was the famous Art. 17 obliging European institutions to conduct regular dialogue with churches (but also humanist organizations).

2. Laicist secularism

Je veux l'État laïque, exclusivement laïque..., je veux ce que voulaient nos pères, l'Église chez elle et l'État chez lui.

Victor Hugo

La laïcité n'est pas un particularisme accidentel de l'histoire de France, elle constitue une conquête à préserver et à promouvoir, de portée universelle.

Henri Pena-Ruiz

Many scholars argue that there is no single French form of laicité. Jean Baubérot is perhaps the most prominent among them. He states that among seven French understandings of secularism only two are to a certain extent anti-religious. Nevertheless, it is without a question that anti-religious component in the French concept of laïcité plays a role as a part of what is considered to be a laicist secularism both in the European social imaginary. It has influenced the way in which the relationship between religion and politics is structured on the European level. As this

thesis does not explore the character of the French model, I will present this debate only in limited scale. I will rather try to outline here what is perceived as the laicist model of secularism.

The roots of laïcité are often located in the Enlightenment. However, today's knowledge about the Enlightenment permits us to say that its relationship with religions was rather complex and certainly not unanimously anti-religious (Sorkin 2008). The conflict between religions (Catholicism) and the supporters of "reason" started to be really heated in the times of the French Revolution and perhaps this is the moment when we can speak of the foundation of a serious anti-religious strand in the European politics. It was from the French Revolution that the anti-religious sentiments and ideas took the shape of a political and cultural project. This heritage can without any doubts be felt in the debates on the relationships between religion and politics in 1905 and before, as well as today.

French laïcité is often perceived as an exception, because it represents a specific form of Western secularism. As Olivier Roy puts it, "France may be the only democracy that has fought religion in order to impose a state-enforced secularism. In France, laïcité is an exacerbated, politicized, and ideological form of Western secularism (…)." Roy distinguishes the legal laïcité, a strict separation of church and state from the ideological one, which he defines as the interpretation of laïcité which claims to provide a value system common to all citizens by expelling religion into the private sphere. Roy states that the latter "defines national cohesion by asserting a purely political identity that confines to the private sphere any specific religious or cultural identities" (Roy 2007 p.xii-xiii).

Roy also explains why is laïcité a hot topic in France. He links this issue with the question of French identity:

> The first reason is probably that the debate touches on what is considered the heart of French identity, at a moment when that identity has been challenged from above by European integration. Consequently, we cling to a pseudoconsensus on republican and national values, which seem to be dissolving from below, in the banlieues and the schools. At bottom, Islam is not the cause of the crisis of the French model but the mirror in which society now sees itself. France is experiencing the crisis of its identity through Islam (Roy 2007, p.16).

One other point should also be mentioned. A very important moment in the distinction of the three forms of secularism in the process of European integration is their relationship to sovereignty. While Christian democratic secularism, following Maritain, is more than sceptical toward the very concept of sovereignty, laïcité is intrinsically linked with it. It is, in other words, rooted in the concept of sovereignty. The concept was transferred from theology (the idea of the sovereignty of God) to the doctrine of the state by the sixteenth century thinkers, Jean Bodin being the most eminent of them. Laicism and such a strong understanding of sovereignty are intrinsically linked, just as Christian democratic secularism takes a very critical stance towards state sovereignty.

1905: The structuring event

Paradoxically, the legal outcome of the 1905 law was not fundamental for the ideal-typical understanding of laïcité, as the final outcome is rather liberal. But the circumstances that led to its adoption are very telling and allow us to identify a strong non-liberal component in laicist secularism. Starting from the French Revolution, the tension between French republicans and the Catholic Church was very strong. It was a part of the story of French nation-building, as it was often the case in many Western European states. The fight between both continued with breaks throughout the nineteenth century and culminated in the law adopted in 1905.

As Jean Baubérot describes it, the parliamentary struggle over the laws concerning the relationship between religious denominations and the French state was a fight between three camps: anti-Catholic politicians (often allies of the Masonic Lodges) who aimed at eradicating Catholicism from the French culture. These attempts were obviously opposed by the Catholic Church and religious citizens. Anti-religious groups supported the idea that the freedom of conscience should not include the freedom of religion (as religion in their opinion restricted human development). This was not acceptable for the Catholic Church and believers. The conflict was exacerbated after the Dreyfuss affair, when the Catholic Church and the Catholic newspaper *La Croix* took part in an anti-Semitic campaign against a French Jew. According to

Louis Begley, it influenced the anti-Catholic political atmosphere that led to the separation law (Begley 2009).

Interestingly, there is an ongoing discussion with respect to the meaning of laïcité in France. Baubérot describes as many as seven sorts of French laïcité (he understands this term in a similar way the term secularism is understood here – in a rather broad and non-deterministic way), which in most cases came into being during the debates on the 1905 law. We can thus distinguish: **anti-religious** laïcité (where the state supports atheism); **Gallican** laïcité (where the state controls religion); **separatist** laïcité (separation with guaranteed individual religious freedom); **collective–separatist** laïcité (with both individual and collective guaranteed religious freedom**), open laïcité** (more open towards religions), **identitarian laïcité** (mostly directed against Muslims), **concordate laïcité** (in Alsace–Moselle). However, only two forms of laïcité mentioned by Baubérot are present in the European social imaginary: the anti-religious one and the separatist (republican) one. I will present them below.

Laicist republican secularism

Republicanism in the French context means something rather different than in other parts of the Western world. It was perceived as a political project, an alternative to the monarchy and the ancien régime. Today it is defined rather against "Anglo–American" multiculturalism and communitarianism, which promotes special rights for ethnic and religious groups while French republicanism grants all citizens similar rights. It was the republican, separatist laïcité that won in 1905. Although there were other political sides of the political spectrum that tried very hard to push for another solution (either a stronger, anti-religious option or no separation at all).

This sort of laicist secularism had in 1905 two champions: Aristide Briand and Ferdinand Buisson. Both wanted to assure freedom of belief as a part of broader freedom of conscience, although there were also differences in their proposals. Buisson was in favour of restrictions of the freedom of religious practices for religious congregations, while Briand was against such restrictions. In the end, it was the second option that has won in 1905. This is why,

according to Jean Baubérot, the 1905 law was in reality not far from the intellectual tradition of liberalism, and it is described as derived from the Lockean tradition. One should, however, remember that besides securing individual and collective freedom of religion, it forbade the state to finance religious schools or any other religious activities. Even if one considers French laicist republican secularism as liberal (as, for example, Christian Joppke does it in his book on the state), it should in my opinion be distinguished, because of the political culture it promotes – rather suspicious of religious insights – which distinguishes it from the Anglo–Saxon model.

Mark Lilla brilliantly describes the complexity of French model of republicanism and its complex relationship with liberalism:

> To be republican came to mean that one defended the timeless principles expressed in the French Revolution, which were valid for all nations, but that one prized France above others as the supreme embodiment of those principles. Republicanism's relation to liberalism is a matter of much dispute today. Some have pointed out the difficulty of reconciling certain of its features notably the hostility to individualism, its cultural uniformity, and political centralization with classic theories of liberalism (…). Others, however, have suggested that republicanism has assisted France's liberalization by giving the French a modern sense of national identity that is deeper than their partisan differences. French republican instincts were even on display in the early post-war decades: although the intellectuals were extremely hostile to the liberal institutions of the Fifth Republic, they never doubted the legitimacy of the French nation (…). (Lilla 1994).

Table 3. The Forms of Laicism

	Anti-religious secularism	**Republican secularism**
Promoted worldview	Atheism	Republicanism

Values	Freedom of conscience, Reason	Equality
Against	Religion as such	State support for religion
Views on religion	An obstacle to the full development of a human person, and in consequence – a state	Possible to danger to the value of equality of the citizens
Sources	Voltaire and anti-religious strand of Enlightenment	Locke, liberalism
Civil religion	Atheism as a civil religion	Republicanism
Views on the politics of multiculturalism	Negative	Sceptical
Instances: institutions and law	French law on secularity and conspicuous religious symbols in schools	1905 law
On the European level	The European Parliament Platform for Secularism in Politics	

Shadow: Anti-religious secularism

Anti-religious laïcité is above all an anti-Catholic (and very often anti-Christian) form of laïcité. Nevertheless, I did not include "Catholicism" as a part of the label, as most of the authors I am presenting here did not subscribe to any other religion and their views on religion were sceptical in general. This is true for sure for François-Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire.

Voltaire, a deist, was a strong antagonist of Christianity:

> [Christianity] is assuredly the most ridiculous, the most absurd and the most bloody religion which has ever infected this world. Your Majesty will do the human race an eternal service by extirpating this infamous superstition, I do not say among the rabble, who are not worthy of being enlightened and who are apt for every yoke; I say among honest people, among men who think, among those who wish to think. [In a letter to Frederick II, King of Prussia, dated 5 January 1767]

Although Voltaire's work and life contain also elements which put different light at his views on religion, it is rather uncontested that he thought of Christianity (but also Judaism and Islam) as clearly bad for human beings. He is also the Enlightenment figure symbolizing its negative views on religion (although – as stated before – the Enlightenment itself was much more complex when it comes to its relationship with religions).

It is not a coincidence that another anti-Christian thinker, Friedrich Nietzsche, dedicated his "Human, All Too Human" to Voltaire, as certain elements of Volterian anti-religious sentiments can be found in Nietzsche's work. Nietzsche was perhaps the most prominent critic of Christianity of all times. In the above-mentioned book, he expresses his disgust over the way noble values in Roman Society were corrupted by the rise of Christianity, which to him is a religion for weak and unhealthy people, whose general historical effect has been to undermine the healthy qualities of the more noble cultures.

We should also mention here Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud[12] – the other two representatives of the school of suspicion, as Paul Ricoeur famously called them. All of them thought that religion was invented to support a particular social and cultural order. The former is important, because of his continuous influence on the European left and – what is important from the Eastern European perspective – on the state ideology of these countries during the communist period. Here we touch on an important point: although there were politicians in France in the beginning of the twentieth century who claimed that the state should be atheist and that freedom of conscience does not include the freedom of religion, they never succeeded in making out of atheism a state ideology.

[12] Freud and Freudianism is important with respect to the 1968 movement and its aftermath. In this respect, it also largely influenced the European project and its form of secularism.

The thought of the above-mentioned thinkers clearly influenced the political proponents of the anti-religious version of laicism. According to Jean Baubérot, the most prominent proponent of it was Maurice Allard for whom it was crucial to continue the work of "dechristianization of France" started by the Convention of 1792–1795. This work was in his eyes a step towards annihilation of religion, seen as an obstacle to progress. Legally, the proponents of the anti-religious laicism proposed not to include freedom of religion in freedom of conscience, arguing that religion is an oppression to the conscience. The objective of Maurice Allard and his supporters was to create a state where atheism was a state ideology – this was acknowledged by a Freemason journal "La Raison" in which he was labelled as a fighter of the "etat athée" as opposed to Jaures and Aristide Briand who fought for "etat laique" (Baubérot 2015, p.28).

Laicist secularism and European integration

The fact that the 1905 law is relatively liberal in its nature does not change the fact that laicist secularism – as an ideal type and a part of European social imaginary – is regarded as strict and suspicious towards religion. And what is also significant is not only the very law, but also French political culture and its influence on that of Europe. It is not surprising then that the most significant French politicians were against mentioning Christianity in the preamble of the European Constitution (Sarkozy, Chirac, Giscard d'Estaing), whereas many liberals coming from other national or intellectual tradition were in favour of such a solution. Apart from France, laicist secularism is particularly present in Belgium, with some remarkable influence in the Netherlands, Spain and partially also Italy. It is also present as an intellectual option in virtually all the Member States of the EU. It is also universally accepted that laicism is more often present in countries that used to be Catholic. This is not a surprise as they often tend to mirror Catholic theology; the humanist spirituality present in Belgium seems to be a good example of such an attitude.

Laicist secularism was at its height perhaps during the European constitutional moment when it managed to block any reference to Christianity and any other concrete religion (allowing only for the "religious inspiration"), but it did not manage to dominate European politics and

discourse, although it is very much present there (for details see Chapter 4). On the European level, laicist secularism is present very strongly in the European Parliament Platform for Secularism in Politics – an informal group led by Sophie van I'n'tveld, a liberal Member of the European Parliament who searches for instances of religious influence on European politics and reports them to the president of the European Parliament and other European institutions.

3. Liberal Secularism

It's your view?
- I am not as mad to have any views These Days or not to have them (…)
-Do you believe so?
- I do believe so or I do not

Witold Gombrowicz "Trans-Atlantyk"

While the laicist tradition was shaped by the French context, the liberal tradition is rather a product of the Anglo–American world. This is important, although of course the forms of secularism "live their life" apart from the traditions which constructed them, they are still genetically connected to the events that shaped them.

One of these events was the English Revolution (1640–1660) which was a fundamental experience for Thomas Hobbes and his writings on church and state. Although Hobbes was an important thinker for the liberal tradition and some of his insights were taken over by, for instance, John Locke, Hobbes was himself not a liberal. His main concern was to provide stability to the political system and security to citizens. As religion played a hugely important role in the English Revolution, Hobbes was in many respects interested in the question of the relationship between religion and politics and his answer was similar to the Gallican or Erastian forms of secularism. Religion in his opinion was supposed to be subordinated to the sovereign. As an interpreter of Hobbes Jeffrey Collins puts it:

> The migrations in Thomas Hobbes' political allegiance away from the royalist cause and towards the triumphant revolutionary regimes, were driven by an obsessive fear of the independent power of the Christian church, and by a sympathy with one of the central political goals of English revolution: securing an Erastian church settlement under the aegis of the modernizing state (Collins 2005, p.5).

Hobbes supported the idea of freedom of conscience, but not freedom of expression. His thought was then taken up by one of the pioneers of liberalism – John Locke. Locke in his "Letter Concerning Toleration" develops his own conception of the relationship between church and state. He claimed that the state should not use force to convince people of the true religion and that religious organizations are voluntary and have no right to use coercive power over their own members or those outside their group. Locke argues that the Bible gives no indication that violence is a proper way to save people.

The initial ambition of liberal agnostic secularism, in contrast to the two presented above forms of secularism, was to find a modus vivendi for people of different faiths. While both Christian democratic and laicist secularisms keep religion in the field of the political (in different roles, of course), agnostic secularism is most cautious when it comes to the link between religion and politics. It is strongly linked to a concrete political philosophy, but people and institutions which represent this point of view often do not use it in a more comprehensive way (as is the case with the two previous forms of secularism). It is often used as a kind of default option, an "unthought", a natural direction in which things go.

Like in the case of the other forms of secularism, it should also be noted here that those who support it do not have to be agnostic themselves – sometimes they might be believers or atheists. The private beliefs can – but do not have to be – identical with the "institutional belief".

The myth of religious violence

Religion is a source of violence – this is one of the most important components of the liberal secularism. It is way beyond the scope of my research to analyse this assumption in depth, but it is fundamental to note that this point of view on religion is very important for the agnostic

form of secularism. I will limit myself to note that there is a deep disagreement among scholars whether this indeed is the case. Some, such as Mark Juergensmeyer, tend to argue that "religion and violence seem to be connected virtually everywhere" (Juergensmeyer 2001 p.xi). Others like William Cavanaugh vigorously oppose this thesis, saying that religion is not so much different from secular ideologies which may but do not have to be used as inspiration for violence (Cavanaugh 2009).

Cavanaugh defines "the myth of religious violence" as the "idea that religion is a transhistorical and transcultural feature of human life, essentially distinct from "secular" features such as politics and economics, which has a peculiarly dangerous inclination to promote violence. Religion must therefore be tamed by restricting its access to public power. The secular nation state then appears as natural, corresponding to a universal and timeless truth about the inherent dangers of religion" (Cavanaugh 2009, p.3). The story of these wars serves as a kind of a creation myth for the modern state. According to this myth, "Protestants and Catholics began killing each other over doctrinal differences. The modern state was born as a peace maker in this process, relegating religion to private life and uniting people of various religions around loyalty to the sovereign state" (Cavanaugh 2009, p.10).

The myth of religious violence is present in both laicist and liberal forms of secularism, but its role in both forms of secularism differ. It is a formative element of liberal secularism – as it was born out of the English religious wars – its aim not being to fight religion as such, but rather to find a way for people of different faiths to live together. For laicism violence is not central – it sees itself more often as an alternative to religion – in both forms.

Agnostic Liberal Secularism

So I took thought, and invented what I conceived to be the appropriate title of "agnostic". It came into my head as suggestively antithetic to the "gnostic" of Church

history, who professed to know so much about the very things of which I was ignorant. ... To my great satisfaction the term took.

Thomas Henry Huxley

He can neither believe, nor be comfortable in his unbelief; and he is too honest and courageous not to try to do one or the other.

Nathaniel Hawthorne on Herman Melville

John Rawls in "Political Liberalism" argues that citizens' shared conception of political authority, not their "comprehensive doctrines" (ideologies or religions) should guide their public deliberations and decision-making, for example when considering constitutional issues. Public reasons should take priority over reasons reflecting citizens' comprehensive doctrines. It is worth noting that his attitude towards religion (as one of the "comprehensive doctrines") has changed from a relative restrictiveness in the "Theory of Justice" to a relative openness in the "Political Liberalism". This relative openness of Rawls distinguishes him from authors such as Richard Rorty who does not accept religion in the political sphere and sees it as a "conversation-stopper". Rawls thinks that citizens may accept a shared conception of political authority based on different reasons and develops an answer to the proliferation of religious and nonreligious worldviews in contemporary societies. This response acknowledges the pluralism and force of these worldviews, while nonetheless insisting that political authority can be justified by citizens' consent.

One of the interesting features of Rawlsian public reason is – as Cecile Laborde puts it – "the indeterminacy of public reason" with respect to religion. This is one of its most important traits: it is indeterminate about the public role of religion. In other words, different sorts of arrangements may take place in the liberal framework: from "modest establishment" to "modest separation":

> Political liberalism, as a theory of justice, is inconclusive about the public place of religion. Inconclusiveness refers to the fact that citizens exercising public reason may hold a range of competing reasonable views, none of which is decisive in the matter at hand. Liberal public reason can accommodate a range of reasonable views about the public place of religion (…). (Laborde 2013, pp.67-86).

There are, however, some elements of the political order that, according to Rawls, have to be established in a just society:

> So what PLR [The Political Liberal Argument about the Public Place of Religion] can establish, at most, is an agreement on constitutional essentials, which will be limited to generalities about what constitutes an 'adequate' protection of religious freedom (the state should not forbid adherence to certain religions, the state should not promote the truth of one religion, and so forth) (…). The political values of freedom of conscience, equality between citizens, and so forth, can be appealed to in support of either arrangement. This means that, even if the public place of religion is considered as a matter of justice (say, as an interpretation of the nature and scope of basic religious freedoms), the theory does not generate one rightful solution (Laborde 2013, pp.67-86).

Rawls writes in the introduction to "Political Liberalism" that one of the most important inspirations for his work was Judith Shklar's thought and gives an example of her essay "Liberalism of Fear" (Shklar & Hoffmann 1998). Her concept of a "liberalism of fear" identifies the basic political objective as securing peace against cruelty, indicating that the origins of liberalism lie in the wars of religion. She suggests a deep affinity between the liberalism of fear with scepticism and humanism of Montaigne or John Madison, for example when the latter writes in "The Federalist" that the best solution to sectarian conflicts is freedom:

> This is a liberalism that was born out of the cruelties of the religious civil wars, which forever rendered the claims of Christian charity a rebuke to all religious institutions and

> parties. If the faith was to survive at all, it would do so privately. The alternative then set, and still before us, is not one between classical virtue and liberal self indulgence, but between cruel military and moral repression and violence, and a self-restraining tolerance that fences in the powerful to protect the freedom and safety of every citizen, old or young, male or female, black or white (Shklar 1998 p.5).

To describe her "liberalism of fear", Shklar uses the Emersonian category of a party of memory as opposed to a party of hope – although for Emerson these were the conservatives who belonged to the first group, while liberals who look into the future, were on the side of the party of hope. Shklar, however, argues that the memory of past cruelties is deciding for the form of liberalism she proposes. It is not a surprise that many scholars after the Second World War shared her view. John Rawls was perhaps the most prominent among them.

Shadow: Republican Liberal Secularism

Liberalism is challenged not only by the conservatives or leftists, but also from a much closer body of thought: republicanism. There is a dispute between political theorists over whether republicanism and liberalism are parts of the same doctrine or whether they are distinct. It is clear that for both the issue of individual freedom seems to play a crucial role in the construction of the political order and this is what makes them very close to each other. There are, however, some significant differences, which make republican secularism distinguishable from the agnostic version. A classic representative of the republican liberal tradition would certainly be Alexis de Tocqueville, but liberal republicanism has its roots in the ancient tradition, afterwards reinterpreted by Italian political writers like Machiavelli.

First of all, republican liberalism has a slightly different idea of freedom. It is less concerned with the lack of interference (negative freedom), but is more about the possibility of participation in public life. Freedom is thus for republicans less private, more public. This translates republicanism into a certain vision of republican secularism: the public presence of religion seems to be more understandable in the light of this tradition. Participation in public life – vita activa – is linked with the issue of virtues, as rights are connected with obligations.

Secondly, the memory is for republicans seen as an important source of inspiration, not a source of problems (the difference with Shklarian liberalism is striking). Although they are not at all optimistic when it comes to the human nature, republicans are deeply interested in history and try to find within it sources of inspiration.

Thirdly, religion is seen in this tradition as a potential ally of the political order, not only in a sense of stabilizing the system, but in a deeper sense: namely, as its existential guarantee. For Tocqueville, religion was the main force that helped fight "licentia", wilfulness. But at the same it should not mean the direct engagement of churches in politics:

> I am so much alive to the almost inevitable dangers which beset religious belief whenever the clergy take part in public affairs, and I am so convinced that Christianity must be maintained at any cost in the bosom of modern democracies, that I had rather shut up the priesthood within the sanctuary than allow them to step beyond it (Tocqueville 2003).

It is not my aim here to draw a line between liberalism and republicanism and judge how these traditions are similar or different. It is my aim to show that within broad name of liberalism one can see two distinct ways of framing religion and politics - seeing religion rather as a potential threat to freedom and seeing religion as guarantee for freedom. This might be the deepest difference between the two forms of secularism. Both options are variations of the liberal secularism.

A short excursion: Obama vs. Kennedy

Republicanism, also due to its elusive character, did not find a way to European politics and to the conceptualization of religion and politics on the European level. If one wants to see the difference between two options in real political life, one could follow Michael Sandel in comparing John F. Kennedy and Barack Obama. Both heroes of the American Democratic Party are seen as liberals, but in fact they had different concepts of secularism. John F. Kennedy in a speech to a gathering of Protestant ministers in September 1960 clearly stated that religion

would not play any role in his presidency (of course, also because of the controversies regarding his Catholicism). He said that he believed that religion should remain a private affair and that the decisions concerning moral issues like birth control, divorce or gambling should be taken in accordance with his conscience and national interest and without "religious pressures or dictates" (Sandel 2010). It is rather a classic liberal strategy of the depoliticization of religion, an agnostic secularism in my typology.

Sandel juxtaposes the speech by Kennedy with the speech by Barack Obama given in June 2006. Obama then made a case for the relevance of religion to political argument. He argued that addressing most fundamental American problems including racism, poverty and unemployment should require "changes in hearts and change in minds". Thus, he distanced himself from the classical liberal reliance on reason: "Secularists are wrong when they ask believers to leave their religion at the door before entering into the public square" (Sandel 2010, p.246). Michael Sandel praises Obama for his faith-friendly political instinct. He thinks that:

> The attempt to detach arguments about justice and rights from arguments about the good life is mistaken for two reasons: First, it is not always possible to decide questions of justice and rights without resolving substantive moral questions; and second, even where it's possible, it may not be desirable (Sandel 2010, p.251).

Are Kennedy and Obama on the same or on the other side of political spectrum regarding the form of secularism they espouse? When it comes to the fundamental freedom – the need for autonomy – they both support the classic liberal solutions. On the public role of religion, however, they are very different. This is why I think there is a need to distinguish both liberal positions: one that seeks to depoliticize religion and the other which accommodates it as a part of human existence.

Agnostic liberal secularism and European integration

As it was written before, it is the argument of this thesis is that **agnostic secularism has dominated the process of European integration from the very beginning.** The following

chapter will explain the victory of the agnostic form of secularism already in the first phase of European integration at the time when it competed with the Christian democratic variation of secularism. The subsequent chapter on Delors' presidency will unveil the story of the president of the European Commission and his willingness to open up the project to spiritual purposes, but ending up in a more agnostic project than ever before. The agnosticism is, therefore, a part of the DNA of European integration.

The chapter on Turkey and Islam will reveal that, although it witnessed a revival of Christian conservative and laicist secularisms, the attitude of the EU towards Turkey and Islam has been agnostic equilibrium more than any other available option. The constitutional dispute also led to the same equilibrium, as the preamble excluded Christianity, though the treaty contained the "churches-friendly" art. 17.

The Foundations of European Communities: Christian democratic Input and Agnostic Output

European integration had originally been a Christian democratic project. Not a social democratic one, not a liberal one, not a conservative one. The European Communities were created almost exclusively by Christian democratic politicians who mobilized transnational networks of Christian democracy created before World War II. It has also been a Christian democratic project because it echoed ideas close to the ideology of Christian democracy: mistrust towards a centralized state and the idea of state sovereignty, scepticism towards both central planning (favoured by socialists) and an entirely free market (preferred by liberals). And – perhaps most importantly – Europe was seen by Christian democrats as a single cultural entity that exists as a legacy of medieval Christendom. Such a Christian culture was naturally opposed to the Soviet Union (the position of socialists–not to mention communists–was much more ambivalent). One can see clearly the traces of these ideas also in today's European Union, for example in the idea of a single market regulated by transnational institutions, in the developed regional policy, or the idea of subsidiarity. However, the European project ceased to be solely a Christian democratic endeavour already in the 1960s when, initially very sceptical, socialists[13] and liberals joined it.

In the conceptual chapter I described the ideational background of Christian democratic secularism. In this chapter I will concentrate on the relationship between Christian democratic politics and the forms of secularism present in the European Union. It is important to bear in mind this distinction, as Christian democratic parties do not have always to endorse a Christian democratic form of secularism. In fact, many of them have chosen to support the forms of secularism closer to its agnostic ideal type. It is my argument in this chapter that Christian

[13] With the significant exception of Belgian Prime Minister Paul Henri Spaak, who was a socialist.

democracy on the European level was actually closer to the agnostic form of secularism, unlike most European countries, where these parties were in the government (especially Germany and Italy). Yet, the fact that the agnostic secularism prevailed in the end does not mean that the Christian democratic option has not been on the table throughout the whole period.

Christian democracy is rather an under researched phenomenon in the political history of the twentieth century Europe, if one compares it with what has been written on social democracy, and the left more generally. It is a shortcoming of political science because Christian democracy constituted a fundament of the political order of post-war Europe and has been one of the most important political forces in Germany, Italy, Austria, as well as Spain, Belgium and – for a short period of time – also France. Christian democratic political parties were constitutive elements of political systems, being able to appeal to voters of different social classes and sometimes also different religious views. Christian democracy shaped post-war Western Europe perhaps stronger than any other political ideology.[14]

The knowledge gap about the role of Christian democratic politics after World War II has largely been bridged by the scholarship of political scientists: Stathis Kalyvas (1996) and Kees van Kersbergen (1995). This last author gave impulse to the study of the relationship between Christian democracy and the welfare state and argued that it developed a distinct welfare state regime – "social capitalism" – combining a specific vision of market, state and family. Kalyvas, on the other hand, famously described the party formation as "the unplanned, unintended, and unwanted by-product of the strategic steps taken by the Catholic church in response to liberal anticlerical attacks" (Kalyvas 1996, p.6).

More recent accounts of Christian democracy concentrate on its intellectual history (Carlo Invernizzi Accetti, Jan-Werner Mueller, Samuel Moyn). Samuel Moyn looks at the role of Christian democratic movement in the ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Moyn 2015). Moyn argues that Christian democracy overshadowed the secular heritage

[14] As Jan Werner Mueller argues, Christian democracy was crucial not only with regard to the European project: "If one had to choose one movement in ideas and party politics that has created. the political world in which Europeans still live today, the answer has to be Christian Democracy. This may come as a surprise to all those who see Europe as the blessed (or, as the case may be, benighted) island of secularism in our world. Clearly, it helped that Christian Democracy could present itself simultaneously as the party of anti-Communism par excellence and as a movement that retained connections to a real religion – as opposed to the fake political religion of fascism." (Mueller 2011).

of human rights linked mainly with the French revolution and thus changed the way human rights are understood (Moyn 2015). Jan-Werner Mueller argues that Christian democracy constitutes a distinct political philosophy rooted in nineteenth century attempts to reconcile Christianity and democracy (Mueller 2013).

German historian Wolfram Kaiser (Kaiser 2007) looks at the role of transnational Christian democratic networks in the creation of European communities. He traces back the origins of Christian democracy to the political Catholicism of nineteenth century – when Catholics decided to enter the new stages of European politics which has becoming more and more democratic – and show continuities and discontinuities between the period before World War II and after that period.

The emergence of Christian democracy: Anti-modernism and social Catholicism

The origins of Christian democracy lie in the political Catholicism of the nineteenth century. The century witnessed the rise of centralized nation states which to a large degree were trying to restrict the influence of the Catholic church on them. This was true for most of the European states: Otto von Bismarck with the support of liberals in Germany started the Kulturkampf[15] against the Catholic Church seeing a huge danger for the unity of Germany in the loyalty of its citizens to the Pope Pius IX. In Italy, the Church was seen as an obstacle to the unification process, which resulted in a very long conflict between the Vatican and the Italian state (the Pope forbade Catholics to participate in Italian political life, which challenged the legitimacy of the new state whose population was almost entirely Catholic). France also experienced a huge conflict between the secular elites and the Catholic Church mostly over the Church's role in the system of education.

[15] Kulturkampf lasted in Germany from 1871 to 1876 and was a campaign directed against the Catholic Church and its influence in German society. Among the most important measures of Kulturkampf were laws banning some Catholic orders, limiting the Church's influence on education, and facilitating leaving the Church.

Pius IX did not want only to watch the events which were undermining the power of the Church and its influence on the European societies. His pontificate was, therefore, an attempt to centralize – and transnationalize – Catholicism in Europe, a basis of the alliances against the modern political order with the support of conservative Catholic aristocrats (also opposed to civil marriages and secular schooling). This anti-modern tendency was in stark contrast to the framing of the Catholic role in the political sphere promulgated by Leo XIII who in many cases – contrary to Pius IX – successfully reconciled Catholicism with modern politics.[16]

Pope Leo XIII with his advisors created a set of principles that founded the body of doctrine called Catholic Social Teaching, largely based on neothomism. This was an answer, firstly, to the industrial revolution and the shocking conditions in which workers lived. Secondly, it was an answer to Marxism which was radically critical of religion, seeing in it an "opium of the people" and a force leaving individuals unable to see the reasons of their bad economic situation. This problem was addressed at length in his encyclical "Rerum Novarum. Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor". It discusses the mutual relationship between capital and labour, stresses the dignity of workers, supports trade unions, rejects socialism and affirms private property. Leo's message brought significant results: it started a new movement of social Catholicism which was of huge importance for many decades to come.[17]

The formation of the political ideology of Christian democracy was a mixture of political Catholicism with its critique of modernity and Catholic social teaching with its concern for the social justice. Thanks to the transnationalization and Europeanization of Catholicism in the nineteenth century, Christian democracy was a European phenomenon. The traces of both strands can be found in the post-war Catholic/Christian parties. Liberal attacks mobilized

[16] On the very day of his election to the papacy, Leo XIII – the successor of Pius IX–wrote to Otto von Bismarck expressing his willingness to end the battle between the Catholic Church and Germany. His efforts succeeded and the German state swiftly adopted the so-called Mitigation Laws ameliorating the situation of Catholics in Germany. This attitude was at heart of Leo XIII's pontificate. He searched for compromise with the modern forms government and, in most cases, succeeded.

[17] It gave an impulse for French Catholics to start Semaines Sociales to debate social reform, Katholikentage in Germany and in other parts of Europe. Leo XIII endorsed emerging Catholic workers' associations and trade unions, even at the expense of Catholic political engagement in representative state institutions. The Volksverein in Mönchengladbach founded in 1890, which had 800,000 members on the eve of World War I, offered German social-reformist and democratic left-wing Catholicism an 'institutional home'. Social Catholicism deeply influenced the activity of Catholics in European politics in the twentieth century in many countries and places and became an important part of French, German, Belgian, Italian, and Dutch political life.

Catholics and fostered Catholic political identity which lies at the basis of the party formation. As Kalyvas (1996) and Kaiser (2007) argue, party formation was actually not planned by the hierarchy of the Church butwas in many respects an unintended result of the campaign started by the anti-clerical forces. Thomas Nipperday goes a step further when he writes that it was the Catholic party-formation that created a division between the Catholic politics and the Catholic hierarchy. Wherever strong Catholic parties emerged, the Church could no longer influence the whole political spectrum, as it was perceived that Catholic parties would represent the Church's interests (Nipperdey 1988). The emergence of Catholic parties thus paradoxically fostered a separation between Church and state in Western Europe.

The post-war velvet revolution and hegemony by default

Catholic politics after 1945, although rooted in the political and social Catholicism outlined above, was in many respects different than the one before the war. It broke with nationalism and redefined the tradition of conservatism, sometimes even abandoned it completely. Most Christian political parties moved to the left and occupied the centre of the political scene. It was a natural move, as a large part of the Catholic radical right became disgraced after the positions taken by numerous right-wing Catholics vis-à-vis fascism, Nazism, and other authoritarian regimes. As Paolo Pombeni pointed out, American political scientist Gabriel Almond was mistaken when he wrote in his article that "A De Gasperi must be prepared to become a Dolfuss or a Salazar if Church interests are threatened, or if they are considered to be threatened" (Almond 1948, cited in (Pombeni 2013a, p.313). In fact, De Gasperi refused the Pope when the latter encouraged him to build an alliance with a fascist party in the municipal election in Rome. This rejection of fascism was true for most of the Western European Christian democratic political parties.

Mark Lilla aptly describes post-war European politics as the other "velvet revolution":

> Today, it is clear that Western Europe underwent its own "velvet revolution" in the half-century following World War II, and that its less dramatic entry into the liberal age was the historical precondition of the more spectacular revolutions we recently witnessed in

> Eastern Europe. But while there is currently much debate over the collapse of state socialism, and much finger-pointing over our inability to "predict" it, the liberalization of Western Europe in the postwar epoch has been met with an almost embarrassed silence by intellectuals and politicians alike. Not only was this a velvet revolution; it is, even today, an unclaimed revolution and we need to understand why (Lilla 1994, p.131).

Although, it's not the subject of Lilla's article, Christian democracy is a case in point of such a "velvet revolution". The pre-war Catholic parties were much more sceptical of the liberal democratic institutions and it is not a coincidence that the Church often supported the authoritarian regimes. Even after the war, it was the case in Portugal and Spain. Christian politicians, however, did change their line and the shift is visible in De Gasperi's *Democrazia Cristiana*, Schuman's *Mouvement Republicain Populaire*, and Adenauer's *Christlich-Demokratische Union*. All these parties accepted the liberal-democratic creeds much more willingly than their pre-war predecessors, although some criticisms obviously remained.

The issue of institutional continuity and ideational dis-continuity is central to Wolfram Kaiser's book. Kaiser suggests that the ability to reconcile conservatism with liberal democracy was crucial to the phenomenon of Christian Democracy:

> Arguably, it was precisely the attempted reconciliation of tradition and innovation which allowed the Christian democrats to be so successful in elections after 1945: the promise of continuity of many core Catholic values, beliefs and preferences combined with new economic opportunities, more effective, but relatively non-intrusive government and new welfare state policies in a pacified western Europe (…). In this way, they contributed to the societal stability of postwar western Europe before the consensus about priority for national and European reconstruction eroded, giving way to a more open climate of much greater public contestation of the past from the 1960s (Kaiser 2007, pp.168-169).

Although scholars like Martin Conway claim that there was a high level of continuity between pre-war and post-war periods (i.e. there was high level of affinity with authoritarianism and distrust towards democracy), there is a growing consensus that the change was significant. This however has often been overlooked because, as Jan-Werner Mueller puts it:

> Christian democracy often did speak the language of tradition. This is the main reason why in retrospect it is easy to miss the momentous turn in European history – and also in the history of the Catholic Church more generally – that mid-twentieth-century Christian Democracy constituted (…). The main change, however, was that Christian Democrats in post-war Europe were no longer in the business of grudgingly and resentfully accommodating the modern world – Christian Democrats really became democrats (Mueller 2011, pp.132-134).

Kaiser has convincingly demonstrated that the Catholic networks created before World War II facilitated transnational cooperation after the war. It did not have decisive political impact for many decades, until the end of World War II, when political and social Catholicism became "hegemon by default", as Wolfram Kaiser called it. The transnational networks created a bond between people who after the war became leading political figures in France, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, and Italy. These networks, as Kaiser argues, were one of the most important factors explaining the emergence of European communities:

> [T]ransnational Christian democracy was hegemonic in western Europe in the first twenty years after World War II. It dominated the formation of the ECSC/EEC core Europe with fundamental long-term repercussions for the present-day EU (…). Transnational Christian democracy was thus an only partly formalised and institutionalised web of multilateral and bilateral contacts and communication. This network fulfilled multiple functions, not least creating political trust, deliberating policy, especially on European integration, marginalising internal dissent within the national parties, socialising new members into an existing

> policy consensus, coordinating governmental policy-making and facilitating parliamentary ratification of integration treaties (Kaiser 2007, p.23).

The electoral victories of Christian democrats were a result of the support of two social groups: the growing middle class and farmers. The support of these classes assured the hegemony of Christian democracy in Western Europe for the two decades after World War II and also shaped the character of the emerging European project – "a farmer–bourgeois alliance", as Martin Conway put it (Conway 2003, pp.54-56). At that time, it started to be clear that the dominant line of the Christian democratic political ideology will be less leftist (anti-bourgeois) and more liberal–conservative: less Mounier, more Adenauer. It also defined the character of the European project:

> Whereas their initial cooperation [Catholic social organization - MM] after 1918 was controlled by left Catholics with a primary interest in national welfare state policies, their intensified postwar networking was dominated by middle-class liberal conservative elites with a common project for creating an integrated Europe based on a curious melange of traditional confessional notions of occidental culture and anti-communism and broadly liberal economic ideas. These elites initially were not even in the majority within some national parties, let alone in domestic politics and parliaments. By utilising their transnational cooperation effectively, however, they succeeded to a very large extent at implanting their core ideas in supranational European integration (Kaiser 2007, p.24).

The inception of the European project: Constrained democracy and political messianism

The rejection of authoritarianism did not mean that democracy was deemed unproblematic by Catholic politicians. The process of reconciliation between Christianity and democracy was not an easy one. One of the ways to deal with democracy was the idea to constrain it through the Christian institutions, as Jan-Werner Mueller demonstrated in his book "Contesting democracy.

Political Ideas in Twentieth Century Europe" (2011). The first proponent of such a strategy was French anti-revolutionary thinker Joseph de Maistre who sought to constrain European states by the institution of the papacy. The other one was Alexis de Tocqueville (often described as a liberal) who argued that the undemocratic character of Catholicism is a social power actually strengthening democracy by giving the citizens a strong moral basis, which served as a guarantee for liberty. The Christian democratic project of European integration might actually be seen as an attempt to constrain democracy a la de Maistre: constraining European states by the institutions of the Community (instead of papacy).

Christian democrats were rather sceptical of the idea of popular sovereignty, the centralization of power and of nationalism. European integration can be seen as a part of the project of constraining democratic tendencies. The project of European integration can be viewed as a product of the old Christian idea of constraining passions and to "extort" more virtuous international relations in Europe after the war. The idea was designed to work on the level of the contacts between nation states, rather than between European citizens.

One of the primary tools of such a constraining power of the Community was the establishment of the European Court of Justice, which oversaw the whole process. From this perspective, it is not a surprise that in the late 1960s the court developed a doctrine of direct effect which, as Joseph Weiler argues, has actually weakened the bond between the citizen and the state – a clear example of constraining state power through non-democratic institutions. The role of law is also central, as Weiler argues, to the messianic character of the European project. In other words, the legitimacy of the project did not lie in the democratic process (as is the case of nation states), but in the nobility of the ideal:

> In political messianism, the justification for action and its mobilizing force derive not from process, as in classical democracy, or from result and success, but from the ideal pursued, the destiny to be achieved, the promised land waiting at the end of the road. Indeed, in messianic visions the end always trumps the means (Weiler 2012, p.683).

One of the examples of such an understanding of international relations was the Schuman Declaration, a very pragmatic and very idealistic document at the same time. On the one hand,

it contained the blueprint for very practical cooperation between erstwhile foes: the European Community of Coal and Steal. On the other it contained a civilizational ideal of "an ever-closer Union" (a phrase from the Treaty of Rome). According to Weiler, Schuman's messianic vision combined Christian grace (as opposed to the stance taken in the Treaty of Versailles) with the Kantian notion of perpetual peace.

It was this higher aim that served as a source of legitimacy for the European project and, Weiler argues, later like Golem turned against its creators, being also the main cause of problems of the European Union: it's democratic deficit (and concomitant politics deficit). The messianic impetus of the project made it much harder (if not impossible) to secure democratic legitimacy; indeed, in the formative decades the European elite did not even see the point in doing so. As a result, as Weiler points out, democracy did not make it into the DNA of the European project and even direct elections to the European Parliament or the idea of European citizenship did not create a meaningful bond between Europe and its citizens.

The messianic vision is important also from another perspective. It influenced the way law is understood in the realm of European integration:

> Inevitably, however, it also meant an account of the principle of the rule of law that was old school: formalist, self-referential, and self-legitimating. Why should I obey? Either because its "the law" or because it is in the service of the self-legitimating messianic dream. Indeed, I would argue, that political messianic projects by their very nature go hand in hand with a formalist, self-referential concept of the rule of law (Weiler 2012).

The formalist and positivist understanding of the rule of law goes against the post-World War II tradition of finding the legitimacy of the project not in "the law" itself, but in liberal democratic values themselves (democracy and respect for human rights).

What are the consequences of the institutional design of the European project, its messianic legitimacy and the positivist understanding of law? It is an affinity with liberal political order: depoliticization (as most European matters were not a matter of democracy) and consequently the central role of law and courts. It seems then that the choice of agnostic

secularism which assumes the depoliticization of religion, was an unintended consequence of the choice of the founding fathers.

Why did the founding fathers not directly refer to Christianity?

In 1923 Richard Coudenhove Kalergi published a manifesto "Paneuropa" (Coudenove-Kalergi 1923), in which he presented a blueprint for the unification of the European continent. His goal was a super state rooted in a common Christian heritage: a new Christendom. It is difficult to tell, whether it was faith that led him to this decision or whether it was rather a pragmatic choice, but without doubts Christianity played an important cementing role in his project. Although his Paneuropean Union, the organization which he founded in order to support the idea exists until today, it never played a crucial role in the history of European integration.

The founding fathers, although also mostly Catholics, made a very different choice. They never mentioned Christianity as the unifying factor for the continent, even as the whole project was seen as a Catholic conspiracy directed by the Vatican (Chenaux 1990). In the following decades, the list of the "founding fathers" was extended by adding new figures like Altiero Spinelli, a communist author of a federalist manifesto written during his exile on the Ventotene Island. However, Spinelli was not involved in the creation of the European Communities. He also had a different position than most of the leftists, because, as the Italian ex-communist president Giorgio Napolitano put it: "the European left misunderstood the European project at the beginning."[18] They often considered it as a plot of the Vatican or solely a big business endeavour.

The Catholic component in the biographies of the "founding fathers" was meaningful, but in a different sense than the supporters of the idea of the "Catholic plot" (mostly Protestants and Socialists) would have had it. Interestingly enough, they were not simply Catholics even as they shared similar views on Catholicism. They were certainly relatively liberal, in contrast to

[18] During the debate at the EUI at the State of the Union Conference (May 2015).

those conservative Catholics who at that time often favoured the authoritarian regimes of Spain or Portugal, and took political instruction from the Vatican. The European founding fathers eschewed this stance: all of them distanced themselves from the Vatican (all the while retaining many links with it). Nor did they believe in the idea of a Catholic state, which Pius XI had supported. They were clearly in favour of secular politics.

Jan-Werner Mueller argues that what linked them was their sceptical view on the value of national sovereignty and the notion and the adherence to the notion of Christian–humanist heritage:

> National sovereignty was neither a value in itself for them nor a precondition for creating political meaning, in the way it had been for Max Weber. On the contrary, it was something to be feared. Advocates of the unification of Europe on the basis of its Christian-humanist heritage. They believed in supranationalism as something done by well-connected elites of high-minded planners and bureaucrats - the kind of diplomacy hat had been foreshadowed by Keynes' dealings after the First World War, but which for the most part had so spectacularly foundered in interwar Europe (Mueller 2011).

Wolfram Kaiser also points to the role of regional identities, but also points to the liberal market orientation of Christian democratic politicians (though one should remember that many of them were in fact Keynesians):

> The overlapping Catholic and strong regional identity and – in the case of many leading Christian democrats like Schuman and De Gasperi – the experience of cross-border contacts between the different 'petite patrie', as Schuman called his Lorraine region, largely account for the interest in some kind of supranational solution for continental western Europe as a guarantee of subnational regional identity and autonomy. In contrast – with the partial exception of the Benelux and French parties – European socialists were initially committed to the national road to socialism in one country. As Donald Sassoon has emphasised, 'The idea that postwar reconstruction would require

> a growing economic and political interdependence expressed through (…) a 'common market' could not have come from the Left' (Kaiser 2007, p.190).

There is a heated debate as to whether it was Robert Schuman or Jean Monnet who played the most prominent role in the first years of the European project. The latter was an official who headed the Planning Unit of the French Government. Normally those who see the European project as a bureaucratic endeavour of states seeking realization of their interests (e.g. Alan Milward or Andrew Moravcsik) tend to view Monnet as the key person, whereas those who view the European project also more as a civilizational project (e.g. Wolfram Kaiser, Joseph H.H. Weiler, Jan-Werner Mueller) tend to concentrate more on the role of Schuman. Monnet outlined the congenial idea to begin the cooperation from the supranational coordination of the coal and steel market in Europe, but it was Schuman who gave this project political energy. In 1950, they both knew that they are about to start a political project of enhanced cooperation between Western European states.

The sculpture of Alcide de Gasperi, Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet and Konrad Adenauer in Scy-Chazelle. Schuman's hometown.

One can imagine that if the "founding fathers" had chosen a form of secularism deliberately, it would be something much closer to the Christian democratic form. However, they did not think

of it. As Olivier Roy argues, religion was not a political issue then also because there was no discrepancy between religion and dominant culture at that time, which was predominantly Christian:

> Mentioning the "Christian roots of Europe" was not an issue for the founding fathers of the EU (Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, De Gasperi and others), although they were more often than not practicing Christians, probably because, on important societal issues (family, gender) there was little discrepancy between a religious-inspired and a secular worldview. Fifty years after, in 2005, the religious identity of Europe became an issue with the debate on the reference to Europe's "Christian roots" in the preamble of the European Constitution (Roy 2016, p.3).

Roy points to an important trait of Christian democracy – its link with the concept of "natural law". As demonstrated in the conceptual chapter, the rise of Christian democracy was linked with the renewal of Thomism at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. One of the fundaments of neothomism was the idea that every human being can recognize Christian moral order. One does not have to be a believer to agree with its most fundamental moral creeds. The idea worked very well in the European societies of the 1940s and 1950s because even those who did not attend Church still believed in Catholic moral norms. This is why Christian democracy could appeal to both religious and non-religious voters, offering them an ideology which did not require faith from them only a commitment to certain values. This vision was compelling in the period after World War II, when societies were clearly dominated by Christian values, to the extent that moral norms regarding contraception, abortion, marriage (mostly the matters of sexual life) were similar for those who believed and those who did not. This "Christian democratic situation" started to crumble in 1960s.

When in the 1960s the already affluent societies were becoming more and more individualized, the value systems of believers and non-believers started to part ways. This is when, as Olivier Roy puts it, the deculturation of religion began. The dominant culture started to become less and less linked with religion. This has been true not only of sexual matters, but also more generally in terms of how life is understood and in the more liberal approach, which

is more supportive of the idea of self-fulfilment, individual rights, etc. While the idea of rights might be seen as rooted in the Christian worldview, its connotation is different when speaking from a Christian or non-Christian point of view. In the first case, human rights are rooted in the fact that God was a man and therefore human beings deserve a certain kind of dignity (and it also requires a certain degree of virtue), while from the non-theistic perspective it is rooted in a vision of a human being that deserves the rights.

Starting from the 1960s this ceased to be true. The division is most striking in issues such as same-sex marriage, euthanasia, and abortion, all of which have been core contributors to the crisis of Christian democracy. It either had to give up the idea of natural law and fundamental values or be marginalized. Thus, by playing the normal political game, political Catholicism has lost a lot of its appeal:

> More generally, western Europe experienced fundamental social change in the 1960s, which shook all tenets of the postwar Christian democratic ideology and policy profile. The youth and student movement culminating in the unrests of 1968 rejected traditional 'bourgeois' values like religion and family which were at the heart of the Christian democratic belief system (Kaiser 2007, p.307).

However, although the sexual ethic has changed a great deal, the idea that both religious and non-religious people still share many moral values is not entirely dead. It would be a simplification to say that religious and non-religious value systems have parted ways entirely. This was most visible during the refugee crisis, when both the Catholic church and European liberal intellectuals and politicians were demonstrating their interest in the fate of the hundreds of thousands of refugees (see: Chapter 5).

What does the "C" mean today?

The range of answers on the role of Christianity for Christian democrats today differs a great deal. There is a big difference when it comes to the role of religion for the two leaders of European Christian democracy in the 2000s, Herman van Rompuy and Jose

Manuel Barroso. While Barroso was rather sceptical when it came to the role of Christianity in his political life, van Rompuy gave public statements that he is a Christian, committed to the philosophy of personalism, although when asked about his Catholicism (apart from the fact that he was surprised to hear such a question), he told me a story of the compromise he believed was necessary also from the perspective of Christian democrats in Belgium (but with a reference to the abortion law at the beginning of the 1990s):

> I was interviewed last week about it and the journalist asked me: do you follow all the instructions of the Church? And I said: not at all! I listen to the Church but I follow my own conscience. You have your inspiration – it's important. But day to day politics is a bit of a different matter. It's not written in the Bible how to solve the Eurozone crisis! In the beginning of the 1990s I was the president of the Christian democratic party in Belgium – the governing party then. There was a battle in the Parliament over abortion. The liberals and socialists were in favour of liberalization. We were against. We lost and there was a big question: should we stay in office? And I, as the president of the party, took the decision to stay. We fought for our own convictions, but we lost and we had to accept it.[19]

But, on the other hand van Rompuy seems to be convinced that the Christianity should play a role in politics as an inspiration and recalls Merkel's "Wir schaffen das" approach to the migration crisis in 2015:

> Our societies are changing dramatically due to technology, biotechnology, prosperity, medical progress, globalization, immigration etc. The worst behavior is folding on oneself and being dominated by fear. This is the source of conflict and violence. Our approach has to remain hopeful ("Wir schaffen das", "yes, we can"), being on the side of Eros and not of Thanatos. Christians have to

[19] Interview with Herman van Rompuy, 2.02.2016, Brussels.

> contribute to this societal change, even in a position of 'the rest of Israël' (van Rompuy 2016).

Jose Manuel Barroso represents a different attitude:

> Christian democrats are on the right in Portugal, I was never a member of this party. The EPP is a broader party today and I like it this way. The EPP is extremely broad: from Orbán to Juncker – it is a typical catch-all party. Today, any ideological classification is a simplification. I believe less in ideologies and more in a kind of a body of attitudes and policies rooted in certain values. Social Christian tradition, personalism – understood as an attachment to the dignity of a human being. But I am not a Christian democrat in a party sense. The Catholic Church with all sincere respect I have for it, is behind the social change. However, it must be recognized that it does a great social job in the countries like Portugal. It is of course also important spiritually.[20]

Donald Tusk, President of the European Council from the EPP has a slightly different view on these issues as a person coming from Poland and having the experience of the Solidarity movement:

> If we want a united Europe, a Europe of Solidarity, we must start with ourselves. One of the great moral authorities, John Paul II said that Solidarity is never one against the other. Solidarity is always one with the other, together. When one is a Christian Democrat, it is sometimes worth listening to the Pope (Tusk 2016).

However, Tusk doesn't seem to see contradiction between his Christian democratic political engagement and liberalism:

[20] Interview with Jose Manuel Barroso, 29.04.2016, Princeton.

> I was born a liberal and I'm sure I'll die as one, but in the fundamental, very basic meaning of the word. For me freedom will always be the absolute chief value, both in public life and politics, and in my personal life. So, I won't wince if somebody sticks that sort of label on me. But as I'm also a loyal student of the wisest political thinkers, such as Aron or Isaiah Berlin; it's important to me to distinguish a predilection for certain values from the ideology that can be built around those values. In this sense, I think of a liberal as someone who will take a mistrustful, wary attitude to ideology and precisely constructed systems of thought within politics. Yes, go ahead and call me a liberal, but on condition that it will be very specifically connected with an affirmation of freedom as the most important value in human life.[21]

Is the EU Christian democratic? Polemic with Carlo Invernizzi Accetti

Despite rather unorthodox attachment of the European People's Party leaders to the Christian democratic principles (represented symbolically by such different figures like liberal pragmatist Jean-Claude Juncker and identitarian nationalist Viktor Orban), the EU is sometimes depicted as a political entity that adopted a Christian democratic vision of the relationship between religion and politics. This view is often represented in the laicist circles (like the European Parliament Platform for Secularism in Politics), but it can also be encountered in the academia – the most prominent example being Carlo Invernizzi Accetti (2017).

Accetti argues that the EU adopted a Christian democratic form of relations between religion and politics[22] for four reasons: it adopted the Catholic doctrine of subsidiarity as one of its fundamental legal principles; it explicitly recognises religion as source of inspiration for its legal acts; it interprets the principle of religious freedom

[21] Interview with Donald Tusk, 2.02.2016, Brussels.

[22] I don't use the label „Christian democratic secularism", as Accetti uses the word „secularism" only with respect to the liberal tradition.

in a positive way (promoting religious traditions and religious education), it grants a privileged status to Christianity in its jurisprudence and treaties.

Accetti's arguments, however, pose several problems. First of all, the reference to religious inspiration in the preamble of the Lisbon Treaty was seen as a defeat of Christian democrats who were in favour of a direct reference to Christianity. The reference to religious heritage includes also other religions – like Judaism and Islam - it was a result of a big debate which ended up in a defeat of those who sought a direct reference to Christianity – it was read in this way by virtually all the sides of the conflict. Including religion as one of the sources of inspiration among others is not incompatible with liberal principles and does not have to mean privileging Christianity.

Secondly, the author writes about the doctrine of "margin of appreciation" both in the case of the European Council of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice. The doctrine is, however, much stronger, in the first case and although it influences for sure the debates on jurisprudence also in the EU, one has to bear in mind that the composition of the Council of Europe is different from the European Union - as among Member States of the Council of Europe there are Muslim and Orthodox countries which have very different views on religion and politics than most of the EU countries – it influences the character of ECHR jurisprudence.

Accetti's argues that article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty (obliging European institutions to conduct regular dialogue with religious and philosophical organizations) would seem to be more convincing – as it gives leverage mostly to Christian and Protestant churches (though it is open also to other religions and humanist organizations). However, art. 17 became in practice a way to depoliticize religion – to give religious organizations a constrained possibility of voicing their concerns and needs regarding European affairs. There is no strong evidence for political significance of these meetings. I am not claiming that the art. 17 plays no role – I'm arguing that it would be difficult to claim that thanks the structured dialogue, the EU has adopted Christian democratic form of secularism. It would be an argument, however, against all those who claim that the EU is a laicist regime.

The irony of Christian democracy: The failure of political Catholicism?

My argument in this chapter is that the champions of European integration in its first phase unintentionally favoured an agnostic form of secularism, because of their attempts to radically break with the European past (which they associated with war) that led them to invest a certain messianic legitimacy in the project. To create a supranational organization, they had to restrict nationalisms. But the price for this was also the restriction of the religious heritage which was at that time already deeply rooted in the national cultures. Without one, it was difficult to have the other. The choice made by the Founding Fathers has had huge consequences for the project – it was the decision that underpinned the Community's relationship with religion and political philosophy more generally – the agnostic secularism, the secularism of fear of war. Thus, they anticipated the developments within the twentieth century liberalism (and thinkers like Richard Rorty) – who rejected all the forms of philosophical underpinning (not to mention religion) of a polity.

Authors who wrote on Christian democracy often point to another paradox: namely, that it was Christian democracy that helped in the European process of secularization:

> Importantly, the confessional parties "detached the Catholic political identity from the church and eventually even from religion" (Kalyvas 1996: 222), thus removing perhaps the biggest remaining obstacle in the European process of secularization. Once the logic of the vote-maximizing electoral process kicked in, it could not but "declericalize" the confessional parties, wrecking their initial project of "rechristianization and the building of a Christian society" (p. 245). The irony of Christian democracy is that the force that was meant to derail European secularization brought it to completion (Joppke 2015, pp.81-83).

One could legitimately ask, if the Christian democratic form of secularism did not dominate the first phase of European integration, where was it successful. It was

perhaps more successful in the first decades of the German Federal Republic with the clear references to Christianity in its Basic Law, the cooperationist attitude of the state towards Christian churches, the political culture largely dominated by democratic Catholic and Protestant politicians (like Adenauer, Kohl, arguably even Merkel (Mueller 2016), and also the role of Catholic intellectuals like Karl Jaspers, Herman Luebbe, and Ernst-Wolfgang Boeckenfoerde (Hacke 2006).

Poland after 1989 can also be seen a country where Christian democratic secularism was very powerful (perhaps dominating the political scene). The role of the first non-communist prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki (who spoke of the friendly separation between Church and state in Poland) and of President Bronislaw Komorowski can be read as prime examples of Christian democratic secularism. The preamble to the Polish constitution as well as its overall shape (the character of marriage, relatively restrictive law on abortion) can be seen as consistent with the Christian democratic vision (though Christian national secularism was also strong). The intellectual influence of Pope John Paul II can also be seen in this spirit, especially his address to the Polish parliament (praising Polish democracy), numerous critiques of capitalist liberal spirituality, as well his definite support for European integration which influenced the Polish hierarchy. All of these elements would seem to support the thesis that Poland has been an example of a country dominated by Christian democratic secularism, although it is now, perhaps temporarily, giving way to a more conservative and nationalistic form of secularism in which the entanglement between church and state is stronger and the Christian democratic value system of the Constitution is often presented as "godless".

Jacques Delors, the Failed Attempt to Give *a Soul to Europe*, and the Institutionalization of Dialogue with Churches

If in the next ten years we haven't managed to give a soul to Europe, to give it spirituality and meaning, the game will be up.

Jacques Delors[23]

We can identify two approaches to institutionalization of the relationship between religion and politics in the history of European integration. The first can be understood as a series of formal and informal contacts between churches and the European Commission concentrating on what could be of mutual interest: fighting poverty, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, the issue of enlargement. The strand line is linked to the constitutionalization of Europe, which is more about setting the limits of the Community by asserting "who we are" and "what holds us together". In this chapter I will concentrate on the first assertion. In the following chapter, I will concentrate on the latter.

The protagonist of this chapter is Jacques Delors. Delors is a politician who has arguably had the most significant impact on the European Union as we know it of any individual. It was he who drove the launch of the Single Market, the single currency project and the cohesion policies, to name only a few fundamental enterprises in today's EU. Jacques Delors also personifies different strands present at the heart of the history of European integration – a follower of French personalists, a socialist, a practicing Catholic and a defender of French laicité. These make him a complex

[23] 'President Delors and the Churches', Newsletter of the European Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society, Brussels no. 2, 2 May 1992, cited in: (Leustean 2012, p.4)

personality who contains all that is important to understand the EU in terms of its willingness (and failure) to engage with religious matters. Delors is crucial regarding the topic of this thesis, because of one fundamental detail: he was the only politician of the European Communities who meaningfully posed a question on the role of religion in the European project and tried to give an answer to this question.

In this chapter I will firstly sketch briefly the biography of Jacques Delors, as this might help us understand his political positions in the fundamental periods of European integration. Then, I will concentrate on the "Soul for Europe" project – one of the very few EU initiatives dealing with religion. Subsequently, I will briefly describe the incorporation of Art. 17 in to the Lisbon Treaty obliging dialogue with churches, religious and philosophical organizations, which is in my opinion a direct aftermath of the "Soul for Europe". At the end, I will pose the question of whether there is a relationship between the "marketization" of European integration and the sort of secularism chosen by Delors.

It is my argument in this chapter that the "religious" project of Jacques Delors in many respects failed. Certainly, Delors did not find a meaningful role for religion in European integration in the way he was hoping for. The project did, however, bring a concrete result – the practice of consultation between religious leaders and the EU leaders which was formalized as the Art. 17 of the Lisbon Treaty. Thus, Delors is the European politician who had the most significant impact on the agnostic form of secularism.

Christian democrat in disguise

Jacques Delors is perhaps the most paradoxical personality in the history of European integration: a Catholic defending laicité, a leftist who perpetuated the most free-market oriented period of European integration, a life-long member of the socialist party who has been closer to the ideology of Christian-democracy than most life-long Christian democrats.

He was raised in a rather poor Catholic family and as he puts it: "I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth." As one of the members of his cabinet told me, he was "a guy from a humble background who does everything to be better than the products of French *grands écoles.*"[24] He is known as a person who is "driven", "knows every dossier he is working on in great detail", and also a person who was not easy to work with – "after a stressful meeting, he often used to kick the cat."[25]

An important inspiration for his engagement in Europe was the encounter with personalists linked to "Esprit" – the magazine in which he first became familiar with Maritain and Mounier, the key French personalist thinkers:

> I didn't meet either of them, but I used to be around Esprit magazine, including writing articles as early as the 1950s, and communitarian personalism is still my line (Delors & Deschamps 2009, p.4).

He has a developed view on what personalism is:

> [I]t is time to go back to our ideal, to be fully conscious of it, through each of our actions in the field of politics, economics, social and cultural affairs, let us continue to investigate what can enable each man, each woman to flourish, **in full awareness not only of his or her rights, but also of their duties vis-à-vis others and society as a whole.** Let us strive to constantly re-establish human collectivities in which the individual is able to live and develop, and to grow through exchanges and cooperation with others (Delors 1989).

His devotion to the idea of Europe was strongly linked with his engagement with personalism and with Jacques Maritain's thought, as well as being influenced by the French "founding father" of the European project, Robert Schuman:

[24] Interview with David White, 20.09.2016, Brussels.
[25] Interview with David White, 20.09.2016, Brussels.

> Yes, I had read up on all that in my spare time. I'd read it all and it had made a great impression on me, especially Maritain (…). It was always my underlying inspiration, so to speak. So, over and above events which I wasn't always capable of evaluating properly, I wasn't in a position of responsibility, but I was perfectly sensitive to it, and especially from the European point of view, to Maritain (…). I have to say that that was the moment when I realized that Robert Schuman's appeal — excuse me for saying this, people will say it's Christian – was of a high spiritual value. Not just political but spiritual. And that was the day when I said: 'There you are, your path is mapped out' (…). I think there is a link between that and my commitment to Europe (Delors & Deschamps 2009, p.3).

He started his political activities as a member of Christian democratic *Mouvement Republican Populaire*, but according to Jerome Vignon, he quickly became disenchanted with the party and became an activist within Christian democratic worker's unions (which later got secularized). Much later, in 1974, he joined the socialist party, a natural move given Delors long-standing sense that he was a person of the left:

> **[Étienne Deschamps] And how were you able to put this communitarian personalism into practice in the active political life you then embarked on?**
>
> [Jacques Delors] The Left. There's this saying by a Swiss writer that 'Nature is on the right, man is on the Left'. That's all. I think that believing in man means being on the Left. After that you can then start defining it in different ways. There are people in the present majority who think like me. But that's it, that's my point of view, I believe in man with my eyes open (Delors & Deschamps 2009, p.4).

There are different opinions on how Delors' religiosity translated into political action. People who worked with him were convinced that religiosity played a big role in his political life:

> You didn't have to work long with Delors to discover that he was a devoted Christian. He was not a doctrinaire Christian, though.[26]

According to one of his advisors, he even went to see the nuncio of Belgium and asked him what could be done for Europe from the Catholic point of view. The nuncio suggested Delors start a network of prayers in the Benedictine monasteries.[27] And indeed he did so – the network is called Groupe Chevetogne (the name comes from the monastery close to Namur in Belgium).[28] This movement was a clear reference to the monastic history of Europe - one of the fundaments of European culture, especially in the Middle Ages. It is rather surprising that a French socialist engaged so openly in an initiative like this and also shows that the dividing lines between Christianity and the European project are more blurred than one might suppose.

Delors and the Pope: Mutual disappointment

Delors' religiosity did not lead to his close relationship with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. He was often at odds with those Christians (especially Catholics) who required religious visibility. This is probably the reason why his relationship with Pope John Paul II was rather a difficult one. They met for the first time in May 1985, and, as Jerome Vignon recalls it, both were very much disappointed after the meeting. Delors

[26] Interview with David White, 20.09.2016, Brussels.
[27] Interview with John O'Loughlin, 22.03.2016, via Skype.
[28] More information can be found here: https://paradis-paris.com/groupe-de-chevetogne/ and here: http://www.bistum-eichstaett.de/ru/bischof/bischofsweihe/pressetexte-der-bischoeflichen-pressestelle/pde-text-vom-14102006/

probably wanted more support for his big European endeavours; John Paul II expected a clearer, more explicit reference in the European project to its Christian roots.

Delors was upset that the Pope did not see his efforts to change the fate of the continent and thought of the project as of economic nature. As he later said:

> [L]e Vatican considere la construction européenne comme un phénomène matérializete et economiciste. Le Vatican n'est-il pas conscient qu'au sein des responsables européens certains luttent pour essayer de preserver, contre vents et marées, une dimension sociale a l'economie, ainsi qu'une dimension sociale a l'economie, ainsi qu'une dimension éthique, voire spirituelle?[29]

The difference between the Pope and President Delors was twofold. First of all, they inherited very different visions of the bond between Catholicism and identity. For the Pope, Catholicism was the primary identity marker – a defining feature for the political reality, even if he endorsed the post-Vaticanum II notion of the separation between church and state. One of the reasons for such a clear position was, among others, the communist idea of the atheist state, which John Paul II experienced in Poland.

Delors, who grew up in France, was strongly influenced by the heritage of 1905 law and the general consensus on the strict separation between Church and state (the French Catholic Church came to terms with the separation after the decades of culture wars). Also, his experience was marked by the failure of the Catholic Church in France in the time of General Petain, which according to David White was an experience that influenced his vision of the relationship between religion and politics. This fascist experience was also crucial for the flourishing of left-wing personalism after World War II in France[30] that was so close to Delors' heart. Personalism was also well known to John Paul II, who as a young priest visited Paris in late 1940s and presumably had contacts with personalists. Yet, by the 1980s his position on the public role of

[29] Note to the president of the EC by Marc Luycxs from 30.03.1994:(Massignon 2007, p.142)
[30] Although the relationship of personalists with the Petain regime was rather ambiguous as Jan-Werner Mueller argues (Mueller 2011, p.138).

Christianity was in many respects different than the one represented by the inheritors of French personalist tradition (especially those on the left).

Second, Delors and John Paul II took very different stances in the constitutional debate (which will be outlined in the chapter below). This is not surprising. John Paul II was very much in favour of the symbolic presence of Christianity in the Constitution, while for Delors it was a second range issue. He was more interested in the dialogue between Commission and churches on the most important issues from his perspective: the fight against poverty, the enlargements of the EC, the question of unemployment. He did not see Christianity as an identity marker of Europe.

It is remarkable that Delors was a proponent of Turkish membership in the EU. As Berengere Massignon demonstrates, this was in line with his understanding of what Europe should be:

> L'argumentaire proposé par Jacques Delors en faveur de l'entrée de la Turquie se rattache aussi au modèle de l'identité contrat, avec le souhait de rattacher le projet européen a des valeurs universelles, mais tirées de l'expérience de la construction communautaire (…). L'âme de l'Europe, c'est son projet qui trouve justement ses racines dans la volonté de dépasser les conflits de passe. Pour Jacques Delors, l'Union reste une communauté de valeurs (non spécifiquement européennes certes), mais pourtant au cœur du projet européen depuis les Peres fondateurs, comme la paix, la démocratie… L'Union, alors, pourrait être un modèle de diffusion des valeurs démocratiques et de droits de l'homme (Massignon 2007, p.282).

It would be interesting to compare the personalism of founding fathers (like Alcido de Gasperi or Robert Schuman) with its more contemporary versions. One thing seems to be clear: the personalists of the 1940s and 1950s did not see the need to make out of Christianity "an identity marker", because the European imaginary was still very much Christian. The fact that contemporary personalists like Delors or Van Rompuy (van Rompuy 2009) are rather far from seeing Christianity as a distinctive trait of the

European project has different meaning in Europe which is largely a post-Christian entity. The second difference concerns the attitude towards liberalism: today's personalists are much less anti-liberal, which would be unthinkable for thinkers like Emmanuel Mounier. To Mounier, liberalism was perhaps worse than fascism. As Tony Judt put it: "fascism might be the immediate threat, but liberalism was the true enemy" (Judt 2010, p. 17).

The intensification of integration

Delors became president of the European Commission in 1985. This was a time when the political will to further liberalize trade arrangements between members of the European Communities and remove barriers to the freedom of movement of goods, services, capital, and labour between member countries was at its high point. In 1985, Delors found a Community in the split between the advanced constitutional federal order and an intergovernmental political order. The constitutional legal order of the Communities was the result of two decades of "integration through law" which almost unnoticeably changed the legal order of the continent by strengthening the legal basis of the communities, above all through the doctrine of direct effect and the supremacy of European over national law. Legal federalization was not, however, accompanied by a political one, as the Luxembourg Accord was still in place. This left each Member State with veto power over Community legislation affecting "its vital interest"; in practice, this meant a general right of veto for every Member State (Weiler 2001).

After the first enlargements, consensual decision making became more and more difficult to achieve. Therefore, there was an idea to switch to Quantified Majority Voting in issues concerning the single market. This was adopted by the states as a minor revision of the Treaty of Rome. Most heads of state thought that it is just a simple change that would not change the community's equilibrium and sold it to the public in their countries as such. However, it became clear that after the adoption of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1985, the European Communities were moving on to a track of faster integration.

There is little doubt that much of this was due to Delors and his personality. He managed to bring Europe on the path of intense political and economic integration[31] for the first time since the 1960s. The SEA marked the beginning of his mandate. He used the pro-European momentum to intensify the efforts to create a more integrated Europe in both political and economic terms. In the 1992 White Paper he outlined a path towards a completion of the internal market, proposing simple legislative steps to achieve this goal. This supposed ideological "neutrality" marked most of revolutionary steps that the Delors Commission proposed. The same can be said about the Economic and Monetary Union (Delors programme) and the political union.

There was another aspect to Delors economic and political reforms – the project of a social Europe. It was Delors who pushed for social legislation on the European level, trying to strengthen the position of workers in the Member States. He wanted thus to include workers in the growth produced by the expansion of the Single Market. This was also rationale behind his other achievement, the development of structural funds that were designed to finance the underdeveloped members of the Community and compensate their weaker performance in the single market. The deployment of structural funds played a big role also after the subsequent enlargements and might be seen as one of the most significant examples of the manifestation of European solidarity.

The 1992 programme resulted in a new treaty – the Treaty of Maastricht – which followed the impetus given by less spectacular SEA. The Maastricht Treaty established the European Union in place of the European Communities (a step which will be discussed in detail below), the establishment of the European Monetary Union (leading to the European single currency), the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and strengthening of the role of the Parliament. Maastricht moved Europe towards a centralized political and economic federation.

[31] With a significant exception of legal integration, as Joseph H.H. Weiler argues in the "Transformation of Europe" (Weiler 1991).

Delors' vision of Europe differed from the one that he managed to achieve. One of the most significant differences was arguably his vision of "social Europe" which would balance the "single market Europe" that he successfully brought about. This cannot be said about political union which, while in many respects translated into the treaties, proved unable to gain the support of most European societies. Political federalization of Europe lacked (and still lacks) popular support, and the ambiguity of European societies has thus appeared as a constant theme in European integration in the last twenty-five years.

Union or Community?

Perhaps the most significant symbolic change which happened in the times of Delors presidency was the change of the name of the polity-in-the-making. Instead of the European Communities, it became the European Union. According to the member of his cabinet, this went against Jacques Delors and his insistence on the "community method", instead of the "intergovernmental method" (which was symbolized by the Union and the need for unanimity):

> Most Heads of state and government who participated in the Intergovernmental Conference that took place in 1991–92 was against extending the "community approach", the third and second pillar. On that point Delors had lost because he was in favour of such an extension. It was finally decided that for matters relevant to foreign and security policy, the decision process should be framed with the intergovernmental procedure. Therefore, the Maastricht Treaty clearly signalled that a new political entity was born out of the combination of three pillars, but only the first under "community method", should no longer be called a Community. Delors not only disliked

> the Word "union", but this word illustrates an option against his own preference.[32]

This strong dislike shows a certain division within Delors: he understood the importance of "community", he emphasised the social aspects, he was attached to subsidiarity,[33] but at the same time he created a market-oriented, centralized polity which seemed to go in the direction of a super-state. Maybe because of this duality, Delors wanted to pursue a new project that would involve churches in his work. Maybe this is why he thought that there is a need to give this project a soul, because – as he famously said – "you cannot fall in love with the Single Market".

Soul for Europe

Delors thought that the European Union cannot be based solely on market and supranational bureaucracy. This is why he started to meet regularly with the representatives of Christian churches, seeking his support in the transforming Europe:

> We are in effect at a crossroads in the history of European construction. 1992 is a turning point (…). The Maastricht summit marked the end of the economic phase of European construction – what has been described as the 'semi-

[32] Interview with Jerome Vignon, 23.12.2016, via Skype.

[33] "Another guiding principle of the Maastricht Treaty is the principle of subsidiarity, whereby – to put it briefly – a higher level of power must be empowered to deal only with those matters which are better dealt with at that level, let's say (…). I think the Protestants said it before the Catholics, to be historically accurate. I did a great deal of work on it. And secondly, a personalist like me can only be in favour of the principle of subsidiarity. So, I realised at a particular time that the wind, after the Danish referendum result against the Treaty, I realised – and then a UK Presidency – that there had to be (…) so I proposed repealing a dozen or so directives. And among the ones I did (…) it's very typical of the contradictions you find in the European countries, there was one about the transporting of swine or pigs. It said that each pig should have its own place in the vehicle, and that it must also be able to look at another pig so that it wouldn't be mentally or psychologically disturbed. The text had been adopted in 1979, I'd had nothing to do with it. I asked for it to be repealed. Kohl burst out laughing, but the British, who were keen on animal protection, took another line altogether. So, I'd put my finger on where it hurt. And as a result, subsidiarity – 'Yes', I even told you a moment ago that I supported the approach taken by the Lisbon Treaty, but the governments also had to find a way out of their contradictions." (Delors & Deschamps 2009)

> automatic' development of the EC, based on drive towards the Common Market (…). Believe me, we won't succeed with Europe solely on the basis of legal expertise or economic know-how. It is impossible to put the potential of Maastricht into practice without a breath of air. If the next ten years we haven't managed to give a soul to Europe, to give it spirituality and meaning, the game will be up. This is why I want to revive the intellectual and spiritual debate on Europe. I invite churches to participate actively in it. The debate must be free and open. We don't want to control it; it is a democratic discussion, not to be monopolized by technocrats. I would like to create a meeting place, a space for free discussion open to men and women of spirituality, to believers and non-believers, scientists and artists (Leustean 2012, p.4).

The meeting was one of a series of meetings with religious leaders organized under the name of "A Soul for Europe" and coordinated by the Forward Studies Unit in the European Commission (directly reporting to the president) and managed by two people: Marc Luycx and Jerome Vignon.

The project consisted of numerous meetings between the president of the Commission and religious leaders (Catholic and Protestant, above all – though Delors did not want to close it off to other religions). At times Delors wanted to discuss with them the current shape of the European Communities, but usually they were devoted to important social problems, such as unemployment, agriculture, migration, the problem enlargement and deepening of the EU. It seems clear that the idea was to discuss the issues important from the perspective of European institutions, not the other way around.

These meetings were continued by Delors' successor, Jacques Santer, but were in fact blocked by the socialist president of the European Commission Romano Prodi. Nevertheless, dialogue with churches remained institutionally linked with the Forward Studies Unit (changed then to Bureau of European Policy Advisors, now it is the European Political Strategy Centre).

It is not a coincidence that Delors decided to name this project like he did. He spoke of the European soul on several occasions, which suggests that he was attached to this idea. The idea of soul is clearly linked with the European philosophical and spiritual tradition. It was "invented" in ancient Greece – the concept of soul can be found in Platonic and Aristotelian philosophic systems and was then transferred to Judaic and then Christian theology – where it constituted a basic feature of the human person and the main source of its dignity.

The soul has a place in the history of European culture and Delors was well aware of that. He was also aware that there is a need to create a bond between the European societies and the European institutions – he thought that churches should play a prime role in this endeavour – at least regarding some groups of European societies.

Did he succeed? It would be very difficult to find arguments for such a thesis. The European project did not become significantly more popular and churches did not change the economic character of the European Union. There is, however, one lasting element of the Delorsian dialogue with churches: the institutionalization of dialogue between churches and European institutions, which in my opinion is also a failure.

The Churches Article

Jacques Delors was against the institutionalization of dialogue with churches, but the presidents of the European Commission who followed him did institutionalize the dialogue. The next formal step was taken by Jose Manuel Barroso in 2005, when he started to organize regular meetings with the churches and humanist organizations. The article was transferred (as large parts of the TCE) to the Lisbon Treaty which was signed by the EU member states on 13 December 2007, and entered into force on 1 December 2009. Thus, Delors set in motion a logic which led to the institutionalization of the dialogue.

The authors of the Treaty thus decided to incorporate a special article obliging European institutions to conduct a dialogue with the churches and non-religious organizations:

> *1. The Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States.*
>
> *2. The Union equally respects the status under national law of philosophical[34] and non-confessional organizations.*
>
> *3. Recognising their identity and their specific contribution, the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organizations.*

The first format of these contacts, established by Jose Manuel Barroso in 2005, is the annual formal high-level meeting event with representatives of different religions (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism), which is devoted each time to a different topic: terrorism, fundamental rights, climate change, economic crisis, poverty (often linked with the "European Year of" various things). There is one high-level meeting with the representatives of churches and one with the non-confessional leaders. The EU is represented by the president of the European Commission (now it's first vice-president Timmermans), the president of the European Council and the president of the European Parliament. The second format is a dialogue seminar organized by churches and religious organizations mostly on the issues where the Commission has competences (for detailed data see Houston 2013).

The meetings and all the other forms of dialogue are organized by a special work force in the European Commission which used to be called the Forward Studies Unit (founded by Jacques Delors), then Group of Policy Advisors (GOPA), then

[34] The category of philosophical organisation is a part of a French and Belgian legal and cultural landscape, inspired by the tradition of Enlightenment, fighting against the involvement of the churches in politics, sometimes linked to free-masonry. In Belgium, humanist organisations are seen as a part of religious landscape. One of the interesting and paradoxical examples of this approach are the humanist chaplains in the army.

Bureau of European Policy Advisors (then BEPA). All these units were responsible directly under the president of the European Commission. Under president Jean-Claude Juncker, however, this has changed. The dialogue with religious and philosophical organizations is now a competence of the first vice-president of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans, and is located in the DG Justice, which changes a bit the importance of the question of dialogue.

The dialogue since Jose Manuel Barroso has been run by Katharina von Schnurbein, a European official with a Protestant background. Although the level of the officials responsible is high, one cannot avoid the impression that the salience of the dialogue for the European Commission is rather low. In the last few years, it was perhaps different only with regard to one person – Pope Francis – and his visit in the Parliament was considered an important event.

Also, the format of the annual high-level meetings seems to be problematic from the perspective of both sides. On the one hand, the Commission has difficulties in finding representative partners (apart from the Catholic Church, which has a clear hierarchy). Therefore, some representatives of, for example, Muslim or Protestant communities seem to be chosen randomly. On the other hand, the insights from the meetings do not seem to be meaningful. As one of their participants told me, "you can write the press release before the meeting".

Pope Francis meeting the representatives of COMECE (17.05.2017). Source: www.comece.eu

The issue of representativeness is, as mentioned, not a problem only with regard to Catholicism. The church is represented by the nuncio (diplomatic representative of the Vatican, currently Alain Paul Lebeaupin) and COMECE (Commission of the Bishops' Conferences), the equivalent of the Council of the European Union at the church level. As for "high politics", it is obviously the competence of the popes and contacts between the leaders of the EU and popes are regular.

It is already a much bigger problem regarding the Protestant and Orthodox churches. They are represented in Brussels by the CEC (Conference of European Churches), an organization established in 1959 (with a secretariat since 1967) that brings together various Protestant and Orthodox churches (the idea to bring the Orthodox churches came about to bring together churches from both sides of the iron curtain). However, this produces difficulties in coming to a single opinion within the CEC, as the position of Protestant churches (which is far from united itself) is often very different from the position of the Orthodox churches, especially regarding sexual morality.

Another problematic issue regarding the dialogue is the question of the balance between religious and non-religious organizations. While it is more or less clear who is represented by the representation of churches, it is not entirely clear who is represented by the non-religious organizations. As Katharina von Schnurbein notes it, these organizations often claim to represent the majorities in many European states who are not practicing any religion (or simply do not believe in God). It is, however, of course very difficult as the "humanist organizations" are most often linked with the tradition of masonry, which is a very specific form of non-belief. The question of how to engage with philosophical beliefs of non-believers seems still in need to be answered.

Jose Manuel Barroso reported being happy with the results Art. 17 brought about:

> It's a good exercise. Dialogue with various churches, but also those who have no religion. Some people ask me what is the concrete result of these meetings? Look, the very fact that we have this dialogue – this in itself is very important.

> I absolutely don't agree with European extreme secularists. Religion is a part of our societies, politics should not try to eradicate it. The political institutions should be secular of course, but they should have intelligence and openness to recognize the importance of religion. Radical secularists are so similar to the dogmatism of some religions that they criticize. They create a kind of a church of secularism. This leads us to an issue of identity. Identities in the contemporary Europe cannot be understood in an exclusive way – because then we're doomed to unresolvable conflicts.[35]

One thing is, however, striking. The unit responsible for the dialogue chooses partners freely, so it is rather difficult to assess the representativeness of such meetings. Apart from the Catholic church which has a clear representation, all the others are chosen rather freely. The question of representativeness seems to be crucial in the dialogue and indicated a very important problem of the nature of organized religion within the EU. All the significant denominations apart from the Catholic church are organized in such a way that excludes the possibility of a meaningful dialogue. Even Protestants who are represented in an organization together with Orthodox churches have such a diverse stance on virtually all the issues that their voice does not seem to be meaningful in Brussels.

The meetings have had no big impact on the way the EU works and do not prove to be particularly efficient. The problem of representativeness is thus compounded by others, including the problem of a false balance between churches and religious organizations and philosophical organizations, which is a specific term describing mostly Belgian humanist and free-mason associations. The legal balance between religious and humanist organizations seems to be false because while the churches represent a significant minority of European societies, the humanists represent only a very tiny group of people, but claim to represent all non-believers. This false balance creates tensions like the one described below.

[35] Interview with Jose Manuel Barroso, 29.04.2016, Princeton.

There is an impression that the Christian churches benefit from the dialogue much more than "philosophical organizations". This discrepancy was criticized by the European Ombudsman, who issued a decision criticizing the European Commission in the case submitted by the European Humanist Federation. The federation complained about the refusal of the European Commission to organize a dialogue seminar on issue of religious tax exemptions. The Ombudsman suggested that it "constitutes an instance of maladministration" (European Ombudsman 2013). It is thus not surprising that article 17 is "a reason for concern" for the humanists (Pollock 2013, p.122), but it also seems not be a tool for a meaningful dialogue for the other religious organizations.

Religion and the Constitution of Europe

No other moment in the history of European integration revealed with such clarity the dividing lines regarding the relationship between the European Union and Christianity as the EU's failed constitutional moment. The attempt to adopt a constitutional treaty saw all the actors interested in the issues of religion and politics obliged to speak up, making the dividing lines clearer than ever before. In this chapter, however, I will deal not only with the constitutional convention and the failed constitutional treaty, but also with the linkage between religion and the constitutionalization of the European Communities, which started long before the constitutional convention and did not end with the failure of the TCE.

Like every polity, the EU has also sought a definition of its links with the supernatural (or the lack thereof). It is my argument in this chapter that in the conflict during the constitutional moment over the forms of secularism, it was agnostic secularism that won the final victory. That triumph was, in effect, the depoliticization of religion. In the previous chapter I described the most important instrument concerning religion proposed first in the TCE and then transferred to the Lisbon Treaty – art. 17 obliging European institutions to conduct regular dialogue with religious organizations. This represents an institutional (day-to-day) aspect of the relationship between the EU and religions. In this chapter I will concentrate on the symbolic aspect of this relationship and tell the story of the battles over religion during the European constitutional moment. The first battle of this conflict was fought over the reference to God (*invocatio dei*) and to Christianity in the preamble to Treaty establishing the Constitution for Europe. Then I will discuss its results – both in the project of the Treaty establishing Constitution for Europe (TCE) and the later Lisbon Treaty – which is for good reasons called "the constitution in disguise".

Before I move on to the debates concerning religion, I will present the circumstances of the emergence of the constitutional treaty.

The constitutional debate

The spectre of a pan-European constitution had been haunting Europe since the nineteenth century and since then the idea would periodically reappear and vanish from the agenda. In the second half of the twentieth century, the most serious attempt was made by Altiero Spinelli who in 1984 as a Member of the European Parliament led the group of parliamentarians who wanted to turn the European Parliament into a Constitutional Assembly and adopt a Treaty establishing European Union. They did not manage to get such a proposal accepted by the national governments,[36] but the idea influenced the Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaty (which officially established the European Union in place of the European Communities). It was clear that the idea of a European constitution would soon return to the top of the agenda.

Indeed, this is precisely what happened. In May 2000, Joschka Fischer gave a famous speech – "From Confederacy to Federation: Thoughts on the finality of European integration" – at Humboldt University, in which he proposed the creation of the European Federation:

> [T]here is a very simple answer: the transition from a union of states to full parliamentarization as a European Federation, something Robert Schuman demanded 50 years ago. And that means nothing less than a European Parliament and a European government which really do exercise legislative and executive power within the Federation. This Federation will have to be based on a constituent treaty (Fischer 2000).

Fischer did not want to erase nation states. His view was that this revolution has to be done in cooperation with nation states, not against them. This, however, does not change the factthat the idea he proposed would clearly restrict the competences of nation states, weaken their sovereignty and strengthen central power in Brussels. This

[36] While it was accepted in the Parliament (237 votes for and 31 against, with 43 abstentions), it was subsequently buried by the national governments.

position was embraced by many federalists – such as Guy Verhofstadt, Jacques Delors, and Giuliano Amato – who decided to use this opportunity to help the European constitutional moment to come into being. They welcomed and supported the idea of a federation.

The debate was relaunched more or less at the same time in intellectual circles, inter alia by the Anglo–American political philosopher Larry Siedentop (Siedentop 2000). Siedentop suggested that Brussels was a bureaucratic tyranny based on a centralized French scheme and therefore European leaders should follow the fathers of the American constitution and create a Madisonian "compound republic" in Europe. According to Siedentop, the fact that the EU is based mostly on economic integration is extremely dangerous for the project. European federation should therefore be built on three shared common elements: a common religion (Europe should be Christian), a common language (English), and a common legal culture that should (according to Siedentop) follow the British common-law tradition. Siedentop criticizes the lack of political courage of the European leaders and repeatedly asks: "Where are the Madisons of Europe?"

However, in intellectual circles – as Joseph H.H. Weiler writes – it was Jürgen Habermas who "koshered the idea of European constitution". For Habermas, Brussels is not a French-flavoured tyranny of bureaucracy, but in fact requires more political power:

> As a political collectivity, Europe cannot take hold in the consciousness of its citizens simply in the shape of a common currency. The intergovernmental arrangement at Maastricht lacks that power of symbolic crystallization which only a political act of foundation can give (…). But even making allowances for the consciousness-raising impact of the Euro, which will soon become a unifying symbol in everyday life across the continent, it seems clear that henceforward economic achievements can at best stabilize the status quo. Economic expectations alone can hardly mobilize political support for the

> much riskier and more far-reaching project of a political union—one that deserved the name. (Habermas 2001, pp.6-8).

Habermas offers the social democratic case for a European constitution that would create a political union that "deserved that name". In the age of globalization and the growing role of the markets, societies need "a certain re-regulation of the global economy, to counterbalance its undesired economic, social and cultural consequences, they have a reason for building a stronger Union with greater international influence" (Habermas 2001, p.8). This shift would, however, need legitimacy of shared values. It cannot be anymore legitimated by the 'Carolingian' appeal to a Christian West – as it had been in the times of Schuman, de Gasperi, and Adenauer – because according to Habermas, this had vanished. It could, however, be legitimated by the "European form of life":

> During the third quarter of the past century, Eric Hobsbawm's 'Golden Age', the citizens of Western Europe were fortunate enough to develop a distinctive form of life based on, but not exhausted by, a glistening material infrastructure. Today, against perceived threats from globalization, they are prepared to defend the core of a welfare state that is the backbone of a society still oriented towards social, political and cultural inclusion. This is the orientation that is capable of embedding economic arguments for an ever-closer union into a much broader vision (Habermas 2001, pp.8-9).

The European form of life in the time of globalization can be saved only through a constitutionally integrated Europe. The constitution would in Habermasian eyes also strengthen the notion of the European public sphere, which is needed to legitimate the whole project. To achieve that, according to Habermas, there must be a connection between institutionalized deliberation and decision-making and mass communication. As there is no truly transnational European media, he finds it crucial that the national media cover "the substance of relevant controversies in the other countries, so that all

the national public opinions converged on the same range of contributions to the same set of issues, regardless of their origin" (Habermas 2001, p.13).

He also says that there is a need of shared political culture to make a more integrated Europe work. Interestingly, when it comes to enlisting the European shared heritage, Habermas starts from Christianity:

> The main religion in Europe, Christianity, obeyed its missionary imperative and expanded all over the world. The global spread of modern science and technology, of Roman law and the Napoleonic Code, of human rights, democracy and the nation-state started from Europe as well (Habermas 2001, p.19).

What is also specific to Europe are the "developed institutional arrangements for the productive resolution of intellectual, social and political conflicts" that Europe developed as a result of deep conflicts between secular and ecclesial powers, city and countryside, faith and knowledge. Depoliticization would therefore be one of the core elements of European heritage:

> In the course of a heroic intellectual appropriation of a rich Jewish and Greek, Roman and Christian heritage, Europe has thus learnt a sensitive attitude and a balanced response, both to the deplorable losses incurred both the disintegration of a traditional past and to the promise of future benefits from the 'creative destruction' of present productivity (Habermas 2001, p.20).

What reminded unnoticed by both Habermas and Siedentop, was pointed out by the constitutional lawyer Joseph H.H. Weiler. In his article "In defence of the status quo. Europe's constitutional *Sonderweg*" he argued that Europe already had a constitutional order, consisting of institutional and legal settlements embodied in the treaties. Its most important trait is, according to Weiler, the principle of constitutional tolerance at the heart of which lies the idea that:

> We acknowledge and respect difference, and what is special and unique about ourselves as individuals and groups; and yet we reach across differences in recognition of our essential humanity (Weiler 2003a, p.19).

Weiler cherishes the "fateful choice" made by the authors of the Treaty of Rome who decided not to create a federation, but rather "an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe". This choice was afterwards repeated in subsequent European treaties. The fact that Europe does not aim at being one Nation is a spiritual and ethical choice:

> When acceptance and subordination are voluntary, and repeatedly so, they constitute an act of true liberty and emancipation from collective self-arrogance and constitutional fetishism: a high expression of Constitutional Tolerance. (Weiler 2003a, p.21)

Weiler thus defends the current constitutional order and criticizes the attempts to give Europe a new constitution:

> But when it is objected that there is nothing to prevent a European constitution from being drafted in a way which would fully recognize the very concepts and principles I have articulated, my answer is simple: Europe has now such a constitution. Europe has charted its own brand of constitutional federalism. It works. Why fix it? (Weiler 2003a, p.23)

Few mainstream politicians presented a similar point of view. Most of them either supported the idea of the constitutional treaty or were against the European Union altogether. Among those who presented similar views was, for example, Helmut Schmidt who was sceptical of the idea of a federal constitution, saying that this might lead to an existential crisis in the EU if societies were to reject European further federalization.

However, there was a strong will in the two most influential European states – France and Germany – to push forward the European project. The reasons were manifold. There was dissatisfaction with the Nice Treaty that strengthened the middle-sized and smaller states vis-à-vis bigger states (Germany had 29 votes in the European Council, while Poland – with less than half Germany's population – had only two votes fewer). There was also a will to prepare Union for enlargement, to democratize it, and to strengthen its institutions. Thirdly, there was also a will to address the dissatisfaction of some opinion makers who criticised the European democratic deficit. Finally, one of the most important arguments of the federalists was the inability of European nations to act constructively in the Balkan war. They were demoralized that it had taken decisive intervention from the US to bring this European war to an end.

The federal spirit and the political calculations of some Member States led to the creation of the Convention on the Future of Europe after the Laeken Declaration. Former French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing (a liberal) was nominated president of the Convention, along with two vice-presidents: Giuliano Amato (a socialist former prime minister of Italy) and Jean-Luc Dehaene (a Christian democrat former prime minister of Belgium).

The Convention was a new method of cooperation in the EU. It was first used during the preparation of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights (in 2000–2001), the success of which prompted its use again in the constitutional debate. The convention consisted of delegates chosen by the Member States (and candidate states), as well as the European Parliament and the Commission. Although the idea of a European constitution was very much present in the public debate, the European leaders who called the Convention certainly weren't aiming for one and it thus came as a surprise when Valery Giscard d'Estaing at the opening ceremony declared that his aim was "a broad consensus on a single proposal for a constitutional treaty for Europe" (Norman 2005, p.313).

The political debate on the European constitutionalism is beyond the scope of this thesis, therefore I will limit myself to underlining only the most important

consequences linked to the preparation of the European constitutional treaty.[37] There was a sense that a new kind of European polity was emerging and becoming more and more sovereign because of the process of sovereignty pooling by the Member States. There was also disagreement over whether the EU should become a German-style federation or a federation of nations states (expressly preferred by the French). In any case, for the authors of the new treaty it was clear that a new form of political power in Europe was emerging.

Those who were in favour of the constitution were clearly referring to the American constitutional experience. This reference can be found in the name of the group working on the constitution proposal ("the Convention", mirroring the American Constitutional Convention) as well as the language and imaginary of American constitutionalism clearly present both in the pieces written by politicians (Johannes Rau, Guy Verhofstadt, Joschka Fischer) and intellectuals (Luuk van Middelaar, Larry Siedentop).

The conflict over the reference to Christianity and God[38]

Constitutions, among other functions, often define collective identity – the very self-understanding – of the society that enacts it. This is why for many actors in the process of European integration it was important not only to concentrate on the power division and the protection of fundamental rights, but also on the spiritual and cultural dimension of the constitution. The most hotly-debated question concerning European identity and its spiritual character referred to the reference to God (the so-called *invocatio Dei*) and the Christian heritage of Europe. Below, I will present the preferences of actors in this conflict and, subsequently, the story of the debates on this issue.

[37] There was a controversy over the very name of the act: the integrationists were in favour of calling it 'a constitution', while the intergovernmentalists were calling it the 'constitutional treaty'.

[38] The course of the Convention proceedings is reconstructed here on the basis of the book by Peter Norman "Accidental Constitution" (2005) and interviews with people involved in the Convention (Giuliano Amato, Guy Milton).

Preferences of Member States and European Institutions

In favour

The strongest proponents of the reference to God and/or the Christian heritage of Europe were Catholic countries with relatively high weekly church attendance: Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and Spain (before José Luis Zapatero came to power). These countries initially wanted a reference to Christianity in the first articles of the constitution that defined the purpose of the Union. This was also the position of the European People's Party (Christian democrat) political group in the European Parliament, though not all the MEPs from this political group supported it (French MEPs were mainly against). The strongest voice in favour came of course from the Vatican. John Paul II issued an exhortation "Ecclesia in Europa" in which he stressed the Christian roots of Europe and the role of Catholic founding fathers in the whole process. He also expressed his sorrow that Europe was losing its memory and "many Europeans give the impression of living without spiritual roots and somewhat like heirs who have squandered a patrimony entrusted to them by history" (John Paul II, 2003). The Pope's position was clear, though hardly radical. He was unwilling to start a culture war for the sake of the reference to God. In "Ecclesia in Europa", he also recalled his own encyclical "Centessimus Annus", where he wrote that the Church "is not entitled to express preferences for this or that institutional or constitutional solution" (John Paul 1991).

Against

Europe at the time of the Convention was governed mostly by the leftist governments which were against the reference. The right-wing government in France was unlike most centre-right parties in so fat as it was also against the reference in the name of laicité as the non-negotiable value for the republic. At the same time, Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain (with its established Church), Finland, Slovenia, and Sweden

did not want the reference to God either, nor to Christian heritage. This coalition consisting of left-wing governments and France finally tipped the balance to resolve the dispute.

They had strong backing in the European institutions. The Party of European Socialists, along with the Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe and the European Greens supported this view. This view was also represented by the European Commission under the Romano Prodi presidency, also a socialist.

Not sure

There were also countries that could accept either solution. It was also a meaningful group, as it contained the biggest European country and a trend-setter, Germany. Apart from Germany, also Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, and Luxembourg did not have a clear preference.

Events

Valery Giscard d'Estaing, the former president of France, had the ambition to be the Madison of the convention, the founding father of the emerging polity. He outlined his conception of the history of Europe in a speech held in front of the "conventionelles" (as he called the members of the Convention)[39] which was very like the shape of the preamble he proposed in the lead up to the Convention:

> Let us not forget that from the ancient world of Greece and Rome until the age of the Enlightenment, our continent has made the fundamental contributions to humanity: reason, humanism, and freedom. (cited in Norman 2005, p.67)

[39] He said at the Convention's opening ceremony: Let us not forget that from the ancient world of Greece and Rome until the age of Enlightenment, our continent has made the fundamental contributions to humanity: reason, humanism and freedom. Cited in (Norman 2005, p.67)

This produced anxiety among the groups who wanted to see a reference to God/Christianity in the preamble. Yet, religion was hardly mentioned in the proceedings of the Convention in the first ten months of its proceedings,[40] apart from the so called "listening phase**"** when the members of the convention listened to representatives of the European NGOs lobbying for certain issues. Among these NGOs, there was a group from the COMECE (European Commission of Bishops Conferences, the representation of the Catholic Church) and the CEC (Conference of European Churches, the representation of protestant and orthodox churches in Brussels). These two lobbied for inclusion in the constitutional treaty of the declaration from the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), which says that: "The Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States".[41] Later these organizations sent letters to the President of the Convention reiterating their views on this issue. At the same time, in the listening phase, the European Humanist Federation –an organization lobbying for the anti-religious laicist form of secularism (in my typology) – was also pushing for no reference to religious heritage of Europe.

The issue started to be clearer when the presidium presented the skeleton of the Treaty, essentially its first draft. The skeleton contained no reference to God, religion or the religious heritage of Europe whatsoever. The members of the convention (for example Edwin Teufel from the CDU) expressed their disappointment about this development. The skeleton also attracted the attention of Pope John Paul II who invited Valery Giscard d'Estaing (a Catholic himself) to the Vatican and tried to persuade him of the importance of Christianity for the fate of Europe.[42]

The actions of the pro-reference side also prompted the anti-reference group to action. Josep Borrel issued an open letter entitled "Let's leave God out of this" in which was an expressive example of the self-consciousness of the anti-reference side:

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[40] My interview with Giuliano Amato (9.05.2013). The fact that religion was not a topic at the Convention for most part was also mentioned in (Norman 2005)

[41] This happened on 25 June 2002.

[42] The meeting took place on 31 October 2002.

The Pope's demand, adopted by the European Popular Party and by some social-democrat representatives, would mean, in my opinion, an important change in a political project which is inherently secular from the beginning, and must remain being so, with even stronger reasons, in the future (…). [T]he treaties that have conformed the Union have not included until now any express reference to religious values, nor to any heritage of any origin, maybe because they all comprehended elements that were better forgotten, and because the history of Europe is too full of religious conflicts. On the other hand, the EU is a group of States that have established links among themselves based on totally lay accords and institutions. This was the only way to build a shared future for communities with catholic, orthodox or protestant Christian dominants, among which there are already 10 million Muslims and only a 15% of the population is practising. It is obvious that the European area has deep Judaeo-Christian roots, and that among the values and cultural guidelines common to the Europeans many come from Christianity (…). Nevertheless, a lot of our values have been forged against the Church or the churches. If we are to celebrate historical heritages we should remember the whole story: with its religious wars; the massacres of the Crusades; the nights of Saint Bartholomew and the Inquisition's autos-da-fé; Galileo and the forced evangelizations; the pogroms and the turning of a blind eye to fascism.

The truth is that all the values that characterise the European identity are the result of struggles and suffering. They have developed since the Greco–Roman world, the Judaic– Christian contribution, the intense contacts with the Arabic civilization, the ideals of the illustration and the social disputes generated by the industrial revolution. These values are those of freedom, democracy, tolerance, respect for human rights, equality – especially among genders – the separation of the spiritual and temporal power, solidarity, justice and social cohesion, etc. And when it comes to democracy, human rights and equality, God is a recent convert. He was comfortable for centuries with slavery, yesterday He still

> blessed Franco and He has not been unaware of the Balkan tragedy (Borrel 2002).

Borrel also advised against starting the debate again as the issue had according to him been sufficiently discussed by the convention working on the Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000– 01) which agreed to secure the freedom of thought and religion, including the right to religious education and the interdiction of religious discrimination. Borrel asserted that the debate had only been reopened because certain European countries (like Poland) were scared to lose their Catholic identity with accession to the EU. He then stated that the worst aspect of the constitutionalization of the Christian roots of Europe would mean the exclusion of the Muslims and becoming "a Christian Club". He closed his letter thus: "Let's then leave God out of this and assume Europe's responsibility in a world with both an excess of religious differences as well as a lack of respect for human rights". In late February 2003 Borrel led a group of 163 Members of the European Parliament (including 80 from the Socialist Party) who signed a resolution asking the Convention to assure that no 'direct or indirect' reference to religion or belief be included in the future Convention. It also called for the promotion of freedom of religion and the separation of church and state (Norman 2005, p.161).

Of course, the actions of the anti-reference group were not left without an answer. The pro-reference side decided to counter-balance their opponents, inter alia, by promoting the "Polish option" as a sort of a compromise between believers and non-believers. This refers to the text of the Polish preamble to the constitution adopted in 1997 and proposed by Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Poland's first non-communist prime minister and leader of the centrist Democratic Union. The German MEP (from the Christian Social Union), proposed the formula used by Mazowiecki adapted to the European context: "The Union's values include the values of those who believe in God as the source of truth, justice, good and beauty as well as of those who do not share such a belief but respect these universal values arising from other sources".

When the draft of the first ten articles of the constitution was published without mention of religion, however, the pro-reference side was disappointed for a second time. It was a disappointment, because – as mentioned before – the pro-reference side expected that in the Article 1 listing European values, objectives, goals some kind of reference would be made. It caused growing anger on the pro-reference side, but it was to a large degree discharged, as Valery Giscard-d'Estaing suggested that the religious reference would find a place in the eventual preamble: "in the preamble to the constitution there will be a reference to the spiritual values or religious heritage or whatever" (Brand, 2003). This was a source of optimism for the pro-reference side (and anxiety for the anti-reference side).

A small victory for the pro-reference side came with the second batch of the constitutional draft, including Art. 37 (then Art. I-52 in the final proposal, and Art. 17 in the Lisbon Treaty) which had already been included in the Amsterdam Treaty (as Declaration 11). Now the importance of this article increased as it was put in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. This was welcomed by the pro-reference side and strongly criticised by the secularists, for example the European Humanist Federation. Nevertheless, both sides knew that the most important battle on the symbolic legitimation of the European project would be fought over the preamble.

And so it was. On 28 May 2003, the presidium presented the first draft of the Treaty's preamble. It was clear that it had, as Norman described it, "Giscard's fingerprints all over it". The preamble mentioned the "cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe" and listed the central elements of this heritage:

> Drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, which, nourished first by the civilizations of Greece and Rome, characterised by spiritual impulse always present in its heritage and later by the philosophical currents of the Enlightenment, has embedded within the life of society its perception of the central role of the human person and his inviolable and inalienable rights, and of respect for law (…). CONV 722/03

Christianity was not included in this list of European traditions that spans from Greece and Rome to the Enlightenment. The orientation of Giscard d'Estaing was strengthened by the motto from Thucydides: "Our Constitution (…) is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the greatest number". It indicated the sources of European culture Giscard wanted to stick to. This development caused tremendous disappointment for all those who wanted the reference to God or Christianity.

The result of the disappointment was the castration of the text of the preamble of any "dense" cultural references. The next draft of the preamble contained no reference to any tradition whatsoever (i.e. the references to Greece, Rome and the Enlightenment were removed). This was the text that opened the draft TCE presented at the summit in Thessaloniki on 19–20 June 2003 and then sent to the Intergovernmental Conference whose aim was to prepare the document for a final vote of European governments.

The reference in the preamble was at that stage impossible, as the draft treaty did not contain it and some major European countries supported such a solution. Pro-reference countries did not manage to influence the anti-reference countries, as the remaining EU Member States were fine with either solution. The Vatican tried to support the pro-reference group by collecting 750,000 signatures (not so impressive given the number of practising Poles alone at that time was between 12–13 million people) for a Europe-wide petition for the inclusion of a Christian reference. As it did not bring any change, the Vatican decided to concentrate on securing Art. I-52 on the dialogue between European institutions and the churches.

The Catholic Church, without enthusiasm, came to terms with the final decision of the Convention and the IGC. The Brussels-based Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE) published a report underlining its positive aspects. The question of a preamble was evaluated with a surprising understanding: "There is no explicit reference to God nor does the term Christianity appear in the Preamble. However, it should be noted that the Churches are designated by their name in the corpus of the text (Art. I-52) which is of great importance for the

present and the future."[43] (COMECE 2005). The Catholic Church thus supported the ratification of the Treaty. It seems, then, that the debate was heated by the media and by some politicians rather than by the Catholic Church.

A similar position was adopted by Christian democratic politicians: Jacques Santer told me that:

> Allerdings gibt es kein Gottesbezug in der Präambel, wir haben jedoch vorgeschlagen, die christliche Werte in der Präambel einzubeziehen. Daneben, und das scheint mir wichtig zu sein, der Artikel I-52 (Status der Kirchen und religiösen Gemeinschaften) ganz klar ein Gesetzesbestimmung enthält, dass die Union mit der Kirchen „einen offenen, transparenten und regelmäßigen Dialog führt". Und das scheint mir wesentlich zu sein. Das ist die Anerkennung, dass die Christen insgesamt ein Bestandteil unserer zivilen Gesellschaft ist. Es ist wichtig, dass das nicht nur in einer Präambel, in einer deklamatorischen Form festgesetzt ist, aber auch als eine regelrechte Gesetzesbestimmung enthalten ist und in den Lissabonner Vertrag steht das auch drin. Das ist auch ein Zeichen, dass wir unseren christlichen Wurzeln bewusst sind.[44]

Excursion: The meaning of the dispute over the reference to Christianity

The result of the debates is in my view an instance of agnostic secularism. The laicist proposal of Valery Giscard d'Estaing lost its dense cultural character as he had to abandon references to antiquity and the Enlightenment. In my opinion, one could easily imagine another result. For example, a centre-right retired politician heading the Convention (for example Helmut Kohl or Wilfried Martens) could have pushed

[43] This was also the position adopted the Protestant churches represented in Brussels.
[44] Interview with Jacques Santer, 20.09.2011, Berlin.

forward a more explicit reference to Christianity, although in my opinion this would not change the general agnostic outcome of the Convention.

The conflict over the preamble was a conflict on the legitimacy of the European project. The European mainstream sees the legitimacy of the EU as based on certain uprooted values, rather than traditions, religions or cultures. Andrew Moravcsik, the author of one of the most influential histories of European integration, describes European values in the following way:

> Like most modern polities, the EU rests instead on pragmatic political practices consensually accepted by overlapping cultural and political groups. The true pillars of the EU – economic welfare, human rights, liberal democracy, and the rule of law – appeal to Europeans regardless of national or political identity (Moravcsik 2001, p.114).

This is how the EU perceives itself - as a depoliticized (also to a large degree deculturalized) pragmatic organization, which aims at securing the prosperity of European citizens. This view is, however, not unchallenged. Perhaps the most powerful critique of the decisions taken by the European Convention (understood rightly as a symptom of bigger cultural and spiritual decision) was Weiler's book "Un'Europa Cristiana. Un Saggio Explorativo" (Weiler 2003b). According to Weiler, there is a deep connection between the lack of a meaningful reference to Christianity and the structural problems of European integration, which Weiler is describing since the 1980s.

James Ensor, Christ's Entry into Brussels in 1899. A detail from this painting is reproduced on the cover of Weiler's "The Constitution of Europe" (1999)

Weiler's argument is threefold: 1) he sees the decision of the Convention as going against the constitutional orders of some Member States; 2) it is also an instance of the important cultural phenomenon of European "Christophobia"; 3) the decision is not only an instance of "Christophobia", but also a more general problem of European societies; namely, the attempt to escape from memory and the past. While I fully support the first and third argument, I do not agree with the second one.

Weiler's constitutional argument is the following. The constitutions of the Member States made various decisions regarding the symbols, traditions, values and sources. The French endorses laicism as one of the characteristics of the republic, while the Irish – in contrast – contains a direct reference to the Holy Trinity. The Polish, as foreshadowed above, contains yet another solution:

> We the Polish nation – all the citizens of the Republic,
> **Both those who believe in God as the source of truth, justice, good and beauty,**
> **As well as those not sharing such faith but respecting those universal values as arising from other sources,**

Equal in rights and obligations toward the common good – Poland (…).

The preamble written by Stefan Wilkanowicz and the first non-communist prime minister of Poland, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, is thought of as an acknowledgement of the pluralism within Polish society. This pluralism is praised by Weiler and presented by him as a model for a solution at the European level. The analysis of the preambles of the Member States led Weiler to the argument that the acknowledgement of the various decisions regarding the reference to God should lead to the incorporation of both solutions.

Weiler's second argument – that the decision taken by the Convention on the Future of Europe is an instance of European "Christophobia" (Weiler 2003b) – is in my opinion more problematic. This would be convincing if one looked only at Giscard's draft preamble. Here one can see that he was to a large degree channelling the French tradition of the anti-religious Enlightenment. The lack of Christianity on the list of Europe's shaping traditions and the explicit reference to the Enlightenment is an instance of such a position. However, this was not the final text. The final text, as I argued above, was cleansed of cultural references, which in my opinion is a victory for agnostic secularism and its project of depoliticizing religion. Another instance of the agnostic solution was in my opinion the dialogue article (I-52 in the TCE and Art. 17 in the Lisbon Treaty).

However, Weiler's argument is broader. For him, the EU's "Christophobia" is just one instance of a broader cultural phenomenon of European "Christophobia", a contempt for Christian religion. According to Weiler, this might be seen, inter alia, as a result of misleading views on the Christian response to the Holocaust, on Christianity as the part of the European status quo, and the rigid stance of the Catholic church (in particular) on the issues of sexual ethics (which clearly departs from the dominant model present in Western culture since the 1960s). This broader description of "Christophobia" is in my understanding a part of the laicist anti-religious tradition that is strongly present in some Member States (especially France, but to a certain degree also Italy, Spain, Belgium) and marginally in European institutions (for example in the

European Parliament Group for Secularism in Politics). The argument of this chapter is that while this stance is present in Brussels, it is not the dominant one.

The third argument of Weiler is closer to the view presented here. Europe has an issue with its memory and history. The Union is an attempt to escape the difficult past (often for good reasons), but it has sometimes led to problematic results. One example is the attempt of former colonial powers to overcome guilt through certain European policies without the ability to stand face to face with its own past. This is for sure also true for European agnostic secularism. Its liberal underpinning is rooted in the fear of religious wars, religious zeal, the alleged affinity of religion with violence and intolerance, but also a panic/fear of any form of nationalism.

The uneasiness of liberalism with respect to memory is often criticized in a classic argument of the republican critique of the liberal tradition. The adherence to certain values (like for example human rights) without putting emphasis on its roots is a classical liberal stance which stresses its universalism and does not want to deal with particularism. This might explain the reasons behind Europe's uneasiness with its Christian heritage. The rejection of memory is often portrayed as the reason why Europe has a problem with building a sense of community beyond economic interests.

One of the liberal-democratic answers to the question of the bond between citizens is, according to some scholars, the idea of constitutional patriotism. This is promoted by, among others, Dolf Sternberger, Jürgen Habermas and (in a different way) Jan-Werner Mueller. Contrary to republican projects, memory is here rather a negative point of reference:

> In the German context, constitutional patriotism has contained strong doses of what, by way of shorthand, I shall call "memory" and "militancy." Memory here refers primarily to a self-critical remembering of the Holocaust and the Nazi past; militancy, on the other hand, has been shown toward the enemies of democracy, mostly through judicial means such as banning political parties and restricting free speech. In other words, a militant democracy is explicitly not neutral about its own principles and values—and puts in place strong checks

> on those hostile (or perceived as hostile) to them (…). I want to argue that memory and militancy were not accidental forms of particularity associated with constitutional patriotism; rather, there is an inherent normative connection to the universalist kernel of constitutional patriotism (Mueller 2007).

Contrary to the initial connection of constitutional patriotism solely with the German context, Jürgen Habermas universalized it by defining it as "rationalizing collective identities" which, as Mueller explains, meant "distancing itself from inherited beliefs", distancing from the power of tradition:

> Tradition means, after all, that we continue something as unproblematic, which others have started and demonstrated. We normally imagine that these 'predecessors,' if they stood before us face to face, could not completely deceive us, that they could not play the role of a *deus malignus*. I for one think that this basis of trust has been destroyed by the gas chambers (cited in (Mueller 2007, p.33).

Jan-Werner Mueller in his "Constitutional Patriotism" contemplates the idea of European constitutional patriotism and shows which conditions would have to be fulfilled to speak of it:

> Broadening a European constitutional patriotism to include "mnemonic elements" would require one of two possible processes (or perhaps even both): first, European countries commit themselves to a separate national "working through the past," in the name of shared universal principles (…). Europe-wide constitutional patriotism— this is the second possible process—might be more demanding than a series of apparently national instantiations of the politics of regret: it seems that it would have to include "new pasts" for each member. This could mean that Europeans acknowledge the collective memories of other countries, strange as that might sound initially (Mueller 2007, pp.100-101).

Mueller also notes that the memory of Europe-wide atrocities (again, the past as a negative point of reference) was one of the fundaments of the European project.

> Not least, the EU itself has always been a kind of monument to the Second World War. It's not simply starry-eyed, pro-European rhetoric to say that it was the memory of the War which animated the likes of Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer and Alcide de Gasperi; it's also not rhetoric to point out that the likes of Helmut Kohl still pursued a fusion of European interests on the basis of memories of large-scale violence and atrocity. The fact that these memories often remained hidden behind the language of technocracy and economic benefits does not detract from the actual motives of the founders (and subsequent re-founders) of the Union (Mueller 2007, p.105).

It is also important that the constitutional dispute revealed the weakness of those who would like to see the EU as a simple continuation of the Enlightenment – not only because a simple reference to the Enlightenment was also eradicated. More important is perhaps the lack of references to the "rational" origins of the European project, the reference to reason is also not a central part of the preamble.

Once again, it seems that both the traditions of the Enlightenment and of Christianity lose with the triumph of the liberal tradition. What is more, it seems also that these two traditions often coexist – if one is eradicated, the other one also gets lost – a surprising outcome when one thinks of the relationship between both traditions in the past. Therefore, some philosophical post-secularists seem to have a point in their claim that post-secularism is a project prompting us to re-engage with reason by engaging with faith that thus defends the tradition of the Enlightenment. They indicate that, in the European context, the only way to successfully defend the Enlightenment is through Christianity (Bielik-Robson & Sosnowski 2013).

Islam, Turkey, and the Boundaries of Europe

The debate on Islam in the context of European integration has rarely been a debate about Islam per se, but rather about Europe – its boundaries, values and identity. It is a debate on the extent to which Europe is defined by Christianity, the Enlightenment, or perhaps just a common market and currency. It is a paradoxical dispute in many respects given that agnostic Europe often forgets its agnosticism when it comes to Islam and takes firmly one of the more radical stances: either Christian-conservative secularism or laicist secularism. This is, however, true more for the general public debate than the European institutions. Indeed, the EU constantly attempts to depoliticize religion whenever possible, although it seems to be more and more difficult due to the unprecedented politicization of Islam in the public debate.

The debate on Islam was for a long time framed in national terms (except for the accession of Turkey to the EU), but since the Arab Spring, it has entered the debates on the common European foreign policy (or rather the elements of foreign policy). The issue of migrants (and refugees) became a problem linked to the EU only with the growing numbers arriving in the second decade of the twenty-first century. It seems that now it will remain as a constant – and potentially the most important – context for European debates on Islam. The issue of European boundaries and the following question of the European other and its connection to European identity is linked not only with Islam, of course. Islam has meaningful predecessors. In the first phase of integration it was for sure the Soviet Union that constituted an important (in most cases) a negative reference point (Kaiser 2007; Moyn 2013). For some left-wing intellectuals, it has been, on the other hand, the USA which served as the "other" (the peak of such an attitude was perhaps the American intervention in Iraq).

In this chapter, I will briefly sketch the emergence of the question of Islam as the European other in the debates surrounding the Turkish accession to the EU, then I will look at the debates surrounding Muslim immigration to Western Europe and, subsequently, the 2015 refugee crisis. The refugee crisis gives me the pretext to write about the reinvigoration of the

drift between Christian-conservative and Christian democratic reaction to Islam. At the end of this chapter, as a sort of conclusion, I will look at the question of the European other and assess the extent to which Islam plays such a role in the European social imaginary. My argument in this chapter is that the EU has not yet found a way to engage with the question of Islam. Fervent religiosity, not only in its Muslim version, is a huge challenge to the European agnostic religiopolitical order, in which religion is the "significant other".

The accession of Turkey

> *He is a weak ruler who needs religion to uphold his government; it is as if he would catch his people in a trap. My people are going to learn the principles of democracy, the dictates of truth, and the teachings of science.*
>
> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Turkey was among the first countries to seek close cooperation with the European Economic Community having applied for an associate member status just one year after it came into existence in 1958. The association agreement ("the Ankara agreement") was signed in 1963 and contained an obligation to gradually develop the customs union between the EEC and Turkey, although it would take until 1995 for this to be concluded. The Ankara agreement also included the possibility of application for membership by Turkey. The accession application was submitted by the Turkish government in 1987, but negotiations began only in 2005. These long waiting periods already indicate how difficult it has been for European institutions to take decisions on the status of Turkey. After twelve years, only one chapter (out of thirty-three) has been closed.[45]

[45]https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/turkey_en (Last viewed 17.04.2017).

It is beyond doubt that the issue of religion has played a major role in this hesitation. The other reasons, if not directly linked, are often associated with the question of Islam, especially the problem of Turkish democracy and the respect for minorities. Another issue, though probably less salient then the others, is the question of size. Turkey would be the second biggest EU country in terms of population and its accession would completely change the balance of power in the EU.

Turkish exceptionalism: *laiklik*

Turkey is a very special case when it comes to the relations between religion and politics. It is both a Muslim country and at the same time a country that has sought for a century to be "European". Europeanness in Turkish case seems to be associated with the Enlightenment (and with positivist rationality in particular), rather than Christianity. Moreover, one of the proxies of "Europeanness" for Turkey is the laicist form of secularism.

After 1922, when Mustafa Kemal Atatürk emerged as Turkey's undisputed leader, the nation underwent huge political and cultural transformation that aimed to bring it closer to Europe, with much of the reform based on the model of the French republican model. One of the most central features of this process was the introduction of the new principle structuring the relations between religion and politics inspired by French *laicité*, translated into modern Turkish as *laiklik*. It would be a mistake, however, to think that French and Turkish forms of secularism are identical. They are, in fact, very different. The French 1905 law on separation of church and state ensured both a very strict separation between the Catholic Church and state and the "free exercise of religion". It did not satisfy the supporters of an anti-religious laicist form of secularism, nor those who did want a special position of the Church. The Turkish form of secularism is different. As Olivier Roy notes: "He [Atatürk] chose not the separation of church and state but the control of religion by the state (the imams are under an office of religious affairs, the Diyanet, that pays their salaries and even composes sermons)" (Roy 2007, p.28). That would mean that it is perhaps closest

to the Gallican form of secularism (see: Chapter 1). It's clear, however that Turkey's approach to secularism was largely inspired by the Enlightenment critique of religion.[46]

The Turkish version of laicist secularism was legally introduced in 1928, as an amendment to the constitution removing the article establishing Islam as the Turkish state religion. It was accompanied by a series of reforms imposing a non-religious character of the state. Atatürk tried to impose a Western model of life in various spheres: schooling, economy, medicine, and more. In every one of these domains Kemalism promoted "positivism, not superstition". Kemal also sought empowerment for women through universal suffrage and promoted Western attire, which differed from the traditional Ottoman clothing style both for men and women. *Laiklik* was officially introduced to the Turkish constitution in 1938 and was reiterated in its new version in 1982.

Since Atatürk, Turkey has not been a stable country having undergone four direct military interventions, often linked with the issue of religion. The military has been seen as the strongest supporter of the strict separation between religion and politics. During the last successful military intervention in 1997, General Çevik Bir, involved in the planning of the coup, wrote about the link between military and secularism in a metaphoric way:

> In Turkey, we have a marriage of Islam and democracy. The child of this marriage is secularism. Now this child gets sick from time to time. The Turkish Armed Forces is the doctor who saves the child. Depending on how sick the kid is we administer the necessary medicine to make sure the child recuperates.[47]

As a result, the Islamist Welfare Party lost power and it became very strictly secular once again. Restrictions on the freedom of religion at that time was so harsh that even the mayor of Istanbul was imprisoned for reciting a poem deemed to have breached

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[46] This was the point of view of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey: his secularism was very militant and would have been openly antireligious had the influence of Islam in his country not compelled him to be more cautious. (Roy 2007, pp.27-28)

[47] http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/ataturk-versus-erdogan-turkeys-long-struggle 15.11

secular principles. He was released couple of months later and became a leader of the modern Islamist movement, and subsequently prime minister of Turkey. Today, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is Turkey's president.

In the period of Erdoğan's premiership and then presidency, EU–Turkey relations have gone from a high-point (around 2005) to a period of intense chill (since 2013). Erdoğan's attempt to restrict the influence of Kemalism and his support of a kind of neo-Ottoman identity for Turkey – a vision of the Turkish empire inspired by the Ottoman period and a reinvented Islamic identity – has seen the nation turn away from its European vocation.

Turkey and the European Communities

A longing for the West was clearly part of Turkish identity even before Atatürk. One could go back to the nineteenth century and the reforms of Ottoman empire carried out then. It is therefore not a surprise that Turkey already in the 1960s looked for a closer cooperation with the European Communities. The cooperation through the Communities could have only been at that time of economic nature as the European project (although with clear political ends) was mainly present in economic matters. Therefore, the question of cooperation with Turkey was at first not a controversial one. The issue became much more problematic in the 1980s when it started to be clear that the European Communities were getting more and more political and cultural significance. And it was then when Turkey officially applied for the membership in 1987. From the beginning, it was commonly accepted that the membership was not a close future. The work of the European Commission was concentrated on the customs union – the goal of the association agreement of 1963. It was eventually signed only in 1995 and began a period of intense cooperation between Turkey and the European Union.

Turkey was recognised as a candidate country in 1999 (with some hesitation because of the 1997 coup). In 2002, the Council stated that it would begin negotiations

were Turkey to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria.[48] The Copenhagen Summit marked the heyday of Turkish–EU relations: a series of actions was undertaken by the Turkish side to fulfil the membership criteria or just to show its commitment to "European values": the abolition of death penalty, better treatment of minorities, some gestures indicating responsibility for the Armenian genocide. Not all the actions were required by the Copenhagen Criteria. Some of them, like the recognition of guilt for the Armenian genocide, were seen as a step towards Europeanness in a more general sense. Working through national history was seen as a part of this.

In 2005, the negotiations began, with some restrictions because Turkey had not fulfilled the protocol to the Ankara Association agreement with regard to Cyprus. It was then, however, when the Turkish membership became real. And it was also then when it started to be really contested. As long as it was the European Commission that was dealing with mostly economic issues, the question of Turkish association/membership was treated as "low politics". The first one who changed the tone was the President of the Convention on the Future of Europe ("the constitutional convention"), Valery Giscard d'Estaing.

Giscard d'Estaing in 2002 said that Turkey joining the EU would mean "the end of Europe", because Turkey was a part of "different culture, different mentality, and different way of living". It meant that the French vision of laicité which underlined the need to decouple religion and politics changes direction when confronted with the question of Islam. The republican liberal laicité gave way to the paradoxical mixture of anti-religious laicism and Christian-conservative secularism. It has lost its universalist character and underlined essentially Christian boundaries of Europe, a rather surprising point of view if one considers Giscard's position on the presence of Christianity in the preamble of the European Constitutional Treaty.

[48] "Membership requires that candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union." In PRESIDENCY CONCLUSIONS Copenhagen European Council, 21–22 June 1993.

Giscard d'Estaing was not the only one. Helmut Schmidt, former German social-democratic chancellor, said that Turkey was not fit to join, as it belongs to a different civilization and that if Turkey joins, it will turn into "into nothing more than a free trade community". Also Frits Bolkestein, Dutch conservative politician and EU commissioner was against the idea saying that "the American Islam expert Bernard Lewis has said that Europe will be Islamic at the end of this century. I do not know if this is right, or whether it will be at that speed, but if he is right, the liberation of Vienna in 1683 would have been in vain." Ian Buruma portrayed Bolkestein as one of the first politicians clearly changing the liberal line of the European mainstream with respect to Islam. Interestingly, Buruma suggests that his main axiological reference was not Christendom (as it theoretically should be when one refers to the battle of Vienna), but the Enlightenment:

> Bolkestein, a former business executive with intellectual interests that set him apart from most professional politicians, was the first mainstream politician to warn about the dire consequences of accepting too many Muslim immigrants, whose customs clashed with "our fundamental values." Certain values, he claimed, such as gender equality, or the separation of church and state, are not negotiable. We met on several occasions in Amsterdam, and when it was time to part he would invariably say: "We must talk more next time about the lack of confidence in Western civilization." Like Afshin Ellian, he frets about European weakness. That is why he worries about the possibility of Turkey, with its 68 million Muslims, joining the European Union. For it would, in his view, spell the end of Europe, not as a geographical entity, but as a community of values born of the Enlightenment. (Buruma 2006, p.29)

The three most influential countries in the EU behaved differently with respect to Turkey and the issue of religion. France was against on "civilizational" grounds. Germany was generally more open, but at the end of the day quite reluctant. Great Britain was conversely very much in favour of Turkish accession as this would help

create the old British dream of Europe as a single market area. These arguments were often reinforced by the participation in the debate of scholars and public intellectuals like Samuel Huntington who thought of Turkey as a country torn between its Muslim background and Western culture. And one that should abandon the Western ambitions and try to become a leader of the Muslim world – its "civilizational destiny" (Huntington 1997).

Interestingly, the mainstream of Brussels was not touched by the "culture talk" on Turkish membership. It did not see a problem in Turkish religiosity, at first. Also, Christian democrats were not against it, although the CDU gradually was more and more sceptical. The EPP was hoping that cooperation with Erdoğan's AKP would bring positive results, as Erdoğan was convincing them that he was doing a similar job that of Adenauer and de Gasperi in reconciling democracy with religion. This opened a brief period of cooperation during the years 2002–2004 between the EPP and the AKP, when there was a hope to create a "Muslim democracy" that would be paired with European Christian democracy.[49] The abolition of the death penalty in 2002 was a major symbolic step towards Europe, as at this time Turkey was the only Muslim-majority nation to have done so. These hopes were of course doomed, when Erdoğan started to pursue authoritarian policies using nationalistic and imperialistic rhetoric.[50]

The relatively open climate towards Turkey in Brussels was, however, changed by the reality of member states' politics, which eventually resulted in the reluctance of Brussels. The reluctance was accompanied by the disappointment of the Turkish side and the growing authoritarian tendencies of the Erdoğan's government, which resulted in the slowing down of the negotiations. As mentioned above, they went very bad indeed as during the five years of negotiations only one chapter was closed.

The relationship between the European Communities and Turkey was revived for purely political reasons during the migration crisis of 2015. Turkey emerged as the key actor to restrict the influx of refugees to Europe, as the majority of immigrants

[49] Since 2013, the AKP has been a member of the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe, a pan-European party containing, among others British conservatives and the Polish Law and Justice party.

[50] The term "Muslim democracy" was then rediscovered in Tunisia, after the Islamists there accepted a certain form of secularism. See (Netterstrøm 2015)

got to the EU from there, especially those coming from Syria (which has exceeded 2.7 million people). This is why Angela Merkel and Donald Tusk struck a deal with Erdoğan whereby he agreed to keep the migrants in Turkey in exchange for money and political favours. A joint EU–Turkey Action Plan was activated in November 2015 and one of its main aims was to break up the business model of people smugglers. The warming of mutual relations, however, cooled once again after the political repressions which Erdoğan undertook after the failed coup in 2016. The establishment of the Turkey Refugee Facility allowed the EU to keep migrants in Turkey and, at times, help them there. The total budget of the facility is €3 billion for the period 2016–2017[51].

The question of the unprecedented influx of migrants enhanced the debate on the nature of Islam and its compatibility with Europeanness. The following subsection will be devoted to the issue of Muslim migrants in Europe.

Muslim immigration and the fear of Islam

Muslim immigrants started to be visible in many European countries in the 1980s. For the first time, European societies understood that the massive immigration would change their cultures. Before then, it had been a question that did not really matter socially as the newcomers were treated as *Gastarbeiter*. Moreover, the problem not associated with European integration but with the policies of European states, as immigration policy has never been a competence of the European Communities. This marks a big difference with the debate in the first two decades of the twenty-first century whereby the European dimension has very much been present, especially with respect to the crisis/end of multiculturalism announced by some European leaders (Angela Merkel, David Cameron).

Post-war immigration was not by chance seen by sociologists as a fundamental challenge to the nation-states of the West, which have "compelled these countries to

[51] More information here: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/migration_en

reinvent themselves as nation-states", as Roger Brubaker put it (Brubaker & States 1989, p.1) from (Joppke 1999, p.3). While Brubaker thought that a nation-state is still the only legitimate political form, Yasemin Soysal suggested that in a globalized world, states will lose ground to post-national constellations, such as the European Union. Christian Joppke rejects both positions:

> Neither is the nation-state simply reaffirmed by recent migratory challenges, nor is it undergoing fundamental transformation. We can observe both, a stubborn insistence of states to maintain control over their borders and increasing human-rights constraints on traditional sovereignty; a proliferation of membership categories and pressures to remould them as unitary citizenship; a persistence of distinct national models of handling (and containing) ethnic diversity and multicultural pressures on the monocultural texture of nations. (Joppke 1999, p.4)

After almost two decades after Joppke's study was published, nation-states are still between these two processes: the need to control external borders and the pressure to keep human rights constraints from different social groups. If one were to choose which pressure was stronger in the twenty-first century, one would probably indicate the pressure to restrict immigration, but the human rights concern was also very strong and often linked with European integration.

Why is it so important for the study of the relationship between religion and politics in the European project? Mostly because a large part of the immigration to West European states after World War II was Muslim. It was not only the religion of newcomers that mattered a great deal, it was also their religiosity; namely, a relatively high level of religious practices as opposed to the decreasing number of practising Christians in the Western societies. What is more, this incongruence was even stronger because of the growing visibility of religious markers: "an optic illusion", as Olivier Roy calls it in "Holy Ignorance" (Roy 2015, p.5) or "the return of the sacred", as Daniel Bell called it (1977).

The beginning of the massive influx of immigrants from Muslim countries was marked by a mixture of the economic and moral reasons. On the one hand, the growing European economy needed a lot of workforce and it obtained it mostly from the Muslim countries, with Germany being perhaps the best-known example. The initial idea was to provide growing German economy with cheap workforce, the idea that "guest" workers would work for some years and then go back to the home country. The reality, however, was different. Most of the *Gasterbeiter* stayed and brought their families to Germany as the Basic Law allowed for "family unification". Officially, the recruitment was stopped in 1973 (partially due to the world economic crisis), but the number of immigrants remained high mostly because of families joining husbands and fathers working in Germany.

The decision to accept big groups of Muslim immigrants was, however, not purely economic, it was also - in some countries - a moral decision. Former colonial powers admitted many citizens of their former colonies, as in the case of the Netherlands and France. The decision turned out to be fateful and changed the landscape of European cities. As Ian Buruma notes regarding the Netherlands (but it's true for many other places in Europe):

> Slowly, almost without anyone's noticing, old working-class Dutch neighbourhoods lost their white populations and were transformed into "dish cities" linked to Morocco, Turkey, and the Middle East by satellite television and the Internet. Gray Dutch streets filled up, not only with satellite dishes, but with Moroccan bakeries, Turkish kebab joints, travel agents offering cheap flights to Istanbul or Casablanca, and coffeehouses filled with sad-eyed men in djellabas whose health had often been wrecked by years of dirty and dangerous labor. Their wives, isolated in cramped modern apartment blocks, usually failed to learn Dutch, had little knowledge of the strange land in which they had been dumped, sometimes to be married to strange men, and had to be helped in the simplest tasks by their children, who learned faster how to cope without necessarily feeling at home. (Buruma 2006, p.20)

The rise and fall of multiculturalism

Western Europe was not prepared for the new situation. It did not have answers to the question of integration between the majorities of its societies and the newcomers. Out of this lack of response, two positions emerged regarding integration: multiculturalism and French-style republicanism. Though both were also often used to label the lack of action on the side of the governments, rather than as specified programmes. While Great Britain, Sweden and the Netherlands are widely regarded as countries that have adopted a multicultural set of policies (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010), a prime example of the republican approach is France.

Multicultural policies assume the recognition of ethnic and religious difference, support for ethnic and religious minorities (including funding consultative bodies representing these minorities), respect for various dress codes, cultural exceptions in law (Sikhs being allowed to wear turbans also when working as policemen), permission and support for the establishment of places of worship, allowance of ritual slaughter (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010, p.3). One of the architects of multicultural policies was Roy Jenkins, British Home Office minister (and later president of the European Commission) who famously said that Britain seeks a form of integration defined not as "flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity, coupled with cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance" (R. Jenkins 1967, p.267). The republican model, on the contrary, does not differentiate between races and religions. The state is officially indifferent towards the race, religion and other cultural artefacts. It is based on the "civic individualism" whereby the individual (not the group) is the focus of rights.

In the second half of the first decade of the twenty-first century, academics and public intellectuals began to criticize the multicultural model with the growing presence of difference–above all, religious difference – making majorities uncertain about the fate of their nations, their culture, and also their economic well-being. At the same time, the leading European politicians – Nicolas Sarkozy, Angela Merkel, and

David Cameron in particular –started to criticize "multiculturalism" and proclaim its death. Cameron, interestingly enough, was the only one actually leading a country with clearly defined multicultural policies.

The link between multiculturalism and Europe, although without solid political grounds, was clearly made by the European societies:

> Some politicians, such as Frits Bolkestein, then leader of the free-market conservatives, or WD, did raise the matter, as did a left-wing sociologist named Paul Scheffer in an explosive essay entitled "The Multicultural Drama." Bolkestein warned of clashing values. Scheffer analyzed the dangers of isolated, alienated foreign communities undermining the social cohesion of Dutch society. Both were denounced as racists. To see massive immigration as a problem at all was, in respectable circles, worse than bad taste; it was like questioning the European ideal or racial equality. The twin evils of World War II, as everyone knew, were nationalism and racism. Any hint of a revival would have to be squashed at once. This was understandable, perhaps even laudable. But it didn't stop many people from feeling that Europeanism and multiculturalism were the ideals of a complacent elite, of the modern-day regenten. (Buruma 2006, p.53)

Buruma later explained that people were waiting for a politician who would answer these anxieties. In the Dutch context, this man was Pim Fortuyn who spoke of the EU as a soul-less body, linking it with the idea of multiculturalism:

> Like many people, in France as well as in the Netherlands, who voted against the proposed constitution for the European Union in 2005, Fortuyn thought of Europe as a place without a soul, an abstraction that appealed only to top politicians, elite cultural figures, international businessmen, Our Kind of People on a European scale. In his vision, a national community should be like a family, which shares the same language, culture, and history. Foreigners who arrived

> with their own customs and traditions disturbed the family- state. "How dare you!" he fulminated against such aliens in one of his columns: "This is our country, and if you can't conform, you should get the hell out, back to your own country and culture." What mattered in the ideal family-state wasn't class, it was "what we want to be: one people, one country, one society. (Buruma 2006, p.67)

The attitude towards migrants was also, to a certain degree, a result of the fact that they became "a mirror image of what they themselves once had been":

> The fact that many Europeans, including Fortuyn, were less liberated from religious yearnings than they might have imagined, made the confrontation with Islam all the more painful. This was especially true of those who considered themselves to be people of the Left. Some swapped the faiths of their parents for Marxist illusions, until they too ended in disillusion. The religious zeal of immigrants was a mirror image of what they themselves once had been. (Buruma 2006, p.69)

The question of the veil

Perhaps the clearest example of the problem with Islam was growing discomfort with the visibility of its symbols in the public sphere. The controversy over the veil (hijab) began in September 1989 when three girls refused to remove scarves in a public school in Creil and they therefore suspended. The Conseil d'État two months later ruled that veils are compatible with French idea of secularism. In December, however, French Minister of Education Lionel Jospin issued a statement saying that the decision in such cases can be made by the school and is not prescribed by the state. As Jean Baubérot, advisor to Francois Mitterrand on laicité told me, the president and the first lady – Danielle Mitterrand – wanted to smoothen the controversy and accommodate the veil

in the French public sphere. As the controversies over the veil (and the growing visibility of Islam) were growing, his successor decided to take a much tougher stance.

After the controversy was renewed, Jacques Chirac decided to look once again at the problem of veils in public institutions and set up a committee led by Bernard Stasi, who was asked to issue an opinion on the religious symbols in state institutions. The decision was clear: they should be banned. Only Jean Baubérot abstained (Alain Touraine was, according to Jean Baubérot also going to do so, but finally voted in favour of such a ban).

It is not a surprise that the ban was a subject of complaints submitted the European Court of Human Rights.[52] The Court has in these cases upheld the ban, often arguing that the French authorities had not exceeded the margin of appreciation when they decided to give precedence to the principles of laicist secularism. These decisions were sometimes compared with the decision in the *Lautsi v. Italy* case, when the Court permitted crucifixes in Italian classrooms. It was criticized for tolerance towards Christian symbols and lack thereof when it comes to Islam. The European Court of Human Rights is not one of the institutions of the EU, but in the debates on European identity, it is difficult to make a clear-cut distinction between both organizations. The European Union and the Council of Europe, although the latter tends to be less laicist as the 47-member Council of Europe consists of countries where religion is more entangled with politics than in many Member States of the EU.

The laicist interpretation of secularism seemed to be strengthened by the jurisprudence of the European Court of Justice, which in March 2017 issued a joint judgement in the cases of two women (one from France and one from Belgium) who refused to remove headscarves at work. The judgement stated that "[a]n internal rule of an undertaking which prohibits the visible wearing of any political, philosophical or

[52] For the European Court on the French religious symbol law of 2004, see also *Aktas v. France* (App. No. 43563/08), *Bayrak v. France* (App. No. 14308/08), *Gamaleddyn v. France* (App. No. 18527/08), *Ghazal v. France* (App. No. 29134/08).

religious sign does not constitute direct discrimination[53]", but the ban must be based on internal company rules requiring all employees to dress neutrally.

In the whole story of Islamophobia there is one intriguing element, which should perhaps be considered: some proponents of anti-Muslim attitudes are very much against any religious zeal. Others, on the contrary are thinking that it's only Islam that is the problem. While the second option seems to be more popular in most of the European countries, the first one is more often represented in the European institutions.

The immigration crisis and the reinvigoration of Christian democracy

The role of the EU in the creation of de facto multicultural societies in Europe was marginal. It has not been in the competence of the EU to deal with the question of immigration when it was at its peak (and it is not its competence also today), but the scale of the refugee crisis of 2015 was so big and the role of the EU as a framework of European politics so meaningful that it could not be omitted.

The humanitarian crisis which was a result of the war in Syria was so intense in 2015 that thousands of refugees sought help in Europe, especially Germany. The problem started much earlier whereby the Italian island of Lampedusa as well as Greek islands were most often first destinations of illegal migrants. At some moment, the influx of refugees who walked from Greece towards Germany was incredibly high. It was a moment when German Chancellor Angela Merkel had to decide whether to let these people come or try another solution (the options were, however, very limited). She made a landmark decision of letting them enter Germany. During that period, she

[53] An internal rule of an undertaking which prohibits the visible wearing of any political, philosophical or religious sign does not constitute direct discrimination http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2017-03/cp170030en.pdf (last access: 17.04.2017)

said in an TV interview a phrase which later became the symbol of her decision: "wir schaffen das" (we'll manage that).

The EU institutions were rather on her side. European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker supported her and tried to force European states to agree to the refugee relocation mechanism, which was a way to share the burden. European Council president Donald Tusk was, on the other hand, more concentrated on external border control, probably because of the pressure from the Central and Eastern Europe which feared deculturation that would come as a result of a massive influx of Muslim immigrants.

There is a dispute over the rationale behind Merkel's decision. Some say that it was a decision made under the force of circumstances (millions of people waiting to enter Germany), others indicate the need of new labour force which is a result of a very serious demographic situation of Germany. Others, on the contrary, indicate the Christian component of her motivation. Jan-Werner Mueller suggests that it was, among others, the idea to reinvigorate the spirit of Christian-democracy:

> Merkel, herself the daughter of a Lutheran pastor, has explicitly countered the growing fear of Islam in Germany with the argument that, rather than fretting about other religions, Christian Germans should return to their roots and take their own faith more seriously. Rather than suspect Muslims of fanaticism for knowing the Koran by heart, they should take some inspiration from the example and firm up on the Bible. Merkel sees both Islam and Christianity as having a place in Germany and as springs of moral conduct. As some observers have put it, it is almost as if, after years of tranquilizing citizens through a carefully calculated politics of consensus, she has thrown down a moral challenge to her own people – and, in particular, for the 61 percent of Germans who identify as Christians actually to live their faith (…). Merkel has been most harshly criticized by Catholics (and it was Catholics who, in the recent state elections, opted for internal CDU critics of Merkel's course, whereas Protestants tended to give their vote to Greens and Social Democrats, who

support her). Some Protestants, meanwhile, think Merkel might be renewing Christian Democracy on the basis of a specifically Protestant sensibility (Mueller 2016).

Mueller juxtaposes Angela Merkel with another prominent politician of the European People's Party: Viktor Orbán. Orbán's strategy is according to Mueller a prime example of identity politics, in which Christianity is understood as a defining factor of our civilisation and the biggest differentiating element of the European civilisation. Mueller also points out to the fact that the Catholic part of the CDU was normally criticising the chancellor, while the Protestants were praising her. It would be a mistake, though, to think that it was a more general Catholic reaction: Pope Francis was the most outspoken defender of refugee's rights. We can see here very clearly the game of two Christian secularisms, a Christian democratic one – represented by Angela Merkel – and a Christian conservative one - represented by Viktor Orbán.

This difference also speaks to the differentiation between Western and Eastern Europeans regarding immigrants. Much of public opinion in the East thinks of the Western openness as a serious mistake which will result in the deculturation of these countries.

Pope Francis, refugees and the EU - an astonishing warming of relationships

The question of immigrants was one of the most important reasons why we witnessed the warming of relations between the EU institutions and the papacy. Two previous popes were not received well in Brussels while they also considered the EU as at least a partially laicist organization. Pope Benedict XVI did not want to visit the Parliament, although he was invited there several times. Pope John Paul II visited it once, but he had rather chilly relations with the leaders of the EU, including the Catholic EC President, Jacques Delors (see Chapter 3). This atmosphere has changed when Jorge

Bergoglio became Pope. His language was very different from his predecessors, although the doctrinal changes have so far been very limited.

It is therefore a bit surprising that he was welcomed by the institutions as the biggest moral authority on the continent, almost as if the chasm between the dominant European secular culture and the Catholic Church ceased to exist. He was invited to the Parliament by German social-democratic President Martin Schulz. He was also awarded the Charlemagne Prize in 2016. Extraordinarily, the ceremony took place not in Aachen, but in the Vatican and was attended by all the presidents of European institutions and many heads of state.

Pope Francis' attitude to migrants might be one of the main reasons behind this change. Migration is one of the most important issues that the Church is interested in the European context for many years (my interview with Fr. Piotr Mazurkiewicz), but Pope Francis made his brand out of it. His speech in the Parliament was not as revolutionary as one might have expected, but the subject of migration was clearly there:

> There needs to be a united response to the question of migration. We cannot allow the Mediterranean to become a vast cemetery! The boats landing daily on the shores of Europe are filled with men and women who need acceptance and assistance. The absence of mutual support within the European Union runs the risk of encouraging particularistic solutions to the problem, solutions which fail to take into account the human dignity of immigrants, and thus contribute to slave labour and continuing social tensions. Europe will be able to confront the problems associated with immigration only if it is capable of clearly asserting its own cultural identity and enacting adequate legislation to protect the rights of European citizens and to ensure the acceptance of immigrants. Only if it is capable of adopting fair, courageous and realistic policies which can assist the countries of origin in their own social and political development and in their efforts to resolve internal conflicts – the principal cause of this

phenomenon – rather than adopting policies motivated by self-interest, which increase and feed such conflicts (Francis 2014).

The other as a foundation of European identity?

"The other" is for the European thought not yet another philosophical category. It is very much present in the political debates surrounding European integration. A European "other" might mean two things. First, the EU is a post-war project – an answer to lethal European nationalisms which often looked for the "other" and labelled him as "an enemy". This is why various authors argued that the European ability to deal with "the other" should be at heart of European identity. In this scenario, the European project can be read as an attempt to overcome the classic political, cultural and psychological mechanism of self-identification through "othering". The second option is more classical. Looking for the other as a tool for self-identification. Without doubt such an other was for many in the Cold War period the Soviet Union and communism (for some also the USA). Samuel Moyn argues that the role played by the communists in the Cold War period was taken up by Muslims in the last decades.

In the debates surrounding European integration perhaps the second option has been more visible, the first one is however more deeply rooted in the consciousness of the architects of the European project. The problem is that Schmittian and Kantian way to frame "the other" are not reconcilable. Either you think of the other as an enemy or you as your neighbour. Because, as Jan-Werner Mueller puts it, "not every identity needs to primarily be c*onstructed* through the *Other*", and that's the case with the constitutional patriotism which was rather close to minds of the important players of European integration. (Mueller 2007, p.11). Two questions arise, however: is it possible to create an identity without "othering", secondly is the "Kantian" option really free from othering? Some could argue that it's the past (nationalisms, Christendom) that is defining the European others for the "Kantians".

How to deal with the "other"?

By "Kantian option" I do not mean of course that a deep reading of Kant is a foundation of the European Union. But there are some crucial categories, which fit rather well to the self-understanding of the European project. One of them is of the notion of perpetual peace. Another is the categorical imperative, the Kantian ethical guideline on how to deal with the other. Jürgen Habermas can be understood as a continuator of Kantian ethics regarding the European Union. Habermas wanted to extend his theory of constitutional patriotism from Germany to Europe, suggesting that it would be the best option for the post-national constellation, as he envisaged the EU. One of the focal points of this attitude would be the attitude to "the other":

> An "acknowledgement of differences – the acknowledgement of the Other in her Otherness – can also become a common feature of a common identity for Europe" (cited in Boon 2007).

This European ability is according to Habermas a result of the European history:

> Due to these historical experiences Europe more than any other culture, has confronted deep structural conflicts and tensions in the social [and] temporal dimensions (Habermas 2006, p.104).

On the other hand, Habermas also understands that there is a need to distinguish between members and non-members of a political community and therefore proposes a paradoxical solution: the distinctive feature is an ability to deal with the other, to include the other. This ability seems to be a sign of political distinctive identity of Europeans. There is also another problem with this idea: such a basis for European identity which entails dealing with the other and excluded othering is built as an opposition to nation-states and perhaps Christianity. Therefore, the past seems to be in such a reading "the other". It is mostly the nationalist past, but in some cases also the religious past.

The problem with the nationalist past is of course the fact that the EU consists of states, and their weakness might also be damaging for the EU. It is still the most effective political form that the West has discovered. It is, after all, only in the context of nation-states that we can speak

of the biggest achievements of the West: modern democracy, the rule of law and the real protection of human rights or the welfare state. The European project is working normally in the areas where it plays together with nation-states than when it is perceived as playing against them or trying to replace them (*vide* the spectacular defeat of European constitution).

There is, however, a different "other" than nation-states: Christianity. Although it is not such a direct enemy of the European project like the nationalisms, it is still seen as a part of the "bad" past that should overcome by a universal European project rooted in the Enlightenment. It is very often the case that religions and nationalisms are viewed as two sides of the same problem: fundamentalism.

Enlightenment is also more problematic than the description above is suggesting: it has also its non-Kantian, identitarian version, in which it is seen as a marker of difference between Europeans and non-Europeans:

> The conservative call for Enlightenment values is partly a revolt against a revolt. Tolerance has gone too far for many conservatives. They believe, like some former leftists, that multiculturalism was a mistake; our fundamental values must be reclaimed. Because secularism has gone too far to bring back the authority of the churches, conservatives and neo-conservatives have latched onto the Enlightenment as a badge of national or cultural identity. The Enlightenment, in other words, has become the name for a new conservative order, and its enemies are the aliens, whose values we can't share (Buruma 2006, p.34).

Carl Schmitt proposed a political idea alternative to the liberal-democratic political philosophy. He wholeheartedly attacked the liberal idea of the "depoliticization" of politics, the removal of the conflictual aspect from the political sphere. His translation of Catholic theology led him to neglect the utopian character of the liberal political order and a positive valuation of the distinction between a friend and a foe as a most basic trait of the political:

The specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy. This provides a definition in the sense of a criterion and not as an exhaustive definition in the sense of a criterion and not as an exhaustive definition or one indicative substantial content (…). The distinction of friend and enemy denotes the utmost degree of intensity of a union or separation, of an association or dissociation. It can exist theoretically and practically (…). The political enemy need not to be morally evil or aesthetically ugly; he need not appear as an economic competitor, and it may even be advantageous to engage with him in business transactions. But he is, nevertheless, the other, the stranger; and it is sufficient for his nature that he is, in a specially intense way, existentially something different and alien, so that in extreme case conflicts with him are possible. (Schmitt 2008, pp.26-27)

The Secularism of Fear and the Nature of European Integration

The title of this chapter is a reference to the key idea of agnostic secularism: namely, the liberalism of fear, a concept coined by Judith Shklar written from the perspective of a victim (Shklar, a Latvian Jew, had to flee from Latvia with her family during the Second World War). "The fear of fear does not require any further justification, because it is irreducible. It can be both the beginning and an end of political institutions such as rights", states Shklar (1998). As Stanley Hoffmann notes, the concept of liberalism of fear originates from her rejection of:

> the liberalism of the eighteenth century (…) propelled by an aggressive faith in reason and in historical progress. Shklar, who distrusted collective emotions, knew only too well the feebleness of reason pitted against or drafted by them and what had happened *after utopia* (Hoffmann 1993).

The most influential proponent of agnostic secularism, John Rawls, explicitly draws inspiration from the Shklarian concept of liberalism.

In the previous chapters I demonstrated that agnostic secularism has dominated in the process of European integration and prevailed over the Christian democratic form of secularism and the laicist republican one. In the final chapter I will present a critique of this form of secularism, drawing mostly on the philosophical literature on Europe and European integration. Some critiques presented in this chapter are not related directly to the process of European integration, but concern the agnosticism and liberalism of modern politics in Europe more generally.

The strongest critique of European agnostic liberal secularism comes from conservative circles, which above all criticize the break with the European Christian tradition, as well as the break with the political form of the nation-state. The

conservatives as a solution often propose a return to Christianity as a primary source of European identity. The republican critique is in many respects linked to the conservative one, as it also sees negative consequences of "the broken thread of tradition" which results in the decline of public virtues and the domination of the liberal idea of negative freedom which seems to override the positive one and overlooks different forms of domination.[54] The republican critique is, however, a critique which accepts the most important creeds of liberalism and would also stress more positive than negative sides of the process of European integration and its relationship with religion. The third critique – a leftist one – focuses on another aspect of agnostic liberal secularism, namely the fact that it leaves too much space to capitalism and consumerism as leading forces in the European polity.

In this final chapter I will concentrate mostly on the most developed critique of the European secular ethos - which is the conservative one, but I will also sketch both republican and leftist positions. In the final part of the chapter I will present the conclusions of this thesis and will also attempt to say what do they tell us about the nature of European integration.

Conservative critique of the European liberal ethos

It is understandable that the process of European integration has attracted the attention of conservatives given that it has undermined old ways of framing political power in Europe. By relativizing national sentiments and creating new supranational forms of political power, it was probably the most obvious object of attack by various conservatives. What is surprising, therefore, is the sheer length of time it took for the conservative critique to emerge.

To a large extent, the dominance of Christian democratic ideology explains why conservatism was not particularly influential in the first decades of European integration. Christian democracy managed to match the political preferences of the

[54] Hence modern republicans define freedom as non-domination, rather than in terms of positive or negative liberty (Pettit 1997).

Christian churches (above all, the Catholic Church) with the new political needs of the post-war period and the hope for the revival of Christendom in Europe, which is why the papacy has always supported the process. Conservatives, sceptical of the supranational form of political power in Europe, were therefore marginalized by the loss of their key partner, the Catholic Church.

Things changed, however, when European societies became more and more secular and liberal. Christianity has gradually ceased to be the point of reference for the European project and its agnostic character has become ever more visible. It is important to note that for some conservatives, the project is not only agnostic, but often laicist. The conservative critique is not always formulated by authors who would identify themselves as conservatives (in fact, some of would explicitly reject this label), but it stresses an important, common point of these critiques: Europe's limited interest in its own religious tradition.

The French debate: De-christianization and its consequences

For some reason, France has been at heart of this thesis. The two major forms of secularism in the process of European integration were created there, with the significant exception of liberal agnostic secularism. It is therefore natural that the critique of the dominant European version of secularism is also present in the French public debate. Interestingly enough, that critique comes not only from the conservative or liberal political theorists like Remi Brague and Pierre Manent, but seems now to be the dominant voice within the French intellectual debate on secularism more generally. Most significant intellectual figures in France are now very reluctant to praise the French model of laicist secularism and many voices in the debate also reject its milder liberal form.

A good example of this atmosphere is the curious popularity of the novels of Michel Houellebecq, who on the one hand demonstrates the weakness of contemporary European culture, which only offers consumerism to its citizens. One

of its main protagonists, professor Rediger, points to the fall of the European culture which seems to be a result of the decline of Christianity in Europe:

> Without Christianity, the European nations had become bodies without souls— zombies. The question was, could Christianity be revived? I thought so. I thought so for several years— with growing doubts. As time went on, I subscribed more and more to Toynbee's idea that civilizations die not by murder but by suicide (Houellebecq 2015, p.208).

Therefore Rediger, believing that the European civilisation is dead, converts to Islam.

> That Europe, which was the summit of human civilization, committed suicide in a matter of decades." Rediger's voice was sad. He'd left all the overhead lights off; the only illumination came from the lamp on his desk. "Throughout Europe there were anarchist and nihilist movements, calls for violence, the denial of moral law. And then a few years later it all came to an end with the unjustifiable madness of the First World War. Freud was not wrong, and neither was Thomas Mann: if France and Germany, the two most advanced, civilized nations in the world, could unleash this senseless slaughter, then Europe was dead. I spent that last night at the Métropole, until it closed. I walked all the way home, halfway across the city, past the EU compound, that gloomy fortress in the slums. The next day I went to see an imam in Zaventem. And the day after that— Easter Monday— in front of a handful of witnesses, I spoke the ritual words and converted to Islam (Houellebecq 2015, pp.209-210).

Rediger's view on Christianity is, however, not entirely straightforward. He blames it for the diffusion of humanism and the "rights of man", spread through the Christian doctrine of incarnation. Part of the weakness of European culture is actually attributed in Houellebecq's book to the weakness of Catholicism. One of its main protagonists who converted to Islam says:

> He, Rediger, was the first to admit the greatness of medieval Christendom, whose artistic achievements would live forever in human memory; but little by little it had given way, it had been forced to compromise with rationalism, it had renounced its temporal powers, and so had sealed its own doom— and why? In the end, it was a mystery; God had ordained it so (Houellebecq 2015, p.226).

It is striking how many similarities there are between Houellebecq's books and the conservative critics of the modern European secularism with a significant difference: the author of "Submission" is playing with the reader (who cannot really be sure what the writer's position is) – the readiness of some Catholics to compare him with Benedict XVI[55] seems to be reaching too far, though one thing seems to be sure: the crisis of European Christianity seems to be linked with a broader feeling of crisis of European culture.

Rémi Brague: The Roman Form of Europe

Many seem to be surprised that Islam plays such an important role in the current writings of Rémi Brague. It should not come as a surprise to those who read his "Eccentric culture" (Brague 2002). Islam is the most important context of the Roman form of European culture described by Brague and has been the "other" of European culture for centuries, according to the author. The Roman form of European culture is, according to the author, the ability to adapt external cultural traditions – above all the Greek philosophical tradition and Judaism. Brague goes against all those who think that the Roman Empire did not bring anything new to European culture (perhaps with the significant exception of the Roman law). While he acknowledges the fact that the novelties can be ascribed to ancient Greece, he thinks that what is specifically Roman

[55] One of the examples of such a position can be found in the Catholic Herald: http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/issues/august-28th-2015/michel-houellebecqs-stark-warning-to-europes-catholics/ (last access: 13.05.2017).

is the fact that it understood its inferiority and therefore adopted first Greek philosophy and literature, then Christianity. This set of absorptions created a curious form of European culture, which made a cultural form from its "Romanness".

European culture is different from other cultures that also absorbed foreign traditions (for example many Asian cultures draw on Indian heritage), because in the European context it is a rule based in religion and one based on a feeling of incompleteness that requires opening it to external (eccentric) insights. The Roman principle is present above all in the Catholic attitude toward the incarnation. Therefore, Europe's Christianity in Brague's understanding is not a content, but a form, and this is why it can remain universal also in a society which is itself post-Christian. He thinks that we should overcome the current European break with tradition and go back to what is essential about European culture: its Roman form.

Pierre Manent: Europe as a Secular Religion

Pierre Manent's critique of European secularism takes aim at the political form of the European Union. In his seminal work "Metamorphoses of the City: On the Western Dynamic" (Manent 2013) he describes three fundamental forms of political power in Europe: the polis, the Empire, and the Church. These are three forms of political power that have shaped Europe and its most important political achievement, the modern nation-state. The modern state (the nation-state) is at heart of Manent's book and political thought. Manent, while pointing to centrality of a state in the modern European history, shows its ambiguity:

> The modern State, still uncertain of its strength, at first joined to itself a religious opinion or word, which was the State religion. Once it had attained its full strength, it raised itself above every word; it was truly without a word of its own. It became the "neutral," "agnostic," "secular" State that we know. (Manent 2013, p.8)

Although Manent is not an enthusiast of the "agnostic" state, he is much more critical of European integration, as it apparently leads to the destruction of the state and does not provide us with an alternative. The fall of European nation-state is a source of its current problems, along with the decline of Christianity in Europe:

> Europe ends itself militarily, politically, and spiritually disarmed in a world that it has armed with the instruments of modern civilization. It soon will be wholly incapable of defending itself. It has for a long time been incapable of defining itself, since in the common European opinion it is confused with humanity itself on the way to pacification and unification. By renouncing the political form that was its own, and in which it had tried not without success to solve the European problem, Europe deprived itself of the association in which European life had found its richest meaning, diffracted in a plurality of national languages vying with one another for strength and grace (Manent 2013, p.13).

A critique of European self-understanding is at odds with how many other intellectuals see the sense of the European project. Marcel Gauchet, for example, thinks that "we may be allowed to think that the formula the Europeans have pioneered is destined eventually to serve as a model for the nations of the world. That lies in its genetic programme." (cited in Anderson 2007). Manent is also at odds here with some historians of European integration, such as Alan Milward who contends that European integration actually helped European nation-states revive after being so badly discredited during the two world wars (see Milward 1993).

Another deficiency, according to Manent, is linked to the fact that European integration seems to be a "secular religion", the term famously coined by Manent's teacher, Raymond Aron, to describe totalitarian ideologies. For Manent, the EU is not totalitarian but it has certain religious traits: devoted believers, a discernible "orthodoxy", and concomitant "heresies".[56] There is also a religious will to proselytise

[56] Joseph H.H. Weiler would also add political messianism to the list: "European integration is nothing like its European messianic predecessors—that of monarchies and empire and, later, of fascism and communism. It is liberal and noble, yet politically messianic it is, nonetheless." (Weiler 2012)

other parts of the world to follow the European example. It is Manent's conviction that it is more natural for the European states to be friends than to be spouses. During a lecture at Harvard University, he said "If they make us spouses, we will be enemies again."[57]

Manent's take corresponds with Weiler's writings on European integration. Weiler juxtaposes the unity vision with the community vision (supranationalism). While the unity vision proposes a sort of federalisation which would finally lead to the European super state, the supranationalism seeks to redefine the political boundaries of the states without the intention to replace one state with another. This community vision is, according to Weiler, more ambitious, as it does not replace one state by another, but it "seeks to tame the national interest with a new discipline" (Weiler 1999, p.342). This is a vision that, according to Weiler, links the European Eros (the affective attachment to one's nation) with civilization (which disciplines the affects).

What Manent is also critical about is the fact that, according to him, Europe forgot about its Christian roots which are crucial for its political form. He states that the new European secular religion is anti-Christian and anti-Catholic (the lack of the reference to Christianity in the preamble of the Constitution being the primary example of its anti-Catholicism). The "ideological Europe" is to him an opposite of the "historical Europe": "Europe is the negation of everything Europe has built: nations and what the nations have in common, namely Christianity."[58]

Another important element of the European secular religion is its attachment to the allegedly virtual idea of "humanity" which is the modern version of the Church's spiritual universality. According to Manent, however, the attachment to humanity cannot be meaningful without a real political form.

For Manent, as for Brague, Islam poses a challenge to European identity. In "La situation de la France" (Manent 2015), he criticizes those who do not want to the alleged threats posed by Islam saying that it is the essentialization of this religion: "political regime and mores encourage us to reduce spiritual entities to the individuals that

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[57] Pierre Manent spoke about this during a presentation at Harvard University: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERRJyd5doXc (last access: June 6, 2016)
[58] The same lecture at Harvard.

constitute them." But religion for Manent is not an individual thing. It is, among others, a social and cultural project which seems to be at odds with European societies. Although many see him as a converted supporter of the far right, he states that what he has in mind is the integration of Muslims into our societies by opening them up to the religious message. This is why he proposes the return to Christianity and the church:

> Although Catholics seem to be pushed ever further toward the periphery of public life, even in our secularized present the Church is the spiritual domain at the center of the West. Her responsibility is proportional to this centrality, which in truth is inseparable from her identity. The universal Church alone is up to the task of holding together a European form of life that has the capacity to offer hospitality to Judaism, Islam, evangelical Protestantism, and the doctrine of human rights (Manent 2016).

A return to Christianity would help us truly integrate European Muslims according to Manent:

> It is my contention that France's Muslims will find their place only if the French nation accepts them, not just as rights-bearing citizens, along with other bearers of the same rights, but as a distinctive community to which that nation, shaped by Christianity, grants a place. Our Muslim fellow citizens must obviously enjoy the rights of French citizens without any kind of discrimination, which is not always the case at present. They cannot, however, find a place in a vacuum. They find their place only within a nation that has the spiritual and intellectual resources to be generous without being complacent (Manent 2016).

Interestingly enough, both Brague and Manent are very much at odds with the slightly forgotten tradition of French personalism and the political thought of Jacques Maritain, who is rightly seen as a crucial thinker of Christian democracy (even if he

did not support Christian democratic party politics). Maritain's negative view on the idea of state sovereignty and his full support for the idea of human rights make him very distant from the Catholic political thought crafted by Pierre Manent and Remi Brague.

Marcin Król: The Tragic Liberalism of Hope

Marcin Król, a disciple of Leszek Kołakowski and one of the most prominent Polish political philosophers, takes a powerful stance against the minimalist liberalism of fear in his books. Król demands more from liberalism. He sketches the project of a "liberalism of hope" as opposed to the "liberalism of fear". Positive liberalism represents the hope of combining the horizontal (profane) with the vertical (sacred) aspect of human life.

First of all, he states that the consequence of the adoption of the liberalism of fear (or negative liberalism - the liberalism centred on the concept of negative freedom) leads to the rejection of the idea of truth. Truth in this optic has a totalitarian flavour and should therefore be abandoned. The logical consequence of the abandonment of the idea of truth is the rejection of the philosophical basis of modern democracy, which is the thesis promoted by another liberal, Richard Rorty. Rorty states that "truth in the Platonic understanding has no meaning for democratic politics" (Rorty 1991). John Rawls also wants to put philosophical considerations about the concept of truth to the side as they do not lead to any constructive political solutions.

Król rejects the idea that we should abandon the quest for truth. He makes a case for what he calls the secularism of hope, which would be tragic in the classical sense of this word, which assumes that human beings are often forced to choose between competing values that cannot always be reconciled – that these conflicts are part of our lives and therefore they should not be removed from politics. Król invokes various liberals who have managed to match liberalism (with its quest for freedom) with other values. He notes that Tocqueville and Burckhardt managed to combine

liberalism with religion and tradition or the idea of equality (like Jean Jaures) and there is no reason why we should not be able to do the same (Król 1996, p.204).

He also makes the case for positive freedom (standing by the communitarians in their conflict with liberals) saying that freedom can be meaningful only if it is an "experienced freedom". An absolute absence of external restrictions on personal liberty enhances social apathy and is consequently dangerous for the freedom itself. Król also rejects the utilitarian flavour of some forms of liberalism, contending that it is not in human nature to be happy, but simply to be free. He praises liberalism for changing the forms of human drama (changing the way conflicts are managed), but claims that it is nevertheless highly dangerous to want to expel drama from human life completely.

The Critique from the Left: Against the Marketization of Europe

The most fundamental critique of the European project from the leftist perspective was written by Perry Anderson, who in his book "The New Old World" emotionally engages with the history of the European Union, inspired by Alan Milward. Anderson, is largely relying on Weiler's critique of the institutional set up of the EU, including the non-transparent role of the Council of Ministers and COREPER and the lack of accountability of both the European Commission and the Council.

Anderson goes on to suggest that the European project is essentially a product of bourgeoisie, designed in a way to secure its interests against the working class, which is hit by the free movement of capital and cannot make use of the opportunities provided by the EU. Anderson's hope would there be linked with the hope to change the nature of the European project and transform its character from elitist to serving working classes.

Another, more philosophical argument against the EU, is related to hegemony of neoliberalism in Europe and abroad, was published in a text relaunching the New Left Review in 2002:

> For the first time since the Reformation, there are no longer any significant oppositions—that is, systematic rival outlooks—within the thought-world of the West; and scarcely any on a world scale either (…)(Anderson 2000).

The left is not unhappy with the agnostic form of secularism. There are, however, some important exceptions, of whom Terry Eagleton seem to be the most prominent. In his book "Reason, Faith and Revolution. Reflections on the God debate" (Eagleton 2009) without addressing the European Union as such, he links advanced capitalism with agnosticism and states that this is not a good combination for the modern society:

> A surfeit of belief is what agnostic, late-capitalist civilization itself has helped to spawn. This is not only because it has helped to create conditions for fundamentalism. It is also because when reason becomes too dominative, calculative, and instrumental, it ends up as too shallow a soil for a reasonable kind of faith to flourish. As a result, faith lapses into the kind of irrationalism which theologians call fideism, turning its back on reason altogether. From there, it is easy step enough to fanaticism (Eagleton 2009, p.148).

He describes the agnostic mental disposition by comparing it with the reading of fiction books, as this requires ironical readiness to believe, believing without believing. Such a mental state was, according to Eagleton, the indispensable condition of the modern subjectivity. "In its ironic refusal to empathize and identify, fiction becomes a kind of alternative to ideology," writes Eagleton (2009, p.146). He aptly demonstrates the dichotomy of civilisation and culture which suits perfectly the European Union, which seems to be the perfect embodiment of civilisation, opposed to culture (which is, of course, the domain of nation-states):

> Part of what has happened in our time is that God has shifted over from the side of civilization to the side of barbarism. He is no longer the short-haired,

> blue blazered God of the West – or if he is, then, this image of him is now current almost only in the United States, not in Porto or Cardiff or Bologna. Instead, he is wrathful, dark-skinned God who if he did create John Locke and John Stuart Mill, has long since forgotten the fact (Eagleton 2009, p.154).

Eagleton, similarly to Król, also longs for the return of tragedy to political life. He opts for tragic humanism:

> Tragic humanism shares liberal humanism's vision of the free flourishing of humanity; but it holds that this is possible only by confronting the very worst (…). Tragic humanism, whether in its socialist, Christian or psychoanalytic variation, holds that only by a process of self-dispossession and radical remaking can humanity come into its own (Eagleton 2009, p.163).

Conclusion: Forms of secularism and the nature of European integration

Religion is still a significant component of European culture and social reality and this basic fact is not neglected by European institutions. Delors, Barroso, Santer and many other European leaders have been aware of it and have therefore sought to engage with religious actors. But they most often do not find feasible ways to do so. Both European institutions and the representatives of religious groups seem to speak in different languages. This might explain why so often both sides are very much disappointed by the behaviour of the other side.

In this part of the final chapter, I would like to bring the reader's attention the most important findings of this thesis and also suggest some changes in the way religion is framed on the European level.

In the first place, the EU has adopted the agnostic liberal form of secularism, which is conceptually rooted in the liberalism of fear, a fear of religious and nationalist

zeal, grounded in European history and social imaginaries. The agnostic secularism has its roots in the reaction to the religious wars and it is genetically linked with the idea the religion entangled with politics may lead to violence and antagonisms. For this reason, it must be depoliticized. Therefore, religion becomes a significant other of the project of European integration - no one is undermining its importance, but it also an "other" that should be excluded from the day-to-day business.

Second, the European Union is not a laicist organization. One should not be misled by the decision not to include Christianity in the preamble of its European constitution (and the Lisbon Treaty). Although this was a victory for the laicists (with the tacit support of agnostic secularists who feared that Christianity in the constitution could lead to an attempt to make it a quasi-official religion), it was not followed by significant forms of *Christophobia* on the European level. The best evidence for this is the fact that Christian churches (with a special role for the Catholic Church) are significant and influential religious actors in Brussels. Although there are some important laicist organisations and individuals who have impact on European legislation (vide: the European Platform for Secularism in Politics in the European Parliament), they are not decisive.

Third, Europe did not adopt the Christian democratic form of secularism. Although there are significant elements of this type of Christian democratic political ideology (the idea of subsidiarity, political centrism, mistrust towards state sovereignty) in the European construction, in general the Christian democratic way of dealing with religion has disappeared. Moreover, Christian democrats adopted the agnostic liberal understanding of religion, in which religion is treated as one of the social partners, not a source of a specific spiritual contribution.

Fourth, the research on the relationship between religion and European integration reveals dividing lines between three of the most influential European traditions: Christianity, liberalism and the Enlightenment. It reveals that liberalism has presented the greatest influence of the three. It also shows us the difference between the traditions of liberalism and Enlightenment, which although there is overlap are not, as they are often seen, one and the same. The first emerged from the religious

wars and was a way to reconcile different people of different religious faiths without the negation of the eternal truths, but with a relativizing effect. The tradition of the Enlightenment was on the other hand fundamentally different. It was designed, inter alia, as an alternative to religion – an ambitious project aimed at a total change of life (Baczko 1974).

The links with the Enlightenment are perhaps most visible: its self-criticism, its devotion to the idea of human rights, its deeply optimistic view of the human nature, perhaps also its utopianism. All these elements seem to indicate that the European Union is yet another political project inspired by the Enlightenment. The idea that the European project develops and evolves from crisis until crisis is also a characteristic of the Enlightenment (Koselleck 1959). Its self-understanding is very often compared with the Kantian idea of perpetual peace between nations, and indeed the idea that the European project brings its nations peace is absolutely central to it. That the EU itself is a Nobel Peace Prize recipient is a crucial piece of evidence in support of this claim.

The Christian character seems to be more hidden, but as Europe is genetically linked with it, so is the European Union. Both Christianity and the European project are stuck with one another. The Christian character of the European project is clearly visible in its boundaries (the reluctance to embrace Turkish membership being the most prominent example), and is also visible in the special relationship that exists between popes and the EU. While this relationship is not always a close one, virtually all the popes since Pius XII have been received and heeded carefully in Brussels (even if in the case of Benedict XVI and John Paul II their message was ultimately rejected). Christianity is also by far the most influential religion in Brussels, dominating Art. 17 seminars, informal meetings and the (limited) space in agenda-setting open to religions generally. This is not surprising when we consider that Christianity remains the largest European religion, even if one considers the decrease in numbers of believers since the 1960s.

The two, significant cultural and intellectual traditions listed above are accompanied by another one: liberalism. As argued above, liberalism was born of the religious conflicts in sixteenth and seventeenth century Britain. Its rationale was

pragmatic: let us not argue about religious truths, as they are not verifiable. We should therefore concentrate on the rules that would make our peaceable living together possible, the main one being that of the individual freedom. As argued above, this is the most influential way of conceptualizing the relationship between religion and politics at the European level – its concentration on the freedom of belief is one of the many proofs for it.

The question of a common life for believers and non-believers will no doubt recur for decades to come in Europe. Christianity is still significant and there is a clear rise of Islam in many European countries. It seems that the way religion is framed in the European project will not answer all the questions of tomorrow.

In-depth interviews:

Jean Baubérot, Advisor on laicite and speechwriter to Francois Mitterand (18.06.2015, Paris)

Remi Brague, Professor (14.06.2015, Paris)

Rocco Buttiglione, former Italian Minister for European Affairs (10.02.2015, Rome)

Gyorgy Hölvenyi, MEP, former State Secretary for Religious Affairs in Hungary (15.09.2016, Brussels)

Fr. Piotr Mazurkiewicz, Secretary General of COMECE (15.03.2010, Brussels)

Guy Milton, Head of Secretariat of the Convention on the Future of Europe, Council of the European Union (15.01.2017, Brussels)

Piotr Nowina-Konopka, Polish Ambassador to Vatican (22.03.2015, Rome)

Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, former Vice-President of the European People's Party (15.09.2016, Brussels)

Jean-Louis Schlegel, Magazine L'Esprit (15.06.2015, Paris)

Katharina von Schnurbein, European Commission responsible for the dialogue with churches (15.02.2017, Brussels)

Jerome Vignon, Member of the Cabinet of Jacques Delors (23.12.2016, via Skype)

David White, Member of the Cabinet of Jacques Delors and Director General of the European Commission (20.09.2016, Brussels)

Semi-structured interviews (some questions the same for everyone, some differ in accordance with expertise):

Giuliano Amato, former Prime Minister of Italy, Vice-President of the Convention on the Future of Europe (15.03.2013, Florence);

Jose Manuel Barroso, former President of the European Commission (26.04.2016, Princeton);

Merete Bilde, advisor at the European External Action Service, responsible for dialogue with religions (3.06.2015, Brussels);

Sophie van I'nt'veld, Member of the European Parliament (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe), founder and co-president of the European Parliament's

Platform for Secularism in Politics (25.11.2014, via telephone);

Ryszard Legutko, Member of the European Parliament (26.11.2014, Strasbourg)

Jan Olbrycht, Member of the European Parliament (26.11.2014, Strasbourg)

Gianni Vattimo, Member of the European Parliament (28.02.2012, Brussels)

Tariq Ramadan, Professor (9.06.2016, via Skype)

Herman van Rompuy, former Prime Minister of Belgium, former President of the European Council (3.02.2016, Brussels)

Donald Tusk, President of the European Council (2.02.2016, Brussels)

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